

How do you choose thanks?

“I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts
God has given me today.”

What does God say?

“Give a lot of time and effort to prayer.
Always be watchful and thankful.”
Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

Teaching Objectives

Students learn:

1. Thankfulness is a choice.
2. Choosing to be thankful during good times AND bad times brings more happiness to my life.

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

2025/26 Winter

THANKFULNESS

December 8 - March 7

Closed:

December 22 - January 1

December 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
12	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	7	8	9	10	11	12
2	14	15	16	17	18	19
	21	22*	23*	24*	25*	26
	28	29	30	31		

January 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
25				1	2	3
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
4	11	12	13	14	15	16
5	18	19	20	21	22	23
6	25	26	27	28	29	30

February 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
7	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	8	9	10	11	12	13
9	15	16	17	18	19	20
10	22	23	24	25	26	27
March 11	1	2	3	4	5	6

Lesson Points (these will be rotated throughout the season)

- Thankful thoughts make me happier.
- Being thankful shows others I care about them.
- Thankful people find good things everywhere.
- Saying *thank you* can turn someone's bad day into a good one.
- Unpleasant beginnings may turn into a thankful ending.

Lessons & Stories:

- Week 1: Thankful thoughts make me happier.
 - no story
- Week 2: Thankful people find good things everywhere.
 - *Billy's Bad Day*
- Week 2b: Being thankful shows others I care about them.
 - no story
- Week 3: Being thankful shows others I care about them.
 - *A True Friend* / handout
- Week 4: Saying *thank you* can turn someone's bad day into a good one.
 - *A Hot Chocolate Smile*
- Week 5: Thankful thoughts make me happier.
 - *Three Hidden Surprises*
- Week 6: Thankful people find good things everywhere.
 - "Earthquake!"
- Week 7: Thankful thoughts make me happier.
 - *Big Changes for Benny*
- Week 8: Unpleasant beginnings may turn into a thankful ending.
 - *Super Mario vs. Slimy Salamanders* / handout
- Week 9: Saying *thank you* can turn someone's bad day into a good one.
 - *The Blueberry Blessing*
- Week 10: Thankful people find good things everywhere.
 - *The Best Thing Ever* / Week 1b image
- Week 11: Being thankful shows others I care about them.
 - *Uncle Bob* / Week 2b image / handout

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

COACH INTRO

As a Most Engaged Coach, I PREPARED was ANIMATED APPLIED the lesson

1. (1 min) Practice declaration & verse - a minimum key success (priority #1)

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. Intro: Play the recording or read the following:

This season we're going to learn how to grow a thankful heart.

People who have learned to think thankful thoughts are happier.

It's like putting on magic glasses that help you see the good things in your life and make you feel happy.

When your mom and dad give you a big bag filled with gifts you wanted for your birthday, you're so grateful! It's such a happy feeling!

If you have a thankful heart, you not only feel happy about the big things - like that bag of gifts - you also find little things that make you happy too.

When you grow a thankful heart, you have a special kind of superpower that helps you enjoy all the good gifts around you, both little and big.

3. Show image 1a and talk briefly about little things to be thankful for.

4. Lesson 1: Thankful thoughts make me happier. *The one main thing we hope to teach or leave with students*

- a. Here are four steps you can take to help you grow a thankful heart.
- b. (show image 1b and read through the steps)

5. Gym Application: (questions often will have to be very brief, or sometimes turned into yes/no or a single answer!)

- a. Now it's your turn to practice!
 - i. Look all around you.
 - ii. What do you see that you're thankful for? (If time and age appropriate, ask why they are thankful for it)
 1. When it's your turn, say something like, "I'm thankful I have each one of you in my class because I love helping you get better at (gymnastics/ninja)!"

6. Remember: When you think thankful thoughts, you gather good gifts.

7. Suggested Warmups: (Choose whatever time permits) - are any coaches doing warm up first when they walk in?

- c. 10-20 jumping jacks
- d. 5 jump-sticks with good form
- e. Floor straddle, feet flexed and facing upward - not inward - for 20 seconds

Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 1: Dec 8-13

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. Intro: Play the recording or read the following:

This season we're going to learn how to grow a thankful heart.

People who have learned to think thankful thoughts are happier.

It's like putting on magic glasses that help you see the good things in your life and make you feel happy.

When your mom and dad give you a big bag filled with gifts you wanted for your birthday, you're so grateful! It's such a happy feeling!

If you have a thankful heart, you not only feel happy about the big things - like that bag of gifts - you also find little things that make you happy too.

When you grow a thankful heart, you have a special kind of superpower that helps you enjoy all the good gifts around you, both little and big.

3. **Show image 1a** and talk briefly about little things to be thankful for.

4. **Lesson 1:** Thankful thoughts make me happier.

- a. Here are four steps you can take to help you grow a thankful heart.
- b. *(show image 1b and read through the steps)*

5. **Gym Application:**

- a. Now it's your turn to practice!
 - i. Look all around you.
 - ii. What do you see that you're thankful for? *(If time and age appropriate, ask why they are thankful for it)*
 1. *When it's your turn, say something like, "I'm thankful I have each one of you in my class because I love helping you get better at (gymnastics/ninja)!"*

6. **Remember:** When you think thankful thoughts, you gather good gifts.

7. **Suggested Warmups:** (Choose whatever time permits)

- a. 10-20 jumping jacks
- b. 5 jump-sticks with good form
- c. Floor straddle, feet flexed and facing upward - not inward - for 20 seconds

Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 2: Dec 15-20 (Closed Dec 22 - Jan 1)

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. **Intro:** This season we're learning how to grow a thankful heart. It starts in our minds. We need to think thankful thoughts. But sometimes it can be hard to be thankful. What if you just broke your favorite toy? How can you be thankful when that happens? This is when we need to remember these four steps. *(show and read image1b)* Today's story is about a boy who has a bad thing happen to him. Let's listen and see what he does.
3. **Lesson 2:** Thankful people find good things everywhere.
4. **Story & Discussion:** Our story is called *Billy's Bad Day*. He's going to need your help in the end, so listen closely!
(Gather kids in so all can see the image. The story is open-ended so the kids need to LOOK more closely at the pictures and THINK of things Billy can be thankful for.)
 - a. Let's help Billy think of things he can be thankful for even though this was not a good thing that happened to him. *(possible answers)*
 - i. #2 Peanut didn't run into the street and get hit by a car. / Billy didn't break any bones.
 - ii. #3 The older boy appeared just in time to catch Peanut. / He was kind, not mean, and helped Billy up and got Peanut back on the leash.
 - iii. #4 His sister was kind and took care of his knee. / She helped Billy to think thankful thoughts about what happened to help him out of his bad mood.
5. **Gym Application:**
 - a. Today, if you start to feel grumpy or you don't like the station you're on,
 - i. STOP what you're doing.
 - ii. PRAY. Ask God to help you find something to be thankful for.
 - iii. LOOK around. Are you thankful for a friend? Your coach? That you're getting stronger?
 - iv. GO back to work on your station!
6. **Remember:** Thankful people will FIND good things everywhere!
7. **Suggested Warmups:** (Choose whatever time permits)
 - a. Hop on each foot 10-15 times.
 - b. Pike stretch sitting on floor: hold for 20 seconds
 - c. 2 bridge holds for 5 seconds each (with head either on or off the floor according to age/ability)

Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 2b: Jan 3

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. Intro: Who remembers what we're learning about this season?

- I'm sure all of you got some pretty cool gifts from your parents for Christmas!
- Let's go around and share what our most favorite gift was.
- Now - how many of you took the time to say a big THANK YOU to them?
- If you do something really kind for another person or give them a special gift, but they never say *thank you*, how does that make you feel? Happy or sad?
- It's important to say *thank you* to those who give us things or do kind things for us. It shows them how much you care about them.

3. Lesson 2b: Being thankful shows others I care about them.

4. Image & Discussion: (*Show image 2b and read the 4 ways to say, "Thank you!"*)

- After reading, ask, "Did any of you say *thank you* to someone today?"

5. Gym Application:

- Have you ever said to your mom and dad, "Thank you for letting me go to Emeth every week!"
- After class, I want each of you to tell your parents that *today!*
- That will show them you care about them. You can also give them a big hug!

6. Remember: Being thankful shows others I care about them.

7. Suggested Warmups: (Choose whatever time permits)

- 10 squat jumps
- Shoulder stretch for 20 seconds: straight arms out front, press shoulders toward the ground.



- Half split hold (or full if they are able) on each leg for 10-20 seconds



Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 3: Jan 5-10

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. Intro: What are we learning about this season?

- How many of you got awesome presents for Christmas?
- How many of you gave a big thank you to your parents?
- If you didn't, I want you to do that as soon as you see them!
- Showing thankfulness to friends and family is the best way to let them know how much you care about them. That's what our lesson and story are about today.

3. Lesson 3: Being thankful shows others I care about them.

4. Story & Question: Today's story is called *A True Friend*. After you listen, I'm going to ask you this question: **Why did Trina want to do something special for her friend?**

5. Discussion: Why did Trina want to do something special for her friend?

- Molly came over every day for three weeks because she cared about Trina and wanted to do something to help her.*
- Trina was so thankful that she had such a good friend, she wanted to do something extra special for Molly to let her know how grateful she was.*

6. Gym Application:

- During class today, if someone says something kind to you, lets you go first, or helps you do a skill, say *thank you*. It will make them feel happy!

7. Remember: Being thankful shows others I care about them.

8. Suggested Warmups: (Choose whatever time permits)

- 10 donkey kicks
- 10 shoulder touches, either in a pushup position or knee pushup
- Butterfly sit. Hold your ankles and bring your chest as far forward as you can. Hold for 20 seconds.

Handout

Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 4: Jan 12-17

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. **Intro:** Growing a thankful heart means we need to be watchful. We need to be looking around us for things that others don't always see. It might be a baby bunny hiding in the grass. Or it might be noticing someone who is being left out that we can be kind to. Both of those are special gifts God places in our life that we can be thankful for. Today in our story, Silas is seeing something that probably no one else saw. Let's listen and find out what it is.
3. **Lesson 4:** Saying *thank you* can turn someone's bad day into a good one.
4. **Story & Question:** Today's story is called *A Hot Chocolate Smile*. After you listen, I'll ask you this question: **How did Silas turn someone's bad day into a good one?**
5. **Discussion:** How did Silas turn someone's bad day into a good one?
 - a. *First, he noticed how Mr. Mailman was having trouble delivering mail at other houses.*
 - b. *Then he made hot chocolate and cheerfully thanked him for bringing the mail on such a yucky day.*
6. **Gym Application:**
 - a. There are many things people do every day for others that no one ever thanks them for.
 - b. Your parents take care of your needs; your teachers help you learn. Do you take time to say thank you?
 - c. All of the coaches here work hard to make class fun and help you learn.
 - d. If you have fun today in class, what should you say when you leave?
7. **Remember:** Saying *thank you* can turn someone's bad day into a good one.
8. **Suggested Warmups:** (Choose whatever time permits)
 - a. 5-10 burpees (no pushups - just squat-thrusts)
 - b. Standing pike stretch: back straight, legs straight, hold 15-20 seconds
 - c. 20 high toe rises with straight, tight legs, hands on hips

Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 5: Jan 19-24

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. **Intro:** The best way to start every day is to think of the many good things God has given you: your family, your warm bed, your friends - things that make your days happy. If you stop to remember all these good gifts every morning, you are becoming a **grateful** person. If you are a grateful person, you can always find something to be thankful for - even when bad things happen! . *(Review image1b)*
3. **Lesson 5:** Thankful thoughts make me happier.
4. **Story:** Today's story is called *Three Hidden Surprises*. At the end, you'll get to look for what Salena discovered because of her grateful attitude!
5. **Discussion:** *(The last image has baby bunnies, a monarch, and a frog hidden in the garden that the kids can look for)*
 - a. *When Salena started to think thankful thoughts, she found three special things to be thankful for.*
 - b. *People who are grateful can always find things to be thankful for - **even when their day seems like a bad day!***
6. **Gym Application:**
 - a. You may not like doing a skill that's hard, but be grateful you are learning new things.
 - b. If you fall off the beam and feel scared, but don't get hurt, you can think, "I'm grateful I'm ok!"
7. **Remember:** You are becoming a grateful person when you think thankful thoughts.
8. **Suggested Warmups:** (Choose whatever time permits)
 - a. 10-20 jumping jacks
 - b. Floor straddle, feet flexed and facing upward - not inward - for 20 seconds
 - c. Plank hold in full pushup position or on forearms, hollow body, 10-20 seconds

Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 6: Jan 26-31

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. **Intro:** Just like it takes practice to grow your skills and muscles, it also takes practice to grow a thankful heart. There are days you don't feel like practicing a skill because it's hard. But if you want to get better, you must *choose* to do it anyway. There are also days when you don't want to be thankful because everything at the moment seems terrible! This is when you need to make a choice: stay grumpy and unhappy or stop, pray, and ask God to help you see something good. Our story today is something that happened in real life to a young girl who lives in the country of Haiti.
3. **Lesson 6:** Thankful people find good things everywhere.
4. **Story & Question:** Today's story is called "*Earthquake!*" Listen carefully. At the end I'll ask you to name **5 things that Bonita can be thankful for.** (*Gather kids in so all can see the single image page.*)
5. **Discussion:** Name 5 things that Bonita can be thankful for. (*Some possible answers*)
 - a. *The man who helped her; her family was not hurt; she was able to have her leg operated on and casted; Dominique was put next to her; they were able to read the Bible together; they found things to laugh about; they changed the whole atmosphere of the tent as they spread their joy to the other kids.*
6. **Gym Application:**
 - a. It's always up to you to choose if you want to complain or be thankful.
 - b. When it seems like everything is going bad during your class, remember Bonita.
 - c. If you can't think of anything else, you can always be thankful for these things:
 - i. A big gym with lots of equipment.
 - ii. A coach who wants to help you get better during every class.
 - iii. Your parents, who know how important it is for you to develop strong muscles and skills.
7. **Remember:** Every day there are good things around you. Stop. Look. Give thanks!
8. **Suggested Warmups:** (Choose whatever time permits)
 - a. 10-20 frog jumps
 - b. Half or full split holds on each leg for 20 seconds



Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 7: Feb 2-7

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. **Intro:** Most people are not naturally thankful. It's something we have to work at, just like you have to work at becoming good at gymnastics or ninja. But that doesn't mean everyone is always complaining either. Many times people just don't stop long enough to notice all the good things surrounding them that they can be thankful for. So they quietly wish things could be different and miss out on all the joys around them right now. This is something Benny is learning in our story today.
3. **Lesson 7:** Thankful thoughts make me happier.
4. **Story & Question:** Today's story is called *Big Changes for Benny*. As you listen, think about this question: **What happened in Benny's life that made him begin to see the many good things he had?**
5. **Discussion:** What happened in Benny's life that made him begin to see the many good things he had?
 - a. *He saw his mom crying because she felt so bad she couldn't get him the present he wanted.*
 - b. *He stopped thinking about his own disappointment long enough to notice his mom looked tired and thin.*
 - c. *He became aware of other people and things outside of himself and began to see many things he was thankful for.*
6. **Gym Application:**
 - a. You can never be happy if you only think about all the skills you can't do.
 - b. Never compare your progress with others. It will make you feel unhappy with your own.
 - c. Instead, pay attention to your coach, which is being watchful, and be thankful for your ability to learn!
7. **Remember:** Choose to find things to be thankful for. You will be much happier.
8. **Suggested Warmups:** (Choose whatever time permits)
 - a. Big arm circles backward and forward. 10 each way.
 - b. 5-10 tuck jump-sticks (knees forward with legs & feet together from start to finish!)

Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 8: Feb 9-14

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. **Intro:** Sometimes we *think* something is going to be terrible, but then it turns out to be a really fun experience and you're so thankful you got to do it. You thought it would be boring or taste really bad, but you were very wrong! And now you love it. That's what our story is about today.
3. **Lesson 8:** Unpleasant beginnings may turn into a thankful ending.
4. **Story & Question:** Today's story is called *Super Mario vs. Slimy Salamanders*. Listen carefully so you answer this question afterward: **What caused Yolanda to change so much by the end of the story?**
5. **Discussion:** What caused Yolanda to change so much by the end of the story?
 - a. *She saw, heard, touched, and smelled many new things.*
 - b. *Afterward, she realized she has probably missed lots of cool things because she never takes time to stop and look for them.*
6. **Gym Application:**
 - a. Each class is full of opportunities to learn something new.
 - b. You can learn secrets about how to do a skill correctly when you listen and watch your coach.
 - c. Don't be like Loretta who was sorry she missed out. Be curious about what's next, work hard, try new things your coach gives you.
7. **Remember:** Some things seem unpleasant at first, but in the end you're so thankful you did them!
8. **Suggested Warmups:** (Choose whatever time permits)
 - a. Hop on one foot 10 times, then the other.
 - b. Hold a plank pose (*knees or full plank*) for 10-15 seconds. (*Can you wave to me with one hand?*)

Week 8 Handout

Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 9: Feb 16-21

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

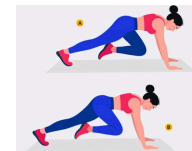
How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. **Intro:** We all have chores or work that we don't like. Maybe it's putting toys away, cleaning your room, or maybe it's picking up dog poop! It's easy to complain about things we don't like. But think about this. Do you want to give your dog away? Or your favorite toys? Would you rather have no bedroom and sleep on the living room floor? Your complaining only makes you feel worse. That's what Renee is finding out today in our story!
3. **Lesson 9:** Saying *thank you* can turn someone's bad day into a good one.
4. **Story & Question:** Today's story is called *The Blueberry Blessing*. Something good happens to Renee during the story. Here's the question I'll ask you after you listen: **What changed Renee's complaining into thankfulness?**
5. **Discussion:** What changed Renee's complaining into thankfulness?
 - a. *Mrs. Fredericks thanked her for doing a good job picking blueberries.*
 - b. *It helped Renee see that her hard work made others happy.*
 - c. *She learned that the job she hated was actually a special blessing that allowed her to do her favorite thing; ride horses.*
6. **Gym Application:**
 - a. Your parents work hard to get you here. And your coaches work hard to make your classes fun while you learn.
 - b. Parents and coaches have bad days too, though they don't always complain about it.
 - c. Saying 'thank you' to them makes them feel happy—and can turn a bad day into a good one!
7. **Remember:** Say 'thank you' to those who help you or give you things. It can change their day from a bad one into a good one!
8. **Suggested Warmups:** (Choose whatever time permits)
 - a. Mountain climbers (either for 15 seconds or counted to 15)
 - b. Seated straddle & pike holds for 15-20 seconds each



Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 10: Feb 23-28 (Closed March 2 for training)

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. **Intro:** People who have a grateful mindset view every day as a bright, sunny day—even if it's not! It's like waking up in the morning and putting on special glasses that help you see all the good things that the sun is shining on. They can easily find lots of things to be thankful for. Grateful people are able to be happy when good things happen AND when bad things happen. They know that even when bad things happen, they can turn into good things later. Today in our story, Eddie shows us how a grateful person responds when things look bad.
3. **Lesson 10:** Thankful people find good things everywhere.
4. **Story & Question:** Today's story is called *The Best Thing Ever!* Pay attention to what Eddie does when things turn bad. Afterward I'll ask you this question: **What bad thing happened that turned out to be a good thing instead?**
5. **Discussion:** What bad thing happened that turned out to be a good thing instead?
 - a. It started to rain, but the rain fooled the fish into thinking it was bugs hitting the water.
 - b. The rain caused the fish to bite so the boys were able to catch them.
 - c. Eddie *could* have complained and left, but because of his grateful mindset, he stayed.
6. **Gym Application:** (*Week 1b image for point c*)
 - a. If you have a grateful mindset like Eddie, you won't quit when things don't go the way you want them to.
 - b. If you fall, or your coach makes you do something hard, or maybe you didn't move up to the next level, don't complain or quit.
 - c. Stop. Ask God to show you something good. Look around. Then be thankful for what you find!
7. **Remember:** Many things may look bad at first, but could turn out to be the best thing ever!
8. **Suggested Warmups:** (Choose whatever time permits)
 - a. 20 jumping jacks
 - b. 2 - 10 second hollow body holds, keeping backs pressed to the ground and arms at your sides. Bend knees slightly if needed.

Planning Notes:

Winter 2026 Junior CT: Growing a Thankful Heart

Week 11: March 3-7

As a **Most Engaged Coach**, I **PREPARED** was **ANIMATED** **APPLIED** the lesson

1. Practice declaration & verse

How do I choose thanks?

"I stop to remember and enjoy the gifts God has given me today."

What does God say?

"Give a lot of time and effort to prayer. Always be watchful and thankful." Colossians 4:2 (NIRV)

2. **Intro:** We've talked a lot about ways we can grow a thankful heart and why it's important to practice thankfulness. When you say *thank you* to someone, you're telling them that you care about them and appreciate their kindness or help. It makes them feel happy. And it makes *you* feel happy too when you see how happy they are! That's why our bible verse says to be *watchful*. Remember *to* LOOK around you. Notice the good things others are doing for you and be quick to thank them. Our story is about something Ricky does when he wants to show a special person how thankful he is for their kindness.
3. **Lesson 11:** Being thankful shows others I care about them.
4. **Story & Question:** Today's story is called *Uncle Bob*. As you listen, think about this question: **Who are the special people in your life that you are most thankful for?**
5. **Discussion:** Who are the special people in your life that you are most thankful for? (*Show Week 2b image as part of point b*)
 - a. *Let them answer, then ask them:*
 - b. What can you do to let them know that you care about them?
 - i. *Encourage simple things like: saying thank you, writing a note or drawing a picture, giving them a hug, picking flowers for mom, baking cookies for dad, etc.*
6. **Gym Application:**
 - a. Every time you come to class you have the chance to thank someone:
 - i. Your classmate who let you go first or helped you put something away.
 - ii. Your coach who helped you on a station.
 - iii. Your parents who brought you here.
7. **Remember:** LOOK around. Be watchful and quick to thank others. Both of you will feel happier!
8. **Suggested Warmups:** (Choose whatever time permits)
 - a. Hop on each foot 10-15 times.
 - b. Pike stretch sitting on floor: hold for 20 seconds
 - c. 2 bridge holds for 5 seconds each (with head either on or off the floor according to age/ability)

Week 11 Handout

Planning Notes:
