

CHARACTER*plus* Handbook



CONNECTING THROUGH CHARACTER

Recognize It Model It Expect It

“The proper time to influence the character of a child is about a hundred years before he’s born.”

-William R. Inge, American playwright (1913-1973)

We cannot go back in time in order to influence and make a difference in the lives of our students. Therefore, we must work with them in the present, doing everything possible to help them to continue to grow and learn to become responsible, productive citizens. Research tells us that building relationships and getting to personally know our students will ensure this goal, as well as increase student achievement.

The Character Education theme for this school year is, “Connecting through Character.” This booklet contains a collection of ideas, some old and many new, to help you build relationships in your school. It is the hope of *Characterplus* that this serves as a valuable resource as you work to build the character of all students.

“Fame is vapor, popularity an accident, riches take wing, and only character endures.”

Horace Greeley, American journalist and educator (1811-1872)



Attitude Tools for A Successful School Year

Use these tools as needed and with care.

ATTITUDE TOOL #1

Misbehaving children are discouraged children.

ATTITUDE TOOL #2

Children do better when they feel better.

ATTITUDE TOOL #3

Mistakes are wonderful opportunities to learn.

ATTITUDE TOOL #4

Use kindness and firmness at the same time.

ATTITUDE TOOL #5

Focus on winning children over instead of winning over children.

ATTITUDE TOOL #6

Focus on long-range results.

ATTITUDE TOOL #7

Look for solutions, not blame.

ATTITUDE TOOL #8

Understand the meaning of discipline.

ATTITUDE TOOL #9

Treat children with dignity and respect.

ATTITUDE TOOL #10

Children listen to you after they feel listened to.

ATTITUDE TOOL #11

Look for the hidden message behind misbehavior.

ATTITUDE TOOL #12

Give children the benefit of the doubt.

ATTITUDE TOOL #13

Laugh with your students.



A 12-Point Comprehensive Approach To Character Education

Classroom Strategies:

1. The teacher as caregiver, model and ethical mentor: Treating students with love and respect, encouraging right behavior, and correcting wrongful actions.
2. A caring classroom community: Teaching students to respect and care about each other.
3. Moral discipline: Using rules and consequences to develop moral reasoning, self-control, and generalized respect for others.
4. A democratic classroom environment: Using the class meeting to engage students in shared decision making and in taking responsibility for making the classroom the best it can be.
5. Teaching values through the curriculum: Using the ethically rich content of academic subjects as vehicles for values teaching.
6. Cooperative learning: Fostering students' ability to work with and appreciate others.
7. The "conscience of craft": Developing students' sense of academic responsibility and the habit of doing their work well.
8. Ethical reflection: Developing the cognitive side of character through reading, research, writing and discussion.
9. Conflict resolution: Teaching students how to solve conflicts fairly, without intimidation or violence.

Strategies for the Whole School:

10. Caring beyond the classroom: Using role models to inspire altruistic behavior and providing opportunities for school and community service.
11. Creating a positive moral culture in the school: Developing a caring school community that promotes the core values.
12. Parents and community as parents: Helping parents and the whole community join the school in a cooperative effort to build good character.

From T. Lickona's *Educating for Character*, Bantam Books. 1991.



Daily Greetings!

Start the Day off on the right foot!

Many Character Education experts recommend starting the day with personal contact with each and every student. This means greeting students coming off the bus, coming down the hall, at the classroom door, or wherever your initial contact takes place. Student arrival is more times than not a hectic time of the day, but the overall conclusion is that taking time to make contact not only gives a positive message to your students, but also energizes you as a teacher. You would greet a guest coming into your home, why not a student coming into your classroom?

How it's done

The first day you should greet all students with a handshake. You will probably find that some of them are caught off guard. One of your opening activities should be to teach students how to shake hands. Some of the key concepts to cover are: eye contact, firm grip, and a verbal greeting such as, "Good morning, _____." "_____, it's a pleasure to meet you." "_____, welcome to the class." It's important to use the student's name whenever possible. Everyone likes to hear their name.

Some students won't be comfortable with a handshake. During your first discussion of the greeting tell students they may choose from one of the Three H's for a greeting: Handshake, Hug, or High Five. Variations in the greeting allow the students to express their personality at their own comfort level.



Class Meetings

A great way to build relationships!

Class Meetings have proven to be a very effective way to build strong relationships among students. In a class meeting students sit in a circle so everyone is visible and students take turns speaking and sharing. Classmates are expected to be active listeners. Meetings can have a variety of formats. Teachers use them to share news, to check homework, to check the status of writing projects, for problem solving and/or review of curriculum as well as discussions on behavior, life choices, and qualities of good character.

During Class Meetings students learn appropriate social interactions, manners, communication skills and leadership skills. Class meetings also increase self-confidence and empathy for others. Class Meetings are a great way to build community, set a positive tone, increase excitement about learning, and improve academic and social skills. If you would like more information about Class Meetings read [The Morning Meeting Book](#), by Roxann Kriete.

These four components should be a part of your opening routine:

- 1) Sharing good news-Ask the students, "What are we celebrating today?"
- 2) Express thanks instead of complaining
- 3) Share compliments to build others up
- 4) Humor



The Morning Meeting Book

By: Roxann Kriete with contributions by Lynn
Bechtel

To begin, all classroom members gather in a circle, greet each other, listen and respond to each others' news. We discuss problems that challenge our minds and look forward to the day's events. The Morning Meeting allows us to begin each day as a community of caring and respectful learners.

Morning Meeting Format

The Morning Meeting is made up of four sequential components and lasts between 15 to 30 minutes.

1. **Greeting:** Children greet each other by name, often including handshaking, clapping, singing, and other activities.

- Ensures that every child names and notices others at the beginning of the day
- Allows the teacher to observe and “take the pulse” of the group that day
- Provides practice in elements of greeting such as making eye contact and shaking hands
- Requires students to extend the range of classmates they notice and greet
- Helps students to reach across gender, clique, and friendship lines that form
- Can employ strategies which challenge the intellect
- Encourages clear and audible speech

2. **Sharing:** Students share some news of interest to the class and respond to each other, articulating their thoughts, feelings, and ideas in a positive manner. (To cut down on time you can pick a few students to share each day.)

- Provides an arena for students to share news
- Helps students develop the ability to gauge the appropriateness of sharing various kinds of news
- Allows students to practice framing constructive, purposeful questions and/or comments back to the speaker
- Helps students develop different types of responses to different kinds of news
- Develops good oral communication skills-both presentation and listening
- Lets students learn information about each other



- Enhances vocabulary development and reading success
- Offers practice in speaking to a group
- Gives practice in considering others' perspectives, developing empathy and social consciousness
- Empowers students by letting them run their sharing

3. **Group Activity:** The whole class does a short activity together, building classroom community through active participation.

- Provides a way for all class members to learn a common set of songs, chants, games, etc.
- Lets the group experience working together to produce an outcome
- Demands cooperation and encourages inclusion
- Fosters active and engaged participation
- Allows students to see each others' differing strengths
- Provides experience in having fun together as a group
- Gives an opportunity to reinforce and extend social and academic skills
- Allows for the integration and practice of curriculum content

4. **News and Announcements:** Students develop language skills and learn about the events in the day ahead by reading and discussing a daily message posted for them.

- Features a written message which welcomes and greets students as they enter the room
- Gets children excited about what they'll be learning that day
- Adds predictability and structure to entering the classroom
- Contributes to students' sense of safety and being cared for by letting them know the teacher had prepared the day and is ready for them
- Affords a fun and interactive way to teach written language, math, and other skills
- Conveys that reading is a valuable way to get information
- Builds community through shared and written information
- Provides a "warm-up" for the day's activities
- Eases the transition from Morning Meeting to the rest of the day

Overview:

Morning Meeting creates opportunities for students to practice social skills and for teachers to model these skills. It gives the students a sense of belonging and the skills of attention, listening, expression, and cooperative interaction which is a foundation for the rest of your day. Teachers and students crave a certain amount of predictability and routine in the school day especially at the start. The format of morning meeting provides this along with variation for change.



Purposes of Morning Meeting:

1. Morning Meeting sets the tone for respectful learning and establishes a climate of trust.
2. The tone and climate of Morning Meeting extends beyond the Meeting.
3. Morning Meeting motivates children by addressing two human needs: the need to feel a sense of significance and belonging and the need to have fun.
4. The repetition of many ordinary moments of respectful interaction in Morning Meeting enables extraordinary moments.
5. Morning Meeting merges social, emotional, and intellectual learning.

Getting Started:

Explain to students that you will begin each day with a Morning Meeting. You may want to adjust the time depending on the age of your students and what fits your schedule. When starting you should introduce each component one at a time and moving at a pace that works best for your class. It is helpful to have a signal to start the morning meeting and something that will signal whose turn it is to talk, such as a stress ball or small stuffed animal. When starting Morning Meeting you will also want to create a set of class rules together for how a meeting will look.

Teacher Responsibilities:

- To make sure that the space is adequate and appropriate for the meeting and its activities
- To act as a time keeper, keeping things moving
- To facilitate the meeting, making sure that all children are greeted, that a variety of children are responding to sharing, that the tone is respectful, etc.
- To observe students' skills-both social and academic
- To notice behaviors and to reinforce, remind, and redirect using positive language
- To make sure that there is equal opportunity to participate
- To make sure everyone in the classroom is included in the meeting

Student Responsibilities:

- To get to the Meeting promptly and to form the circle safely and efficiently
- To participate fully, contribute actively, listen, and respond appropriately
- To move smoothly from the meeting to the next activity



Questions and Answers

1. My students seem to be getting bored with our greetings.

It is important to provide variety in your greetings. You can introduce a new one at any time during the year.

2. I know that the activities should be fun, but my class gets really silly and doesn't take it seriously. Any suggestions?

Don't be afraid to stop an activity if it gets too silly. Monitor the group to decide if it is a few students or the whole group. If it is a few students find out why they are not wanting to join wholeheartedly, if it is the group you may want to look at the activity

Also always refer to your rules you made as a class, and if necessary, you can decide as a class to add a new rule.

3. My students really like reading the message chart, but I find it hard to keep thinking of new things to write each day.

Look at your ongoing curriculum and knowledge of your students. It may also be helpful to have a topic for each day of the week. For example, Monday could be news about the upcoming week while Tuesday could be a math question.

4. What is the difference between Class Meeting and Morning Meeting?

Class Meetings are held for the purpose of solving a problem or planning for a project and Morning Meetings are held for the purposes named earlier.

*****As always as a teacher there is never enough time in the day to do all the things that we find beneficial for students. I have found the Morning Meeting to be a great way to build community in my class at the beginning of the year. However to suit my needs I have now shortened my meeting by not doing all of the components each day and by shortening the time I give to them. It has also helped to include things from my curriculum to make them more beneficial. The book is a great tool and can be used in any way that works best for you!

Example Week:

Monday: Greeting/A few students share/quick news for the day

Tuesday: Greeting/riddles or poems/quick news for the day

Wednesday: Greeting/minute math/quick news for the day

Thursday: Greeting/daily edits/quick news for the day

Friday: Greeting/share question of the week journal and give compliments to others/quick news for the day



Discussion Topics that could also be used during Morning Meeting:

Why is my education a gift?
Am I doing my best at school?
Who needs my kindness today?
When I need help whom do I ask?
How can I be more respectful of myself and others?
Do I treat others the way I want to be treated?
How will my education help me succeed?
Do I feel proud of my work this week?
How do I help others?
Who influences me, and whom do I influence?
How can I reach my goals?
Do I appreciate all that I have?
Do I have an attitude worth catching?
What am I grateful for today?
What do my friends help me see about myself?
Am I a giving person?
How can I turn a stumbling block into a steppingstone?
In what way do I need to persevere?
How do I deal with anger?
Am I doing my personal best?
How can I create more peace in the world?
How am I special in my own way?
How can I help make the world a kinder place?
Am I tolerant person?
Who wins when I choose to do the right thing?
How will the choices I make today affect tomorrow?
Am I choosing to be responsible?
What do I need to do to be more successful at school?
Am I a person of character?
What is the right thing to do?
What fear do I need to conquer?
How does being an honest person make my life richer?
What courtesy can I show someone today?
How can I put love into action in my world?
Am I educating my mind as well as my heart?
Will I rest or rust this summer?



Topics/Activities for Beginning of the Year Class Meetings:

*Use quotes about character as discussion topics:

Examples:

“The reputation of a thousand years may be determined by the conduct of one hour.”

Abraham Lincoln said, “You can’t escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.”

Aristotle said, “No one who desires to become good will become good unless he does good things.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “The only way to have a friend is to be one.”

“Character, in the long run, is the decisive factor in the life of an individual and of nations alike.” — *Theodore Roosevelt, American adventurer and 26th president (1858-1919)*

“Character, not circumstance, makes the person.” — *Booker T. Washington, American educator and civil rights activist (1856-1915)*

*Get Acquainted Activities:

***Fact or Fiction**- Students tell three things about themselves. Two of them are true and one is not. Go around the circle and have students tell which one they think is not true.

***The Gesture Name Game**- Each student says his/her name while making a gesture. For example, Amy Jones might clap her name for Amy and snap her name for Jones. The group repeats her gestures as they say her name. Each student takes a turn.

***Student Interview**- Students interview a classmate they may not know very well. You may give them guiding questions if you want. Then students take turns introducing his/her friend to the class.



Circle of Power and Respect-Middle Schools

CPR is the middle school version of Morning Meeting. The components of the meeting are:

- **Greeting**- brings students together
- **Sharing**- deepens the connection between students
- **Group Activity**- builds team spirit, energy, and sense of community
- **News and Announcements**- quiets things down and prepares students for the rest of the day.

“CPR offers middle school students stability and predictability during a time in life that is marked by tumultuous emotional, physical, and cognitive change. And it allows students this age to do what they most want and need to do: interact with their peers. ‘CPR directly meets these kids’ needs,’ says consulting teacher Anna Foot. Middle school students long to be part of the group but they’re often not quite sure how to join together in a way that isn’t mean and exclusive. The four components of CPR allow students to make connections with their peers in a safe, positive, and inclusive way.”

Roxann Kriete, The Morning Meeting Book

CPR offers an opportunity for middle school students to learn and practice **CARES** social skills:

Cooperation...rather than competition

Assertion...rather than aggression

Responsibility...rather than apathy

Empathy...rather than self-absorption

Self-Control...rather than lack of control

- Plan to do CPR at least 3 times a week.
- Do a full CPR some days and an abbreviated version (such as News and Announcements) on other days.
- After 6 weeks, groups of students can take responsibility for planning and running a CPR.
- Another way is to have pairs of students plan and run one component of CPR once or twice a week.



Rules and Regulations

There are different views on setting rules for classrooms. Some educators believe students should be involved in the process of establishing the rules. Others feel the rules should be written down prior to the beginning of the school year and the class should discuss them. Some may not even have rules. Below are some things to keep in mind however you choose to establish the rules for your room.

Rules should be stated in a positive way—"We will..." instead of "We won't..." If one of your rules is to be respectful, add clarification to it: "We will be respectful by using appropriate words, treating others the way we want to be treated, taking care of school property, etc." "We will be responsible by handing in our work on time, etc."

Send a copy of the rules home so parents are aware of the expectations.

To create a positive classroom climate you could display on posters the oaths, creeds, and/or laws at the back of this packet. Students are asked to read them and come up with common themes of the documents. Using the themes, the class wrote their class pledge. This pledge is recited daily after the Pledge of Allegiance. The amount of guidance and independent work for this project would have to be adjusted according to the level of your students. This activity takes about two hours to complete. You should also make plans to allow for reflection on the pledge a few times during the year. The final product to be displayed in your classroom could take the form of the Bill of Rights and/or the Learning Community Constitution like the examples at the back of the packet. These documents could easily be adapted to any classroom theme.

A popular character educator and well known author is Dr. Hal Urban. He is a retired high school teacher from California who has written *Life's Greatest Lessons: 20 Things I Want My Kids to Know*. Dr. Urban strongly believes that the first two weeks in your classroom will establish the foundation and framework of your classroom climate. For this reason he suggests spending this time getting to know your students and establishing relationships. He highly recommends creating a Mission Statement for



your classroom. The following is his way of doing it. The teacher reads and displays to the class several mission statements from schools, businesses and corporations. Students are put into small groups and asked to come up with their own mission statements. The statements cannot be longer than two sentences. All of the statements are then displayed. The class either combines statements to make their own, or votes on the best one. Hal Urban's all time favorite mission statement is, "Came to Learn." Regardless of what the statement is, it is displayed and referred to constantly throughout the year.

Hal Urban also uses keywords to serve as reminders in his room. As he puts the words up he explains the meaning behind them:

Celebrate Life!	Choices	Work
Opportunity	Attitude	Compliments spoken here!
Possibilities	Respect	No discounts-everybody counts!

You may want to use the following oaths and pledges as models for your classroom pledges.

The Boy Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake and morally straight.



The Boy Scout Law

A Scout is Trustworthy	A Scout is Obedient
A Scout is Loyal	A Scout is Cheerful
A Scout is Helpful	A Scout is Thrifty
A Scout is Friendly	A Scout is Brave
A Scout is Courteous	A Scout is Clean
A Scout is Kind	A Scout is Reverent

The Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:
To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

The Girl Scout Law

I will do my best:
*to be honest
*to be fair
*to help where I am needed
*to be cheerful
*to be friendly and considerate
*to respect authority
*to use resources wisely
*to protect and improve the world around me
*to show respect for myself and others through my words and actions.



The American's Creed

(In 1917, William Tyler Page of Maryland won a nationwide contest for “the best summary of American political faith.” The U.S. House of Representatives accepted the statement as the American's Creed on April 13, 1918.)

By William Tyler Page

Cited in The Book of Virtues by William J. Bennett

I believe in the United States of America as a Government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies.

The Athenian Oath

(This oath was taken by young men of ancient Athens when they reached the age of 17.)

Cited in The Book of Virtues by William Bennett

We will never bring disgrace on this our City by an act of dishonesty or cowardice.

We will fight for the ideals and sacred things of the City both alone and with many.

We will revere and obey the City's laws, and will do our best to incite them or set them at naught.

We will strive increasingly to quicken the public's sense of civic duty.

Thus in all these ways we will transmit this City, not only not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.



Follow Up Assignment

Oaths, Creeds, Promises

Based on the oaths, creeds, and promises you read, create a class oath, which explains the responsibilities the class and teacher must have to create a positive learning environment and classroom community.

Sample Learning Community

Constitution

Every citizen of the community will have the right to learn in a friendly and nurturing environment. Each and every citizen will take on the challenges necessary to improve their academic and social skills. The citizens will work together to ensure that every member of the community experiences a comfortable learning environment. Every citizen will work together to better understand their world and the factors that affect our communities.

Each citizen has the right to receive instruction that meets their individual needs and interests. The leader of the community will work diligently to provide each citizen with challenges that will help them develop both academically and socially. It will be the responsibility of the leader to provide meaningful instruction that prepares the citizens for the challenges of middle school and other life experiences.

Citizens and their leaders will maintain an open line of communication in an effort to learn about one another. Every citizen will maintain a positive attitude, and share their knowledge and skills with their fellow citizens. Each citizen will pledge themselves to work to their fullest potential. Every citizen is expected to be fully devoted to their studies and to serving their fellow citizens.



Sample Bill of Rights

- Amendment 1: Citizens will respect the property of self and others.
- Amendment 2: Citizens will be ready to start the school day on time.
- Amendment 3: Citizens will refrain from using putdowns or other insulting terms.
- Amendment 4: Citizens will complete their assignments on time.
- Amendment 5: Citizens will raise their hands to answer questions to maintain order in the community.
- Amendment 6: Citizens will take care of their daily duties and responsibilities.
- Amendment 7: Citizens will take pride in their work.
- Amendment 8: Citizens will maintain the organization of the community and their desks.
- Amendment 9: Citizens will eat healthy and take care of personal hygiene and their own belongings.
- Amendment 10: Citizens will be honest at all times.
- Amendment 11: Citizens will have fun!
- Amendment 12: Citizens will model appropriate behavior and serve as leaders for other students.
- Amendment 13: Citizens will be helpful to others at all times.



Examples of Activities that Build Relationships

Here are several activities that could be done the first week of school and throughout the year. Feel free to adapt them to fit your teaching style, subject area, and/or grade level.

Beach Ball Activity

Inflate a beach ball that you can purchase at Target or the Dollar Store. In each color section, with a permanent marker, write a question or statement that has to do with character education. Examples could be: “Tell the class about a time you helped someone.” “Tell the class the name of your favorite character. How does he/she show good character?” “What are you most proud of about yourself?” “What are some goals you have for this year?” “What character traits do you look for in a friend?”

The students can sit on the floor as a group or at their desks. Have them toss the ball to someone in the class. When that person catches the ball he/she should answer the question that is in the section where his/her right thumb lands.

This activity can last as long as the class is engaged and motivated to continue.

Clock Activity

Give each student a paper plate and instruct them to make a clock with the 12 numbers. Tell the students to write their name on the back of the plate. Then tell them to exchange plates with one other person. Each student should sign their name to 3:00. Give them a minute to do this. They should give the plate back to the owner. Have students exchange with someone else and sign on 9:00. Give them a minute to do this. They should give the plate back to the owner. You can do this a few more times. Make sure that students are signing on the right time. For example, if David is signing Shannon’s clock at 3:00, Shannon should be signing David’s clock at 3:00 as well.



When students have signed in at least 4 times make sure they have their original clocks. Tell them to find the person who signed at 3:00. Tell that person about your family. Give them a few minutes to discuss. Now tell them to find the person who signed at 9:00. Tell that person about a character in a book you have read. Was this person of good character? Why or why not?

You can continue this as long as they are engaged and interested. You can think of questions dealing with choices, character traits, etc.

M & M Activity

Pour a couple of big bags of M & M's into small cups, one for each student. Try to put between 10 and 20 in each. Students should then partner with another student. It's best if they are with someone they don't know really well.

You will have them respond to statements according to the number of colored M & M's they have. You may read the statements one at a time, or display them on the board. If you read the statements aloud it's important to allow plenty of time for each partner to respond. Here are some sample statements:

- For every green candy you have tell your partner what you like about yourself.
- For every yellow candy tell your partner things you like to do or are interested in.
- For every red candy tell your partner about your family.
- For every blue candy tell your partner what kind of job you would like to do when you are older.
- For every brown candy tell your partner a wish you have for the world.
- For every orange candy tell your partner what you can do to make that wish come true.
- At the end the students can eat their M & M's.



Soda Activity

Give each student a can of soda to drink. (You can buy the cheap stuff, it really tastes pretty good.) Instruct them to leave their cans alone when they are empty. While they're drinking give them time to talk and visit. When everyone is finished tell the students that in the past and as you were walking around you heard different comments made by different students. Tell them you are going to repeat the statements. If one of the statements would hurt their feelings when it was said to them they should crush their can a little. If the statement wouldn't bother them when it was said to them they should leave the can alone.

You can make up the statements according to your grade level. Come up with about 7-10 statements that would be hurtful and about 5 that would be nice to hear. Read the statements one at a time and give the class time to think about it and crush their can if they need to.

When all the statements have been read, tell the students to look at their cans and see what those hurtful words did to them. Now ask them to return the cans to their original shape. They will tell you it can't be done. Explain to them that this is what happens when we say hurtful words to one another. We can never take them back and most of the time the damage is permanent. Encourage them to think about that the next time they want to say something negative to a classmate.

Puzzle Activity

Students use colorful markers to write their names in big letters on a sheet of drawing paper. Under their names, they write several sentences describing themselves, for example, favorite things, family info, hobbies, and pet info. Then hand out blank puzzles (which can be found in craft stores--cheap!). Privately--perhaps behind a folder upright on their desks--students illustrate on the blank puzzles the interests and information on their name sheets. They break up their puzzles and place the pieces in a brown paper bag with a question mark on the front. Post the large papers with the descriptive sentences on a bulletin board and, beneath that display, line up all the paper bags full of puzzle pieces. Throughout the week, during free time, students can choose a bag, put the puzzle together, compare the puzzle with the posted sentences, and guess which classmate it may be. At the end of the week look at the guesses, and find out which puzzle belongs to which student.



Citizenship Charades

Have participants act out names of people who have shown good citizenship. They may need to be planned out ahead so participants have an opportunity to research their character. (People could include historical figures, such as Abraham Lincoln, or local people that participants are likely to know.) After the game is over, discuss why each person is a good citizen and what contributions each student has made to his/her country or community. Students could also be given a character trait and act that out.

Squirms

Cut apart the following list of “squirm situations.” Divide the class into small groups of 2 or 3 members, and have each group pick two situations. Ask each group to act out their scenario and what would happen next.

- While waiting for the bus a boy who is not very popular comes and sits beside you. You notice the other kids laughing when they see you both talking.
- You spill grape juice on someone at a party.
- Your mom’s friend comes over to visit and brings her daughter. You don’t enjoy spending time with this girl, but your mom asked you to play with her.
- You are playing with a baseball and accidentally throw it through a neighbor’s window.
- You are brushing your teeth when your older sister says she’s late and needs to use the bathroom right away to put on makeup.
- Your father says he’s expecting an important phone call. Five minutes later the phone rings. It’s a friend of yours from school.
- You’re in front of a bank selling raffle tickets for your school club. A man with crutches is struggling to open the door.
- Friends are playing basketball after school. A new student asks if he can join in the game.
- You interrupted your brother while he was speaking.
- Friends are planning to spray paint the school doors. What do you do?
- A friend approaches you with uncomplimentary jokes about an ethnic group.
- Your older brother has asked you to stay out of his room. You really like his stamp collection and you want to look at it.
- A classmate makes a major mistake in class.



- You sit down on a bench with friends. You have a bag of chocolate chip cookies. You really enjoy chocolate chip cookies.
- Your sister has a great collection of school supplies in her desk drawer. You need some graph paper, and you're sure she has some in her drawer.

After each role-play, have the group identify whether the way they acted out their “squirm” was respectful or disrespectful. There are several ways to respond to any situation. Some show respect and some don't. Ask how they decided to carry out their “squirm” and discuss their answers. What was difficult? What was easy? Why is it important to show respect to others? What are situations where people have acted disrespectfully? How could the players change their actions to show more respect?

Coseeki/Follow the Leader

One player leaves the group and stands where s/he cannot see the group. The group chooses a leader who does a movement, such as tapping his/her toe, which the others follow. The leader changes the movement regularly and the others follow the leader's movement. The hidden player returns, stands in the middle of the circle, watches the movements, and tries to guess who the leader is.

Category Snap

The group sits in a circle. The leader starts a rhythm using a sequence of knee slap, hand clap, right-hand finger snap, left hand finger snap. The leader then announces a category, such as fruits (or something you are studying in class) on the right-hand finger snap and names an example with the left-hand finger snap. The next person in the circle must be ready to name the leader's fruit with the right-hand finger snap and then a new example in that same category with the left-hand finger snap: Knee slap, hand clap, “Apples, apricots.” The play continues around the circle. Once an item has been named, it cannot be used again.



A Variation on Twenty Questions

This activity is similar to twenty questions. The group sits in a circle. The child who is “it” gets a card with a word written on it taped to his/her back. The word names a person, place, or thing; the word can be related to subjects the class is studying such as animals, geography, capitals, books. The child can ask the class up to ten yes-or-no questions to try to determine what is written on his/her back. To increase the difficulty, the group can agree ahead of time that certain questions or types of questions are not allowed. Each time a question is asked, the class responds with thumbs up to indicate “yes” or thumbs down to indicate “no.” The child can make a guess at any time with a maximum of three guesses. After ten questions, the child can ask for clues from the class before making a final guess.

Partner Interviews:

At the beginning of the year, students pair off with a partner that they may not know very well and interview each other. It may help to write a few guiding questions for them on the board. They then share their partner’s information with the group.

*****Many of the following activities have been selected from *Field Day Survival Guide*.**

Jump Rope Twins

Materials needed: 6 single jump ropes

Each pair of students is given one jump rope. The pair must work together so that both partners are jumping in the rope at the same time.

Balloon Squeeze

Materials needed: blown-up balloons, extra balloons, one cone

Student partners face each other and place a blown-up balloon in between their foreheads. Together they must walk around the cone and back without dropping the balloon. If the balloon drops, they must replace it before making any forward progress.



Hula Hoop Pass

Materials needed: 16 hula hoops

Students stand side by side holding hands in a line. The student on the end picks up a hula hoop passing it on to the next person. The idea is to pass all 16 hoops to the other end as quickly as possible. Students may not let go of hands and must climb through all of the hula hoops.

The Non-Stop Hoop Pass

Materials needed: 10 hula hoops per team

Students are divided into 2 teams. Each team must hold hands in a straight line and cannot let go. A pile of ten hula hoops is placed at the feet of the first player in each line. On the teacher's signal, the first person will slip a hula hoop on his/her arm, get it over his/her head, step in it with one leg, step out of it with the other leg, and jiggle the hoop to the arm of the adjoining player. The task is to pass all 10 hula hoops through the line as quickly as possible. The relay is completed when all ten hoops make it to the other end of the line. The first person may send another hoop as soon as the previous hoop touches the ground on the other side. If time permits, try passing the hoops in the opposite direction.

Tablespoon Relay

Materials needed: tablespoons (1 per team), paper cups, water buckets, cones, ruler
Divide the students into 4 or 5 groups and put them in lines. The first person in each line runs with the spoon to the water buckets and gets a spoon full of water. Then they carefully carry the spoon back to the line and spill it in the empty cup. Pass the spoon to the next runner. Continue for 3-5 minutes and then measure the water. The team with the most water is the winner.

Moon Ball

Materials needed: beach balls

Divide the students into 2 groups with 1 beach ball per group. The task is to see how many consecutive hits the group can get before the ball hits the ground. Once a student hits the ball, he cannot hit again until everyone has hit it. This is a group problem-solving activity and the less adult intervention the better. Encourage students to come up with ways to improve their score. For the last five minutes put the whole class together and set a class record.



Traveling Heavy

Materials needed: 6-8 sponge balls, 4 big cones

The team's task is to travel together from the starting line to the finish line while holding a sponge ball between the shoulders of team members. If a ball drops, the team must start over. This is not a race. Also have them try this with the balls between their hips and then their legs.

Cooperative Get Up

Materials needed: none

The goal of this game is to go from a sitting to a standing position using a partner's back for support. Players begin sitting down, back to back, with elbows interlocked and legs out straight. On the signal to begin, the players have five seconds to stand up without releasing their partners.

All Aboard

Materials needed: 1 hula hoop

The goal of this game is to get as many players as possible inside the hoop. To be considered inside the hoop, the players must have at least one body part touching inside the hoop.

Marvin K. Mooney Will You Please Go Now!

Materials needed: 8 hula hoops, 4 beanbags, Marvin K. Mooney Will You Please Go Now by Dr. Seuss, 4 clipboards, pencils and papers with "Go" printed over and over on them

Divide the class into four groups. Each group lines up behind a hoop. The first person sits in the hoop while all others sit behind the hoop. There is an empty hoop in front of each team. (Distance depends on the size of the room. The first person in line has a beanbag in his hand. As the adult reads the story slowly and dramatically out loud, the children listen carefully for the word "Go". As they hear the word "go", the first student in line runs to the hoop in front of them, then places the beanbag inside the hoop and runs back to the end of the line. At the end of each line there is a clipboard, paper, and pencil. Each student should cross out a "Go" on the paper each time they go to the end. After the book has been finished, one student from each team should count the number of crossed-out "Go's" on their paper. Then the class can look at the book with the reader and count the number of times the word "Go" appears (38 times).



A Mural of Hope

Materials needed: butcher paper, markers, crayons, paint, and paintbrushes
In the Wizard of Oz, Dorothy found hope “Somewhere over the rainbow.” What hopes do you and your class have for the world or for the school year. On a large piece of butcher paper have your students paint or draw a mural that shows their hopes for a bright future.

Out of these World Greetings

Materials needed: none

Around the world people greet each other with a bow, a handshake, a curtsy, or a “high five.” What would it be like if you were meeting someone from another planet? What kind of greeting would they extend to you? Have your students find a partner and invent a new greeting. Have them share that greeting with others.

Triptychs

Materials needed: drawing paper, crayons, pencils

A triptych is a set of three pictures side by side. Have students pick a partner and together draw a triptych using one of these themes:

- Three things you and this person have in common
- Three things you might do together
- Three ways you are different
- Three things that really surprised you about your partner
- Three things you really like about this person
- Three things you both like about school
- Three hobbies you both like to do

New Kid at School

Materials needed: chart paper

Ask students what they would do if they were the new kid at school? What would they like their new classmates to do to make them feel welcome? Make a list of these ideas and remind your students of them when new students come to your school.

What I Want my Teacher to Know

Materials needed: index cards for each student

Have your students write a list of three things they would like you to know about them. Save these lists and use these items to generate conversations throughout the year.



Group Solving Problems

Materials needed: none

Write some or all of these problem situations on the board and/or feel free to add specific ones that pertain to your class.

- Your best friend is becoming friends with someone else.
- You know your friend is cheating on his/her schoolwork.
- The other kids in class think you are the teacher's pet.
- You want to be popular, but the popular kids don't seem to like you or are different from you.
- Your teacher calls on you when your hand isn't raised.

Have your students form small groups. Have them choose one situation from the board and work together to come up with ways to solve the problem. Have them share the solutions with the class.

Who Am I?

Materials needed-small slips of paper

Give each child a small slip of paper. Have each student write facts or interesting bits of information about themselves. What have they participated in? What is a talent, hobby, or personality characteristic? Each student will write these clues on their slip of paper. Mix up the slips of paper in a container and draw one out.

Read someone else's clue. Students try to guess who it is.

Name Collage

Materials needed: drawing paper magazines, scissors, glue, and markers

Have your students cut pictures or words from magazines or draw a picture of their name with images and letters. Have them illustrate their first name, last name, or both. Encourage them to do their best to show how their name fits them. Display the collages.

Food Like Me

Materials needed: none

Have students compare their personality to their favorite snack. Is their personality like granola, a mixture of interesting and very different qualities? Are they bright, crisp, and sweet like an apple? Do they bubble and fizz like soda? Have students share and discuss in small groups.



Who are You?

Materials needed: none

Have your students imagine they are about to be introduced to a great world leader such as a president, king, queen, or prime minister. Have the students tell who they are but they are allowed only one sentence. What will they say? Ask student why is it important to know they are?

I'm the Best!

Materials needed: none

Tell the students someone at school is starting a new team or group. As the teacher you know they would be perfect for this new group. To become a member the students must convince the group leader they would be valuable members. Ask students how they would show the best in themselves.

Build Me Up!

Materials needed: outline of boy/girl, crayons, and pencils

Hand out the outlines according to the students. Have the students color the outline to make it look like that student. Make sure their names are on the outline. When students are done coloring hang the outlines in the hall. Have all the students write a positive comment about that student. It could be, "You are a good artist," or "You always do your homework."



Responsibility Word Search

Y E M W N J U P Y K Y R S L V B C
N T Q O I B U S T T R E E O N F G
R C I F K R Z E I K E C L R C W V
A T G L S U E L L R T Y F T O V G
H U H U I O I R I Z C C R N M R V
X O I P P B L U B P A L E O M I V
V T C L A C A M I A R I L C I H E
R S C I H T E T S E A N I F T P X
X V L E X X C T N C H G A L M U F
D E D J N N K L O U C Y N E E I W
R U X V P B Y N P H O A C S N F J
A G T O K Q G G S X Q C E V T K J
G P E R S E R V E R A N C E I B G
E S S E N T F I R H T Y X A J R G
E X C E L L E N C E W J T D Q U N
S E C N E U Q E S N O C H U T W E
D I L I G E N C E S N Q X O D D U

ACCOUNTABILITY
CHARACTER
COMMITMENT
CONSEQUENCES
DILIGENCE
DUTY

ETHICS
EXCELLENCE
PERSISTENCE
PURSUIT
RECYCLING
RELIABILITY

RESPONSIBILITY
SELF-CONTROL
SELF-RELIANCE
THRIFTNESS

Puzzles like this can be
made at
puzzlemaker.com



Communication Arts Links:

Connections: Students can make connections from their lives to books about character traits.

Theme: Students can find the author's theme in stories about character traits.

Compare/Contrast: Students can compare and contrast different characters and their traits.

Cause/Effect: Students identify the consequences of a character's actions and ask, "Did he/she make a good decision?"

Personal Narratives: Students can write about how to show the different character traits or about a time in his/her life when he/she had to demonstrate one of the character traits.

Concept Definition Maps: The character traits can be used as the concept.

Persuasion/Argumentation: Students can write about why you should show a certain trait.

Problem Solution: Students can write about how to solve a problem.

Prediction: Based on what is known about a character have students predict what that character will be doing in ten years.

Notes and Ideas:



Internet Sources for Character Education

CHARACTERplus of CSD

<http://www.characterplus.org/>

CHARACTERplus of CSD is St. Louis' local character education support. You can find information about workshops, programs, services, and additional character education resources.

Character Education Partnership

<http://www.character.org>

CEP is a leading national character education organization. National School of Character Award and Best Practice applications available via this site.

National Character Education Center

<http://www.ethicsusa.com/home.cfm>

For Pre-School through High school educators. The National Character Education Center provides educators with hundreds of solutions and practical strategies through the Free On Line Newsletter-Values in Action.

The Character Education Network

<http://www.charactered.net/>

The Character Education Network is a place for students, teachers, schools and communities to facilitate character education. This site is dedicated to providing quality online, ready-to-use curriculum, activities and resources that integrate with and enhance the classroom experience. It allows schools and students to network together by sharing ideas and experiences with others in their community and nationwide.

Goodcharacter.com

<http://www.goodcharacter.com>

Character Education: Free Resources, Materials, and Lesson Plans

Josephson Institute of Ethics

<http://www.josephsoninstitute.org/quotes/quotecharacter.htm>

Quotes about Character

The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

www.actsofkindness.org

This website is just packed with great stuff for propagating basic human kindness. Their own description is way too modest, but here it is: "Want to encourage kindness on campus? Access our free Teacher's Guide, lesson plans, activity ideas, teachers' experiences, and other materials to help you successfully incorporate kindness into your school." A real gem.

The Laws of Life Essay Contest

<http://www.lawsoflife.org>

This project of the John Templeton Foundation offers young people the chance to reflect on and write about what they stand for. Participants identify the laws of life that mean the most to them, and explain their choices through the experiences they have had, the lessons they have learned, and the people who have served as living examples. A truly great character education activity for any grade level. The website gives detailed instructions and lots of examples. Highly recommended.



Wise Skills Resources - Free Lessons

<http://wiseskills.com/samples.html>

These free sample lessons serve up a generous variety of interconnected activities and experiences to help your students develop good character. Written by a former teacher.

Do Something

<http://www.dosomething.org/>

If you want your kids to be passive and docile, don't let them near this website. It'll fill their little heads with ideas about making the world a better place, and empower them to do something about it. Whatever you do, don't click on the "Action Guide."

The Ethics Connection at the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics

<http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/focusareas/education/>

Ethical dilemmas for young people written as dialogs. Lots to think about, talk about, write about. Also, they have a very useful framework for ethical decision making, which is at:

<http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/decision/>

In fact, check out the whole website - it's loaded with goodies.

Kids Care Clubs

<http://www.kidscare.org>

Dedicated to developing compassion and the spirit of charity in children. This organization provides children, families, schools, and religious groups with meaningful opportunities to help others in their local and global communities. You can set up an affiliated club in your elementary school.

Teaching Tolerance (for teachers)

<http://www.tolerance.org/teach/>

A national education project dedicated to helping teachers foster equity, respect, and understanding in the classroom and beyond. This website offers excellent classroom activities as well as tremendously useful resources for teachers.

Guidelines for Challenging Racism and other forms of Oppression

<http://www.esrnational.org/challenge.html>

What to do both in and out of the classroom. Solid advice. Try it. Share it with your students. Use it as a discussion starter.

Tips for Keeping the Peace

<http://www.esrnational.org/keeppeace.html>

Teach your students these practical tips for preventing fights.



LIBRARY LITERATURE RESOURCES

This is a list of resources available for check out from the Willow Brook library. If interested please contact Jennifer Dederl at x4807.

CALL #	TITLE	AUTHOR	MEDIUM
PRO 155.2GFE	Character Development	Polly Greenberg	book
PRO 158 URB	20 Things I Want My Kids to know	Hal Urban	book
PRO 158.1 URB	Life's Greatest Lessons	Hal Urban	book
PRO 370.114	Building Community Consensus For Character Education		book
370 STO	Character Matters		book
PRO 303.32 LEB	Easy Activities For Building Social Skills	Nancy Jolson Leber	book
PRO 370.11	Educating For Character	Thomas Lickona	book
PRO 370.11	Developing Character in Students	Dr. Phillip Fitch Vincent	book
PRO 370.11	Promising Practices In Character Education	Dr. Phillip Fitch Vincent	book
PRO 370.110 HUFF	Developing a Character Education Program	Henry Huffman	book
370.11 ABO	Developing Character For Classroom Success	Charlie Abourjille	book
370.11 BRO	Lessons in Character		book
PRO 370.114	Show-Me Character Idea Book		book
PRO 370.114	Advisor/Advisee Character Education	Sarah Sadlow	book
PRO 370.114	Evaluation Resource Guide		book
PRO 370.114	Replication Handbook for School and Community Decision Makers		book
PRO 371.4	Good Ideas To Help Young People Develop Good Behavior		book
PRO 370.114	Character Education Connections		book
PRO 370.114	Character Replication Handbook		book
PRO 370.114	Teaching Character	Anne C. Dodson - Karen Wisont	book
	Raising Good Children	Dr. Thomas Lickona	book
PRO 371.5	Waging Peace in Our Schools	Dan Goleman	book
PRO 371.58	Bullies and Victims	Suellen Fried	book
	Great Places to Learn	Neal Starkman, Peter Scales	book
	Developing Character in Students	Dr. Phillip Fitch Vincent	book



CHARACTER EDUCATION RESOURCES

This is a list of resources available for check out from the Willow Brook library. If interested please contact Jennifer Dedert at x4807.

	Eight Habits of the Heart	Clifton Taulbert	book
	Character Evaluation Resource Guide		book
	Hearts of Gold Compassion		book
	Dare to Dream Imagination		book
	Against the Odds Courage		book
	Never Give Up Determination		book
PRO 372.6	Tough Issues, Good Decisions	Lillian R. Putnam & Eileen M. Burke	book
PRO 371.4	Conflict Resolution	Kathleen M. Hollenbeck	book
PRO 362.29	McGruff's Elementary Drug Prevention Activity Book		book
PRO 155.2 KID	Kids for Character		Video
PRO 155.2 CHO	Kids for Character Choices Count		Video
PRO 370.11 CHA	Character Education: Application in the Classroom		Video
PRO 370.11	Elementary Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education		Video
PRO 370.114	Get into the Game Videos and book (multiple copies)		Video
PRO 362.7 DEA	Dealing with Pressures for grades 5 - 9		Video
	Our Children, Ourselves - The case for Character Education		Video
	Commitment to Character		Video
	Character Education: What it means to our Schools, our Children, our Future	CSD	Video
PRO 370.114 SIT	Character Education Connections for School, Home and Community	revised 2002 by Diane Stirling	book
PRO 370.11 STI	Character Education Connections for School, Home and Community	Diane Stirling	book
PRO 370.15 BOD	Creating the Peaceable School	Richard Bodine	book
PRO 371.10 WAY	Ways We Want our Class to Be		book
	CHARACTERplus- Show-Me Character Idea Book - MO 4-H Youth Development	CSD	book
	Character Evaluation Resource Guide	CSD	book
	Character Replication Handbook	CSD	book
	Soar With Your Strengths	Donald O. Clifton	book



CHARACTER EDUCATION RESOURCES

This is a list of resources available for check out from the Willow Brook library. If interested please contact Jennifer Dedert at x4807.

	Character Connection - A School to Home Outreach Program	Marla Loew & Janie Hamilton	book
	The Peaceful Solution: Teachers Manual Grade Three	Pilot Program	book
PRO 362.5 PAY	A Framework for Understanding Poverty	Ruby K. Payne	book
	And Words Can Hurt Forever	J. Garbarino	book
	Easing the Teasing	Judy Freedman	book
	Facing the Schoolyard Bully	Kim Zar Zour	book
	The Bully, The Bullied and the Bystander	Barbara Coloroso	book
	Best Friends, Worst Enemies	Michael Thompson	book
	Bully Busters; A Teachers Manual for Helping Bullies, Victims, and Bystanders	Dawn Newman	book
	Bully on the Bus	Carl W. Bosch	book
	Battling the School Yard Bully	Kim Zarzour	book
	Just A Bully	Gina Meyer	book
	They Don't Like Me	Jane Katch	book



We hope this handbook is helpful in establishing a positive classroom climate. Building relationships amongst the students and teachers is one of the key elements in classroom management.

The best of luck to you and have a great year!

Your Pattonville CHARACTER*plus* Committee

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Carla Robertson, Drummond

Karen Vogel, Drummond

Kate Zust, Drummond

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Sandy Weis, Parkwood

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Carole Murphy, Remington

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Tammy Lucas, Rose Acres

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Sarah Funderburk, Willow Brook

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Erin Zoltanski, Heights

Pam Rasmussen, Holman

Amy Walker, Holman

Susan Phillips, High School

Anthony Robinson, High School

Amy Schwendeman, High School



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