

Character Education

“Positive Attitude” Grades 5-8

DEFINITION:

A positive attitude is the ability to have positive thoughts about one's self and one's environment even when things are not going as one would hope.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

Help students understand that they have a choice on how they respond to events in their day-to-day lives. The outcome is a result of their choices.

- Read a novel such as *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* or *Tuck Everlasting* and discuss the power of a positive attitude in an unexpected situation.
- Have a class debate on which character in a novel displays the most enthusiasm and how it helped the other characters. Consult with the campus librarian for suggestions.
- Discuss that while most novels have a hero as the leader, villains can be used to express their evil schemes and leadership skills. How does attitude affect the story line?
- Write a song or rap as a class about cooperation, teamwork, enthusiasm, or a positive attitude.
- Discuss that some people have a reputation for possessing a positive attitude. Ask students, "What do you think your reputation is?" "If your friends were asked, would they say you are a positive person?"
- Have students research their favorite sports team. Have them create a timeline of their team's history and the coaches who have led the teams. Have students reflect on the team's success. Ask, "Do you think the attitude of the coach affect the success of the team?" "Why or why not?"
- Ask students to write a letter to someone who is in the military service. Make a list of five questions to ask him/her regarding cooperation and teamwork during war time.
- Draw a Venn diagram to compare/contrast two famous persons in history whose positive attitude made a difference.
- Ask students to write 3 things on a card that give them a positive attitude and 3 things that can give them a negative attitude. Have students move into pairs and hold their cards in a fan. Take turns pulling a card from each other's hands. Have the student whose card was pulled talk about what is written on the card. Discuss ways to turn negatives into positives.

- Have students make a list from a selected book of the actions (positive and negative) that showed the inner attitudes of the characters. Ask students to discuss different ways a character could have shown a more positive attitude.
- Read *Cheaper by the Dozen* by Frank and Ernestine Galbreath and discuss how having a positive attitude makes a large family (or other group) work together.
- Read selections from *Anne Frank, Diary of a Young Girl*. List the examples of Anne's determination to survive as seen through her positive thoughts.
- Have students keep a log describing their comments that positively encourage their peers. Ask students to be specific and note the reactions of their peers. Discuss these findings in class.
- Ask students to find examples of popular music that promote positive attitudes. Either write down the lyrics or bring examples to school for everyone to enjoy.
- Write the word "teamwork" on the board. Have the students illustrate a cartoon about teamwork. Submit some cartoons to the school newspaper /newsletter.
- Have students search the web for quotations that inspire positive attitude or enthusiasm. Post in classrooms, hallways, and on school marquees throughout the month. Read a daily "positive attitude" quote during morning announcements.
- Ask students to reflect on how negative expressions, feelings, and thoughts can destroy a relationship. Give examples of how this is true in school or personal relationships.
- Have a T-shirt design contest in your classroom to promote good character and a positive climate.
- Refer to activities for grades K-4 for ideas to be adapted.

RESOURCES:

www.gamesforgroups.com (Book/game store)

www.pecentral.com (Activity site)

www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/ (sponsored by United Nations)