

# CHARACTER EDUCATION

## "Respect" Grades 9-12

### DEFINITION:

Respect means to honor and to show consideration and value to people, property, the environment, and yourself. It means to treat others well even if they look, act, or believe differently than you do.

### STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

- Have students watch a show on television, and then write about how the actions of the characters showed either respectful or disrespectful behavior.
- Get students to start thinking about respecting others by asking these hard questions:
  - What are the social groups that make up our school?
  - How do groups define themselves, and how are they defined by others?
  - Does everyone have access to school resources, activities and space?
  - What would it take for respect to occur among groups?
- Encourage students to promote good sportsmanship. Discuss ways to accomplish this goal.
- Pose these questions for a discussion about respecting differences:
  - Are there boundaries and "invisible walls" in our school?
  - Name all the factors that people use to separate themselves into these groups. Then name as many similarities between the groups as you can. Do people pay more attention to the differences than to the similarities? Why or why not?
  - How does a new student learn about boundaries and 'invisible walls' in our school?
  - What happens when someone tries to cross one of the invisible walls?
  - Can some students cross the walls more easily than others? Why or why not?
  - What forces keep the wall in place? What forces, if any, are trying to bring down the walls?
- Brainstorm ways to encourage students at school to act more respectful towards each other. Make a list of ideas and submit them to your school newspaper.
- Lead a discussion on "How to Model Respect". Consider the following for both adults and students:
  - Be honest- if you are wrong, admit it.
  - Be positive- Don't embarrass or insult others. Instead, encourage one another.
  - Be fair - Listen to all sides of the story before reaching a conclusion and taking action.
  - Be polite- Keep promises. Say what you mean, and mean what you say.
  - Be a good listener- Give others your full attention when it is needed.

- Have students research and report on environmental organizations in the area to show respect for the environment.
- Have students make a list of synonyms for the word respect. For example, esteem, honor, regard, value, cherish, appreciate, admire, praise, compliment ...
- Have students write out their answer to the question: "I think I am/am not a respectful person because..."
- Brainstorm what students can do to make this a more respectful world?
- Have students reflect on "Does respect play a role in harmonious race relations?" Ask them to explain.
- Ask students, "Do you think that people in our society are respectful enough of each other? Why or why not?"
- Discuss how respect is related to fairness? To caring? To the Golden Rule? To violence?
- Have students' journal on the topic, "What does respect have to do with the quality of your character?"
- Ask students to write an essay on the benefits of people treating each other with respect?
- Discuss the concept that if one person treats another with respect, the respect begins to spread out from there. Have students write an editorial for the school newspaper encouraging students to start the "respect ripple effect." Describe what it could accomplish.
- List three things you could do to be a more respectful person. How would that affect your relationships with others? How does it benefit you to be a respectful person?
- Discuss how government "of, by, and for the people" depends on respect? Write an essay connecting the concepts of democracy and respect. How is listening to different points of view a sign of respect and a cornerstone of democracy? What is it about the concept of democracy that relies upon mutual respect among people? How is the very concept of democracy related to respect for the individual.
- Divide students into groups. Ask them to respond to the following questions:
  - Bullies are often trying to make people "respect" them. Is this respect, or is it fear?
  - What is the difference?
  - How is bullying and violent behavior an act of disrespect?

- Have students' journal about a time when they were disrespectful to someone. Why did it happen? Was it the right thing to do? What were the consequences? How did it make the other person feel? What did they learn from the experience?
- Divide the class into small groups. Have each group develop a list of do's and don'ts for being a respectful person. Have them make oral reports to the class addressing the following questions: What happens when people live in accordance with these guidelines. What happens when they don't? In what ways does respectful and disrespectful behavior affect our community and society?
- Bring in appropriate articles from newspapers and magazines describing situations in which respect or disrespect are issues. Talk about who is acting respectfully, and who is acting disrespectfully in these situations. Using the articles as evidence, tell the class about the consequences of disrespectful and respectful behaviors.
- Role play some typical situations in which disrespectful behavior leads to hostility and maybe even violence. Change one of the disrespectful actions into one of respect and see how the situation changes.
- Give each group a travel size tube of toothpaste. Tell them to squeeze all the toothpaste onto a paper plate. Explain that the game is to try to get all of the toothpaste back into the tube without using any tools except a toothpick. Explain that the toothpaste is like words we speak. Once an unkind word is spoken, we can't put it back in our mouth. Lead a discussion about respecting one another.
- Have students develop a portfolio based on respect. This could include copies of poems, original poems, journal entries, newspaper, and magazine articles, and cartoons. Include reports on song lyrics, why the theme of respect was part of a certain novel that the class read, and write expository paragraphs explaining what happens in a society when respect is not exemplified by its citizens.
- Lead a discussion about encouraging original ideas through acceptance, encouragement, and by not plagiarizing. Acceptance comes from respecting self, personal art work, and others' beliefs and art work.
- Begin a collection of pictures of architecture and artifacts from other cultures and use it to enrich lessons on symmetry, teaching a respect for the contributions of other cultures.  
[people.clarityconnect.com/webpages/terri/multiculturalideas.html](http://people.clarityconnect.com/webpages/terri/multiculturalideas.html)

### **BOOKS TO USE IN TEACHING "RESPECT"**

*Stay Strong: Simple Life Lessons for Teens* by Terrie Williams

*Everything you need to know about Self-Confidence* by Matthew Ignoffo, Ph.D.

*7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* by Sean Covey

*If Life Is A Game These Are The Rules* by Cherie Carter-Scott, Ph.D.

*Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul* by Jack Canfield

*Success Express for Teens* by Roger Leslie

*If Success is a Game these are the Rules* by Cherie Carter-Scott, Ph.D.

*How Rude!* By Alex J. Packer, Ph.D.

*Black Profiles in Courage: A legacy of African-American Achievement* by Kareem Abdul-Jabar

*The Magic of Spider Woman* by Lois Duncan

*Let the Circle be Unbroken* by Mildred D. Taylor

*Lord Jim* by Joseph Conrad

### **QUOTES TO USE IN TEACHING “RESPECT”**

"Every action in the company of others ought to be done with some sign of respect to those present." - George Washington

"Self-respect is the fruit of discipline; the sense of dignity grows with the ability to say no to oneself." - Abraham Heschel

"Respect is love in plain clothes." -Frankie Byrne

"I must respect the opinions of others even if I disagree with them." -Herbert Henry Lehman

"Respect commands itself and it can neither be given nor withheld when it is due." -Eldridge Cleaver

"Respect is learned, earned and returned." -Anonymous

"The soul that is within me no man can degrade". -Frederick Douglas

"This above all; to thine own self be true." -William Shakespeare

"My honor is my loyalty." -Heinrich H.

"Respect, not tolerance, must be our goal if we would diminish prejudice in our time."-Selma G. Hirsch

"Where talent is a dwarf, self-esteem is a giant." -J. Petit-Senn

"Our own heart, and not other men's opinion, forms our true honor." -Samuel Taylor Coleridge

"Respect is the reward for what you give to others." -Anonymous

"You know what's right. Respect yourself and others, and do what's right." -Anonymous

"Respect involves an appraisal of ourselves first, and then others." -Anonymous

"Make someone feel accepted." -Anonymous

"Never underestimate the power of a smile. Even if you don't know someone, it doesn't hurt to smile, and it can brighten someone's day. Your teachers love to see you smiling." --Anonymous

"Empathy is the ability to sense and understand the feelings of another person. It is not the same thing as feeling sorry for someone, because sometimes when we do that we are looking down on that person. Try to work on your ability to feel empathy: nothing makes another person feel better than to know someone else understands." -Anonymous

"Love, respect, and enjoy other people!" -Anonymous

"The only people you should try to get even with are those who have helped you" -Anonymous

"If you witness an act of disrespect toward another person, don't be silent! You have an obligation to ask the disrespectful person to stop, or to tell an adult. It will make you feel better about yourself." - Anonymous

"You can become a better, more caring person if you begin to show respect for everyone, even those who can't do anything special for you." -Anonymous

"Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." –Abraham Lincoln

"A sense of humor is important. Be the kind of person who can laugh at yourself if you make a silly mistake. Studies have proven that laughter can be a very strong medicine and actually makes people healthier." - Anonymous

"If you come at me with your fists doubled, I think I can promise you that mine will double as fast as yours; but if you come to me and say, "Let us sit down and take counsel together, and, if we differ from each other, understand why it is that we differ, just what the points at issue are; we will presently find that we are not so far apart after all, that the points on which we differ are few and the point on which we agree are many, and that if we only have the patience and the candor and the desire together, we will get together." -Woodrow Wilson

"Respect is the moral conscience of the great." -Anonymous

"Respect is the thread that weaves throughout all human encounters."- Anonymous "Treat men greatly and they will show themselves to be great."- Anonymous

"Respect yourself, if you would have others respect you."- Baltassi Gracian

"Respect for oneself and others is the precondition of any ethical action." – Oscar Arias

"Do right. Do the best you can. Treat others the way you would want to be treated."- Lou Holtz

"Respect and honor are the best memorial for a mighty man."- Beowulf

"Respect is the ultimate compliment." - Anonymous

"Respect is purchased by the deeds we do." - Christopher Marlowe

"I would rather man should ask why no statue has been erected in my honor, than why one has." - Marcus Cato

"It is better to be hated for what you are than to be loved for what you are not." - Andre Gide

"Respect does not come from possessing honors but in deserving them." -Aristotle

"Be respectful yourself, if you wish to associate with respectful people." – Welsh Proverb

"To be capable of respect is almost as rare as to be worthy of it." - John Joubert

"Character is the formation stone upon which one must build to earn respect." - R.C. Samsel

"If you expect respect, be the first to show it." - Anonymous "When we do good things, our self-respect grows." - Heschel

"Be the change you want to see." -Ghandi

"Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it." -Maya Angelou

#### **SOURCES:**

Character and Community in the Classroom K-3 Huntington Beach, California: Creative Teaching Press, Inc., 1997.

Character Education Ideas and Activities for the Classroom" Greensboro, North Carolina: Carson-Dellosa, 1998.

Duran, Maureen Kids with Character. Nashville, Tennessee, STARS A Choice in Education, 1995.

Fields, Kimberly and Walker, Susan. The Best of the Mailbox Building Character- Primary. The Education Center, Inc. 2000.

Forrest, Donna. Character under Construction. Chapin, South Carolina: Youthlight, Inc., 2000.

Hodgin, Duane. The Best of Character the National Center for Youth Issues, 2001.

Howley, Ronda, Mangan, Melissa, Oplawski, Katie, and Vogel, Jody. Building Focus on Character.

Knoblock, Kathleen. Character Education Teaching the Values for Life. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Instructional Fair, 1997.

Lewis, Barbara. What Do You Stand For? Minneapolis, Minnesota: Free Spirit Publishing, 1998.

[www. goodcharacter.com/ISOC/Respect.html](http://www.goodcharacter.com/ISOC/Respect.html)

[www.dpi.state.nc.us/nccep/lp/lp21.html](http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/nccep/lp/lp21.html)

[www.ncpublicschools.org/nccep/lp/lp5.html](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nccep/lp/lp5.html)

<http://info.ag.vt.edu/vce/offices/webinfo/files/Tips>

[www.educationworld.com](http://www.educationworld.com)

[www.people.clarityconnect.com/webpages/terri/multiculturalideas.html](http://www.people.clarityconnect.com/webpages/terri/multiculturalideas.html)