

CHARACTER BUILDING

Classroom Guidance

**10 Four-Session Classroom Guidance Units
Focusing on Character Education**



By Arden Martenz

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Character-Building Classroom Guidance

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Introduction

***Character-Building Classroom Guidance* is a compilation of 10 four-session units. Each unit features insightful activities and discussions that will help students better understand the meaning of the character trait being presented as well as the personal use of the character trait in their daily lives.**

The four-session format enables leaders and students to explore each character trait in the depth that it deserves. If we, as educators, have character education as a goal, then we must present it in the same manner as we would present any other subject. To lightly skip over many character traits is not as educationally sound as concentrating on a few.

Each lesson is designed to be completed within one class period of 35-40 minutes. If for some reason this does not take place, leaders may choose to eliminate some parts of the lesson, assign some part as an out-of-class assignment, or extend the lesson into another period.

The lessons have been designed with a great deal of variety. This was done purposely to maintain student and leader interest. Individual, small-group, and whole-class activities are featured in a variety of ways that will stimulate the students to look forward to each class.

The featured units are: relationships, self-discipline, honesty, citizenship, responsibility, respect, leadership, fairness, trustworthiness, and caring. The units may be presented in any sequence.

Every educator has the responsibility to take character education seriously. The purpose of *Character-Building Classroom Guidance* is to help educators meet this responsibility.

Pre/Post-Tests are provided for every topic. By having students complete these tests at the beginning and end of every topic, educators can evaluate the effectiveness of their presentations for every participating student.

Relationships

Session 4

PURPOSE:

- ▶ To have students role-play scenarios that illustrate ways to build positive relationships

MATERIALS NEEDED:

For each student:

- ☐ *Speaker of the Day* (from Session 1)
- ☐ Number of 3" x 5" cards equal to the number of speakers

For the leader:

- ☐ 2 jars or containers (one for role-plays, one for numbers)
- ☐ Papers marked with numbers equal to the number of students in the class, cut apart and placed in one jar
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ *Positive Relationship Role-Play Scenarios* (pages 24-25) cut apart and placed in the other container

ACTIVITY:

Select the final group of students to read their *Speaker of the Day* activity sheets. Then follow the same procedure as in Session 2.

Introduce the topic for this session by telling the students:

At our last session, you had an opportunity to examine characteristics you already possess and others that you would like to possess. You also developed a plan for reaching your goal. This is our last session on this topic, and today you are going to role-play some situations that you might encounter. Each situation will be a test of the character you display in your relationships. I will assign each student a number. Then I will draw numbers from this jar. Then I will draw a scenario from the other jar. The students with the numbers I select from the jar will be the role-players for that scenario. Each role-play focuses on a particular character trait. That trait is written in bold-face type on the scenario. Role-players should incorporate this trait in their script. Those students who are not selected to be role-players will be evaluators. The evaluators' jobs will be to rate how the role-players demonstrated the character trait assigned to them.

Positive Relationship Role-Play Scenarios



ROLE PLAY #1

NUMBER OF ROLE-PLAYERS: 2

Friend #1 is very good in social studies and has completed the mid-term project, which accounts for 50% of the semester's grade.

Friend #2 is not good in social studies, has not started the project, and wants help in selecting a topic, researching it, and putting it together.

Problem to be worked out: How can Friend #1 display the characteristic of HONESTY and still keep the friendship?

ROLE PLAY #2

NUMBER OF ROLE-PLAYERS: 3

Friend #1 has decided to vote for a certain candidate in the school election.

Friend #2 and Friend #3 have decided to vote for the other candidate.

Problem to be worked out: How can Friend #2 and Friend #3 display the characteristic of RESPECT for Friend #1's choice in this close and important election?

ROLE PLAY #3

NUMBER OF ROLE-PLAYERS: 2

Friend #1 has started to hang out with kids who use tobacco.

Friend #2 really doesn't want to get involved with this group.

Problem to be worked out: How can Friend #2 display the characteristic of COURAGE and still maintain the relationship?

ROLE PLAY #4

NUMBER OF ROLE-PLAYERS: 2

Friend #1 wants to earn some money for a bike and knows of a job at a local store.

Friend #2 wants the same job.

Problem to be worked out: How can the two friends, who heard about the job at the same time, display the characteristic of FAIRNESS and maintain their relationship?

ROLE PLAY #5

NUMBER OF ROLE-PLAYERS: 3

Friend #1 hurries to meet Friend #2 and Friend #3 at the mall at 4:30 so they can find a place to have a snack before going to a movie which starts at 5:30.

Friend #2 arrives right on time.

Friend #3 arrives at 5:15.

Problem to be worked out: How can the friends who arrived on time display the characteristic of PATIENCE and maintain their relationship?

Self-Discipline

Session 3

PURPOSE:

- ▶ To realize how routines foster the development of self-discipline
- ▶ To establish routines that work at home and in school

MATERIALS NEEDED:

For each student:

- ☐ Copy of *School Routine* (page 40)
- ☐ Copy of *Home Routine* (page 41)
- ☐ Pencil

For the leader:

None

ACTIVITY:

Review the concepts that have been presented by reminding the students that self-control is the key to avoiding disciplinary measures from outside sources such as school officials, community officials, and parents. Continue the lesson by telling the students:

Until now, we have only considered discipline as something imposed by someone else, an outside source. A teacher disciplining a student, a police officer disciplining a citizen, and a parent disciplining a child are all examples of someone disciplining another person. Is discipline the responsibility only of outside sources?

If the students don't immediately answer the question, guide the discussion until it becomes clear that people must also discipline themselves.

Explain that *self-control* is *not letting our feelings and thoughts control our actions* and that *self-discipline* is *the training process one does in order to exercise self-control*. For example:

Jeremy really wants to watch a special TV program at 8:00. He knows that his friends are meeting after school for a soccer game. He wants to watch the program and play soccer, but he also has homework due the next day. If Jeremy had no self-control or self-discipline, he would play soccer, watch TV, and have no time left to complete his homework. In this case, Jeremy has no self-control, because his thoughts and feelings are controlling his actions and he does not have a plan to control them. He just

Who or What Influences You?

Directions: Read the list below. Then rank each item with a 1, 2, or 3. For example, if your parents are your greatest influence on whether you would purchase the item mentioned, put a 1 in that column. If your friends are the second greatest influence, put a 2 in that column. If advertisements are the third greatest influence, put a 3 in that column. If none of these influences affect you, put a 1 in NA column and go on to the next item on the list. When you have finished ranking these items, look at each column and write the title of the column with the most 1's, 2's, and 3's on the blanks provided at the bottom of the page.

	PARENTS	FRIENDS	ADS	NA
Clothing				
Video Games				
Music/Music Downloads				
Computer/Video Games				
Cellphone				
Hair				
DVDs				
Makeup/Cosmetics				
Food				
Books/Magazines				
Personal Hygiene Items (toothpaste, shampoo, etc.)				
School Supplies				

Column with the most 1's _____

Column with the most 2's _____

Column with the most 3's _____

Who or what has the greatest influence on the way you spend your money?

Responsibility

Session 4

PURPOSE:

- ▶ To help students recognize that goal-setting is responsible behavior

MATERIALS NEEDED:

For each student:

- ☐ Copy of *Doing My Best* (page 90)
- ☐ Pencil

For the leader:

- ☐ Three paper bags or wastebaskets
- ☐ Three signs labelled “just get by,” “do pretty well,” and “do your best”
- ☐ Three signs labelled “1,” “2,” and “3”
- ☐ Spongeball, wiffleball, or paper wadded into a ball
- ☐ Chalk
- ☐ Board to write on
- ☐ Copy of *Goal Evaluation Sheet* (page 91)

PRE-PRESENTATION PREPARATION:

Attach two signs to each paper bag or wastebasket. Attach “just get by” to one side of a bag/basket and the number 1 to the other side. Attach “do pretty well” and the number 2 to another basket/bag and attach “do your best” and the number 3 to the last bag/basket. Draw a chalk line on the floor as far from the baskets/bags as the ball is to be thrown. Turn the baskets/bags around so that the students will only see the numbers, not the written words. Place the baskets/bags on the floor. The bag/basket with the number 1 should be closest to the chalk line, and the one with the number 3 should be farthest from the chalk line.

ACTIVITY:

Introduce the lesson by telling the students that they are going to play a team game. Divide the students into two teams and have them form two single lines. Explain that each person will have one chance to throw the ball into one of the baskets/bags. Which basket/bag, if any, the ball lands in, will determine how many points each student accumulates for his/her team.

Choose one team to throw the ball first. As each team member takes a turn, record the number of points he/she earns on the board. When every student has taken a turn, add up the number of points for each team. Do not declare a winner.

NAME _____

Doing My Best

I would like to do better at _____.

My goal is to _____.

Four steps I need to take in order to reach my goal are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____



MY PLAN IS THIS:

I WILL ACHIEVE MY GOAL BY: _____

COMPLETION
DATE

STEP 1. _____

STEP 2. _____

STEP 3. _____

STEP 4. _____

Character-Building Classroom Guidance

Leadership



Leadership Traits

Directions: Check the box that tells what you truly believe the answer to be. Your answers will not be discussed in class

		ALL OF THE TIME	MOST OF THE TIME	HARDLY EVER
1	When I am listening to someone, I focus on what that person is saying, until he/she has finished speaking.			
2	If there is an opportunity to participate in a service project such as cleaning up a stream, I volunteer.			
3	When I am listening to someone, the expression on my face reflects the speaker's mood.			
4	I am among the first chosen for a team.			
5	If someone makes a mistake, I tell him/her that it's okay.			
6	I have lots of friends.			
7	When there is an unexpected change in my plans, I am able to regroup and find something else to do.			
8	I am willing to help my classmates.			
9	I compliment others.			
10	I organize games.			
11	When I am listening to someone, I ask questions about what he/she is saying.			
12	I am on time for appointments.			
13	I ask for and accept the ideas of others.			
14	I complete my classroom assignments on time.			
15	If my friends are having a disagreement, I can talk them out of it.			
16	I keep my promises.			
17	I do not break rules.			
18	I want to do well in school.			
19	My behavior sets a good example for others.			
20	I express my opinion freely.			

ALL OF THE TIME

Total _____

MOST OF THE TIME

Total _____

HARDLY EVER

Total _____

My best leadership trait is _____.

If given a leadership opportunity in school, I would like to _____.

Trustworthiness

Session 4

PURPOSE:

- ▶ To have the students evaluate their own trustworthiness

MATERIALS NEEDED:

For each student:

- ☐ Copy of *Trustworthy Evaluation* (page 161)
- ☐ Pencil

For the leader:

- ☐ *Trustworthy Chart* from Session 1
- ☐ Copy of *Trustworthy Skits* (pages 156-160)
- ☐ Scissors

PRE-PRESENTATION PREPARATION:

Reproduce the *Trustworthy Skits* and cut them apart.

ACTIVITY:

Post the *Trustworthy Chart* where it can be seen by the students. Then say:

For the past few weeks, we have been talking about the traits of a trustworthy person. Our *Trustworthy Chart* says that a trustworthy person is dependable, reliable, keeps commitments, honors his or her word, keeps promises and secrets, is loyal, is a good friend, and lives by his or her principles. For our last lesson, we are going to ask ourselves how trustworthy we are by examining each of these qualities in ourselves.

Distribute a copy of the *Trustworthy Evaluation* and a pencil to each student. Then tell the students that they will be performing a short skit about each of the traits the class has discussed. Select the necessary number of students to perform the first skit. Distribute the skit script and, after the performance ends, ask the question at the end of the skit. Then have the students evaluate their own trustworthiness on their evaluation sheet. Continue this activity until all of the skits have been read and the evaluation sheet has been completed.

Allow those students who wish to do so to share one of the answers from their evaluation.

Conclude the unit by thanking the students for their participation. Encourage them to remember the traits of a trustworthy person and to make every effort to apply those traits when situations arise that require them.

NAME _____

Caring Acts Done for Me



Directions: Read each question and answer it as honestly as you can.

Describe the last caring act that was done for you.

Who was the person who performed the caring act? _____

Was this the first time this person had done anything like this for you? _____

If not, is this a person who regularly does caring things for you? _____

What was your reaction to the caring act?

Did you react to the caring person the way that you would want someone to react to you if you performed a caring act?
