



SEPTEMBER is RESPECT MONTH!

I live with *Respect*

I will treat myself and others with consideration, high regard, courtesy and dignity.



“Make yourself the kind of person that
you want people to think you are.”

— Socrates

WHAT IS RESPECT?

Definition: To have deferential regard for: to treat with consideration.

RESPECT is when you show good manners, pay attention, treat others as you would like to be treated.

I WILL:

- * Be polite, dignified, honorable and positive in my dealings with others.
- * Honour people's rights.
- * Treat other people's belongings, the environment and the world around us with due consideration.
- * Demonstrate respect for myself by behaving in the above manner.

TELL US YOUR RESPECT STORY!

Has someone's demonstration of respect left you feeling great? Let us know your story about respect. Contact us at our website.
<http://www.rrdsb.com/> and we'll post some of the stories online for everyone to read.

Character in Action

Grade 7 Suggested Activities

- * Create a *Classroom Bill of Rights*
- * Lesson 5 from the **Anti-bullying Curriculum, Grade 7** (Anna's Story)
- * Fairness and Friendship unit from the **Anti-bullying Curriculum, Grade 7**
- * Thumb through magazines and newspapers to find pictures of people who, by their appearance, seem to have an unpleasant or superior facial expression. Though you cannot really tell by a picture, it can be interesting to see what impresses you as being arrogant. Cut these pictures out and write a fictional sketch of these characters. What are their names? How do they earn a living? What are their interests? (*Mind Over Manners*)
- * Write about a time when you 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 you learn from the experience?
- * Describe 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?

HOW DO I SHOW RESPECT?

Hey, it's not as hard as you think, especially now that you're thinking about it.

RESPECT can be shown in many little ways and, if you want your children to be respectful, the best way to achieve that is to model respectful behaviour for them. Here are some ideas:

- * Thank the people who serve you each day, genuinely and with a big smile. The grocery clerk, the gas bar attendant, the teacher, the telephone operator. If your child sees you being genuinely grateful for the contributions of others, s/he will be encouraged to adopt that behavior.
- * Demonstrate care for the environment. Be respectful of parks and public places by putting your trash and recyclables in the appropriate containers.
- * Listen to your child. Look him/her in the eye when the two of you are talking. Pay attention. Repeat the key message. Acknowledge the information and show you care.
- * Say "Please" and "Thank You" often and honestly.
- * Teach your children about other cultures, about people who have different abilities or physical challenges, about other types of families. Demonstrate a respect for the differences in our community and celebrate our diversity. It will demonstrate respect.



Give respect Get respect







DECEMBER is EMPATHY and COMPASSION MONTH!

I live with *Empathy and Compassion*

I will do whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others. I will strive to understand and be sensitive to their feelings.



WHAT IS EMPATHY?

Definition: Empathy means identifying with, and being concerned about other people's **feelings** and needs.

WHAT IS COMPASSION?

Definition: The **act** of compassion is seeking to understand another's struggles from his or her point of view and then doing whatever is necessary to heal the hurt.

I WILL:

- * Stop to listen.
- * Listen when others want to talk.
- * Give of my resources to help those in need.
- * Look for lasting solutions.
- * Comfort others without regard to race, gender, faith, age or nationality.

TELL US YOUR COMPASSION STORY.

Do you know someone who displayed the attributes of empathy and compassion or do you know of a time when the positive attributes of empathy and compassion was demonstrated? Share your story with us. Contact us at our website. <http://www.rrdsb.com/> and we'll post some of the stories online for everyone to read..

Tell us what kind of difference empathy/compassion made to other people's understanding and to finding positive solutions.

"The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing."

—Albert Einstein

Character in Action

Grade 7

Suggested Activities

- * Read **The Giving Tree** to your class, then have a giving tree in your class as a Bulletin Board for Christmas. Have students recognize the "gifts" of others—things students have done for them. When a student has performed an act of kindness, the student receiving it can put a gift on the tree with that person's name on it.
- * Develop a class project designed to help someone in the community.
- * Create a bulletin board for class news. Have students bring in clippings from the community that show people helping others.
- * http://charactercounts.org/pdf/Exercising-Character/Exer-Char_teens-caring.pdf
- * Art Idea - Caring Collage - Show on one side what makes it a caring world and on the other side how the world is uncaring? Then have students write or discuss, what each of us could do to make this a more caring world?

TALKING ABOUT EMPATHY and COMPASSION

At the core of empathy and compassion is the ability to listen—really listen—to others. When you listen to another person's story you begin to experience the world through their eyes, through their feelings and through their heart.

Sometimes it is hard to imagine the experiences of another person, especially if they are different from you. Perhaps they are from a different culture or older or younger than you. Perhaps they have different opinions than you have. Sometimes it is difficult to feel empathy for someone who is different, but that is only because it is difficult to imagine how he or she feels.

When you are able to listen to their story then you can begin to understand them. As you understand another person, you become sensitive to their feelings. This understanding of how another person feels, is empathy, and when individuals are empathetic, they can then demonstrate acts of compassion. You may be willing to do whatever is necessary to heal another's hurt, and if you have really listened to their story, you will know exactly what that person needs.

Like all positive attributes, compassion has its own rewards. Becoming involved in the life of another brings a deeper level of intimacy and friendship. You will be a happier person and the world will be a kinder, gentler place because of your compassion.



JANUARY is OPTIMISM MONTH!

I live with *Optimism*

I will maintain a positive attitude, look on the brighter side of situations and seek opportunities in the face of adversity.



WHAT IS OPTIMISM?

Optimism is being too noble for anger.

Optimism is being too strong for fear.

Optimism is being too large for worry.

Optimism is being too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

I WILL:

- * Make all my friends feel good about themselves.
- * Look at the bright side of things.
- * Present a cheerful countenance at all times.
- * Forget the mistakes of the past and be positive about the future.
- * Not be critical of others but rather look to improve myself.

TELL US YOUR OPTIMISM STORY.

Has someone's demonstration of optimism left you feeling great? Tell us your story.

Contact us at our website.
<http://www.rrdsb.com/> and we'll post some of the stories online for everyone to read..

"I will live by my own policies.

I will sleep with a clear conscience.

I will sleep in peace."

—taken from
"Emperor's New Clothes"
song by Sinéad O'Connor

Character in Action

Grade 7 Suggested Activities

- * List all the things you do for yourself and others that make you feel good about yourself.
- * The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, pages 86 - 89, Mission Statement

WHAT DOES OPTIMISM LOOK LIKE?

OPTIMISM allows us to look at the bright side. When things don't go the way you want and when it would be easy to be negative, take a positive approach. Think of how the members of Team Canada's 2003-04 junior hockey team must have felt after a very difficult one-goal loss in the gold medal game. While it's natural to be angry about losing, consider the learning opportunity gained by this experience. By focusing on the positive and looking toward the future, those players who return the following year will be better prepared when facing a similar situation. This will provide them with what it takes to be gold medal winners!

LET'S TALK ABOUT OPTIMISM

- * When you see a friend who is not having a good day, say something to cheer them up.
- * Tell someone who won an award how proud you are.
- * Learn to create positive images in your mind when you face new challenges.
- * The past is history, no point in focusing on what happened yesterday but rather look forward to what opportunities today might present.



FEBRUARY is HONESTY MONTH!

I live with *Honesty*

I will be sincere, trustworthy and truthful.



"Honest hearts produce honest actions."

—Brigham Young

WHAT IS HONESTY?

HONESTY is when you commit to being true to yourself and others.

I WILL:

- * speak the truth with kindness and caring.
- * be trustworthy, so people know they can depend on me.
- * be sincere. There is no difference between what I say and do and what I believe in my heart.

THE LITTLE WHITE LIE

We all know it's fine to talk about telling the truth all the time, but is it always the right thing to do?

Is it always a good thing to do?

Is it always necessary?

What if the truth will hurt someone's feelings?

This is a good subject for a discussion. Some people say it's OK to tell a little white lie if you're doing it so that feelings don't get hurt. Some people say it's never OK to lie, no matter what.

'Think of a situation where you told a little white lie. What was the reason?

What did you learn about your character when it happened?

Do you know someone who demonstrates the positive character attribute of HONESTY? Contact us at our website. <http://www.rrdsb.com/> and we'll post some of the stories online for everyone to read..

Character in Action

Grade 7 Suggested Activities

- * The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, p. 24, discusses "principles."
- * As a class, brainstorm all the excuses and rationalizations people give for lying, cheating, and stealing, and then have a discussion about them. How valid are they? What's wrong with each of them?
- * <http://nie.honoluluadvertiser.com/12-Character-Education/Proj.%20Solution%20Gr.%203-7/Honesty2.pdf>
- * Activities from website: 1. Think about the last time you almost told a lie, but decided against telling it. What made you change your mind? How did you feel when you told the truth? How do you think you would you have felt if you had lied?
- * 2. A TRUE FRIEND—What makes a true friend.

WHAT DOES HONESTY LOOK LIKE?

HONESTY can be demonstrated and acknowledged in many ways by adults, teens and children alike. Here is a true story about honesty that happened in a public high school.

A student approached his teacher and said, "I think my mark has been calculated incorrectly. It's 95 and I think it should be 85."

The teacher said he doubted if he was off in his calculations by 10 points, but reviewed the mark with the student.

Sure enough, the student's mark should have been 85. "Because I appreciate your honesty," the teacher said, "let's split the difference. We'll make it a 90."

The student declined. "I earned 85 and that's what my mark should be."

Why not use this story as a discussion point with your family.

Would you have been as honest as this student?

How hard would it have been to be in this student's shoes?

How does this story make you feel?

MARCH is INTEGRITY MONTH!





MAY is PERSEVERANCE MONTH!

I live with *Perseverance*

I will not give up when things get tough. I will stick to my goals and work hard to achieve them, despite obstacles.

WHAT IS PERSEVERANCE?

Perseverance is sticking to the goals that I have set for myself and never giving up on what I set out to do

I WILL:

- * continue to be the best that I can be
- * lead by example and be a role model for others
- * be patient and calm as I continue to strive for success
- * stay the course, no matter how difficult it might become
- * not become discouraged
- * always believe in myself and my abilities

A CANADIAN ROLE MODEL OF PERSEVERANCE

Terry Fox is a Canadian hero. Over the course of 143 days, Terry ran 5,373 Km and ran through six provinces, raising a total of \$24 million for cancer research. It was Terry's perseverance and his belief in himself and his mission that made his Marathon of Hope a success. At one point during the run, Terry said, "Everyone seems to have given up hope of trying. I haven't. It isn't easy and it isn't supposed to be, but I'm accomplishing something. I just wish people would realize that anything's possible if you try."

Contact us at our website.
<http://www.rrdsb.com/> and we'll post some of the stories online for everyone to enjoy.

"When the world says, "Give Up,"
Hope whispers, "Try it one more time."

—Author Unknown

Character in Action

Grade 7 Suggested Activities

- * The novel *Hatchet*
- * Ask students to watch for examples of persons who show enormous perseverance—such as a person injured in an accident who must learn to walk again—or a baby learning to walk for the first time. Discuss the rewards these people will realize because of their determination.
- * Tell students about Thomas Edison, who tried 1,000 different combinations before he found the right materials for the light bulb. (For a resource, use the book *The Wizard of Sound*, by Barbara Mitchell.) Talk about the importance of trying out an idea, sometimes over and over again.
- * Talk about goals. Why are they important? What are they for? Ask students, if we don't know where we are going, are we likely to get there?
- * Summarize *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, by Steven Covey. Share these habits with your class and briefly describe how each habit can lead to accomplishing goals.
- * Select someone in your community who exemplifies the quality of diligence. Invite this person to speak to your class about his/her own background, any obstacles overcome, and the factors that led to his/her success.

WHAT DOES PERSEVERANCE LOOK LIKE?

Perseverance can be demonstrated and acknowledged in many ways by adults, teens and children alike. Here are some ideas:

For Discussion: Perseverance takes will power. Having will power means that you stay focused on your goal and don't move away from it. Can you remember a time when you demonstrated will power and stayed focused until you attained your goal? How did it make you feel? Share your thoughts.

Perseverance at Home:

Your family is getting a new pet. Sometimes it takes perseverance to get through the first few months and get acquainted. Read books about your pet, talk to other pet owners, be sure to feed and care for your pet. Can you think of other ways you can show perseverance at home?

Perseverance at Play:

Learning to ride a bicycle takes perseverance. Sometimes it seems that you will never get the hang of it. Others don't seem to fall as often as you do. You may even want to quit. You show perseverance when you keep on trying.

