



September is RESPECT MONTH!

I live with *Respect*

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

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.



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

—Socrates

Character In Action Grade 8

Suggested Activities

- * Create a classroom Bill of Rights.
- * Respect lesson from **Teen Character Counts!**
http://www.charactercenter.com/Teen_Character_Counts.pdf
- * Bullies are often trying to make people "respect" them. Is this really respect, or is it fear? What is the difference? How is bullying and violent behavior an act of disrespect?
- * Have students watch a TV sitcom. First, identify the target audience. Next, record examples of respectful behaviour, then disrespectful behaviour. Share as a class, then identify why we find disrespectful behaviour so entertaining. Discuss stereotypes.

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 parents 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



OCTOBER is INITIATIVE MONTH!

I live with *Initiative*

I will recognize what needs to be done and do it, without prompting from others.

WHAT IS INITIATIVE?

Definition: the power or opportunity to act independently with a fresh approach before others do.

INITIATIVE is when we act without being prompted by others. We are eager to do what needs to be done without having to be told to do it. We take the first step towards the achievement of a goal.

I WILL:

- * do things without having to be asked.
- * pitch in where I see I am needed.
- * be innovative and enthusiastic in everything that I do.

TELL US YOUR INITIATIVE STORY!

Has someone's demonstration of initiative 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 enjoy.



It is not the mountain that we conquer, but ourselves.

—Sir Edmund Hillary

Character In Action Grade 8

Suggested Activities

- * Cut out a photograph of your hero and explain how this person showed initiative.
- * Brainstorm ways students can show initiative. Have each student show which one they would like to demonstrate, and have them target it and track it for a week (ie. Complete homework)
- * I Am poem
- * "I Am Going To Make a Difference" unit from **Anti-Bullying Curriculum**
- * <http://nie.honoluluadvertiser.com/12-Character-Education/Guides-Supplements/Goal%20Setting.doc>

WHAT DOES INITIATIVE LOOK LIKE?

Initiative is about doing something even if it isn't necessarily your job or responsibility to do so.

It's about doing something that you haven't been asked to do because you know it must be done or you see a need that is unmet.

Having initiative not only allows you to do what needs to be done quickly and effectively, but also prompts others to become involved in the endeavors you undertake because they see your positive work habits.

You become a role model for others.

FOR DISCUSSION:

Can you remember an incident when you took the initiative to do something?

Share your story with your friends, family, class.

Did it make a difference to someone? How did you feel about yourself? How did others see you?

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 8

Suggested Activities

- * Idiom analysis: Have the students draw what it literally means: “Sees the world through rose-coloured glasses.” Discuss what it actually means. This can be repeated with others, such as comparing “Is the glass is half-full, or half-empty?”
- * Develop a personal mission statement. (The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, p. 81). Stress the importance of being optimistic when looking at life.
- * *Don't Worry, Be Happy.* Along with the mission statement, develop a personal mantra that screams optimism.
- * Watch the movie **Cool Runnings**. Discuss how by believing in themselves and maintaining a positive attitude, the first ever Jamaican bobsled team overcame numerous obstacles to win the respect of fellow Olympians.
- * Listen to the Sinéad O'Connor song quoted above. Discuss how it illustrates optimism.

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.

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.rdsb.com/> and we'll post some of the stories online for everyone to read..



"Honest hearts produce honest actions.

—Brigham Young

Character In Action Grade 8

Suggested Activities

- * The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, p. 24, discusses "principles."
<http://nie.honoluluadvertiser.com/12-Character-Education/Proj.%20Solution%20Gr.%203-7/Honesty2.pdf>
- * Select an advertisement from a magazine or newspaper, or from radio or TV. Analyze it for honesty: Does it explicitly say anything you think is untrue? Is it trying to make you believe something that might not be true? Is it lying by omission, i.e. leaving out important information that would make a difference to you? Is it misleading in any way? Does it present any half-truths?
- * Debate idea: discuss the whole concept of "little white lie." What does it mean? Is it okay to tell a little white lie?

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?

APRIL is FAIRNESS 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 8

Suggested Activities

- * Complete unit from Teen Character Counts!
<http://nie.honoluluadvertiser.com/12-Character-Education/Proj.%20Solution%20Gr.%203-7/Persevering2.pdf>
- * 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.

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.

