



CHARACTER COUNTS!

Respect Pillar Activity Quickies

Upper Elementary Activities

GLURP

Have students design a “GLURP”:

G = Something I’m **G**OOD at

L = Something I **L**IKE

U = Something I could do **U**MPTEEN times

R = Something I do to **R**ELAX

P = Something I’m **P**ROUD of

They can use art, words, or pictures. Allow the students to share their GLURP with the group. Be sure the students speak loudly and clearly and that the group is quiet and respectful as each person shares his/her GLURP.

Source: Character Education Informational Handbook & Guide, 2002

Teaching Tolerance and Acceptance

Children benefit from having an opportunity to listen to the viewpoints of others. They can develop respect and empathy for others by coming to understand and share other people’s feelings.

Pair up your students for this activity. The children can share with their partners ways they are alike and ways they are different. Write the following questions on the blackboard: What is your favorite school subject? What is your favorite sport? What do you like to do outside of school? What do you like to eat for lunch? What animals do

you like? What TV shows do you watch? Have the partners list something they both like and something they both dislike. Then have the partners share their results with the class.

Source: Developing Character When It Counts, Grades 2-3, 1999

Ten Things I Like About Me

Respecting others is crucial to good character. Respecting yourself is equally important.

Read the following quote aloud: “*As the internal combustion engine runs on gasoline, so the person runs on self-esteem: if he is full of it, he is good for a long run; if he is partly filled, he will soon need to be refueled; and if he is empty, he will come to a stop.*” – Thomas Szasz

Ask students to define self-esteem. Discuss the ways in which having good self-esteem can be helpful: It allows us to meet challenges with confidence, and to stand up for ourselves. It helps us to resist peer pressure and to aim for the best.

Have each student devise a list called “Ten Things I Like About Me.” Encourage students to include anything that makes them proud, from the silly to serious. Ask students to decorate their lists. Tell students to tuck their lists away in a special place, to read again when they need a little “refueling.”

Source: Spotlight on Character: Plays that show CHARACTER COUNTS! – Grade 6-8, 1999

Lower Elementary Activities

The Sun and the Wind by Aesop

Read Aesop's Fable, *The Sun and the Wind*, to the students. Choose three students to role play (the sun, the wind, and the man) while you read aloud Aesop's Fable, *The Sun and the Wind*.

Long ago, the Wind and Sun were having an argument about who was stronger. They decided to have a contest.

"Do you see that man walking along the road, wearing a cloak?" asked the Sun.

"Yes," answered the wind.

"Let's see who can make him take off his cloak," said the Sun.

So the Wind and Sun agreed. First, the Wind tried. It began to blow. It blew harder and harder. But the more it blew, the tighter the man wrapped himself in his cloak.

Finally, the Wind said to the Sun, "I give up. You try."

The Sun began to smile warmly at the man. The man began to feel the warmth of the sun. The sun got brighter and brighter. The man felt warmer and warmer. Soon the man was sweating as he walked along the road. Feeling hot and tired, he sat down on a big rock and threw off his cloak.

Lesson: Gentleness can do what force cannot.

Ask the students what the wind used to try to win the contest and what the sun used to try to win the contest.

Give the students a playground situation to role play such as: A player on the other team always uses his hands when playing soccer, giving his team an unfair advantage. Role play the situation trying to solve the problem as the wind would (with force) and as the sun would (with kindness).

Source: *Developing Character When It Counts*, 1999

Alike and Different

Ask two students (a boy and a girl – different races) to come to the front of the

room. Ask the rest of the class to call out differences between the two and have the boy and girl step away from each other as each difference is named: sex, color, hair, dress, etc.

Then ask students to call out similarities: blood, humanity, language, arms and legs, brain, both wearing jeans, both wearing sneakers, etc. The two students are to walk toward each other as the similarities are named. Soon they will have moved so close to each other that you must stop, because there are more similarities than differences.

We appreciate the different things about others, because we can learn a great deal from them. However, we need to realize how much we are all alike. Usually we have more things in common than we realize.

Source: *Character Education Informational Handbook & Guide*, 2002

Create An "I'm Really Mad" Pad

When children (and adults) become angry, they often forget to treat each other with respect. Rather than saying mean things they may regret or lashing out physically, children can vent on the classroom "I'm Really Mad" drawing pad. Children should write or draw a picture of why they are mad. Tell them to sign and date their papers so you know who to talk to. You can use the pad to talk privately with the child once he or she has calmed down. A simple statement, like "Tell me about this picture," will invite the child to share his or her feelings.

Source: *Spotlight on Character: Plays That Show CHARACTER COUNTS!* – Grade K-1, 1999