

Respect

Treat Others The
Way You Would
Like To Be
Treated.

CHARACTER *Connection*



“Living by the Golden Rule-treating others the way you would like to be treated-means that you have to be willing to treat people better than they may be willing to treat you.”

--Michael Josephson



March Character Connection Theme: Respect

Definitions

To respect is “to esteem the worth or excellence of a person.” It also means “to revere, consider, admire or heed.”¹ Here are some ways to show respect:

- *Treat others the way you would like to be treated.
- *Speak courteously to all.
- *Honor rules in your family or country.
- *Respect others’ property.

In the February 13, 2000 issue of Parade magazine, sociologist and Harvard professor Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot wrote, “Respect commonly is seen as deference to hierarchy, often driven by duty and based upon a person’s position, age, gender, race, class or accomplishments. But I propose a different view of respect—one derived from equality, empathy and connection in all kinds of relationships, even those often seen as unequal, such as parent and child, teacher and student, doctor and parent. The image is a circle, not a triangle or a pyramid.” She called respect “the single most powerful ingredient in nourishing relationships and creating a just society.”

Professor Lawrence-Lightfoot suggested 6 qualities of respect:

- Dialogue—Use real communication to resolve problems.
- Attention—Be fully present in conversation.
- Curiosity—Be interested in the thoughts, feelings and fears of others.
- Healing—Nourish feelings of worthiness, and well-being in others.
- Empowerment—Nurture self-confidence and self-reliance.
- Self-Respect—“It’s impossible to respect others if we don’t respect ourselves.”

Quotes

“America has furnished to the world the character of Washington. And if our American institutions had done nothing else, that alone would have entitled them to the respect of mankind.” --Daniel Webster

“ Never esteem anything as of advantage to thee that shall make thee break thy word or lose thy self-respect. Respect the faculty that forms thy judgments.” --Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.²

“When you are content to be simply yourself and don't compare or compete, everybody will respect you.” --Lao-Tzu

“There are countless ways of achieving greatness, but any road to achieving one's maximum potential must be built on a bedrock of respect for the individual, a commitment to excellence, and a rejection of mediocrity.” --Buck Rodgers³ ⁴

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

¹ From Websters Encyclopedia Dictionary.

² www.bartleby.com

³ www.quoteland.com

“Character is the foundation stone upon which one must build to win respect. Just as no worthy building can be erected on a weak foundation, so no lasting reputation worthy of respect can be built on a weak character. ”-- R. C. Samsel⁵

Activities

**Have students work in small groups to create posters that show actions that each letter in RESPECT might stand for. When the posters are finished display them in the hall.

**Have students talk to their parents about the roll that respect plays in the community and work place. Divide students into groups and have them come up with courteous words that show respect to others. See which group came up with the most words and compare the lists. Discuss when and where you would use the words.

Make “Who and How” chart by asking students to list the categories of people and things that deserve respect. As you list them one at a time, discuss how respect for that person or thing can be effectively given. (E.g., for “Mother”: by “answering respectfully,” “by obeying her,” etc. For “Nature”: by “preserving and protecting,” etc.)⁶

Stories

George Wythe: Teacher of the Presidents

Of the 27 lawyers that signed the Declaration of Independence, George Wythe was probably the most respected. He was not only a powerful attorney, but extremely honest. It is said that he would not take a client who would be in the wrong. If he caught his client lying, he would drop the suit and return any paid fees. Rather than misrepresent or twist the truth, Wythe would rather lose a case. He taught law at the College of William and Mary. Two of his pupils were future United States presidents: James Monroe and Thomas Jefferson. He treated many of his students like the sons he did not have, boarding and paying tuition for those in need.⁷

He was so respected that although absent on the day the Declaration of Independence was signed, his Virginia colleagues left a space so his name would appear first.⁸

"No man ever left behind him a character more venerated than George Wythe," Thomas Jefferson wrote. "His virtue was of the purest tint; his integrity inflexible, and his justice exact; of warm patriotism, and, devoted as he was to liberty, and the natural and equal rights of man, he might truly be called the Cato of his country." Jefferson referred to him as “my second father,” and “my faithful and beloved Mentor in youth, and my most affectionate friend through life.”^{9 10}

In King Henry VI, Shakespeare writes:

What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted!

Thrice is he arm'd that hath his quarrel just,

And he but naked, though locked up in steel,

Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

What relationship is there between self-respect, self mastery, and respect from others?



⁵ www.cybernation.com

⁶ Eyre, Richard and Linda. Teaching Your Children Values. Simon and Schuster, 1993

⁷ Fradin, Dennis Brindell, The Signers New York: Scholastic 2003, pages 22-23

⁸ Biography of George Wyth, <http://www.history.org/Almanack/people/bios/biowythe.cfm>, accessed February 3, 2004

⁹ Fradin, Dennis Brindell, The Signers New York: Scholastic 2003, pages 22-23

¹⁰ Biography of George Wyth, <http://www.history.org/Almanack/people/bios/biowythe.cfm>, accessed February 3, 2004



Earning Respect

Once there was a cat that was perfectly black with only a small white star like tip on his tail. When the cat walked through the town, people noticed, stopped and raved over the tail's whiteness and uniqueness.

However, the cat was not content to be noticed for his tail. He wanted the townspeople to respect him for his prowess and his speed. After pondering the problem for some time, he decided that surely respect must be centered in his tail. He reasoned that if he could catch the tip of his tail, people would then respect him.

In the town square the next day, three strolling officials stopped to look at him. Seizing this opportunity, he turned in circles, speeding after his tail. When he couldn't catch it going left, he turned and circled right. The town officials laughed heartily at the cat's antics; pointed out the silliness of the cat to others passing, and all were amused. Embarrassed, the cat slunk away.

It happened that the next day during the cat's stroll a careless mouse peeped out from under a leaf. Forgetting about his dreams of respect, the cat ran and pounced and after a few minutes caught the mouse. Townspeople gathered to watch the chase and as the cat won, they nodded to each other in approval. "Did you see that cat race after that varmint?" "All I saw was a black streak. The mouse hardly had a chance." "What a wonderful thing it is to have such a beautiful and talented mouser!"

And the cat finally felt respected. For, respect, like a tail, is hard to catch when you chase it, but naturally follows when you do good.¹¹

Writing or Discussion Topics

**The Reverend Robert Fulghum said: "Most of what I really need to know about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in kindergarten. . . . These are the things I learned: Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. . . clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody." *Have students write their own list of what they learned in kindergarten.*

*Discuss whether the simple relationship training received early in life still applies. Would the world be a better place if adults all continued to practice and implement these simple lessons?*¹²

**When Aesop's lion frees the captured mouse, he laughs at the mouse's promise to return the favor. However when the mouse later chewed the ropes that trapped him, he realized that no matter what the size and strength, everyone deserves respect.¹³ *Have students recall a true life incident or compose a story using the theme, "Treat others the way you would like to be treated."* Share some stories with the rest of the class.

Role Plays

**Taylor is walking home from school with his friends when they decide to write graffiti on his neighbor's fence. *What should Taylor say? What does respect for property have to do with respect for people?*

**Jennifer has a rule in her home to go directly home after school. On her way home her girlfriend asks her to come to her house to work on homework. *How does not obeying family rules show disrespect?*

**Shane is upset with Bryan for saying something mean in front of his friends. He wants to tell something about his friend that would embarrass him to get even. *Why is treating people the way you would want to be treated a better alternative? How might Bryan react if Shane embarrassed him? How might he react if Shane chose to forgive him?*

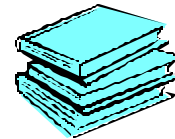
Book List

Thank you Mr. Falker by Patricia Polacco

Chester's Way by Kevin Henkes

The Rag Coat by Lauren Mills

Twenty and Ten by Claire Huchet Bishop

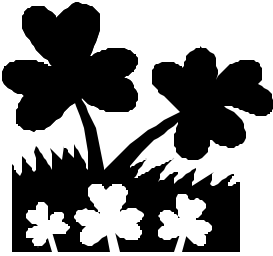


April: Compassion/Caring May: Loyalty
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¹¹ Story contributed by Lindon Character Connection volunteer.

¹² Eyre, Richard and Linda. Teaching Your Children Values. Pg. 165

¹³ Treasury of Virtues. "The Lion and the Mouse." Pages 123-134.



Name _____

Respect Bingo

I'm Sorry.	May I . . . ?	Please	Thank you.	You're welcome.
You may go first this time.	It's your turn.	Excuse me.	I like the way you. . .	I'm Sorry for. . .
Mr. . .	Allow me. . .	I like you because. . .	I'm sorry.	Excuse me, please.
Pardon me.	Mrs. . . .	Yes, please.	I would be pleased to. . .	Miss. . .
May I help you?	Sir	No, Thank you.	Ma'am	Dr. . .

Tell someone else why you like him or her, then sign your own center square. During the day, listen for the polite and respectful words on the Bingo list. When a respectful phrase is heard in a real life or role play situation, ask the respectful speaker to sign the phrase's Bingo square. The object is to obtain one student signature in each square. The winner is not only the first to gather 25 different signatures, but the one who recognizes and learns to use words of politeness and respect.