

Return to Learn: Responsibility

When under stress, or outside of our comfort zone, it can be tempting to shy away from responsibility. However, it is critical as the school year progresses that each person take responsibility for their role in ensuring a safe and productive learning environment.

When norms and routines are disrupted, it can be easy to lose sight of our goals and the process we need to follow to achieve those goals. The Goal Map tool is an excellent resource to focus attention on the action steps needed to continue progressing towards our objectives, especially when we are outside of our comfort zone.



Responsibility for Educators: The unique challenges of this

school year likely feel overwhelming. How do you transition your entire curriculum to online delivery? How do you track student progress when you don't see your students each day? How do you create a productive classroom space while still following health guidelines? Use the Goal Map to break down what seem like insurmountable tasks into small, achievable action steps. Devote your time and energy solely to each step until you are ready to move on to the next action step.

Responsibility for Students: Students can use the Goal Map to craft a plan for achieving objectives each day, each week, each month, or even over an entire semester. Whether attending school online or in person, the Goal Map can help students identify what tasks need to be completed, in what order, and track their progress towards completion.

Responsibility for Families: The Goal Map is a great tool for families to use to help their students create a learning plan, especially for students working online. Create a Goal Map each day, outlining the objective for the day, and the action steps needed to reach those objectives. Then, review the Goal Map at the end of the day to track progress and ensure students are taking the necessary steps to be successful each day.

Download a Goal Map.

Return to Learn: Respect

Every school stakeholder – students, parents, educators, and administrators – have a key role in the success of each school year. How well these stakeholders work together and treat each other with respect ultimately determines how successful the year will be.

A Compact for Excellence is a simple tool to help groups of people agree on what they need to do in order to do their best work and treat each other with care and respect. To use a Compact, create a list of expectations (see sample below) that outline what every stakeholder needs to do in order to ensure their best work can be done and everyone is treated well.

Then, ask all stakeholders the following questions:

1. Is there anything else that needs to be added to this list?
2. Is there anything that needs to be clarified?
3. Is there anything that you cannot or will not do?
4. Do we agree to work with these guidelines?

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COMPACT FOR EXCELLENCE

In order to do our **best work** and treat each other with **respect and care**, we each agree to/not to:

- » 1) Assume best intentions – everyone is doing their best to make the right decision in a constantly changing situation
- » 2) Focus on both academic growth and student mental health
- » 3) Maintain clear and open lines of communication
- » 4) Prioritize health and safety by following current guidelines
- »



Adapted from Lickona & Davidson (2005).

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Respect for Educators: At the beginning of each school year, educators set classroom rules and expectations. This year is no different, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic you may need to

update these expectations to address online learning, following health guidelines at school, or even create a Compact with parents and families so all stakeholders have clear guidelines for how everyone can do their best work and treat each other with care and respect.

Respect for Students: Whether working at home, in school, or in a hybrid setting, think about what is needed for you to do your best work and treat others well (teachers, parents, siblings, other students, etc.). Create a Compact for Excellence that outlines what all parties agree to do in order to do your best work and treat each other well, no matter the environment. You can also create a Compact with your group before beginning a new group project.

Respect for Families: Create a Compact for Excellence with your children that outlines how you will work together to ensure that everyone can do their work effectively and treat each other well. Agreements could be: 15-minute active break for every 60 minutes of work, only engage on social media during breaks, negotiate who utilizes work spaces (at home), maintain social distance and wear a mask (if back at school), and so on.

Download a Compact for Excellence

Learn more about character education.

Return to learn: Trustworthiness

This year, perhaps more than any other, parents, educators, and students are making incredibly challenging decisions. It's

important in these moments to assume best intentions, and trust that everyone is trying to do what they think is right and necessary to ensure a safe and impactful education experience.

In situations where there isn't a clear and obvious answer, it's useful to have a tool, like the Integrity-in Action Checklist, to help check our decision-making. Not every decision will pass each test below. Sometimes, the right decision isn't fair to everyone, for example. However, checking your actions against the Integrity-in-Action Checklist can help ensure that you make good choices and maintain trust.


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INTEGRITY-IN-ACTION CHECKLIST

Would my decisions pass each of these tests?	Yes	No
Golden Rule Test: If the situation was reversed, is this how I would want to be treated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fairness Test: Is this fair to everybody involved in and affected by my actions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Truth Test: Does this represent the whole truth — no distortions, omissions, or spin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conscience Test: Would I feel good about this afterward — no regrets, no guilt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role Model/Mentor Test: Would the people whose integrity I respect most be proud of this?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Front-Page Test: Would I want this reported on the front page of the newspaper?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consequences Test: Would this lead to positive consequences and avoid negative consequences now and in the future?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What-If-Everybody-Did-This Test: Would I want to live in a world where everybody did this?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guiding Beliefs Test: Would this be supported by the philosophical, religious, political, and/or ideological worldviews guiding my life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What if it's still not clear what to do?

1. Stop!
2. Think it over some more.
3. Seek additional insight from individuals whose integrity you respect.



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Trustworthiness for Educators: Even people with the best of intentions can sometimes make the wrong decision, especially when navigating the countless changes created by a global pandemic. As you work to bring students back to the classroom

safely, or migrate your lessons to online delivery, use the Integrity-in-Action Checklist to make sure the choices you make are thoughtful and build trust with students, parents, and your colleagues.

Trustworthiness for Students: Students can use the Integrity-in-Action Checklist to help them make choices that could impact the health and safety of others. (“Is it fair to my classmates if I don’t follow guidelines to help stop the spread of COVID-19?”) Likewise, students working remotely can use the checklist to help make good decisions about how they engage with school. (“Do I want others to know that I was watching TV rather than paying attention to this online lesson?”)

Trustworthiness for Parents: The decisions parents make in the best interest of their child also impact the health, safety, and learning experiences of everyone else at school. Use the Integrity-in-Action Checklist to make sure the decisions you make are not only good for your children, but the teachers and other students with whom they interact. In addition, families can use the checklist to help guide the decisions their students make. “I know it’s uncomfortable to wear a mask, but let’s look at the truth test. While the mask is uncomfortable, the truth is I can wear it, get used to it, and keep myself and others safe.”

Download an Integrity-In-Action Checklist

Learn more about character education.

Building Trust (Grades K-5)

Students develop and demonstrate the character trait trustworthiness. They understand that trust is an essential ingredient in meaningful and lasting relationships as well as school and career success and they strive to earn the trust of others by demonstrating the ethical virtues of integrity, honesty, promise-keeping and loyalty.

Caring for Others (Grades K-5)

Download a PDF of this game card.

Character Education Objective:

- Students will engage in conversation with another student to talk about their own experience with random acts of kindness

Content Goal:

- Students will be able to understand their moral duty to care for one another.

Language Goal:

- Students will journal about the personal benefits of performing random acts of kindness.

Purpose:

Random acts of kindness are some of the simplest ways to say you care. Not only do these acts benefit those who need it,

but it has a huge benefit for those performing those acts. When you care for others, your own happiness levels increase! Filling the bucket of someone else also helps to fill your own. This lesson is designed for students to engage in random acts of kindness throughout the day and allows classrooms to celebrate those acts in a fun and exciting way!

Lesson:

1. Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwAYpLVyeFU>
2. Ask students to find a partner and answer the following questions:
 1. What are some random acts of kindness you have seen?
 1. How does it feel to have someone do something kind for you?
 1. How does it feel to do an act of kindness for another person?
3. As a class, complete the empty squares on the Random Acts of Kindness Bingo with actions specific to your day.
4. Decide on the classroom celebration when you complete a bingo.
5. Play Random Acts of Kindness Bingo!
6. Have students journal about how it felt to do acts of kindness for others and the benefits you feel of being the one who helps.


Family Connection:

Encourage families to watch the following video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwAYpLVyeFU>.

Ask families to create a list of possible random acts of kindness they could do as family. Plan to do one act every month. This website could help families think of some good ideas:

<https://www.care.com/c/stories/3757/101-random-acts-of-kindnes>

CLASSROOM RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS BINGO

	Cheer someone on			
		Give a compliment		Offer to help someone
Let someone go first				
			Sit with someone new	
		Clean up someone else's mess		

Interpersonal Skills (Grades 6-12)



Character Education Objective:

- Students will discuss how to develop and maintain positive relationships in their lives.

Content Objective:

- Students will define, establish, and maintain healthy relationships.

Language Objective:

- Students will employ strategies to promote positive relationship building and connections.

Purpose:

Human beings need opportunities to build and maintain positive relationships in all stages of life. Providing teens with opportunities to develop a clear definition of what healthy

relationships look and sound like is important to help ensure health development, physically, socially, and emotionally. Creating positive models and situations to practice healthy boundaries and communication is important to grow relationships and social connections.

Lesson

Independent

- Who do you have a healthy, positive relationship within your life?
- How does this connection with this individual make you feel?

Productive Group Work:

- Read this article and/or infographic about connection and the impact on health.
- List the impact of human connections on health

Whole Group Discussion:

- What did you learn?
- What are some ways to spend more time with friends?

Reflection Journal (Independent task)

- Compare and Contrast the feelings/benefits of social media time with friends and in-person time with friends
- How will you get out from behind the screen and be seen this week?

#BeSeen

#CharacterCounts

Learn more about character education.

Interpersonal Skills (Grades K-5)



Character Education Objective:

- Students will discuss how connection increases communication and collaboration.

Content Objective:

- Students will discuss what the Six Pillars look like in them, their friends and the people they admire.

Language Objective:

- Students will journal about how they can actively work to connect with one another.

Purpose:

Including intentional connection time with your students is a great way to show the importance of connecting with one another. When we are connected we communicate better,

collaborate more successfully and assume better intentions in one another. We often think of connection as something to check off the list at the beginning of the year or getting to know you activity, but in reality it is something that needs to happen regularly. The following activity will allow students to connect over character traits they see in themselves and those that are important to them.

Lesson

- Watch “Six Pillar Shuffle” and encourage the students to dance along.
- Electricity Split the students in two equal groups. Each group will be a team. Encourage them to get together and create team names. One team will get in a line standing shoulder to shoulder and all facing one way. The other team will get in another line shoulder to shoulder and facing the other team. The lines should be a few feet apart. There should be an aisle between the lines.
- If students point directly in front them, they should be pointing at only one student and one student should be pointing at them. This is their partner for the first round. Have students discuss the following question with their partner: What’s your favorite cartoon character? Now, students will play a game to get their next partner. To set up, you keep the teams in their lines and determine which side will be the start and which side will be the end of the line. At the end of the line, place an item on the ground evenly between the last two players of each team. The game is passing a high five down their team’s line from the starting side until it gets to the last person. The only rule is that you may not pass the high five until the high five is given to you.
- Once the high five hits the last person then the last person will grab the item from the ground. The first team to grab the item is the winner. The team that lost

will move one person to the left. The person on the furthest left spot will walk down the aisle to the other end of the line. If you want, encourage the students to do a little Six Pillar Shuffle down the aisle! This should give students a new partner. With their new partner, have students discuss: What makes a person trustworthy? Have the students get ready to pass along the high five again.

- Once the winning team is determined, have the team that lost move one to the left again. This will give the students a new partner. Have the new partners discuss a question and then repeat the game and questions until you have answered all of them: How do you respect your friends? Who is someone in your life you think is responsible? Why? Was there a time in your life when something was unfair? How did you handle that? How has someone show you they cared for you? Who is someone you admire that shows good citizenship?
- When the game is done, talk about the power of connection. When we do these games, we are connecting with one another and finding things we have in common or how we think similarly. When we find that connection with someone we are kinder, more respectful and work better together. It's important to take the time to connect with each other and it doesn't always take a game. Encourage students to take the time to connect to someone they don't know well during lunch, recess, group projects or collaboration times in the classroom.
- Have the students journal about ways they can make connections throughout the day. Connection is not something you can do just once and check it off the list. It must be done continually. Connection is also something that doesn't always come naturally and sometimes needs to be intentionally planned. During this journaling time, you should encourage students to think about those two things and how they will work in connection into their day more frequently.

Family Connection

Give a brief overview of the importance of connection. Encourage families to watch a video about the power of connecting with those who may look and think differently than you: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQuM5e0QGLg>

Give the families the following prompts to connect around character development:

- What makes a person trustworthy?
- How do you respect your friends?
- Who is someone in your life you think is responsible? Why?
- Was there a time in your life when something was unfair? How did you handle that?
- How has someone show you they cared for you?
- Who is someone you admire that shows good citizenship?

Learn more about character education.

No Gossip (Grades 6-12)

**Character Education Objective:**

- Students will discuss the impact of gossip on individuals, teams, friend groups, and families.

Content Objective:

- Students will commit to a No Gossip challenge to show respect.

Language Objective:

- Students will share ideas about spreading the #NoGossip

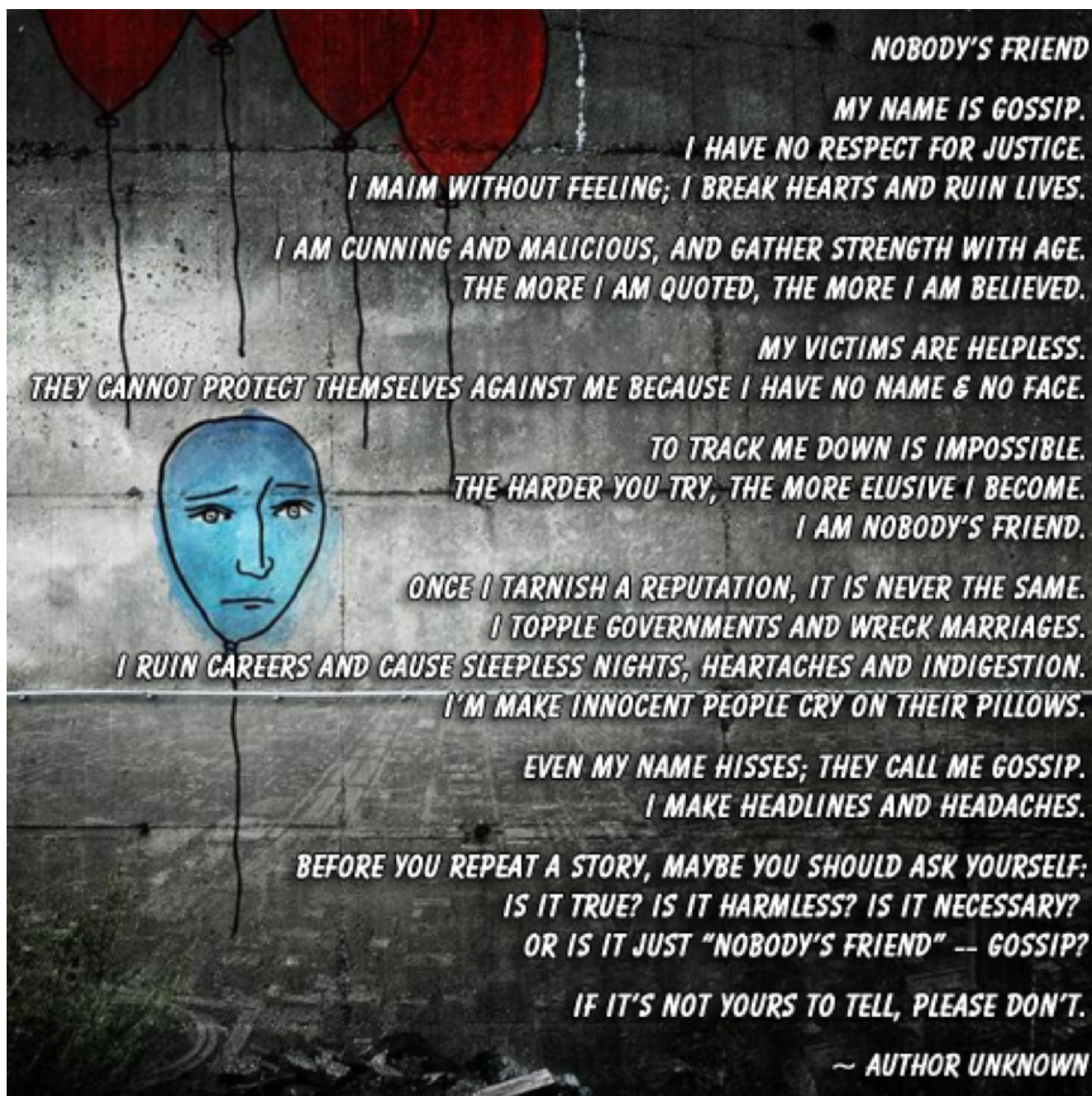
Purpose:

Gossip is a toxic cloud that spreads darkness around the globe and runs rampant in schools and communities. Creating a culture of respect is vital to ensure learners feel safe and like they belong. So, let's build a 40 Day No Gossip Campaign to empower students, teachers, administrators and families to stand for respect.

Lesson:

- Independent (3 mins)

- Write about a time you have heard, been part of, or were gossiped about in school or on social media.
 - How did it make you feel?
- Write one feeling on a sticky note and add it to the whiteboard or post on social media: Instagram/Twitter/Facebook #NoGossip #CHARACTERCOUNTS
- Vocabulary (2mins): What do these words mean? (Optional)
 - Gossip
 - Maim
 - Tarnish
 - Elusive
- Productive Group Work (10mins):
 - Read the poem (or print image of poem below)
 - List the attributes and impact of *gossip* you find?
 - What are some respectful statements you can use to stop gossip you might hear?
 - Make a plan about how your group will spread the #NoGossip



- Whole Group Discussion (3 mins):
 - How can showing respect to others stop gossiping behavior?
 - What will your group do to spread the #NoGossip?
- Reflection Journal (Independent task 2 mins)
 - Post on social media and/or in planner
 - #NoGossip #CHARACTERCOUNTS! #Respect

**Family
Connection**

- Tech Support
 - Friend
your child and follow their social media profiles
 - Share
out a social media post as a family with #NoGossip #CHARACTERCOUNTS!
- Pillar Time
 - Share
ways to stop gossip in your household
 - Practice
ways to lovingly hold one another accountable to no gossip
 - Invite
extended family to join your family in the #NoGossip #CHARACTERCOUNTS!
- Dinner Discussion
 - What
is harmful about gossip?
 - How
is gossip disrespectful?
 - What
feelings do you associate with gossip?

Learn more about character education.

6-12 Character Education Lesson Plan: Connecting with Others

Help students understand the importance of connecting to other individuals. Develop connection strategies and provide an

opportunity for students to practice connecting with others.