

# Small Acts of Kindness and Citizenship (Grades 6-12)

Students can learn how to model good citizenship in the way they care for the members of their school. Students will develop tangible habits that show how to increase awareness of citizenship and good character. This lesson will explore ways to support the citizens and take care of the community of learners within the building.

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## Volunteering (Grades 6-12)



### Character Education Objective:

- Students will discuss how caring is demonstrated through volunteering.

### Content Objective:

- Students will volunteer for an organization that is

close to their heart to demonstrate care for others.

### **Language Objective:**

- Students will research local organizations where they can volunteer

### **Purpose:**

Students can learn how to care for others by volunteering for organizations and getting more involved. Discussing ways to care for animals, the Earth, or people is a great way to share caring, but serving in those areas is a superior way to make connections to this pillar of character. Therefore, this lesson will push students to think and research organizations where they can volunteer and demonstrate what it means to care in action not just in words.

### **Lesson**

Independent (5 minutes)

- If you could write a blank check to any non-profit or service organization what would it be and why?

Categorize who or what your selected organization cares for in service (2 min)

- Animals
- Individuals with disabilities
- Sick Children
- Etc

Utilizing the areas of interest find a group who is also interested in supporting these types of organizations. (13 min)

- Create a poster as a team of the 5W and H ways to volunteer and demonstrate you care
- What organizations are available in your area?
- Where do you need to go to get signed up to volunteer?

- When do can you volunteer?
- Who do they need or accept to volunteer?
- Why would you choose to volunteer?

Share out your Why (2 min)

- Why should you volunteer at your selected organization?

Learn more about character education.

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## Defining Fairness (Grades 6-12)



**Character Education Objective:**

- Students will discuss the meaning of fairness.

## **Content Objective:**

- Students will define fairness.

## **Language Objective:**

- Students will share their ideas and definitions of fairness from assorted quotes.

## **Purpose:**

Fairness can vary based on definition and situation. Thus, students need to discuss what it means to be fair, and what should be considered *unfair* in their world. This lesson will give students the opportunity to view fairness from multiple perspectives, so they can create a more expansive picture of what it looks like and sounds like in different settings and situations.

## **Lesson**

Partner discussion (2 min)

- What is something you think is unfair?
- What is the definition of fair?

Productive Group Work (10 min)

- Place quotes around the room (images or list of them)
- Students will meet with a group to discuss each quote
- The students will develop a definition or attributes of fairness based on the meaning they attributed to the quote

Share out your teams definition of fairness (5 min)

Create a class consensus definition of fairness (5 min)

Independent (3 min)

- What was your favorite quote and why?

“Win or Lose, Do It Fairly.” – Knute Rockne

“The Way You See People Is the Way You Treat Them, And the Way You Treat Them Is What They Become.”– Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

“Live So That When Your Children Think of Fairness and Integrity, They Think of You.” – H. Jackson Brown, Jr

“Fairness Is Not an Attitude. It’s A Professional Skill That Must Be Developed and Exercised.” – Brit Hume

“I Think Perfect Objectivity Is an Unrealistic Goal; Fairness, However, Is Not.”– Michael Pollan

“From the Equality Of Rights Springs Identity Of Our Highest Interests; You Cannot Subvert Your Neighbor’s Rights Without Striking A Dangerous Blow At Your Own.”– Carl Shurz

“You Cannot Be Fair to Others Without First Being Fair to Yourself.” – Vera Nazarian

“If You Want to See the True Measure of a Man, Watch How He Treats His Inferiors, Not His Equals.” – J. K. Rowling

“We Hold These Truths to Be Self-Evident: That All Men Are Created Equal.” – Declaration of Independence

Learn more about character education.

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## **Problem Solving (Grades 6-12)**

**Character Education Objective:**

- Students will discuss the role each individual play in solving his or her own problem.

**Content Objective:**

- Students will take responsibility to solve the problems they face.

**Language Objective:**

- Students will tackle a problem in their own life so they can #GetUnstuck

**Purpose:**

Taking responsibility for our own actions and problems in life is a skill we need to build. There will always be escalators breaking down in our lives, so we must take ownership over what we can control to keep moving up the stairs. This lesson highlights the importance of recognizing the things you can take responsibility for to #GetUnstuck and keep moving

forward.

## **Lesson**

Independent (2 min)

- What is a problem you are facing?

Watch the video as a class Stuck on an Escalator: <https://youtu.be/Kq65aAYCH0w> (3 min)

Small Group Discussion (8 min):

- What is the problem for these people in the video?
- What is the solution?
- Whose responsibility is it to solve their problem?
- What keeps us from taking responsibility and just getting off the escalator when we have a problem?

Whole group share out (4 min):

- When faced with a problem, what are some ways we can take responsibility and get off the escalator?

Reflection Journal (Independent task) (3 min):

- Go back to the problem you listed in your journal and write some responsible solutions or ideas that you can take to #GetUnstuck on the escalator or get it moving again.

## **Family Connection**

- Tech Support
  - Anydo is an app that helps organize and prioritize tasks when you are overwhelmed and stuck with too many things to do
  - Sam App is an app to help you take ownership over your own health and manage the anxiety of dealing with the stress of the day to day.
- Pillar Time

- Play a game of chess to determine strategic ways to stay out of checkmate
- Write a 100-word poem about being thankful for problems
- Use an object from your home and try to come up with as many ways to use it as possible
  - A spoon
    - Dig a hole (slowly)
    - A party trick for your nose
    - To carry an egg
- Watch the video, Stuck on an Escalator as a family
  - <https://youtu.be/Kq65aAYCH0w>
- Read What do you do with A Problem by Kobi Yamad
- Dinner Discussion
  - Describe an experience when you had to solve a problem in your life?
  - Discuss how responsibility plays a role in finding solutions to everyday problems.
  - Share why you feel it is important to take responsibility for your own actions and problems.

## References

Radcliv, Bob. "Stuck On An Escalator – Release Your Trapped Emotions!". *Getanswers.Com*, 2013, <https://youtu.be/Kq65aAYCH0w>.

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# 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.

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# Trustworthiness Through Organization (Grades 6-12)

**Character Education Objective:**

- Students will discuss the impact of disorganization in their lives and in the lives of those who count on them

**Content Objective:**

- Students will explore ways to become more organized to help them remain trustworthy and accountable to their commitments

**Language Objective:**

- Students will share ideas about what it looks, and sounds like to be trustworthy and organized

**Purpose:**

School is back in session, and students are lining the halls and classrooms in anticipation of another year of learning. The hallways smell of freshly sharpened pencils and glue, and the agendas are sparkling with white space. Soon, calendars will begin to fill up, to-do lists will start to take up more space, and the students and families will become overwhelmed with commitments. After all, students are busier today than they have ever been and are struggling with balance. Therefore, this lesson will focus on tips for students to

demonstrate trustworthiness through organization. Learning to prioritize and organize are vital to keeping commitments and maintaining a character of trustworthiness.

## Lesson

- Watch video: “Organization for the Chronically Disorganized.”
  - <https://youtu.be/ENF8090oJvM> (5 mins)
- Consider the following quote and discussion questions independently, and then with an elbow partner (5 mins)
  - What does this quote teach about the impact of your habits
  - What does this quote say about being trustworthy in your commitments?
  - How does this quote relate to prioritizing and organizing things in your life?

Watch your thoughts; they become words.

Watch your words; they become actions.

Watch your actions; they become habits.

Watch your habits; they become character.

Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

- Productive Group Work: Students complete a chart paper with ideas for one of the following questions. (5 mins)
  - What are some ideas you have about getting or staying organized this year?
  - What are some ideas you to focus on being more trustworthy in your commitments through organization?
- Gallery Walk (2 mins)
  - Students will put a colored sticker next to an idea that they think will help them to be more trustworthy and organized.
- Reflection Journal (Independent task) (2 mins)
  - Write in planner cover or text to someone who can

hold you accountable.

- I will be trustworthy because I will (Fill in blank with what you will do to be more organized).

## **Family Connection**

- Tech Support
  - Download the COZI App
  - Share calendars to help organize and determine the level of commitments in the household
- Pillar Time
  - Share ways to stay organized and have a weekly meeting to declutter backpacks, and calendars
  - Declutter/Organize a room together\
  - Create a drop zone for backpacks for the school year
- Dinner Discussion
  - What does it mean to be trustworthy in your family?
  - What is one area of your lives / home do you want/need to organize?
  - How do you feel when you are organized?

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# **Teaching Respect (Grades K-12)**



## RESPECT

- Treat others with respect; follow the Golden Rule
- Be tolerant of differences
- Use good manners, not bad language
- Don't threaten, hit or hurt anyone
- Be considerate of the feelings of others
- Deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements

You don't have to like everyone and you don't have to agree with their opinions or behavior. Everyone has worth as a human being and deserves our respect. Give respect freely, regardless of the respect that you receive.

Respectful communication can be difficult when we disagree with someone. We must be willing to accept that our opinion is not fact; believing in something strongly doesn't make it more true. Communicating with respect requires us to express ourselves in a thoughtful and purposeful way.

### T.E.A.M.

- **Teach:** Show your child how to use the tool below. Teach your children the Golden Rule: Treat others the way you

want to be treated

- **Enforce:** Embrace diversity and cooperation with individuals who are ethnically and culturally different.
- **Advocate:** Talk to your child about the differences between “treating everyone with respect” and admiring them.
- **Model:** Be a good role model by having respectful discussions.

### Discussion starter

Ask your child what they think: are there things that if everyone did it, would it be a bad thing? What if everyone used bad manners? What if no one treated others with respect?

### Excellence and Ethics Tool: Two Steps to Better Communication

#### Try to Understand

Use active listening by restating, in your own words, what you just heard. This helps to make sure that you understand what you are hearing.

Example:

Person 1: “I’m disappointed that you didn’t come to my birthday party.” Person 2: “I understand that you are upset that I didn’t come to your party.”

#### Try to be Understood

Express your thoughts, feelings and expectations without blame, insult or personal attack.

Example:

“I’m disappointed that you didn’t share your new toy.”

Learn more about character education.

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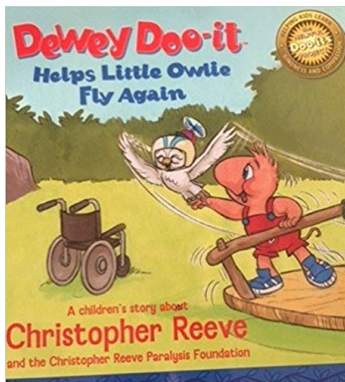
# Expectations of Respect (Grades 6-12)

Students and teachers will use a Gallery Walk activity to define what respectful behavior looks like in the classroom, in the hallways, in the cafeteria, and in their athletics and activities.

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## Books to teach determination

*Dewey Doo-It Helps Little Owlle Fly Again* by Brahm Wegner and Alan Green



**Good for grades: K – 5**

**ISBN-13: 978-0974514314**

When Dewey Doo-it's kite becomes lodged in a tree, the protagonist and his siblings ask renowned flyer Owlle for assistance, but they find the owl in a wheelchair after an accident. He shows the Doo-its how he can paint with his beak and use a special computer despite his disability.

[View on Amazon](#)



## **Zoom! by Robert Munsch**



**Good for grades: 1 – 3**

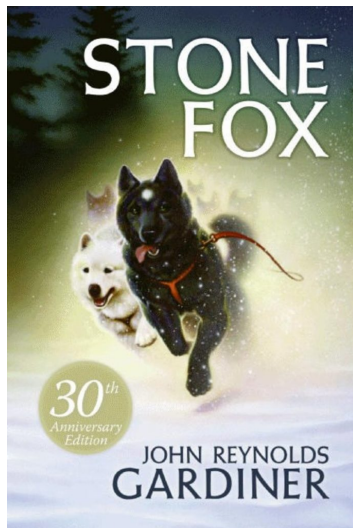
**ISBN-13: 978-0439523493**

Lauretta's mother takes her to buy a new wheelchair, but Lauretta isn't satisfied with a regular five-speed or ten-speed model. No, she insists on the 92-speed, black, silver, and red dirt-bike wheelchair. When she gets a speeding ticket during a one-day tryout, her parents insist that the chair be returned to the store . . . until Lauretta's older brother has an accident and only one person can whisk him to the hospital on time—Lauretta, in her amazing wheelchair!

[View on Amazon](#)

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**Stone Fox by John Gardiner**



**Good for grades: 2 – 5**

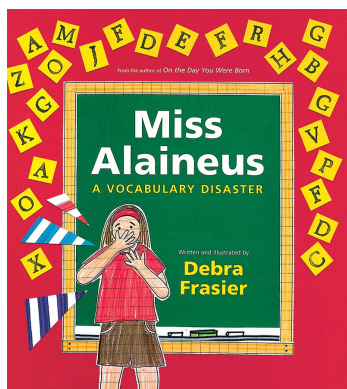
**ISBN-13: 978-0545548229**

Based on a Rocky Mountain legend, *Stone Fox* tells the story of Little Willy, who lives with his grandfather in Wyoming. When Grandfather falls ill, he is no longer able to work the farm, which is in danger of foreclosure. Little Willy is determined to win the National Dogsled Race—the prize money would save the farm and his grandfather. But he isn't the only one who desperately wants to win. Willy and his brave dog Searchlight must face off against experienced racers, including a Native American man named Stone Fox, who has never lost a race.

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***Miss Alaineus: A Vocabulary Disaster* by Debra Frasier**



**Good for grades: 3 – 5**

**ISBN-13: 978-0439317917**

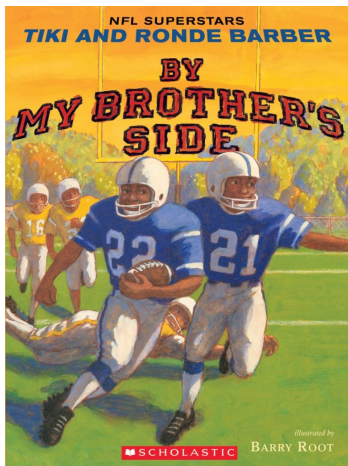
Sage has misheard and misunderstood one of Mrs. Page's weekly vocabulary words. Her error leads to a humbling catastrophe: a momentous tragedy, in front of the entire class. Can Sage turn her vocabulary disaster: an event bringing great misfortune, into a triumph: a true success?

Anyone who has ever been daunted: discouraged or disheartened, by a mere word in the dictionary will cheer wildly: in a manner lacking all restraint, as Sage transforms embarrassment into victory in Debra Frasier's touching story of loving—and mistaking—our glorious language.

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***By My Brother's Side* by Ronde Barber and Tiki Barber**



**Good for grades: 3 – 5**

**ISBN-13: 978-0439802062**

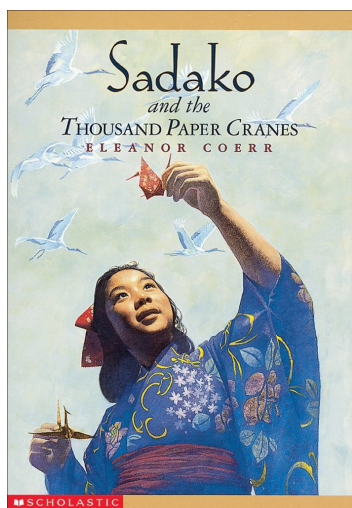
Tiki and Ronde were each other's best friends. Together from the start, these twins might not have been the strongest or the tallest, but they were fast and worked hard at what they loved. And they loved sports, especially football. Then one day Tiki badly hurt his knee in a biking accident, and he was

sure he'd never be able to play again. Their mother had always told them, "You are each other's best friends. Stick together, believe in yourselves, and you can do anything." They kept her words in their hearts and never gave up. Based on the childhood of National Football League superstars Ronde and Tiki Barber, this inspiring book about the values of family, hard work, and determination is the story of what it takes to be a champion.

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### ***Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr**



**Good for grades: 3 – 5**

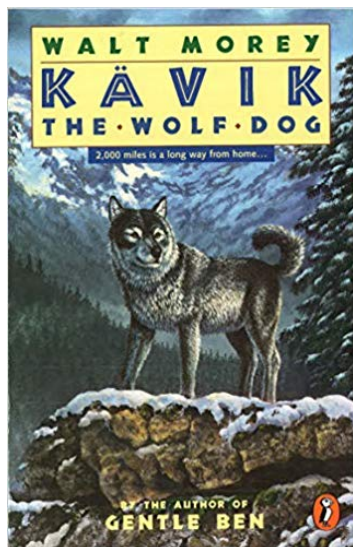
**ISBN-13: 978-0439168243**

Two-year-old Sadako Sasaki was living in Hiroshima when the atom bomb was dropped. Sadly, ten years later, she was diagnosed with leukemia, also known as "atom bomb disease." There is a Japanese legend that says that if a sick person folds 1,000 paper cranes, the gods will make her well again. Sadako spent long hours in bed, folding those paper cranes, and never giving up that hope. When Sadako had folded six hundred and forty-four cranes, and they hung above her bed on strings, her classmates folded the rest.

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***Kavik the Wolf Dog* by Walt Morey**



**Good for grades: 6 – 8**

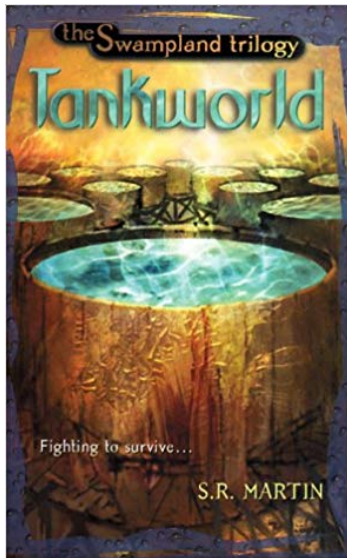
**ISBN-13: 978-0140384239**

When Andy Evans stumbles upon the snow-covered wreckage of a small plane, he's shocked to find a survivor. Should he put the gravely injured dog out of his misery? The look in the animal's eyes says he's not ready to die. It turns out that Kävik's a champion sled dog, and soon he makes a full recovery. When his rightful owner finds out Kävik is alive, he wants the dog back. But Kävik has other ideas.

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***Tankworld* by S.R. Martin**



**Good for grades:** 9 – 12

**ISBN-13:** 978-0439105675

Edie and Zac find themselves in a strange world where children live underground, men ride huge dogs, and feral pigs hunt everyone. A fast-paced and unusual trilogy about teenagers fighting for survival in a world of genetic mutation and warring scientists.

[View on Amazon](#)

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[Learn more about character education.](#)

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## Books to teach trustworthiness

Check out these books for K-12 students to help teach trustworthiness.