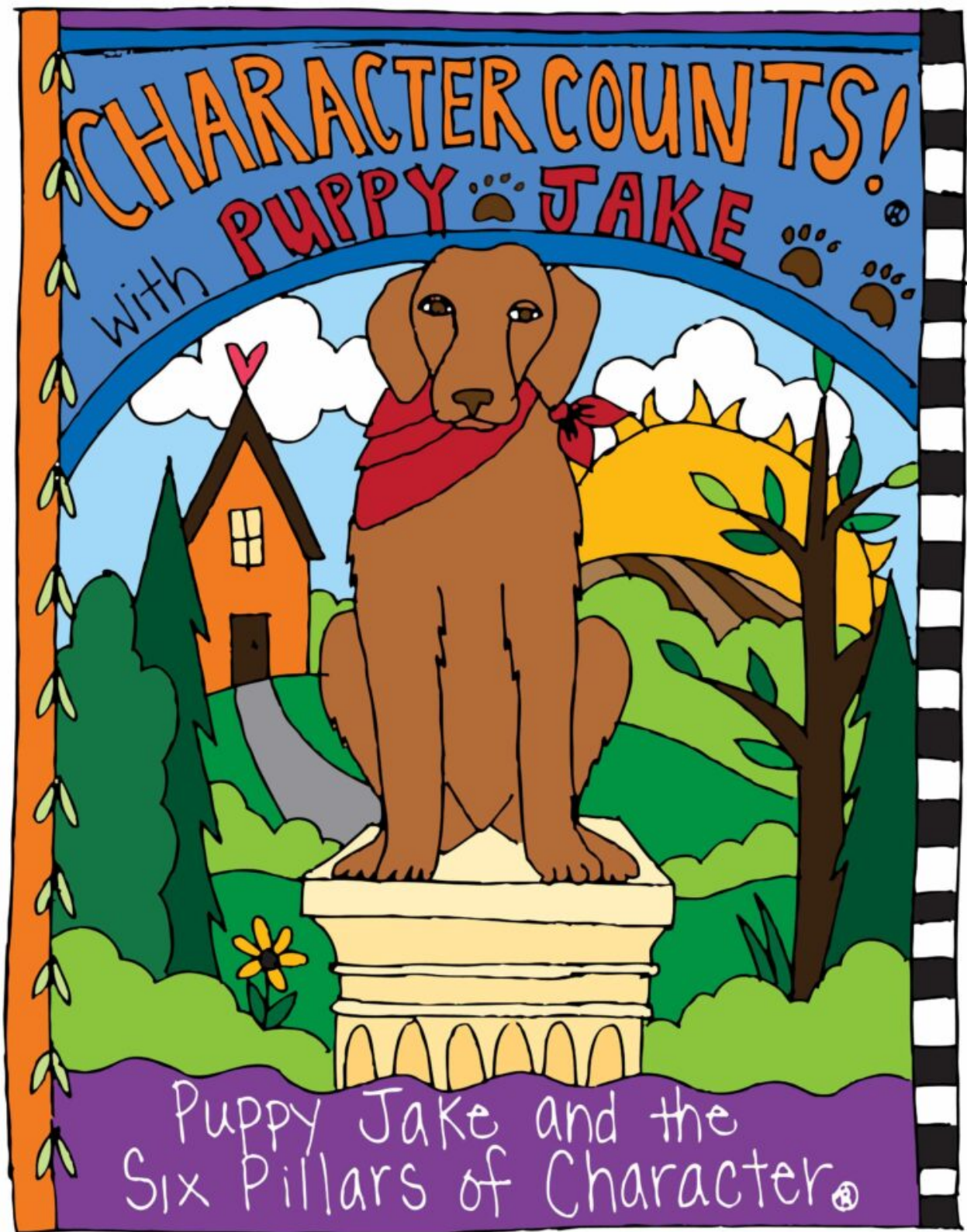


# CHARACTER COUNTS! Coloring Book

Download our CHARACTER COUNTS! with Puppy Jake coloring book.



Special thanks to our friends at the Puppy Jake Foundation and Sticks.

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# Return to Learn: Citizenship

There is, perhaps, no more important time to be a good citizen than during a global pandemic. Through our citizenship, each of us plays a critical role in contributing to the health and well-being of others. Whether returning to the classroom or engaging in online learning, educators, administrators, students, and families have an important role to play in maintaining the health and safety of all parties and contributing to a positive educational environment.

The Leader-to-Detractor tool serves two important purposes. First, it defines what each role – detractor, participant, and leader – looks like in action. Good citizens are able to change detractor behaviors to participant behaviors, and participant behaviors to leader behaviors. Second, one can use the tool reflectively by asking, “were my actions that of a leader, detractor, or participant, and what do I need to do better or differently tomorrow to be a better citizen?”

## LEADER-TO-DETRACTOR SCALE



Adapted from Jeffrey Beedy.

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**Citizenship for Educators:** Educators can use the Leader-to-Detractor tool to define what each role looks like in their classroom (virtual or in-person). You may choose to include leader to detractor behaviors that are specific to following health guidelines as well. Share these definitions with parents so they know what your expectations are as well.

**Citizenship for Students:** Once students have worked with educators or parents on defining what leaders, participants, and detractors look like in action, they can engage in daily self-reflection to gauge their behaviors for the day. Students should note if there are instances in which they are more likely to be a detractor or participant and create and follow a plan to be a leader in every circumstance. Their reflection can be centered on school, home, following health guidelines, or a combination of all three.

**Citizenship for Families:** Families can use the Leader-to-

Detractor tool to identify leader, participant, and detractor behaviors they observe each day. These may be behaviors the student exhibits, or observations of others, whether at the grocery store, at work, or in the community. Ask your student what leader-to-detractor behaviors they notice in others each day, and what could be done better or differently to be a leader in each situation.

Download the Leader-To-Detractor tool.

Learn more about character education.

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## **Making Good Decisions in Tough Times**



We all make countless decisions every day. Should you wear a face mask while out in public? Attend a social justice protest? Confront someone you disagree with?

Some of these decisions have relatively minor consequences (good or bad), while other decisions could have significant implications for us and others. A tool like the Character-in-Action Checklist (below) can help you navigate complicated choices and make the right decision.

When making a decision, ask yourself:

- Will my words and actions be honest, sincere, and reliable?
- If the situation was reversed, is this how I would hope to be treated?
- What are the consequences of my words and actions if I make this choice?
- Is my decision fair to everyone involved in and affected by my actions?
- Is my decision expressing compassion and kindness?
- Would I want to live in a world where everyone makes this choice?

Not every decision will align with each of the Six Pillars of Character. They can come into conflict with each other and even themselves. For example, sometimes the right decision isn't fair to everyone involved. However, by identifying that a decision may not be fair, you can address the issue, explain why you made the decision, and provide support to those who perceive the decision as unfair. Or, sometimes the right choice may be contrary to a previous commitment, thus not in alignment with the trustworthiness test. Knowing this can help you determine how to honor your word when your decision doesn't allow you to keep your word.

We're facing troubling times and we can all contribute to the greater good by making sound decisions that reflect our best




selves.

Excellence with Integrity TOOLS™

## **CHARACTER-IN-ACTION CHECKLIST: SIX PILLARS**

When faced with a choice or dilemma, consider the following:

Would my decisions pass each of these tests?	Yes	No
<b>Trustworthiness Test:</b> Would my words and actions be honest, sincere, and reliable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Respect Test:</b> If the situation was reversed, is this how I would want to be treated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Responsibility Test:</b> What would be the consequences of my words and actions and would I do the right thing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Fairness Test:</b> Would this be fair to everybody involved in and affected by my actions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Caring Test:</b> Would my words and actions express compassion and kindness?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Citizenship Test:</b> Would I want to live in a world where everybody did this?	<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.

Adapted from Lickona & Davidson (2005).

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Learn more about character education.

## Character During Crisis

We are living through challenging and turbulent times. Americans are facing an international health pandemic, financial uncertainty, racial tensions, and civil unrest. It can be easy to feel helpless – wondering what possible impact someone like me can have on such great problems?

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# Way To Go Lesson Plans



CC! can help schools with a resource to provide online lessons for use during this time that schools are closed.

Teachers can share with students a 10-12 minute lesson incorporating compelling images, quotations and thought-



provoking short writing and discussion activities that focus on each of the three core domains of student development: academic, social/emotional and character.

We are providing a number of these lessons free to any teacher that would like to incorporate character into their online learning experiences.

Elementary School Way To Go Lessons

Middle School Way to Go Lessons

High School Way to Go Lessons

Learn more about character education.

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## **Protecting the Environment (Grades K-5)**

There is so much power in the actions of one person. This lesson is designed for students to understand the impact of being an engaged citizen of their community. Citizenship is more than voting and obeying laws. It involves individuals taking responsibility for their duty to protect the environment. This lesson gives students time to discuss solutions to problems they see in their communities around the environment.

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# 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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# The Six Pillars of Character and the Holidays



As we gather around those who are most important to us this holiday season, we should keep in mind the Six Pillars of Character. Each Pillar can offer a new way to spread holiday

cheer and joy to friends, family, coworkers, neighbors and even strangers.

**Trustworthiness** It can take a lot for us to put our trust in someone and for someone to trust us, and the holiday season is a great time to work on building trust. The most simple and straightforward way to build trust is to keep your word. If you say you'll do something, do it. If you make a promise, keep it. During the holidays, we often count on one another to get the gifts, make the food, send the cards out or put up the decorations. By keeping track of and completing your holiday responsibilities you become dependable and build trust. Trust can even be built by inviting new people to your holiday gatherings, cooking a dish for a family in need or shoveling snow for a neighbor.

**Respect** Sometimes respect can get lost in the shuffle of the hectic holidays. When we are in crowded stores it can be easy to get frustrated with store employees or other shoppers. We need to remember that we are all doing our best, but sometimes stress can get the best of us. In these times, we should remember to always treat others how we would want to be treated. Being kind and forgiving to overworked retail employees, letting a busy family go ahead of us in line or using reusable shopping bags shows that we have respect for those around us and the environment. The holidays are all about being grateful, so show those around you that you respect them by following the golden rule.

**Responsibility** If you're the one hosting a holiday gathering, you have a lot of responsibility on your shoulders. Always keep your word and do what you said you were going to do, but don't be afraid to ask for help. If you need friends or family to bring a dish, help you clean up or watch your kids or pets, reach out to them. This can help you meet your responsibilities, but also help show you how responsible others in your life are.



**Fairness** It's always the thought that counts. The holidays are not about comparing gifts that you have given or received. The holidays should be focused on celebrating the relationships of those closest to us. It can be easy to get caught up in the material things and the gift-giving, but making sure that we treat those around us with fairness should be at the forefront of our minds.

**Caring** There are countless ways that we can show that we care this holiday season. We usually show that we care by giving gifts to our loved ones, but we can show that we care in other ways as well. By donating our unused clothing, donating blood, cooking for a family in need or simply sending holiday cards we can show that we are thinking about all members of our community. For those that don't have close families or don't have the means to buy gifts, the holidays can be a difficult time. So, let's show them that we care and want them to have a merry holiday season.

**Citizenship** The holidays are a great time to show that we are dedicated citizens. One of the best and easiest ways we can do this is by supporting local businesses and local restaurants. We can show our support of our communities if we do our holiday shopping at local stores that are run by our neighbors. Going to events put on around the neighborhood is also important. Whether it's a craft fair, a holiday light show or an ice skating event, we can connect with members of our community while supporting those who make our communities so special.

Learn more about character education.

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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.