

Lesson 1: Polished Stones – Pillars of Character

Character Counts Curriculum 2019

Lesson Plan

Lesson Goals

Lesson Goal(s): Polished stones – Pillars of Character:

Key Understanding: Character is what determines how we behave, even when no one is looking.

Objectives:

- ✓ Learn (identify) the six pillars of character
- ✓ Understand what each of the pillars mean
- ✓ Identify key words for each of the pillars.

Background: Teachers and parents talk about having good character, building character, and good character traits — but what does it all mean?

‘In general, people who are considered to have good character often have traits like integrity, honesty, courage, loyalty, fortitude, and other important virtues that promote good behavior. These character traits define who they are as people—and highly influence the choices they make in their lives.

Furthermore, a person with good character does the right thing because they believe it is the right thing to do. They don’t act because someone else is influencing or pressuring them to do so, and they don’t do something just because they want to look good in front of others. They take the right action because it is important to them to live life according to their personal values.’

(Journal Buddies, 2019) <https://www.journalbuddies.com/teacher-parent-resources/what-is-good-character/>

Curriculum Introduction

- ☞ Introduce yourself to the group
- ☞ Stand where everyone can see you and hear what you say

- ◆ Welcome students to Character Counts
- ◆ Provide an overview of the program –preview program and upcoming lessons

Opening Activity– 5 to 10 Minutes

- ☞ Today we are going to talk about ‘character’
 - Display picture/graphic of a popular figure (Simba from the Lion King, any character that they will know about.)
 - Discuss:
 - They are a ‘character’
 - They have expectations given to them by someone else, like in their script
 - The ‘character’ we are going to talk about is you
 - Who decides how you will think and act?

☞ Rough Stones / Smooth Stones

→ Provide each student with a rough stone

- How does the stone feel?
- How might the roughness affect you? (hurts, irritating, uncomfortable to hold)
- What might happen over time if we polish the stone?

Relating Game / Activity Experience (Anchor) 5 minutes

☞ **Explain** that some time we are like a rough stone, we don't know what is right or wrong.

In Your own Words:

→ If we learn how to be a person of good character: trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring and a good citizen; and act with positive character, with practice or polishing we can become a gem of character. Reinforce the idea of expectations of our character.

Creating a Vision – (Add) (Content Delivery)

☞ Share objectives:

- ✓ Learn (identify) the six pillars of character
- ✓ Understand what each of the pillars mean
- ✓ Identify key words for each of the pillars.

☞ **Define character:** (Display definition on poster or smart board)

Dictionary definition: the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual.

→ What does that mean?

A person's character is shown by how they act, think, and feel in life. It isn't just one thing, it's the 'pattern' or a 'model' of how you interact with others and how you treat yourself.

☞ **Share examples:**

→ Possible examples: What do you call your teacher? 'Mr/Mrs.' Which shows respect. Showing respect is part of having good character.

→ Does anyone have a pet? Do you feed and water the pet? That shows you are being responsible, it is another part of having good character.

→ We think of a person with 'good character' as someone practices character traits like 'honesty, respect, responsibility, caring,

Key Point: → **EVEN when no one is looking.**

☞ **Share the six pillars with slide show/poster**

→ The **Six Pillars of Character®** are: **Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship.** <https://charactercounts.org/>

Each Pillar is consistently identified with a color:

Trustworthiness – **Blue**, Respect – **Gold/Yellow**, Responsibility – **Green**, Fairness – **Orange**, Caring – **Red**, Citizenship – **Purple**.

OR

☞ Prepare six large pillars cut from a roll of art paper or poster. Each 'pillar' should be the color of one of the six pillars (Blue, Gold/Yellow, Green, Orange, Red and Purple)

- Handout small pillars, each with characteristics of one of the pillars.
- Lead students to categorize the characteristic on their pillar and post them on the appropriate pillar.
- Students could also have blank pillars on which to write a characteristic of a pillar

☞ **Remember them by thinking: Terrific!**

T - Trustworthiness - Blue

R – Respect – Gold/Yellow

R – Responsibility - Green

F – Fairness - Orange

C – Caring - Red

C- Citizenship - Purple

Application and Reflection (Apply)

☞ **Select one of the following activities**

Option 1: **Six Pillar Play** – Students review situations and identify which pillar is being practiced. Scenarios can be read aloud to all OR , divide students in pairs, distribute scenarios to students to read and discuss

Option 2: **'Who is someone?'** Students identify someone who practices the pillars of character. Students draw a picture of the person and write a few sentences explaining why their person demonstrates good character.

Option 3: **Six Pillars Collage** Students create a collage of the six pillars of character by identifying pictures that represent the pillars, cutting them out and pasting them on poster board.

☞ **Explain that now we have the six pillars of character. Ask students to name the pillars.**

Summarize Key Concepts

→ A person's character is shown by how they act, think, and feel in life. It isn't just one thing, it's the pattern by how you interact with others and how you treat yourself.

→ Character is about 'doing the right thing' even when no one is watching.

Assessment and Goal Setting

☞ Polished Stones

1. Remind students about the stone they had in the beginning. What was it like...
2. Have each student choose a polished stone
3. Note: Our first stone was rough, this one is smooth. Talk about how smooth the stone is to the touch. How did the stone get that smooth? (Polishing over and over.)
4. How can we develop our character? (Practice the pillars over and over.)
5. As each student holds their stone, ask them for one thing they will try to do to show good character or to practice one of the pillars.
6. Wrap up – keep your stones in your pocket. When you feel it, it can remind you to make a good choice, do the right thing, show good character.

➔ *Additional Optional Activities*

☞ Provide students with the Character Scavenger Hunt to complete in pairs or small groups. Review the answers when finished.

OR

☞ Provide each student with a word search 'Six Pillar Puzzle'. Students are to find the words for each pillar, using the color of the pillar to underline or highlight them. Review answers.

Preview Next Lesson

☞ Explain that today we looked at 'Character'. In the next lessons, we will look at each of the pillars of character. The first one is: Trustworthiness!