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INTRODUCTION

Definition of a Teacher

A teacher is someone who takes a bunch of live wires and gets them well grounded

As an educator, I feel it is my responsibility to not only fill students' minds with information in the content areas, but to guide them and provide them with tools which will assist them in becoming a productive member of society. Social skills such as courtesy, respect, work ethic, honesty, boundary setting and having a caring heart are as important, if not more, than what a child produces on a state test.

The pioneer women of long ago knew the value of raising kids of character. During their quilting bee times they would share discipline techniques, and stitch into the fabric of their kids' lives the importance of a life filled with valuable virtues. So it is with the classroom teacher and the parent. Together they weave values daily and impart those values into the design of the whole child.

This easy-to-use resource guide will provide you with creative lesson plans and resources that build kids of character on a foundation of virtues. Ideas for integration in language arts, reading, math, music, art, writing, social studies, and character education are given throughout the pages of this handbook.

Character building topics are woven throughout seasonal lessons. The topic of *time management* as well as the character traits of *courage*, *gratitude*, *respect*, and *self-esteem* are included in the section **Falling for Self-worth** for use during the fall months of September, October and November. A **Winter Wonderland of Values** includes *love*, *kindness*, *responsibility*, and *honesty* throughout the months of December, January, and February. Springing into March, April, May and June, (August can be included) are good virtues dealing with respect, leadership, cooperation and goal setting. The **Tuning up Social Skills** section includes old familiar tunes, with character-building lyrics. A section of personalizable poems is also included. They can serve as springboards for personalized compliments, memories, and "gratitudes" towards faculty and staff members. These poems are delivered by students to the recipients and show kids how to treat fellow staff members with courtesy, kindness and gratitude. The songs promote cooperation and a caring attitude toward faculty and encourage students to perform kind acts in their own lives.

The bibliography gives an overview of library books covering a wide range of character building topics for kids. They are excellent resources for classroom libraries, and tools parents enjoy seeing come home.

BODY PARTS

All rules are related to body parts. To reinforce these rules, students can draw the body part next to the rule. At the beginning of the school year, students can copy these rules and design their picture. The rules can be sent home and signed by the parents.

Mouth

We don't interrupt when others are talking.
We say kind things that will build up one another.

Ears

We listen for instructions.
We listen first then ask questions.

Hands

We keep our hands to ourselves.
No pushing, shoving, or taking things from other's desks.
We respect the property of others.
We raise our hands to speak.

Feet

We walk. We don't run in class.
We do not wander around the room aimlessly.
We ask permission to leave the room.

See also *Classroom Rules Song*® in the back of this book.

STORIES FOR DISCUSSION:

HONESTY

CONCEPT: *The importance of honesty even when loyalty to a friend is involved.*

The Dilemma

Johnny Rogers is a third grader at Soledad Canyon Elementary School. Johnny never tried to work very hard. But everyone in the class liked Johnny and his father always let him take some of his friends camping with their family. Their next camping trip was Saturday and Johnny's father said he could invite three boys to go along.

On Wednesday, Johnny's class had their weekly spelling test. Johnny told some of the boys he was going to "cheat" and have all the words on a paper on his lap. The three boys saw the paper on his lap during the test.

After the teacher had corrected the tests, she told the class how proud she was of Johnny because he was the only one who had spelled all of the words correctly.

- If you were one of the boys who saw Johnny cheat, would you tell the teacher about the paper on his lap?
- Would you keep quiet so that Johnny might invite you to go camping with him?
- How can Johnny be helped?

SPRINGING UP WITH TEST PREPAREDNESS

VIRTUOUS VOCABULARY

This is a good way to integrate state testing review and character education. Review synonyms, multi-meanings, prefix and suffixes using Character Building vocabulary. A team of grade level teachers can brainstorm similar worksheets in the future and keep a file of these test-taking practices.

Check the box beside the word that means the same as the underlined word.

1. The boy showed he cared for his dog and fed him every day.

- kindness
- bones
- mean
- good

2. Susan was sick during the holidays and missed the class party. Nicole was thoughtful and visited her at home. She brought her holiday cards and treats.

- sickness
- respectful
- kind
- trusting

3. Billy was a hard worker and got his assignments done on time.

- fair
- generous
- citizenship
- responsible

4. During the holidays, Pam found some money at the mall. She was truthful and turned it in to the mall security station.

- honest
- happy
- trusting
- thoughtful

continued on next page ►

KINDNESS, KINDNESS EVERYWHERE

To the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle"

Adapted by Carole Cliffe

Kindness, Kindness everywhere,
Show your neighbor that you care.

Lend a helping hand today.

Please and thank you always say.

Kindness, kindness everywhere,
Show your neighbor that you care.

When a frown is on a face,
Give them your smile in its place.

Kindness, kindness, everywhere,
Show your neighbor that you care.

When the workload is so bad,
Lend a hand—make others glad.

Kindness, kindness everywhere,
Show your neighbor that you care.

A better world we will share,
When each day we show we care.

Kindness, Kindness everywhere
Show your neighbor that you care.

*Refer to "Kindness Keepers" in the Winter Wonderland section
on page 76*