



Teacher Tip of the Week

New Teacher Support Program 2008-2009

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Teacher Tip of the Week
New Teacher Support
Program
Wilson County Schools
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What is Character Education?

Developing positive character traits among youth is vital in today's society. Character Education should be infused into the climate and daily routine of schools.

Many different schools, school districts and even states are now requiring that Character Education be specifically addressed in the classroom. Some organizations are even specifically listing the traits to be taught. The Character Education Network has identified the most common and broad-ranging group of character traits:

These character traits are:

Responsibility

Being accountable in word and deed. Having a sense of duty to fulfill tasks with reliability, dependability and commitment.

Perseverance

Pursuing worthy objectives with determination and patience while exhibiting fortitude when confronted with failure.

Caring

Showing understanding of others by treating them with kindness, compassion, generosity and a forgiving spirit.

Self-discipline

Demonstrating hard work controlling your emotions, words, actions, impulses and desires. Giving your best in all situations.

Citizenship

Being law abiding and involved in service to school, community and country.

Honesty

Telling the truth, admitting wrongdoing. Being trustworthy and acting with integrity.

Courage

Doing the right thing in face of difficulty and following your conscience instead of the crowd.

Fairness

Practicing justice, equity and equality. Cooperating with one another. Recognizing the uniqueness and value of each individual within our diverse society.

Respect

Showing high regard for an authority, other people, self and country. Treating others as you would want to be treated. Understanding that all people have value as human beings.

Integrity

A firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values. Being honest, trustworthy and incorruptible.

Patriotism

A love for and loyalty to one's country.

Character education is the deliberate effort to develop virtues that are good for the individual and good for society. The objective goodness of virtues is based on the fact that they:

- Affirm our human dignity
- Promote the well-being and happiness of the individual
- Serve the common good
- Define our rights and obligations

Meet the classical ethical tests of reversibility (Would you want to be treated this way?) and universalizability (Would you want all persons to act this way in a similar situation?).



HELPFUL WEBSITE FOR TEACHERS



<http://www.loc.gov/rr/international/portals.html>

Links to electronic resources from around the world. Great site for geography, government and history teachers.



Cutting Corners

GIVE OUT "CUT" CARDS!

Whenever students catch a mistake you have written on the chalkboard, give them a cut card. The card allows them to cut in line. When they want to use it, they cut and then hand the card to the teacher. Sometimes make purposeful mistakes in grammar and spelling to see how quick they are.

Part Three: Montessori and the Prepared Environment

PART THREE:

MONTESSORI AND THE PREPARED ENVIRONMENT

Italian physician Maria Montessori's work emphasized the idea of the prepared environment: Provide the proper surroundings and tools, so that children can develop their full potential. Montessori materials are carefully selected, designed to help children learn to function in their cultures and to become independent and competent. Emphasis is on beauty and quality, and that which confuses or



clutters is avoided: Manipulative are made of wood rather than plastic tools are simple and functional, and television and computers are discouraged.

The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say, "The children are now working as if I did not exist."—
Marie Montessori

MONTESSORI CLASSROOMS



Next week: [Charlotte Mason and Guiding Natural Curiosity](#)

NOTABLE MONTESSORI BOOKS

[How To Raise An Amazing Child the Montessori Way](#) by Tim Seldin

[Teach Me to Do It Myself: Montessori Activities for You and Your Child](#) by Maja Pitamic

[The Absorbent Mind](#) by Maria Montessori and John Chattin-McNichols

[Montessori Method - Maria Montessori](#) by Maria Montessori

[Montessori: A Modern Approach](#) by Paula Polk Lillard



“No one has yet realized the wealth of sympathy, the kindness and generosity hidden in the soul of a child. The effort of every true education should be to unlock that treasure.”

—Emma Goldman



**Wishing you a
rewarding
Fall Break
October 4-19**

**Find time to
rejuvenate, rejoice
and rest.**

**Terry Edwards
New Teacher
Support Program**

New Teacher Support Participants:



Blake Hall
Mt. Juliet High School
Algebra 1B & Geometry

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I became a teacher because when I got to college I knew my major at the time (broadcasting) would not meet my needs as a professional. One day my senior math teacher, Beverly Sharpe, came to mind and I remembered what a difference she made in my educational life and I knew that I wanted to be as good as an influence for students as he was for me. So I went and signed up immediately and changed my major."—
Blake Hall



Teari Humphreys
Mt. Juliet Middle School
6th grade Science

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I have a passion for working with students."—**Teari Humphreys**

Take Time for "Talk Time"

Building student confidence is one of the key elements to develop motivation which leads to success, states middle school teacher Maryann Foster.

"I find something good to say to each student on a daily basis," she explains. "A pat on the back, a smile, a bit of enthusiasm, and a little love helps everyone become successful."

"We work hard on our assignments and at the end of the hour we take time for 'Talk Time,'" she says.

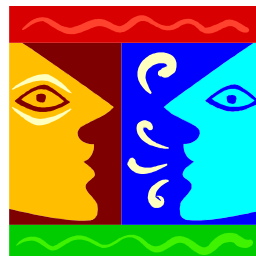
Talk Time, she explains, is five minutes of

discussion about a particular character trait on which adolescent students need to work.

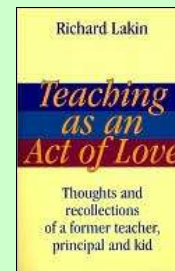
Foster says these traits include optimism, justice, honesty, sincerity, loyalty, modesty, and many others. (Character Education principles would work great for this activity!)

"The talks center around a situation where a lack of character has resulted in problems," she says. "The students try to redirect the scene and add a value to change the outcome."

"It is hard to believe, but students actually look forward to these talks and give examples of ways they have grown in a particular virtue."—*Better Teaching*



From the Bookshelf:



Teaching as an Act of Love: Thoughts and Recollections of a Former Teacher, Principal and Kid by **Richard Lakin**

A former elementary school teacher and principal conveys in a collection of thought-provoking, humorous and heartwarming pieces that teaching and learning are essentially acts of love.

Written from the heart, with humor and insight, Lakin expresses very clearly the role of the connection needed between staff and student for real learning and growth to take place. He finds realistic and caring answers to complicated, everyday problems both students and teachers face. This book is an authentic look into a world of stressed students and school staff. You will laugh with delight, cheer on students and teachers, and tear up as you recognize and salute a true educator.



Oh, the Places You'll Go!
By Dr. Seuss

Ages 9-12



Master Teacher Tips...

Student Relationships

Remember, students will know you are one of their best teachers if you accept the fact that both you and they will make mistakes. If you acknowledge your mistakes easily, openly, and quickly, students will give you an even higher rating. On the other hand, any effort you make to minimize your mistakes will affect your relationships with students adversely—and effect your ability to correct their errors.

Many students would like to talk to a teacher. But they don't want to talk in the presence of classmates—and they want to make absolutely sure that what they want to talk about will not be told to anyone else. To meet this student need and expectation, pay attention to verbal signs and body language that indicate students want to talk to you. When you notice the signs, simply test the water by saying, "Do you have something on your mind that you want to talk about privately?" You may be surprised how many take you up on the offer. Just be aware that the conversation may range from academic fears to peer pressures to family problems to help in making a decision.



Teacher FAQ

QUESTION: How can I find out whether or not students are following and understanding the course materials? How can I identify soon enough those students who are not prepared or do not come with the skills and background adequate for ensuring their success in my course?

ANSWER: The more often you evaluate, the easier it is to find out if students are on track or not. It's important to have an early evaluation and give timely feedback so you can identify those students coming into the course with sub-par skills and can get them connected with remedial help early, and they either get an early signal they're going to have to do something if they are in trouble or get affirmation and a challenge to explore the subject more deeply the way the best students in a class can (you can use some version of that phrase on feedback to strong students) when they have all the requisite skills in place. In deciding on the number of assignments, you do have to balance what's ideal for students with what's practical for you given your overall responsibilities. Asking questions of students in class can be a form of evaluation too. You might try asking, "Can someone (or a specific student) put into her or his own words the point I've just made?" If you do this frequently, it primes students to be attentive because they might get called on.

For a Laugh!

