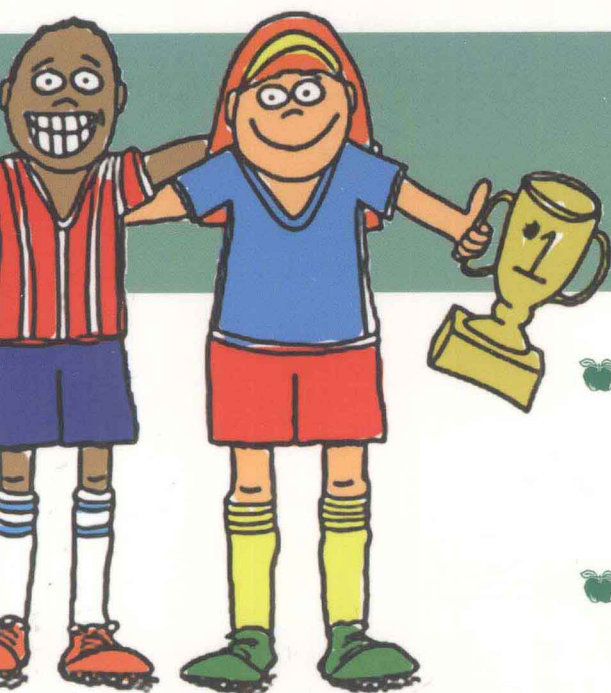


The Organized Teacher's Guide to

Building Character



An Encyclopedia of Ideas to
Bring Character Education
into Your Curriculum



Full of Ready-to-Use Lesson
Plans, Projects, and Materials



Help Your Students Be the Best
That They Can Be



**Steve Springer, M.A., Michael Becker, M.A.,
and Kimberly Persiani-Becker, Ed.D.**

Extra Checklists and Templates on a Handy **CD-ROM**

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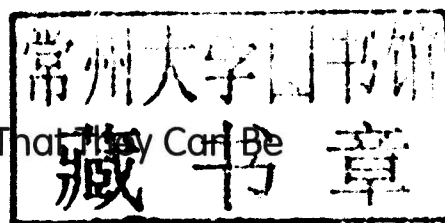
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The accompanying disk contains PDF files of the reproducible materials contained in this book, so you may print them instead of photocopying. The disk will open on any computer, and the files are named by the corresponding book page numbers. The free version of Adobe Acrobat must be installed on your computer in order to use these files. You may download that software at <http://get.adobe.com>.

For Windows:

1. Insert the disk into your disk drive.
2. Click on the disk to open via My Computer.
3. Two folders will appear, **Character Tools** and **Organizers & Templates**, corresponding to book Chapters 13 and 14.
4. Locate the file name that you wish to print, and click on the file to open the page.
5. Print as usual.

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1. Insert the CD-ROM into your CD-ROM drive.
2. Double-click on the CD-ROM icon.
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4. Locate the file name that you wish to print, and click on the file to open the page.
5. Print as usual.

Some files have features that you can manipulate. The reward certificates found on pages 271–279 appear on the disk in several formats, including a version that you can print and fill in by hand, as well as a version (indicated by [e] in the file name) that you can fill in electronically and then print.

Introduction

During their Masters program at Concordia University in Irvine, California, Steve and Michael took a course titled “Developing Character and Ethics.” For their final projects, they developed ten months of lesson ideas for several character traits, such as responsibility and respect, diligence and perseverance, friendship and loyalty, and courage. The ultimate goal was to implement the lesson ideas in their own classrooms.

The project was time-consuming. Steve and Michael spent weeks preparing their projects, performing research, reading a variety of picture books, watching movies and television shows, seeking information from relevant textbooks and the Internet, tapping into their own professional development and teaching experiences, and conferring with other teachers about what they do in the classroom to instill character. Having observed both of them diligently create these year-long curriculum projects, I asked if they would collaborate with me in turning their projects into a book on teaching character education—a subject that is not new, but for which a book is desperately needed. Each lesson was implemented with real students in an actual classroom setting. From these experiences, many of the original lesson ideas from their course projects were adjusted, deleted, or supplemented.

In addition to a mandated reading and math curriculum, teachers must fit science, social studies, physical education, health, and the arts into their daily lesson plans. This leaves little time to teach additional areas such as character education. Parents may put a lot of time and energy into modeling for and teaching their children manners, doing the right thing, making good decisions in relation to others, and seeing the big picture in regard to school and community, but support from teachers bolsters the parents’ efforts and reinforces positive behavior.

Teacher support is vitally important in communities with high foster-home rates, where parents have to work several jobs to make ends meet, or where children of divorced parents are sharing time between two homes and the parents don’t spend as much time with their children as they would like. In fact, the three of us have dedicated our lives to working with children and families like these. Teaching character education in conjunction with the parents can be a huge benefit to all.

The Organized Teacher’s Guide to Building Character not only enhances the curriculum and provides the means to help students become productive members of society, but achieves this through activities like writing, reading, graphic organizers, art, analysis of scenarios and movies, script development, oral presentations, and role-playing. This book will be a valuable resource for K–8 teachers, for parents who homeschool their children, for school counselors who lead group discussions, and especially for professionals who lead groups in anger management or for children who have ADHD or difficulty

controlling their impulses. This book will also be a useful tool for homeroom teachers who meet with students for a short period each day or for longer periods throughout the week.

By implementing the many lesson ideas in this book, teachers and parents can begin or continue to make progress in developing children of good character who want to better themselves and, in turn, make the world a better place. Children build character first within their families and among their friends; in time, character-building filters into their school and community and toward others in need. We hope that *The Organized Teacher's Guide to Building Character* serves you and your students well.

Kimberly Persiani-Becker, Ed.D.
Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction
California State University, Los Angeles

Making This Book Work for You

The first ten chapters of *The Organized Teacher's Guide to Building Character* include an abundance of detailed lesson ideas for teaching character, one or two character traits per chapter. For each character trait, we encourage you to read the book summaries in the Annotated Bibliography, as well as the summaries for DVDs, movies, and television shows. In this way, you'll be able to decide whether or not you want to invest time seeking copies through the library, movie rental, a friend, or another teacher, or even invest money to purchase copies. Numerous lessons are based on these books, DVDs, movies, and television shows, but these materials may not be available to you at school or at your community library. If a resource is unavailable, you may be able to find a suitable substitute in your own classroom closet or library. However you choose to teach the character trait, whether with our suggested resources or your own, the lessons will serve as your guide. In addition, the list of online resources directs you to websites that expand or provide additional lesson ideas or that include related articles that teachers and parents will find valuable.

The lessons connect with much of the rest of the curriculum. For example, when teaching fairness, the teacher can conduct a lesson in breaking a candy bar into fractions and discussing how fairness plays a role in equality. Many of the character trait lessons include components about the community, which directly connects to social studies. Several of the lessons incorporate historical figures. There are also many opportunities for writing, reading, and dialogue, which go hand in hand with language arts.

Chapter 11 contains great ideas for motivating students. The lessons in this book serve as excellent examples of character, and the ultimate goal is for students to apply what they have learned. As students demonstrate examples of a character trait, the teacher can encourage this by using the motivators, either with the entire class or with individual students. Since students vary from class to class and individual to individual, it is important to know them and choose the best motivators for them. Some students may not need motivation; simply calling attention to good character is enough to motivate them. For others, the strategies provided in Chapter 11 will be powerful motivators.

Many of the lessons in Chapters 1–10 include the art activities that are found in Chapter 12. These can be used for any of the character traits. Creating is a powerful way to engage students—allowing students to “show” what they have learned—and to bring about meaningful learning experiences. Many of these activities can serve as bulletin board material, so that students are constantly reminded about what they are learning or have learned. Some teachers have difficulty incorporating art into the curriculum—they may not know how to do so or what steps to take. Chapter 12 will help teachers who struggle

with this curriculum area. In addition, *The Organized Teacher* and *The Creative Teacher* contain other art activity ideas that can be used to implement the lesson ideas in this book.

The organizers in Chapter 13 are referenced in many of the lessons in Chapters 1–10. These are especially useful in introducing each character trait. Many of the organizers can be used for each trait; examples are the Character Trait Hunt Organizer, Web Organizer, Inventory, Journal Page Template, and Word Analysis Organizer. Students may even create their own organizers, using our organizers as models. The teacher may copy organizers on a transparency or chart paper, then have students recreate the organizers in their own journal or notebook.

Several of the character traits overlap in many ways. For this reason, we have included several items for copying in Chapter 14. Character Scenario cards are provided for each of the character traits. These can be used to pose questions, to elicit conversations in small group settings, and as writing prompts. Character Tickets may be given to students “caught” demonstrating the character trait for the month. The tickets may be used by students to win prizes, class parties, and the like. Character Bookmarks are provided for each of the character traits; students may color these bookmarks, then laminate them, and use them throughout the unit as a reminder of what they are learning. Character Trait Certificates may be awarded at the conclusion of a unit to those students who have demonstrated exceptional understanding of the character trait being taught. Character Trait Word Cards may be colored, laminated, and hung by students throughout the school year as a reminder of what they have learned and accomplished; they may also serve as occasional timely reminders.

Another important component of the lesson ideas is the group strategies in Chapter 15. “Talk time” is important to students. While it is easy for a teacher to dominate discussion and deliver instructions to students, real learning often occurs when students can discuss information and draw their own conclusions. The group strategies contain a variety of ways to facilitate student discussions and can be used with any of the character traits. The teacher should use group strategies that fit his or her style and that of the students. Varying these approaches will make classroom discussions more interesting for the teacher and the students.

Because many students are homeschooled today, we have included a home component in many of the lessons. Most lessons can be easily tailored to homeschooled students.

We often refer to other teacher resource books we have written (with Brandy Alexander): *The Organized Teacher* and *The Creative Teacher*. These books can supplement the character trait lesson ideas here with more general lesson ideas. For example, *The Organized Teacher* includes several classroom incentive ideas that can be used as motivators, as well as many general art activities and traditional book report forms that can be applied to any of the character traits. Chapter 1 of *The Creative Teacher* is full of nontraditional book report ideas, ways to organize information, interview procedures for authors and characters in stories, graphic organizers, and art ideas.

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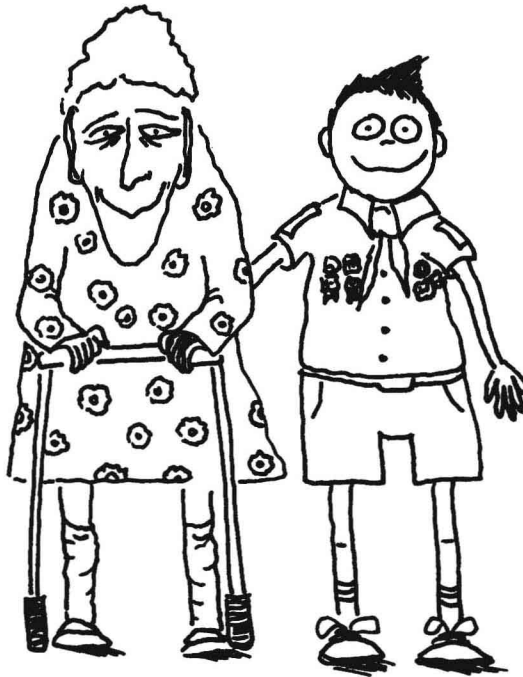
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I

Lesson Ideas for the Year

FIRST MONTH OF SCHOOL

Responsibility and Respect



Your family is at a neighborhood function—perhaps a church gathering, a street barbecue, or a car wash fund-raiser for your school—and one of your friends begins to make fun of an elderly person using a walker. What are some things you can do?

First Month of School

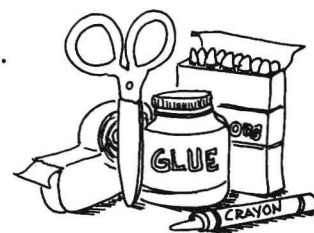
The best time to discuss responsibility and respect is at the very beginning of the school year. As you and your students develop classroom expectations, rules, and boundaries through a democratic process, you can make a conscious effort to teach your students about important character traits such as responsibility and respect. This is an opportunity to teach them about being responsible not only at school, but also at home and within their community. They will learn about respect for the environment, as well as for diversity of people.



List of Activities and/or Lesson Ideas



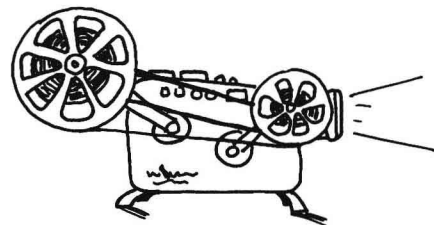
- Students brainstorm using the Web Organizer and then write sentences or an essay using the organizer.
- Students create and role-play scripts about responsible behavior.
- After hearing *Being Responsible: A Book About Responsibility* by Mary Small read aloud, students illustrate and label two ways in which characters from the book show responsibility.
- Students write about and/or illustrate situations that compare and contrast responsibilities of today with those of long ago.
- Students develop a Class Pledge/Slogan/Mantra Poster about being responsible at school.
- Students critique a television show about characters showing responsibility.
- Students create a Responsibility Flower with at least five petals to show responsibilities that they have either at home or at school.
- Students develop a responsibility list and use it in developing classroom rules.
- Students discuss the meaning of responsibility as represented in quotations provided.
- Students write one to three paragraphs describing the importance of exercising their responsibility to protect the rain forests.
- After hearing *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss read aloud, students develop a class list of environmental hazards and their effects by completing the Character Trait Cause and Effect Organizer.
- Students take responsibility for recycling school paper and lunch materials.
- Students work in groups to create posters promoting the school recycling program, reminding students and staff what is recyclable, and pointing out why it is so important to recycle.
- Students write about a story that demonstrates responsibility from the website karmatube.org.



- Using given scenarios, students create a skit that demonstrates a responsible outcome and perform it for the whole class.
- Students view an episode of *The Little Rascals* and critique it for responsible behavior shown by the characters.
- Students use new vocabulary to write about which responsibilities they feel are most important for citizens and why they feel this way.
- After students listen to the book *Angel Child, Dragon Child* by Michele Maria Surat, they develop a class list of respectful behavior.
- Students make a list of do's and don'ts for treating people with respect.
- Students role-play respectful behavior through puppets.
- Students identify respectful and disrespectful behavior in their favorite television show.
- Students create posters illustrating what “respect” looks like.
- Students use synonyms to develop a list of compliments to demonstrate that it's more respectful to compliment than to criticize.
- Students create a class list of examples showing what respect means in terms of inclusion and diversity.
- Students view an episode of *The Simpsons* that shows respectful and/or disrespectful behavior.
- Using a Venn Diagram Organizer, students learn about their similarities and differences and write about them in a respectful way.
- Students create posters showing respectful language versus disrespectful language.
- Students work in groups to create a skit that demonstrates respect and disrespect in the same scene.
- Students make cards for people living in a local shelter or convalescent home.
- Students write and perform a poem or song about respect.

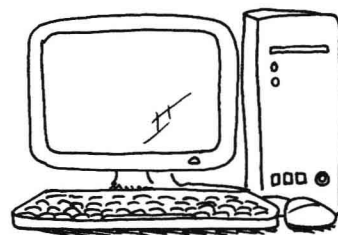
Recommended Movies/Videos/ Television Programs

- Television: *The Simpsons*, other animated television show, family sitcom, or cartoon



Resources

- Cooperative Children's Book Center—<http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc>
The Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) is a vital gathering place for books, ideas, and expertise.



- EdHelper.com— www.edhelper.com
“Jean Learns About Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens,” reading handout with additional materials, by Patti Hutchison
- KarmaTube—www.karmatube.org
KarmaTube is a collection of short, “do something” videos coupled with simple actions that every viewer could perform.
- KidSource online—<http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content/behavior.html>
“Helping Your Child Learn Responsible Behavior with Activities for Children,” edited by Theodor Rebarber
- Dr. Robyn Silverman—<http://drrobyn.wordpress.com/2008/04/12/10-tips-on-teaching-respect-to-children-you-cant-get-it-if-you-dont-give-it/>
“10 Tips on Teaching Respect to Children: You can’t get it if you don’t give it!” by Dr. Robyn J.A. Silverman
- *The Creative Teacher*. Steve Springer, Brandy Alexander, and Kimberly Persiani-Becker. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006. (ISBN 9780071472807)

Annotated Bibliography

- Avi. *The Secret School*. 2003. (ISBN 9780152046996)
In 1925, a fourteen-year-old girl secretly takes over as teacher when her one-room schoolhouse in rural Colorado is closed a month and a half before the summer break. Ida Bidson protests, because without exit exams she cannot move on to high school in the fall. She takes over, swearing the students to secrecy. It’s no easy task, and she takes on great responsibility along with her farm chores and her own studies. When the county examiner discovers the secret, he agrees to keep it, but only if all the students take a final exam. (Responsibility, Grades 5–8)
- Brinckloe, Julie. *Fireflies*. 1986. (ISBN 9780689710551)
A young boy is proud of having caught a jar full of fireflies, which seems to him like owning a piece of moonlight, but as the light begins to dim he realizes he must set the insects free or they will die. (Responsibility, Grades K–3)
- Cherry, Lynne. *The Great Kapok Tree: A Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest*. 2000. (ISBN 9780152026141)
A man goes into the rain forest one day to chop down a great kapok tree. He soon grows tired and falls asleep. Animals of the forest come to him to ask him to spare their home. When he awakes and sees the animals, he leaves the rain forest without chopping down the tree. (Responsibility, Grades K–3)
- Fox, Mem. *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge*. 1989. (ISBN 9780916291266)
Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge lives next door to a nursing home in which several of his friends reside. His favorite is Miss Nancy Alison Delacourt Cooper, because she has four names just like he does. The only problem is that Miss Nancy, who is 96, has “lost” her memory. Wilfred sets out to “find” Miss Nancy’s memory for her. (Respect, Grades K–8)



- Kunjufu, Jawanza. *A Culture of Respect*. 2007. (ISBN 9781934155066)
This book emphasizes the value of space that supports mutual respect among teachers and classmates. It helps to foster a sense of courtesy in students, leading to a calmer, more focused classroom. (Respect, Grades K–2)
- Loewen, Nancy. *Do I Have To?: Kids Talk About Responsibility*. 2002. (ISBN 9781404800304)
An advice-column format is used to define responsibility as a character value and demonstrate how it can be used in daily situations. (Responsibility, Grades K–4)
- Nelson, Robin. *Respecting Others*. 2003. (ISBN 9780822512868)
This book serves as an introduction to respecting yourself, friends, parents, teachers, people you don't know, and the earth, with specific examples of how to show respect at home and at school. (Responsibility, Grades 2–5)
- Raatma, Lucia. *Responsibility*. 2001. (ISBN 9780736891561)
This book explains what responsibility is and how readers can practice it at home, at school, in the community, and with each other. (Responsibility, Grades K–3)
- Roberts, Cynthia. *Responsibility*. 2007. (ISBN 9781592966769)
Real-life examples show young people taking responsibility for chores and tasks. (Responsibility, Grades 3–6)
- Seuss, Dr. *The Lorax*. 1971. (ISBN 9780394823379)
Long before saving the earth became a global concern, Dr. Seuss, speaking through his character the Lorax, warned against mindless progress and the danger it posed to the earth's natural beauty. In this classic story, the Once-ler describes how his greedy actions destroyed a beautiful and thriving environment. There are subtle messages about the negative effects of deforestation, habitat destruction, and air and water pollution. (Responsibility, Grades K–6)
- Silverstein, S. (1986). *The Giving Tree*. (ISBN 9780060256654)
This story is told throughout the life of a boy as he grows to adulthood and the tree that selflessly gives him her resources throughout the years. It reminds us about the gift of giving and the capacity to love. (Responsibility, Grades K–8)
- Small, Mary. *Being Responsible: A Book About Responsibility*. 2006. (ISBN 9781404817883)
Young people are shown taking responsibility for chores and tasks in real-life examples. (Responsibility, Grades K–3)
- Surat, Michele Maria. *Angel Child, Dragon Child*. 1989. (ISBN 9780590422710)
A young girl named Ut encounters difficulties with children at school because they see only how she seems different from them. They learn, however, that all people have the same feelings. (Respect, Grades K–5)

Teaching Tools

Definitions

What does “responsibility” mean? Those who follow directions and are good listeners show responsible behavior. People who show responsibility help others as well as themselves, and they are accountable for their own behavior.



What does “respect” mean? People who show respect treat others the way they want to be treated. They are courteous and polite toward one another; they honor others and their viewpoints. People who show respect are considerate of their surroundings and their environment, in addition to people.



Responsibility Quotations

- “It is not only for what we do that we are held responsible, but also for what we do not do.” (Molière)
- “Life is a gift, and it offers us the privilege, opportunity, and responsibility to give something back by becoming more.” (Anthony Robbins)
- “Life is a promise; fulfill it.” (Mother Teresa)
- “No alibi will save you from accepting the responsibility.” (Napoleon Hill)
- “If you want children to keep their feet on the ground, put some responsibility on their shoulders.” (Abigail Van Buren)



Respect Quotations

- “Respect for ourselves guides our morals; respect for others guides our manners.” (Laurence Sterne)
- “They cannot take away our self-respect if we do not give it to them.” (Mahatma Gandhi)
- “When men and women are able to respect and accept their differences, then love has a chance to blossom.” (John Gray)
- “I must respect the opinions of others even if I disagree with them.” (Herbert Henry Lehman)
- “If one doesn’t respect oneself, one can have neither love nor respect for others.” (Ayn Rand)