

# CHARACTER EDUCATION

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

APRIL 2010



CHARACTER — THE CORE OF OUR LIVES

**TOLERANCE:** Recognizing and respecting differences, values and beliefs of other people.

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“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”  
- Martin Luther King, Jr.

“We have conquered time and space, but we still have no vaccine against bigotry and prejudice.”  
- Abraham Foxman

“A person who flows in the peace and harmony of the oneness of humanity is tolerant of all people.”  
- Confucius

“People tolerate those they fear further than those they love.”  
- Edgar Watson Howe

“Every bigot was once a child free of prejudice.”  
- Mary de Lourdes

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing.”  
- Edmund Burke

“I have a dream...that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”  
- Martin Luther King, Jr.

“We can learn a lot from crayons. Some are sharp, some are pretty, some are dull, some have weird names and all are different colors... but they all have to live in the same box.”  
- Unknown



### Attention: K-2 Teachers

Your media specialist may request a “We Are Family” video from Renee Brown via CAB to show to your class to introduce and complement the following activities. We only have one video per school.

- Prepare your students for storytelling by beginning with a discussion about family. Ask the children to think about the different characters they saw in the video who sang about being a family. Who was in the family? Highlight the many varied members of the family in the video – animals, people, etc. Ask the children why they think the characters are a family. What makes them a family? (Reinforce ideas such as caring about one another, spending time together, sharing experiences, etc.).

SS.912.C.2.5, SS.912.C.2.8

- In your classroom discussion, introduce the idea of “resemblance” by encouraging the children to talk about “looking alike and looking different.” Talk about how people in families sometimes look alike or “resemble” one another but sometimes they do not. Ask the students to talk about the ways they look similar to and different from members of their family.

None

- Encourage students to discuss the various languages spoken in their families. Talk about the fact that people in a family may all speak the same language or several languages. With older students, talk about how members of each family may come from several different countries or just one country.

SS.912.C.3.15, SS.912.A.7.16

- Read *Angel Child, Dragon Child* by Michele Maria Surat to the class. Discuss the story. Use chart paper to record the students’ comments. Why is this story especially appropriate for tolerance month?

None

- Ask students what makes each of them what they are. Discuss the consequences of not accepting people's differences.

SS.912.C.3.15, SS.912.A.7.16

- Ask students the following questions:
  - How many of you came to the United States from another country?
  - How many of you started school somewhere else?
  - How many of you remember being the “new kid” in school or in your neighborhood?
  - How many of you remember being the “new kid” in an after-school program or on a sports team?Allow students time to write and illustrate their feelings about the previous questions. \* \*

SS.912.A.7.11, SS.912.A.7.16

- A child from a different racial, cultural, or ethnic background being teased, bullied or rejected by his or her peers occurs in schools and communities. Ask the students if this has ever happened to any of them. How did they feel? What is a good way to prevent it from happening to other students?

None



- Discuss with the class the concept of perceived differences. Have students write about how it feels to be made fun of because of their perceived differences. \*\*

SS.912.A.7.11, SS.912.A.7.16

- Have students write a story about a time when they were teased, left out, bullied, or discriminated against. How did the problem start? Who was involved? How did the people involved think and feel about what happened? How did it turn out? \*\*

None

- Have students verbalize their feelings about being different. How might they feel if they were treated in hurtful ways because of their eyes, skin color, height, weight, disability, or areas over which they have no control?

None

- Have students locate the human body in an encyclopedia or online database and notice the body parts. Explain that every human being has a heart, lungs, stomach, kidneys, and liver, regardless of what color or race they are, and that it is the outside of the human body that makes us unique. Each of us is different in some way and we should celebrate these differences as they make our world exciting and interesting. Discuss the following questions: How do you think you would feel if you looked like everyone else? How do you think you would feel if someone made fun of you because you looked or acted differently?

SS.912.A.7.16, SS.912.C.3.13

- Read to the class and discuss: "Mary's grandmother is getting older and sometimes she has a hard time remembering things. Many times she will tell the same story over and over again. Mary told her grandmother that she was tired of hearing her stories and walked out of the house." Ask the class how they think her grandmother felt and what they think of Mary's behavior. Ask students to write about what they would do in this situation. \*\*

None

- Discuss the following: "Richard laughs and makes fun of people who are overweight. Other students find Richard's behavior intolerable." Ask the class what they could do in this situation. Discuss the consequences of their choices.

SS.912.C.3.12, SS.912.A.7.14

- Have students interview a student in their class/school who is from a culture different from their own and write a story about this student describing what they learned about him/her. Ask students to describe outward differences but focus on the similarities with themselves. Share their stories. \*\*

None

- Have students write an essay on how to show tolerance for the wild animals that share their environment and/or their neighborhoods. \*\*

SS.912.C.2.5, SS.912.C.2.8



- Read the following scenario: “There are a group of three students standing together when another student walks by. One of the students makes a loud, derogatory statement about that student. One of the students in the group tells the boy who made this statement that he is being intolerant. The boy asks what he means by that. The boy tells him that he is unwilling to give the boy the respect that he would want for himself.” Discuss what this statement means and why this is important.

None

- Discuss the following with the class: “A synonym for tolerance is being charitable. To be charitable means: “full of love for and goodwill toward others.” Discuss whether they think these words have the same meaning or if they have different and distinct meanings.

None

- Tell the class that there are people who hate other people whom they do not know. Ask students to write a letter stating why they think this is wrong. \*\*

SS.912.C.2.8, SS.912.A.7.15

- Ask students to select a quotation listed on the front of this activity sheet and write about what it means to them. \*\*

SS.912.A.1.1, SS.912.A.1.4

- Write the word TOLERANCE on the board. Around the word, map the following words: endurance, open-mindedness, patience, stamina, and forbearance. Have students brainstorm what these words mean to them.

SS.912.A.1.1, SS.912.A.1.4

- Read the following scenario: “A UFO lands in Broward County. The crew is from Pluto where tolerance is very important.” Have students imagine that they are the earthlings and have been asked to explain humans to the crew. The aliens want them to explain how humans get along and if they are tolerant. Have students write a list of how humans are tolerant. \*\*

SS.912.A.1.3, SS.912.C.2.7

- Assign a topic to students on either ethnic cleansing or genocide. Students may choose Rwanda, Kosovo, Bosnia, Nazi Holocaust, Cambodia and Laos, Stalin’s ethnic cleansing in Eastern Poland, 90-year Greek ethnic cleansing of Bulgarians in Macedonia, or genocide in Northern Uganda. Have the students research their assigned topic, write a report or create a multimedia presentation, and present their findings to the class. Have the students discuss how a lack of tolerance for other ethnic groups led to ethnic cleansing and genocide. \*\*

SS.912.A.1.1, SS.912.C.4.3



## HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS



- Have students create a “Welcome Buddy” system in the class and design a welcome bag for new students. These bags may include items and information that would make a new student feel welcome. As new students enter, introduce the new student to his or her buddy group and present them with a welcome bag.

None

- Discuss with students what individuals can do to prevent prejudice. Have partners brainstorm “Prejudice Dos and Don'ts.” Using outlines of fire hats, write on each one a tip to combat the fires of prejudice. Create a bulletin board, “How to Stomp out the Fires of Prejudice.”

SS.912.A.7.15, SS.912.A.7.16

- Have the class role-play the following: “You and your friend approach another student on the playground. He asks you to play but says that he doesn't want to play with your friend. What could you do?”

Stop and think: Do I want to join in? They want me but not my friend.

Decide what to say: “I want my friend to play, too.”

He answers, “No.”

In a friendly way, say “Then I won't play.”

Have students discuss a time when they defended a friend.

None

- Brainstorm with the class a list similar to the following:

Students born in another country

Students who speak another language

Students who are the oldest child in their family

Students who are the youngest child in their family

Students who are the only children in their family

Students who live with Mom, Dad, grandparents

Under each phrase, write the students' names that identify themselves with that category.

Graph the results of the answers.

SS.912.A.1.4, SS.912.A.7.16

- Part of being tolerant is being open to learning about other people. Have students illustrate some of the new things they have learned about others in the class (e.g., native dress, customs, and family traditions, etc.) \*\*

SS.912.A.1.1, SS.912.A.1.4

- Ask students what we mean when we say, “The more you know, the less you fear.” Have students think of scenarios and act out situations where this holds true.

None





## HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS



- Have students make a giant class Venn Diagram showing similarities and differences among the members of the class. Have a recorder keep track of whether there are more similarities among the classmates or more differences.

SS.912.A.1.2, SS.912.A.1.4

- Hold up a storybook that has a dust cover (paper cover). The actual jacket should be covered with the dust jacket from another book. The jacket should be something that the teacher knows is boring to the students. Ask how many students want to hear the story depicted on the jacket. (Expect complaints about the book.) Take off the incorrect jacket and reveal the actual book underneath. Tell the students they have just learned the adage, "Don't judge a book by its cover." Discuss with students their reactions. Have students choose their favorite book and design a cover that reflects the story on one side and a cover that is not about the story on the other. \*\*

None

- Choose two students to volunteer to stand in front of the room. Discuss ways in which these students are alike or different. On the board or chart paper, list their similarities and differences. Discuss if differences are good or bad and if similarities are good or bad.

SS.912.A.1.2, SS.912.A.1.4

- Ask students to role-play the following: "There are times when someone in your class may do something that is distracting to you. You want to continue studying and you want to be tolerant of the person." Role-play the self-talk that you could do about your choices.

Alternatives might be to:

- o Ask politely that the person stop doing what is distracting you.
- o Try to concentrate and ignore the person.
- o Ask if you could move to another desk.
- o Decide what would be the best choice, then act on it.

None

- Have students create a poster collage about a culture different than their own, researching the cuisine, currency, holidays, dress, religion, recreation, etc. \*\*

SS.912.C.4.1, SS.912.C.4.3

- Ask the class to design a Florida license plate that has "TOLERANCE" as its logo. \*\*

SS.912.C.2.5, SS.912.C.2.10

- Have students write to Kids Meeting Kids, an international organization that promotes multicultural understanding, peace, fairness, and children's rights, at 324 West 96th Street, New York, NY 10025. Find out about their penpal and peace exchange programs. \*\*

None





## HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS



SS.912.C.2.5, SS.912.C.2.10

- The teacher should tell the class that when we learn more about each other we have a better understanding and become more tolerant. Have students bring objects to class that represent the geographical origin of their families. These could represent different states or countries. Each student should present these objects to the class and tell why they are important to his/her family history.

SS.912.C.2.9, SS.912.C.2.11

- Have students tape their thumbs to their hands and then assign a simple writing activity. After the activity, discuss with the class how they felt and how difficult simple tasks can be for people with disabilities.

None

- Ask the class to work with different language clubs to teach tolerance for different cultures. Have students or parents bring in samples of food from their culture and explain how it is made. Give each student a small sample of the food.

SS.912.C.4.3, SS.912.C.4.4

- Have students create a collage that conveys a story on tolerance. Examples of issues are the homeless, animals, the poor, different races, different ethnic groups, different styles, music, the elderly, etc. \*\*

None

\*\* - These items can be used as homework assignments.

### SHARE YOUR GREAT IDEAS & BEST PRACTICES

If you have feedback regarding any of these activities or have successfully implemented an activity that is not listed and you would like to have it included, e-mail a one- to two-paragraph overview of the activity to Renee Brown @ CAB or [renee.m.brown@browardschools.com](mailto:renee.m.brown@browardschools.com).

Dear Teachers:

As we come to a rapid close of another school year, my hope is that each of you has found these suggested monthly activities to be useful and beneficial to your students.

Thank you for your support this year in stepping up to the plate to ensure that our students are actively engaged in the development of their "character."

We must remember the famous quote by Eleanor Roosevelt: *"Character building begins in our infancy and continues until death."*

Let's continue to come together and work together to make a difference in the future of our children!

Enjoy your summer vacation and again, hats off to you for your dedication and support this school year!

Sincerely,

Renee Brown  
Character Education Coordinator



# KIDS OF CHARACTER Award

Cooperation • Responsibility • Citizenship • Kindness • Respect • Honesty • Self-control • Tolerance



## CHARACTER EDUCATION ACTIVITY SHEET UPDATE



Access to all monthly activity sheets with curriculum and Sunshine State Standards will now be available in **electronic version only via BEEP** (through Learning Village).



## EDCO'S FREE CERTIFICATES & PLAQUES



Here is the process for how to receive **free** certificates and plaques:  
(*website correction for EDCO is below*)

- Each month, each teacher may choose one "Kid of Character" from his/her classroom. (Middle and high schools may decide if they want to do this by teams, departments or other methods.) Those students should receive a certificate at the end of the month at an awards assembly or on your school's morning/afternoon announcements.
- From the group of students who receive the certificates, schools may choose ONE of these students to receive a FREE plaque from EDCO. You may order your plaque from EDCO Awards and Specialties by logging onto [www.edcoawards.com/kidsofcharacter](http://www.edcoawards.com/kidsofcharacter). ALL CERTIFICATES AND PLAQUES ARE FREE. (ONLY ONE PLAQUE PER SCHOOL PER MONTH IS PROVIDED FREE. Schools may order additional plaques at a reduced rate from EDCO.)
- Certificates may be ordered through the Character Education Department, courtesy of the Sun-Sentinel, or through EDCO. The ones from the Sun-Sentinel must be filled in at the school site. The certificates from EDCO may be entered on-line and will be printed by them. This takes an advance time of 1-2 weeks. Please call Renee Brown at 754-321-2568 ext.2750 or email via CAB or at [Renee.M.Brown@Browardschools.com](mailto:Renee.M.Brown@Browardschools.com) if you have any additional questions about this process.

### **\*\*ATTENTION TEACHERS... KIDS OF CHARACTER STORY SUBMISSION PROCESS\*\***

- John Chace is working to collect **on-going** KOC stories from teachers. You may send these and any questions you may have directly to him at [jchace@communitycc.com](mailto:jchace@communitycc.com). He will then evaluate these stories and let you know if that student has been selected.
- Stories should be about students who are **EXCEPTIONAL** in demonstrating **any** of the character traits. He is not concerned about the order of a particular month's trait.
- Be very specific and clear providing key details about the act or continued deeds. Two to three quotes are needed from the person making the nomination for an actual article. The suggested format for submission should be in WORD, not Adobe, please.
- Remember, this is **not** based on academic performance; those students will be rewarded through honor roll or other academic honors. These are **EXCEPTIONAL** students in other unique areas.

**IN TOLERANCE AS THE SEED OF BULLYING**

By Aimee Wood

The teaching of tolerance is both an integral and supportive element to all bullying prevention and intervention efforts. We are not targeted for bullying because we are different – but our differences are targeted. Celebrating diversity through tolerance helps to create a climate within a school and classroom where bullying is not the norm.

Tolerance is integrated into all successful bullying prevention efforts because history has shown us that discrimination can lead to prejudice, which leads to discrimination, assault, and if left unchecked, even genocide. The imbalance of power inherent to being a minority can set the stage for bullying by the majority if tolerance is not taught.

In our efforts to reduce bullying and teach tolerance in the classroom, we have often utilized the classroom lesson plans from such sites as TeachingTolerance.org and the Anti-Defamation League's ADL.org. As students are exposed to new ways of thinking, intolerance moves toward tolerance, through acceptance, and finally into a celebration of differences. Bullying others has no impetus in a culture where we truly tolerate and accept both ourselves and others. The one truth for all of us is - we are all the same AND we are all different.

**FROM THE CHAMPs CORNER**

Teaching Tolerance  
"I am Special"

After reading these two stories, discuss our differences and how they make us unique and special.

The first story is *Fish is Fish* by Leo Lionni. It is about two friends, a minnow and tadpole, who believe they are the same until they grow up and minnow becomes a large fish and tadpole becomes a big frog. After frog crawls on land and comes back to tell fish the amazing sights he has seen, fish decides to jump out and see the land for himself. He quickly discovers that there is a reason "frog is frog" and "fish is fish."

The second story, Chisato Tashiro's *Chameleon's Colors*, is about a chameleon that grows weary of blending in because nobody can ever see him. All the other animals long to be able to change like he does, so he helps them to learn this ability. The animals, however, learn that changing their appearance causes all kinds of new problems.

Adapted from Kitty Sanderson, Haywood County Schools





## CHARACTER: THE CORE OF OUR LIVES PATRIOTISM: THE CORE OF OUR NATION'S STRENGTH



### **Patriotism**

To weave Patriotism throughout our Character Education Program, this month's suggested activities that can be integrated into the responsibility trait are related to Unity – the benefits of diversity within the context of unity.

### **Patriotic Quotes**

*"In the goodness of time, all peoples will come to live together in a peace guaranteed by the binding force of mutual respect and love." – Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th President of the United States of America*

*"Tolerance implies no lack of commitment to one's own beliefs. Rather it condemns the oppression or persecution of others." – John F. Kennedy, 35th President of the United States of America*

### **Patriotic Activities**

- Have the students write a paragraph or two detailing examples of stereotypes and explaining why they believe those stereotypes are wrong. \*\*
- Ask the students to write an essay pertaining to a situation where they exhibited/observed tolerance in their life. \*\*
- Have the class illustrate a picture that exudes a theme of tolerance. \*\*
- Ask the students to interview adults and/or other students. The theme of the interview should include a time(s) when they exhibited tolerance to another. \*\*
- Have the students create a class newspaper filled with articles of student stories promoting tolerance. \*\*
- Ask the students to brainstorm issues related to tolerance. Teachers can put brainstorm, a list on the board, or use a graphic organizer. \*\*
- Have the class write the theme on paper and draw what the theme looks like. \*\*
- Write the word "Tolerance" on the board and hold a class discussion on synonyms and antonyms of tolerance. \*\*
- Have the students write the theme "Tolerance" on paper and create an autobiographical essay that depicts the theme. \*\* Tell a story to assist students. They may use any medium or a combination of materials, including pencils, pens, pastels, crayon, cutout pictures and paste, to illustrate the theme. \*\*
- Ask students to create a collage of the tolerance theme. \*\*
- Have the students create an original poem under the theme of tolerance. \*\*
- Ask the class to take photos of their communities of individuals behaving in a tolerant fashion. \*\*



# TOLERANCE

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

### Primary



#### Grandmama's Pride

Bootman, Colin. Albert Whitman, 2005. 32p.  
080753028X / 9780807530283 Primary/Intermediate

While on a trip in 1956 to visit her grandmother in the South, six-year-old Sarah Marie experiences segregation for the first time, but discovers that things have changed by the time she returns the following year. (*Golden Kite Award* Honor Book)



#### Sweet Smell of Roses, A

Johnson, Angela. Simon & Schuster, 2004. 32p.  
0689832524 / 9780689832529 Primary

There's a sweet, sweet smell in the air as two young girls sneak out of their house, down the street, and across town to where men and women are gathered, ready to march for freedom and justice - a march led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



#### Wings

Myers, Christopher. Scholastic, 2000. 40p.  
0590033778 / 9780590033770 Primary

Ikarus Jackson, the new boy in school, is outcast because he has wings. But his resilient spirit inspires one girl to speak up for him in this thought-provoking story about celebrating individuality.

### Intermediate



#### Brendan Buckley's Universe and Everything In It

Frazier, Sundee T. Delacorte, 2007. 208p.  
0385734395 / 9780385734394 Intermediate/Middle

Brendan Buckley, a biracial ten-year-old, applies his scientific ability and newfound interest in rocks to connect with his white grandfather and to learn why he and Brendan's mother are estranged. (*Sunshine State Young Readers Award* nominee)



#### Crooked Kind of Perfect, A

Urban, Linda. Harcourt, 2007. 224p.  
0152060073 / 9780152060077 Intermediate/Middle

Ten-year-old Zoe Elias, who longs to play the piano but must resign herself to learning the organ, instead finds that her musicianship has a positive impact on her workaholic mother, her jittery father, and her school social life. (*Sunshine State Young Readers Award* nominee)



#### Negro League Scrapbook, A

Weatherford, Carole Boston. Boyds Mills Press, 2005. 48p.  
1590780914 / 9781590780916 Intermediate

The author uses historical photographs and text to explore what it was like to play in baseball's Negro League and provides information about some of the League's most distinguished players, touching on the realities of segregation.

#### Light in the Darkness

<http://www.tumblebooks.com>

Primary/Intermediate (accessed 2/6/10)

When a friend's house is vandalized, Willy decides to help end the intolerance. Students may want to take the quiz after enjoying the story. (The school's Media Specialist has log-on and password information for home access.)

### Middle



#### Gabriel's Horses

Hart, Alison. Peachtree, 2007. 161p.  
1561453986 / 9781561453986 Intermediate/Middle

In Kentucky, during the Civil War, the twelve-year-old slave Gabriel contends with a cruel new horse trainer and skirmishes with Confederate soldiers as he pursues his dream of becoming a jockey. (*Sunshine State Young Readers Award* nominee)



#### Hot, Sour, Salty, Sweet

Smith, Sherri L. Delacorte, 2008. 176p.  
0385904312 / 9780385904315 Middle/High

Disaster strikes when Ana is about to deliver the salutatorian speech at her graduation, but an even greater crisis looms when her best friend invites a crowd to Ana's house for dinner, and Ana's multicultural grandparents must find a way to share a kitchen. (*Sunshine State Young Readers Award* nominee)



#### Kira-Kira

Kadohata, Cynthia. Scholastic, 2005. 244p.  
0439799414 / 9780439799416 Middle

This story chronicles the close friendship between two Japanese-American sisters growing up in rural Georgia during the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the despair when one sister becomes terminally ill. (*Newbery Medal* winner)

### High



#### Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, The

Alexie, Sherman. Little, Brown, 2007. 240p.  
0316013684 / 9780316013680 Middle/High

Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Native American is the mascot. (*Florida Teens Read* nominee)



#### Generation Dead

Waters, Daniel. Hyperion, 2008. 400p.  
142310921X / 9781423109211 High

When dead teenagers who have come back to life start showing up at her high school, Phoebe, a goth girl, becomes interested in the phenomenon, and when she starts dating a "living impaired" boy, they encounter prejudice, fear, and hatred. (*Florida Teens Read* nominee)



#### River Between Us, The

Peck, Richard. Dial, 2003. 164p.  
0803727356 / 9780803727359 Middle/High

During the early days of the Civil War, the Pruitt family takes in two mysterious young ladies who have fled New Orleans to come north to Illinois.

#### The Anne Frank Web Guide

<http://www.annefrankguide.net>

Intermediate/Middle/High (accessed 2/6/2010)

This site has a wealth of resources (text, photos, film clips, 360-degree rotating panoramas, and sound effects) that may be downloaded. Users may also contribute photos to the site.

For additional resources, please see your school media specialist.  
Broward County Public Schools