

CHARACTER COUNTS

The Sun Sentinel Character Counts program, presented by Publix Super Markets, honors students who go above and beyond while exhibiting Character Traits.



2017 - 2018

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news in education



Special
"Take-Home" Poster
Inside: Character
Education Activities
For Families

Character Counts

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About the Sun Sentinel News In Education program:

Throughout the school year, the Sun Sentinel NIE program provides electronic newspapers to South Florida schools at no charge. Our goal has been to help teachers help their students, promote literacy, encourage hands-on learning using the newspaper, and assist students in staying up-to-date on the world around them. Another key focus of our program is providing curriculum materials, like *Character Counts*, to enhance lessons in the classroom across all subject areas. These complimentary booklets are aligned with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and the Common Core Standards.

For more information about Sun Sentinel News in Education and to download educational materials, visit our website at: www.SunSentinel.com/nie



About this curriculum:

Character Counts: Using the Sun Sentinel to Promote Good Character, was written in response to the Florida Legislature Senate Bill 20E, a section of which mandated that character education be expanded to include grades K-12. For more information about the basis for this program, go to: www.charactercounts.org

About the Sun Sentinel Character Counts program:

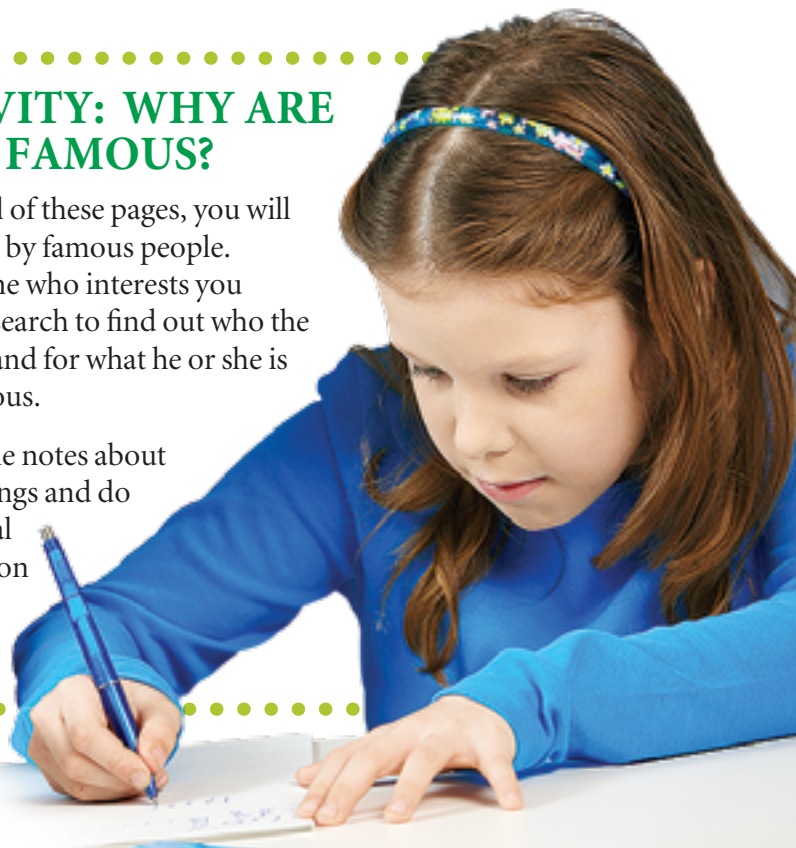
Sun Sentinel Character Counts is a partnership with Palm Beach County Schools and Publix Super Markets to honor students for doing exemplary deeds, at home, in school and in the community. As partners, we also feel strongly that health and wellness should be included in programs on character education. You will find these topics incorporated into this curriculum guide.

A message from The School District of Palm Beach County Character Education Team:

Character Education enhances the educational experience by promoting good decision making skills and positive behaviors in students. The School District has adopted six pillars of character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Caring, Fairness and Citizenship.

ACTIVITY: WHY ARE THEY FAMOUS?

- On several of these pages, you will see quotes by famous people.
- Choose one who interests you and do research to find out who the person is and for what he or she is most famous.
- Make some notes about your findings and do a short oral presentation to your class.



“In evaluating people, you look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence, and energy...”
 - Warren Buffett (1930 -)

Trustworthiness

... A trustworthy person is someone who is honest, loyal, has integrity and is reliable.



ACTIVITY: TRUTH VS. UNTRUTH

Draw a picture, write a poem, create an electronic presentation, or write a play demonstrating the meaning of the following and how they apply to trustworthiness. Present to the class.

- Honesty
- Loyalty
- Integrity
- Reliability

ACTIVITY: DRAW A COMIC

For a few days read the comic strips in the *Sun Sentinel*. Are there any characters that demonstrate honesty or dishonesty? Who are they? Tell how their words and actions show they are being honest or dishonest.



Think about what being trustworthy means to you. Then draw a comic strip that demonstrates your ideas about trustworthiness.



ACTIVITY: TRUTH VS. MYTH

When asked if he chopped down a cherry tree, it has often been stated that our first President, George Washington, answered, “I cannot tell a lie.” This statement seems to support the idea that President Washington was a man of great integrity - someone who could be trusted to tell the truth.

As it turns out, this statement is what is known as a myth. Answer the following questions and discuss with your class:

What is a myth?

In what way does a myth differ from a lie?

Why do you think myths often become “truth”?

What purpose does a myth serve?

Based on the results of your research, explain whether you think it is acceptable to continue repeating this myth about our first President? Explain if you think it is acceptable to continue repeating any myth. Discuss your opinion with your classmates.

Respect

... A respectful person shows tolerance, acceptance, courtesy and non-violence toward people, places and things.

Responsibility

... A responsible person does what he/she is supposed to do, is accountable for his/her actions, pursues excellence and demonstrates self-control.



ACTIVITY: START WITH YOU

Every year you learn about the negative effects drugs and alcohol have on your health. Research to find specific facts on how these are harmful and create a poster, song, video, or electronic presentation sharing these facts and providing positive alternatives.

ACTIVITY: RESPONSIBILITY COLLAGE

You have responsibilities at home, school, and in the community. Cut out pictures, words, headlines, and phrases from the *Sun Sentinel* that show your other responsibilities. Create a collage with your words and phrases, and write an explanation of how/why they demonstrate responsibility.

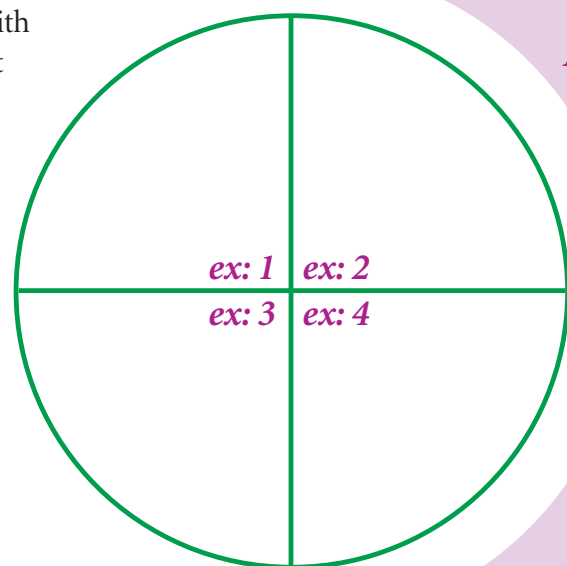
ACTIVITY: DO AN INTERVIEW

Look through the *Sun Sentinel* for an article about a person who interests you. Note the specific facts and quotes included in the article and how the article is written to include the 5W's - who, what, when, where, and why.

Choose someone you know well enough to interview about a time they acted in either an irresponsible or responsible manner. This person can be a friend, adult, parent, teacher or coach. Prepare questions to ask beforehand and make sure to include the 5W's. Also, write down exact words for direct quotes. What were the results of their actions? Write a short article about what you learned. Make sure you have permission to use names, dates, etc.

ACTIVITY: RESPECT THE WORLD AROUND YOU

Draw a large pie chart and divide it into four sections. Label each quarter with a specific way you can show respect for the environment (recycle, conserve water, alternate transportation, etc.). Search for articles in the *Sun Sentinel* or online demonstrating how others are practicing these actions and place them on the chart. In small groups select one of these and create a plan for implementing it in your community.



SAMPLE PIE CHART

ACTIVITY: RESPECT FOR OTHERS

Interview a friend or relative. Create a list of adjectives that describe the qualities that you respect in that person. Write a short essay explaining your choice, using specific examples gleaned from your interview that convinced you that this is a person worthy of respect.

BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOU

You already know the importance of physical activity. In order to have a sense of well-being and to remain healthy, you must also take direct responsibility for what you eat. That means eating a variety of foods and making super healthy choices.

START WITH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

How do you make those choices? One good place to look is the produce (fruit and veggie) section of your local Publix. Admire the beautiful colors - juicy red tomatoes, crisp green beans, shiny oranges, purple grapes. This is nature's way of pointing you in the right direction toward better eating. The brighter the colors, the more nutrition each food contains.

ACTIVITY: MAKE RESPONSIBLE FOOD CHOICES

There are countless choices in the fresh produce department. Make a list of the ones you have never tried. Pledge to go to a nearby Publix & select one new fruit or vegetable each week. Keep a record of which ones you like best.

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around." - Leo Buscaglia (1925 - 1998)

Caring

... A caring person shows concern for others by being kind, helpful, compassionate and charitable.

ACTIVITY: THE GIFT OF KINDNESS

Look through the *Sun Sentinel* for words and pictures that express caring. Find as many as you can. Write each word in the "gift box" you see here. Also write the name of someone you think deserves these "caring words." Add a sentence telling why you want to give your gift to this person.



ACTIVITY: SHOW THAT YOU CARE.

Many times students tend to pick on other students because they see them as being "different". This is a form of bullying. A very peaceful, constructive way to combat or even prevent bullying is to perform kind acts.

As a class brainstorm ways that you can help to stop bullying in your school. Create a one-act play that demonstrates various problems and possible solutions to show that you care.

Using the computer go to <http://www.randomactsofkindness.org> and look for the button that says "World Kindness Day November 13, 2015." When you click on this it will bring up then ways to demonstrate kindness or caring. Working in small groups develop a plan of action for World Kindness Day and explain how you will implement that plan.

Two young women met at Pepperdine University. One of the common threads they shared was that both had been a victim of bullying — Lauren Paul in middle school and Molly Thompson in high school. They joined forces & created a documentary about bullying — also organizing the Kind Campaign.

Although, the clubs generated from this campaign are formed with girls in mind, boys also suffer the negative consequences of bullying.

Investigate the website <http://www.kindcampaign.com> to discover the types of information and activities they share to make teens aware of bullying and "weapons" to combat it. Now develop a plan to form a kindness club in your school including a club name, mission statement, goals, and activities. Share this plan with your peers through an oral or multimedia presentation.

TAKE-HOME POSTER

WAYS TO PROMOTE GOOD CHARACTER

AT HOME AND IN YOUR COMMUNITY



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"Be kind to your body. Eat well."

Once upon a time...

there was a group of kids who were honest,
compassionate, disciplined, and kind.



These kids changed the world.
And everyone lived happily ever after.

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Congratulations to all the 2017/2018 Kids of Character from your friends and fans at Publix.®

Caring

ACTIVITY: START WITH CARING ABOUT OTHERS

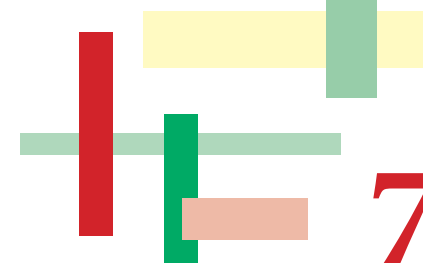
Look through the *Sun Sentinel* for an article about an organization, place, or group that is in need of help. Develop a plan and write a letter to the organization explaining why you would like to assist and inquiring as to what you can do.



ACTIVITY: CONTINUE BY TAKING CARE OF YOU

Eating less healthy food, eating too much or too little, childhood obesity, not drinking enough water... you have heard it all by now, and you have probably done one or all of these things. You aren't alone. Americans in general do not always take good care of themselves, and we are paying the price with many health problems.

Divide the class into groups to research these issues: anorexia, bulimia, dehydration, sedentary life style, stress, sleep deprivation, early onset diabetes. Do an oral report to your class on your findings. Include visual aids such as posters, drawings, graphs, statistics, etc. Include solutions to these problems and where to find help.



“... the practice of listening to opposing views is essential for effective citizenship. It is essential for our democracy.” – President Barack Obama (1961 -)

Citizenship

...A good citizen respects authority, understands and demonstrates a high regard for rules and governments and protects the environment.

ACTIVITY: BE A CREATIVE CITIZEN

Do one of the following using a theme of Good Citizenship: draw a picture or comic strip, write a poem, create a song or jingle, make a video, or write a play. Share your project with your class.



Photo Credit: Debbie Rahamim



ACTIVITY: WRITE ABOUT IT

One way to demonstrate good citizenship is to show patriotism. Write an essay, short story, poem or song demonstrating what being patriotic means to you. Share with your class.



ACTIVITY: ENCOURAGE VOTING

Voting has always been a powerful privilege of citizenship. Research the history of voting eligibility in this country. Generate a timeline showing when each specific group of people was given the right to vote and write a brief description of the circumstances surrounding the changes.



ACTIVITY:

With family, friends, or classmates, brainstorm an action or select one of the suggestions below that you can initiate to demonstrate what it is to be a good citizen. Make specific plans and goals towards accomplishing the project you select. Create a timeline for each step.

- Start a neighborhood or school garden for food or to beautify a blighted area.
- Cook something healthy to give to a friend or neighbor who is housebound.
- Set up an after school fitness or walking program.
- Play with a younger neighbor or small child who needs extra attention.
- Volunteer at a youth center or YMCA to coach a team.

ACTIVITY: OUR FLAG

Look at the United States flag. Note the red and white stripes and the blue background with the white stars. Research to discover the symbolism of each item. Now select another country and research its flag. Draw a picture of the flag labeling the symbols or writing them on an index card below your drawing. Have a class discussion as to why it is important for each country to have its own flag.

ACTIVITY: PATRIOTS

Those who fought for the independence of our country from England were called patriots. Research to discover the origin of the term patriotism and why this term applied to the residents of the Thirteen Colonies. Keep in mind that not all of those residing in the colonies were in agreement with independence from England. Set up a class debate to argue whether the colonials were patriotic or unpatriotic.

ACTIVITY: OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM AND PATRIOTIC SONG

Locate a copy of the words to America's national anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner." Read the words out loud in class or at home with your family. Discuss what the words mean. Do the same for "America the Beautiful." Then sing the songs together.



“It is not fair to ask of others what you are unwilling to do yourself.”
- Eleanor Roosevelt (1884 - 1962)

Fairness

... A person who is fair plays by the rules, shares, is open-minded, listens and does not take advantage of others.



ACTIVITY: WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT - OR ARE WE?

Choose someone to write on the board. Have that person write two headlines: On the Outside and On the Inside. Next, hold up a Tootsie Roll Pop. Everyone should describe what the Pop looks like on the outside and what it looks like on the inside. Write down the comments under the correct headline.

Continue class discussions to answer the following questions:

1. How are Tootsie Roll Pops like people, on the outside and on the inside?
2. If you choose a Tootsie Roll Pop by the color of its wrapper, should you also select friends by their outer appearance, such as clothing or the way they wear their hair? Why or why not?
3. Talk about a time you judged someone by their “outside”, then later found out that the person was not so different on the inside.
4. Do you try different flavors of Tootsie Roll Pops or do you always stick with the same flavor or color? Why? In the same way do you try out new friends or always choose the same types of friends?
5. Tootsie Roll Pops have a hard exterior, but a soft center. Sometimes people do, too. Why do you think that is?
6. Have you ever been judged by your outside appearances or differences? How did that make you feel?



ACTIVITY: EVERYONE’S OPINION MATTERS

A great place to look at a variety of ideas and opinions is on the editorial or OPINION pages of the *Sun Sentinel*. Look through the comments and letters of this section. Choose an editorial or column that discusses a topic that interests you. Read it carefully and decide if you agree or disagree with the writer and if you think he/she is being open-minded and fair or unfair. Use examples to explain your position.

ACTIVITY: WRITE A STORY

Write a short story or poem describing what the world would be like if everyone was the same.

Resources



Book Resources for Elementary Schools

TRUSTWORTHINESS (Honesty)

- Jamaica’s Find by Juanita Havill
- Too Many Tamales by Gary Soto
- The Honest to Goodness Truth by Patricia McKissack
- Empty Pot by Demi

RESPECT (Attentiveness, Tolerance)

- The Summer My Father Was Ten by Pat Brisson
- Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse by Kevin Henkes
- Whoever You Are by Mem Fox
- Don’t Laugh at Me by Steve Seskin

RESPONSIBILITY (Initiative, Patience, Self Discipline)

- Pig Pig Gets a Job by David McPhail
- The Paperboy by Dav Pilkey
- Babushka’s Doll by Patricia Polacco
- Peppe the Lamplighter by Elisa Bartone

CARING (Kindness)

- Somewhere Today by Shelley Moore Thomas
- The Three Questions by Jon J. Muth
- Now One Foot by Tomie de Paola
- Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister

FAIRNESS (Equality)

- Judge Judy: You Can’t Judge a Book by Its Cover by Judge Judy
- How to Lose All Your Friends by Nancy Carlson
- Martin’s Big Words by Doreen Rappaport
- Recess Queen by Alexis O’Neill

CITIZENSHIP (Cooperation, Patriotism)

- I Pledge Allegiance by Bill Martin Jr.
- I Am America by Charles R. Smith
- We the Kids by David Catrow
- Stone Soup by Jon J. Muth

Book Resources for Middle Schools

TRUSTWORTHINESS (Honesty)

- One Eyed Cat by Paula Fox
- Skull of Truth by Bruce Coville
- Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Ronald Roald
- A Single Shard by Linda Sue Park

RESPECT (Attentiveness, Tolerance)

- Roll of Thunder hear My Cry by Mildred Taylor
- Let the Circle be Unbroken by Mildred Taylor
- Blubber by Judy Blume
- Number the Stars by Lois Lowry
- Stepping on the Cracks by Mary Downing Hahn

RESPONSIBILITY (Initiative, Patience, Self Discipline)

- On My Honor by Marion Dane Bauer
- Queenie Peavy by Robert Burch
- Shoeshine Girl by Clyde Robert Bulla
- Holes by Louis Sachar
- Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis

CARING (Kindness)

- Thank you Jackie Robinson by Barbara Cohen
- Old Ramon by Jack Schaeffer
- The Family Under the Bridge by Natalie Savage Carlson
- Shiloh by Phillis Reynolds Naylor
- Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech
- Petey by Ben Mikaelson

FAIRNESS (Equality)

- Silent to the Bone by E. L. Konigsburg
- The Jacket by Andrew Clements
- Sounder by William Howard Armstrong
- Mississippi Bridge by Mildred Taylor

CITIZENSHIP (Cooperation, Patriotism)

- Freedom’s Children by Ellen Levine
- Dear Mr. President, Letters from a Slave Girl to
- Abraham Lincoln by Andrea Davis Pinkney
- My Brother Sam is Dead by James Lincoln Collier

OPERATION RESPECT: Don’t Laugh at Me

The Don’t Laugh at Me Project (DLAM) is a curriculum-based program designed to establish a climate that reduces the emotional and physical cruelty some children inflict upon each other by behaviors such as ridicule, bullying and sometimes even violence.

Founded by Peter Yarrow of the folk group Peter, Paul & Mary, DLAM utilizes inspiring music and video to support special curricula and lessons created for your classroom. DLAM is a gateway program designed to provide all educators with an entry point for year-round social and emotional learning. The program is designed to inspire children, along with their teachers and other educators, to transform their classrooms and schools into “Ridicule Free Zones.” For FREE materials and information go to www.operationrespect.org

For more resources on health and nutrition:

BOOKS

[Honest Pretzels and 64 Other Amazing recipes for Cooks Ages 8 and Up](#)
[Good Enough to Eat: A Kid’s Guide to Food and Nutrition](#)
[Physical Fitness \(My Health Series\)](#)
[The Children’s Kitchen Garden](#)
[Cooking with Children](#)

WEBSITES

www.choosemyplate.gov
www.kidshheartfelthealth.com
www.kidshhealth.com
www.shapingamericasyouth.com
www.publix.com
www.floridajuice.com
www.letsmove.gov

Once upon a time...

there was a group of kids who were honest,
compassionate, disciplined, and kind.



These kids changed the world.
And everyone lived happily ever after.

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Congratulations to all the 2017/2018 Kids of Character from your friends and fans at Publix.®