

## Character Education: Grades 3-5

August/ September 2013

### Responsibility

#### 1. Introduction

- a. Introduce yourself and your family (if your child is in that class).

#### 2. Character Education – what it's all about:

- a. Helping you learn to make good choices – even when you're having a difficult time. This will help you grow into mature, successful and caring adults.
- b. You already learn this as part of the lessons you have every day. The way you learn to treat each other and your teacher in class all help to build your character.
- c. Our time together will focus on different traits every month.
- d. We're going to talk about one very important character trait today – Responsibility

#### 3. Define Responsibility

Ask the students to say some words that define or are the same as responsible (write them on the board)

##### **THEN SHARE THIS DEFINITION**

- a. Being dependable in carrying out obligations and duties
- b. Being reliable and consistent in words and conduct.
- c. Being accountable for your own actions.
- d. Being committed to active involvement in your school and your community.
- e. REMEMBER: It's about your ACTIONS not your thoughts

#### 4. Discussion questions:

- a. Who are some responsible people you know? What makes them responsible?
- b. How do we show responsibility in our lives?
- c. Can you think of a time when, even though it might have been hard, you took responsibility for something?
- d. What can you do today, or this weekend to show how responsible you are?

**5. Literature Suggestions:** (Time will probably only allow for one story)

If you have a book at home that you would like to read to the students then please do so. Before reading, think through what you want the students to learn and make a note of questions you intend to ask them. Below are 3 recommended books.

**a. A Day's Work, by Eve Bunting** (can be borrowed from Greensboro Library)

- i. How does Francisco feel about his grandfather?
- ii. What did Francisco say to convince Ben to hire him and grandfather? What mistake did he make?
- iii. What does the grandfather mean when he says this is the price of a lie?? Why is he mad at Francisco?
- iv. What did the grandfather do that taught the boy a lesson? What was that lesson?
- v. Ben said that that Abuelo knows the important things already? What are the things he is referring to?
- vi. When was Francisco not responsible? Do you think he learned responsibility in the end?

**b. Ginger** (Printed at the end of this lesson)

- i. What did Brittany do that was irresponsible?
- ii. Since Ginger recovered, was it necessary that Brittany tell her parents what she thinks caused the illness? Why
- iii. What kind of consequences that might occur if Brittany talks to her parents.

**c. Miss Rumphius, by Barbara Cooney** (can be borrowed from Greensboro Library)

- i. Why did Miss Rumphius' Grandpa tell her she needed to do something to make the world more beautiful?
- ii. Why did Miss Rumphius find this to be the hardest thing to do?
- iii. How did she feel after she had enjoyed all the beautiful things in the world?
- iv. How did she feel after she had made the world more beautiful?
- v. Why did she tell the author to do something to make the world more beautiful? Do you think the author will do it?

**6. Activities:** (Choose one or 2 activities depending on time)

**a. What if it didn't get done?**

- i. Have students call out chores that need to be done at home, either by themselves or other family members. Write each chore down on the board.
- ii. After you have 5 or 6 chores listed, ask the group what would happen in each case if the chore did not get done.  
E.g. If nobody put the trash out then trash would start to build up around the house, it would start to smell and there would be a lot of flies.

**b. Where is Puffy?**

- i. **PREPARATION:** Print out 3 or 4 copies of the sheet 'The Story of Puffy' at the end of this lesson. Cut each sheet into sentence strips. Mix up the strips from each sheet thoroughly and put in a small bag – one bag for each sheet. Make sure you keep a complete set of strips in each bag. **Bring glue sticks to the lesson**
- ii. Divide the class into 3 or 4 small groups. Give a complete set of story strips to each group.
- iii. The groups should divide the strips equally among the group members.
- iv. The task is to put the strips in an order that forms a story with a beginning, a middle and an end.
- v. This activity is timed so be sure groups do not start until you say 'go'.
- vi. Explain to your students that each group member must place his or her own strips in the story. Other group members may contribute suggestions and advice. The story must make sense all the way through.
- vii. Set a time limit, but be sure to allow all groups to finish building their story. (15-20 mins)
- viii. Say 'go'
- ix. When time is up, read the master sheet aloud so the groups can see how close they are to the original story.
- x. Discuss the following questions:
  1. How did Evan's neglect of his responsibilities affect others in this story?
  2. How was Evan affected?

**c. Is this character responsible?**

- i. **PREPARATION:** Find pictures of different characters that students will know. (Some examples are provided at the end of this lesson – feel free to add more) **Bring the pictures and tape to the lesson.**
- ii. Divide the board into 2 sections labeled ‘Responsible’ and ‘Not Responsible’
- iii. Show the pictures to the students one at a time and ask whether they are responsible or not responsible. Students can come up and stick the picture on the board in the appropriate place. Ask the students why.

**7. Closing**

With any good trait, your actions, not your thoughts are important. What will you do to be responsible and help your family, school or community today, tomorrow or this weekend?

## Ginger

“Dad, can I have a kitten?” asked eleven-year-old Brittany.

“Well, I don’t know, Brit,” answered her father. “You realize, don’t you, that you have to take care of your pet. Let’s find out if you can handle that responsibility. Why don’t you get a smaller animal first?”

Brittany got a goldfish in an aquarium that weekend. She showed her parents that she could take good care of her goldfish. She didn’t over-feed it, and she made sure that the water in the aquarium was clean and had enough oxygen. After six months of caring conscientiously for her gold fish, Brittany asked her parents at dinner one night, “What about it – can I have a kitten now?”

“I think Brittany has shown she is quite responsible, Carl. What do you think?” her mother responded.

“Sure Brittany. I think you’re ready to have that kitten,” agreed her father.

Brittany chose a tabby kitten at the pet shop and named her Ginger. She was a sweet loving cat. Brittany gave her pet a lot of love and watched Ginger grow rapidly.

One Saturday afternoon, when Brittany was the only one at home, she was bothered by several flies that managed to get into the house. She swatted at them, but they wouldn’t go away. When she went to investigate, Brittany noticed that most of the flies were buzzing around in the back porch where Ginger’s water and food dish were kept. She got the insecticide can and sprayed thoroughly around the porch. Brittany was determined to get rid of those pesky flies.

That night Brittany’s mother noticed that Ginger was just lying quietly in her bed. The next day, Ginger was still lying around. She refused to eat her food and was throwing up.

“What do you suppose the matter is with Ginger, Brittany?” commented her mother at dinner. “She seems to be sick.”

“I don’t know, Mom,” Brittany replied. “I can’t get her to play or do anything.”

That night Brittany thought back to what had happened on the previous afternoon. Did her spraying the flies have anything to do with Ginger’s being sick? Maybe some of the insecticide got in the water or on the food.

Ginger was better on Monday, and everyone was relieved. But Brittany felt funny. She wondered if she should say anything about spraying the flies. She was fairly sure that the spraying was the reason why Ginger had been ill. If she didn’t say anything, no one would ever know she had been careless and caused her pet to be poisoned.

## Is This Character Responsible?



Mabel from Gravity Falls



Phineas and Ferb



© Disney

Disney  
**good luck  
charlie**

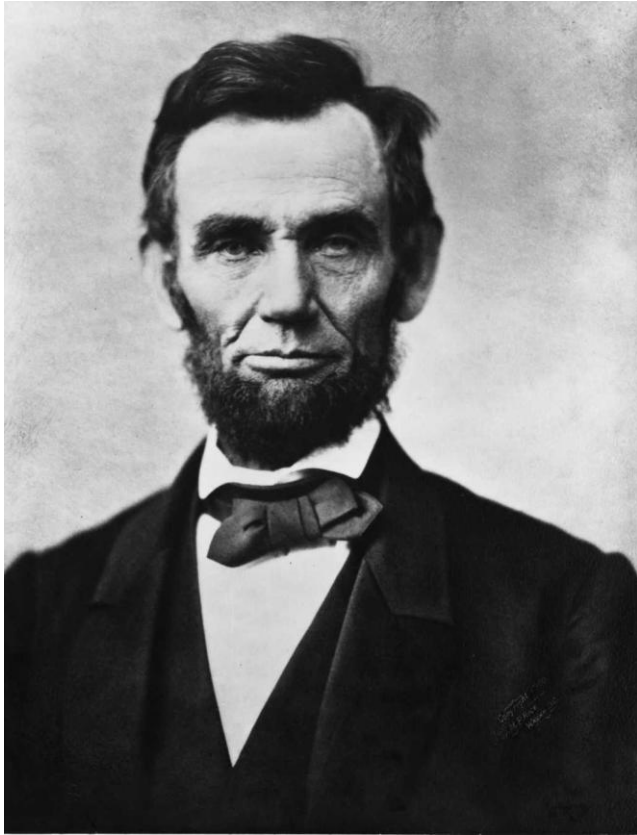
Watch Good Luck Charlie  
on Disney Channel!

Gabe

A young boy with dark hair, smiling, wearing a black t-shirt with a colorful graphic, stands with his arms crossed. The background is a blue and green abstract design.

Disney  
CHANNEL

DisneyChannel.com



Abraham Lincoln



Trish from Austin and Ally



<h1>The Story of Puffy</h1>	The Parker family lived next door to Mrs. Murphy and Evan's dog headed over there.
Evan was not always a responsible person.	He went up the Parker's back steps and scratched on the door.
Sometimes he didn't do his homework.	The scratching set off an alarm.
Other times he did his homework but forgot to take it to school.	The noise of the alarm woke up the whole Parker family.
And when Evan was at home, he would do some of his chores, sometimes.	The alarm scared Puffy and he started to run.
And other times he would not do any of his chores.	He ran past the fire truck and the police car that were coming down the street.
One of those chores was letting the dog, Puffy, in at night. Puffy stayed outside during the day and slept in the kitchen at night.	In fact Puffy kept running right out of the neighborhood.
There was a night, not long ago, when Evan forgot about Puffy.	No one in the neighborhood got much sleep that night, especially Evan.
The dog waited on the porch that night for Evan to let him in.	He spent all night looking for the dog.
But after awhile the porch got cold. So Puffy went looking for a warmer place to sleep.	He spent the next day explaining why Puffy had been loose.
First he wandered into Mr. Brook's yard. He spotted Mr. Brook's cat and chased her up a tree.	Evan had to explain to his family, the neighbors, the police and the fire department.
The poor cat could not get back down.	He was so busy explaining that he missed his ball game.
When Mr. Brooks saw his cat in the tree, he called the fire department to come to the rescue.	His teammates were upset because they had counted on him.
Meanwhile Puffy was sniffing around Mrs. Murphy's bushes.	His team lost.
He knocked over Mrs. Murphy's trash can.	All because Evan wasn't very responsible.
Mrs. Murphy thought it was a prowler and called the police.	