

Character Education

August/September 2013

Responsibility

Define & Discuss Responsibility

- 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.

Literature Suggestions

Choose a book to read aloud and discuss.

1. "The Three Little Kittens" by Eliza Lee Follen
2. "The Little Red Hen" by Paul Galdone
3. "One Foot, Now the Other" by Tomie dePaola
4. "A Day's Work" by Eve Bunting
5. "It's Up to You, Griffin" by Susan Pickford

Activities

"The Little Red Hen" trail mix. *Bring food items to create a trail mix. Have students work together to make/mix it. Talk about how it would not taste as good if each individual doesn't do his/her part.*

"The Three Little Kittens" *Create a mitten template & have students trace a mitten & cut it out, discussing responsibility while working.*

"Pulling Together" game

Role Play & discuss from scenarios

Closing

Game two - Pulling Together



Write the words 'Class Unity' on a small piece of paper. Tape it to the top of a broom stick or even a yard stick. Cut a piece of string two yards long for each member in the class.

Explain that the stick, string and sign represent classroom unity and that they are going to learn something important about being together as a class from this activity. Have each member in the class tie his or her string to the stick a little above the midway point. Lay the stick down in the middle of the floor and have the class sit in a circle, spaced evenly apart, around the stick. Tell everyone to lay the end of their string down in front of them. (You may want to divide the class into three or four groups meaning you would need three or four sticks)

Ask one member of the group to see if he can raise the stick to a standing position by pulling his string alone. He will find that one string doesn't support the stick very well; it will fall over easily. Next, ask another person to join the first to see if two strings can hold the stick up and keep it standing. It may be possible, but the stick will still be unsteady.

Now let everyone pull on their strings to hold the stick in an upright position. You may have to slightly adjust the points at which the strings are tied, but with people pulling from different directions, the pole will stand upright. While it is still standing, ask the class what they can learn from this exercise. Listen to all responses but try to point out that with everyone "pulling together" your class is able to accomplish more than each person can by herself. With everyone doing his share, working hard learning and playing together as a team, your class this year will get a lot accomplished and be very happy.

Now have someone pull the string toward him with all his strength while others pull normally. If one person pulls hard enough, the stick will topple over. Ask, "What does this show about classroom unity?" Point out that if one person in the class is disrespectful, selfish, controlling and rude, this can destroy the balance of the class and spoil the feelings of cooperation and togetherness.

Discuss how as a class they can show support for one another.

Activity: Role Playing

From *Kids with Character: Character Building Activities for the Elementary Classroom*

These ten scenarios can be acted out in front of class by two or more volunteers or discussed in small groups. Reinforce behaviors that you want to observe.

How would you practice responsibility if...

1. You are watching your favorite television program and you remember that your science project is due tomorrow?
2. You just broke a framed picture of your family because you were playing with a ball in the house?
3. Your grandmother asks you to watch your younger brother while she drives to the store to get a gallon of milk?
4. You're watching a video at a friend's house and it is time for you to be home?
5. Your row in class has been assigned a group project on Native Americans. You have to do part of the project's research but you would rather play kick ball after school than go to the library?
6. Your sister is not feeling well and your parents ask you to take over her chores for the weekend?
7. You borrowed your neighbor's rollerblades?
8. It is bath or shower time and you are in the middle of an exciting computer game?
9. Your friend asks you to play, but you have promised your mom you would put away the clean dishes?
10. Your coach asks you to come to practice on time and you'd rather "hang out" with friends?