

Risks and Consequences

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INTRODUCTION

Writing is a very challenging task for teachers as well as students. I am an ESL teacher working with nine- and ten-year-old students at my present elementary school. This year is my fourth year of teaching in the Houston Independent School District (HISD). My family and I have moved from my home country, the Philippines, to the United States in the Fall Semester of 2002. I was one of the many teachers hired overseas. HISD's new teachers were welcomed during the ABRAZO. Translated in Spanish, ABRAZO attempts "to embrace" new teachers. Also, the new teachers went through intensive training. We learned how to teach the given curriculum and how to teach students with diverse backgrounds in the public school classroom. The training experience could not really prepare new teachers for what to expect in the actual classroom. My new teaching assignment was teaching ESL students in fourth grade.

During my first year of teaching at HISD, I was informed that the fourth graders should pass the TAKS Writing Test, which comes in February. It was a difficult task for me. During the first week of school, I realized that some of them were barely writing good sentences and their reading skills were below grade level. That was the beginning of my dilemma for these students and for me. I wondered how I could bring their reading and writing up to grade level. Should I make the students write a composition with five paragraphs and grade for English language mechanics? Along with their academic deficiencies, some students had behavioral problems.

I have two major goals for the school year. My first goal is to teach the students the reading and the writing skills for mastery. The next goal is to be able to teach those students with behavioral problems how to turn themselves around and convert being at-risk to being resilient. I will concentrate on the second goal. I believe that students can be taught in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but they have to be emotionally stable in order to learn these skills. I believe that emotional intelligence is more important to learning than their Intelligence Quotient (IQ). Only when a student is emotionally stable is the learning process able to take effect.

My unit will focus on teaching character education to both the at-risk students as well to those students without behavioral problems. In doing so, the philosophy of teaching the golden rule will benefit all students in the classroom. I will integrate the writing skills with discussions of risks and consequences, which are parts of my character education unit. I know that I can be an effective teacher to all my students and more so to those who are at risk. I will mention two particular students in my present classroom. I am trying to do what I can do for them in class. Although some students may need medical or psychological help from professionals, I have to be able to find ways to reach out to these particular students.

Take for instance male student A, an above average student. He is reading and writing on grade level; however, for some reason he acts up in class. Student A has decided not to work in class because he does not want to be classified as a nerd. His behavior has been unacceptable because he does not want to be on the good side. His consequences are as follows: poor conduct,

failing grades, parent conferences, and time out. Student A is not popular in class and hardly has any friends. His unhappiness makes him unmotivated, and he continues to fail in the areas of math and reading.

Next example is female student B. She comes to class unprepared, disorganized, and raging with anger. Her social skills are so unacceptable that the girls do not want to have her around. Instead, she prefers to make friends with the boys. That awkward situation causes her to be socially ostracized. Student B is unsuccessful with friendship group and her attitude has failed her in academic areas.

Both students have emotional problems to deal with. Student A is going through a death and depression in the family. Student B is dealing with a parent who has been legally put away. These students are not the only students in the class that are suffering from emotional problems. There are others still that remain in my class. I am sure that teachers would like to reach out to these students. This character education unit will help them understand that for every risk there is a consequence. With this in mind, the students will learn the importance of making good choices and be global citizens in the future. Teachers are the students' role models, so we have to do something to help them cope with life skills. This is only one of the units that I think will help all the students in my class.

For more than a decade, public and educational discourse has focused on "children and families at risk" (Polakow 1). According to Bonnie Benard (1997), social science research, considers poverty as the major reason for putting these children "at risk." Having identified these children at-risk there is success in achieving the needed services to children and families. However, this has led to stereotyping, tracking, and lowered expectations for many students in the public schools, and even to prejudice and discrimination. We view these children as exceptional, but also lacking in capabilities and strength.

The more I read about students' resiliency, the more I become involved with my curriculum unit. With my clearer understanding of the youthful aggression and violence, risk and consequences, resilience and prevention of anti – social behavior, I could see that my curriculum unit would help me become a better teacher to this group of students. Christle notes:

No single factor can predict who is likely to engage in aggressive and violent behavior, but longitudinal studies have established developmental pathways that lead to antisocial and delinquent behavior, which includes patterns of aggression and violence. Hyperactivity, limited attention span, restlessness, risk-taking, poor social skills, certain beliefs and attitudes (e.g., the necessary retaliation), appear to favor the development of delinquent behavior. In addition, students with learning disabilities for example emotional disturbance, attention deficit- hyperactivity disorders, specific learning disabilities) are more likely to display antisocial behavior, suggesting that these conditions maybe risk factors for later aggressive and violent relations. (Leone et al. 2000)

Werner (1992) defined as resilient those people who, despite being raised in environments characterized by environmental hardships and extreme stressors, were able to lead successful lives. Characteristics of these resilient individuals included having positive temperaments, having well-developed cognitive and academic skills, having an internal control, having realistic educational and vocational plans, taking pleasures in hobbies, assuming responsibility, helping others, taking advantage of opportunities during periods of transition, having at least one unconditional relationship and having religious affiliation and inner faith. Resilient means being able to spring back to an original form and size after compression, bending, or stretching. Think of a gardener who loves to grow flowers. Each flower in his/her garden gets special attention. The love of gardening is seen as the flowers bloom in spring. He/she nurtures and cares for each

flower. I would like to be that gardener. One who has the patience to teach writing and character education.

The purpose of this curriculum unit is to help my students to become resilient individuals and to understand that for every risk there is a consequence. Keeping in mind that each student has his/her own innate resilience and well being, I will be engaged in those qualities that they have. When the students can let go of their issues and tight control with patience and trust, teaching will become less strenuous and more pleasant. I believe that I am making a difference in their lives. I know that when I care, believe in and embrace the at-risk students, they not only are developing healthily and learning successfully but also are building their academic and social skills to be productive, creative, and compassionate global citizens.

Resilience is important to teach because it will cultivate the students' personality, enhance the students' behavior, and develop their writing skills. Benard states that all individuals have the power to transform and change. Lifton (1994) identifies resilience as the human capacity of all individuals to transform and change, no matter what their risks; it is an innate "self-righting mechanism" (Werner and Smith 202). "Resilience skills" include the ability to form relationships (social competence), to problem solve (metacognition), to develop a sense of identity (autonomy), and to plan and hope (a sense of purpose and future). Long-term studies were conducted on children born into poverty or war-torn environments and families that are dysfunctional. The researchers found out a remarkable outcome. Fifty to seventy percent of the children grew up to be successful, confident, competent and caring persons (Werner and Smith 202).

Teachers and schools have the power to transform the lives of these at-risk children into a positive way. Teachers possess a powerful influence on these children and can have a great effect on their lives. Turnaround teachers/mentors provide and model three protective factors that buffer risk and enable positive development by meeting youth's basic needs for safety, love and belonging, respect, power, accomplishment and learning, and ultimately, for meaning (Benard 1991). There are three factors to build resilience: caring relationships, positive and high expectations, and opportunities to participate and contribute.

There are several ways for teachers to show that they care for their students. They can listen to their students and validate their feelings, demonstrate kindness, compassion, and respect (Higgins 1994; Meir 1995). That tells us to refrain from being judgmental. They should not take students' behavior personally and should understand that the children are doing the best they can, based on the way teachers perceive the world. If necessary, they should also refer their students and their families to the social services that will assist them.

Positive high expectation is the next factor for building resilience. According to Delpit (1996) teachers' high expectations can structure and guide behavior and can also challenge students beyond what they believe they can do. Teachers can uncover students' strengths, emulate them, and help students recognize them. The teachers who have positive expectations are student-centered. They use their student's strengths, interests, goals, and dreams as the starting point for learning.

Turnaround teachers give students opportunities to participate and contribute. Students are able to voice their own opinions and imagination, choose, solve problems, help and work with others, and in return render community service. Students are treated as individuals and are allowed to participate in all school functions.

This curriculum unit will examine the different factors that will build up resilience and will be integrated in creative writing. How can the students develop their innate resilience? What are the different ways of developing their resilience? How can I help develop my students' resilience? I will branch into literature with the theme Risks and Consequences. There is a set of

twelve character education books for my fourth graders that I have in the classroom (Raatma, 2000). These are the books with topics such as respect, kindness, caring, and loving others. These books will help students understand character education. When these values are built up and understood, students will be more positive with their behavior, and I will have fewer behavior problems in class. Teaching creative writing will be pleasurable for me, and learning will be fun for my fourth-graders.

TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS HAVE THE POWER TO TRANSFORM LIVES

When I graduated from high school, I wanted to be in a service profession, and teaching was then my choice. I went to the teacher education college to pursue my goal, graduated, and got certified. My first year of teaching taught me a lot of things that I have not read in the education books. As the saying goes, “Experience is the best teacher.” The classroom experiences were real.

One of the memorable experiences was the time when I was teaching geometry to junior high students in a public school. These students were mostly “city kids” and life was tough for them. Since that was my first time to teach, I kept telling myself that I had mastery of my subject matter. I was very nervous and deeply concerned with how my students would perceive me. I looked so inexperienced that I had to show my students I was in control of the class. Indeed, I was so structured and rigid that I could hear a pin drop. I was so tight on my students, no one was allowed to talk in class.

One of my former students blurted out a question without raising his hand. I thought he interrupted my lesson, so I got annoyed. For me the student broke a class rule. He should have raised his hand if he had any questions. As a consequence for this action, I told him in a harsh way that I did not appreciate his interruption. He did not take this comment too well and felt that I embarrassed him in class. He nearly fainted. From the look in his face, I knew I did something terribly wrong. I did not listen at all.

Wisdom prevailed. I thought quickly, got off of my “pedestal” and walked up to him and apologized for being discourteous. He was graciously forgiving as was the whole class. At that moment my whole perspective changed. My students and I talked about the incident in class and discussed how to apply the philosophy of the Golden Rule in our lives. From then on I knew that I had touched the lives of my students during my first year of teaching. I taught and modeled the lesson that even grownups have to learn respectfulness and kindness.

The event was a humbling experience for me. A teacher is powerful in her class, but teaching is not showing power. Teaching is learning at the same time. I knew that I had touched their lives from that incident. As my teaching years passed, I remembered my first year of teaching experience. I learned to listen, listen and listen to my students then and now.

Twenty-two years later, as I was crossing the street, a police officer approached me to my surprise. He introduced himself, and I politely acknowledged him. I could not exactly tell from what year he graduated, but he mentioned that he was that teenager who got in trouble in my class and I, the teacher apologized. Of course, I remembered him. Deep inside I felt I won a million bucks because this “city kid” continued to trust his teachers and others. He made good choices along the way and strived hard to go to college and earned a degree.

What would have happened to that student had I not taken the consequence of my action? That is a hard question to answer. Teachers do not have solutions to all the problems that we encounter in our classroom nor can their success and ours always be measured by how well a student scores on standardized tests or the state assessment. The best we can do is to help student succeed in their social, emotional, and academic life. Teachers and administrators have the power

to transform the lives of their students. We have the responsibility to take care of these students whose parents have entrusted their lives to us.

Benard (1997) mentioned in his research the power of teachers, often unbeknownst to them, to tip the scale from risk to resilience. They are one of the keys to the academic and emotional success of their students. It is important to teach this curriculum unit focused on the “Golden Rule”, the philosophy that we all know. This is doing unto others what you want to be done unto you. Keep in mind that students are coming from diverse cultural, linguistic or ethnic populations and socio-economic classes. In the inner city schools, teachers are challenged to bring their students to the highest academic achievement as well as mold the character of their students to become good citizens globally.

According to Benard (1991), turnaround teachers/mentors provide and model six protective factors that buffer risk and enable positive development by meeting youth’s basic needs for safety, love and belonging, respect, power, accomplishment and learning, and ultimately, for meaning.

Benard’s first factor is the caring relationships factor. Teachers can convey loving support to students by listening to students and validating their feelings, and by demonstrating kindness, compassion, and respect (Higgins, 1994; Meier, 1995). They refrain from judging, and do not take students’ behavior personally, understanding that youth are doing the best they can, based on the way they perceive the world. Teachers can also help meet the basic survival needs of overwhelmed families through provision of supplies and referrals to social services agencies.

The second factor is positive and high expectations. Teachers’ high expectations can structure and guide behavior, and can also challenge students beyond what they believe can do (Delpit, 1996). Turnaround teachers recognize students’ strengths, mirror them and help students see where they are strong. They specially assist overwhelmed youth, who have been labeled or oppressed by their families, schools, and/or communities, in using them to: (1) not take personally the adversity in their lives; (2) not see adversity as permanent; and (3) not see setbacks as pervasive (adapted from Seligman, 1995). These teachers are student-centered; they use the students’ own strength, interests, goals and dreams as the beginning point for learning, and they tap students’ intrinsic behavior for learning.

Benard’s third factor is giving students the opportunity to participate and contribute. As an outgrowth of a strengths-based perspective, turnaround teachers let students express their opinions and imaginations, make choices, problem solve, work with and help others, and give their gifts back to the community in a physically and psychologically safe and structured environment. They treat students as responsible individuals, allowing them to participate in all aspects of the school’s functioning (Rutter et al., 1979; Rutter, 1984; Kohn, 1993).

The fourth factor is finding strategies for building resilience: A key finding from resilience research is that successful development and transformative power exist not in programmatic approaches per se but at the deeper level of relationships, beliefs, and expectations, and willingness to share power. Schools need to develop caring relationships not only between educator-student but also between student-student, educator-educator, and educator-parent. Certain programmatic approaches, however, can provide the structure for developing these relationships, and providing opportunities for active student involvement; small group process, cooperative learning, peer helping, cross-age monitoring, and community service. Overall, schooling that has been a turnaround experience for stressed young people is described by them as being like “a family,” “a home,” “a community,” and even “a sanctuary” (Goodwillie, 1993).

The fifth factor is teacher support. Just as teachers can create a nurturing classroom climate, administrators can create a school environment that supports teachers’ resilience. They can

promote caring relationships among colleagues; demonstrate positive beliefs, expectations, and trust; provide ongoing opportunities and time, in small groups, to reflect, dialogue, and make decisions together (McLaughlin and Talbert, 1993).

The last factor is staff development. Teachers should reflect personally on their beliefs about resilience, and also, as a staff exchange experiences—both personal and literary—about overcoming odds. They can read and discuss the research on resilience, including the studies of successful city school (Polakow, 1994). Reaching a staff consensus about innate resilience is the first step in creating a classroom or school that fosters resilience.

Teachers are role models for students. So when teachers work from their own innate resilience and well-being, they can also appoint those qualities from their students. If teachers show that they are patient and trustworthy, teaching will become more effortless and enjoyable. Teachers do make a difference in their students' lives. Therefore, by caring about, believing in, and embracing our students in Houston's inner city schools, we are helping them develop their social and academic skills and success in learning. We can establish social change and build future citizens who are creative and compassionate.

UNIT BACKGROUND

I believe that the first week of school is the most crucial time for establishing my rapport with the class and showing that I truly care for their well being. This is the best time of the year to plant the seed of success. The popular saying goes, "Do unto others what you want to be done unto you." I would like to start the next school year with a unit that builds on that philosophy.

In the many years that I have taught, I have seen many intelligent students in my class who are affected with personal issues. Due to these problems, the students do not achieve their highest academic success. I can only agree with what Dr. Hamburg (2004) states in his book. According to Hamburg, technological advances have opened opportunities, changed lifestyles, and disrupted tradition patterns. Disruptive factors involve increased geographical mobility, including massive migrations; the crowding of strangers in cast societies; conflicts in values; the emergence of complex, largely unprecedented circumstances; the immense heterogeneity of the modern world; and the decline of opportunities to practice traditional subsistence activities, leaving millions jobless and often lacking basic essentials.

Since the students are under my care for forty hours a week, I decided to create a unit that will help me increase student achievement through improving their social and emotional well being. I would like to strengthen and support to meet my students' needs. Also, I would like to be able to emphasize the importance of human groups or relationships for their psychological well being. The 21st century has tremendously changed in terms of family and education values. Some of my students struggle with parental relationships. The issue has a tremendous affect on their academic success.

As part of my lesson planning and whenever I teach risks and consequences or good manners and right conduct in my classroom, I will use these helpful insights that I learned from my philosophy class. The topic Suggestions for Teaching Philosophy was one of the most interesting discussions in Professor Garson's class. He suggested that teachers help students understand risks and consequences. We should be able to discern the stage that they are operating at, and ask questions designed to a deeper level.

When discussing difficult controversial and emotional issues, it is better not to appear to have the answers. Get students to pose answers, for discussions and reflections. Be able to identify the various views with people other than yourself even if you have strong views. For instance, we can say "Some people think...Do you agree? Why? (Why not?)" and question rather than saying, "I think..." or "Don't you think..."

Allow the students to think in ways that are new to them. There is no way to teach philosophy or ethics, unless students are able to confront the questions on their own. In general, your students will be surprisingly good at this. It is adults that sometimes forget to approach life in the attitude of curiosity characteristic of philosophy. Furthermore, instead of providing information, the crucial thing you want to accomplish is to get your students to reflect for themselves on the questions (Garson).

I designed this curriculum unit for students to become successful in their social, emotional, and academic life. I will teach this during the first nine weeks of the school year. The time frame for each character education topic will be two weeks. I will have twelve topics that would take me twenty-four weeks to teach the different values. Each section of the unit is designed for forty-minute periods. The sections will be used to discuss values and ethics that will help develop my students' resilience. I will be reading character education books in class that address respect, kindness, cooperation, self-worth, consideration, and friendliness. Creative writing will be integrated in each topic. In addition to the character education books I will also be using films and videos.

The Literature

I have chosen a series of Character Education Books written by Lucia Raatma. I will use literature as part of my unit to teach character education. The first core ethical value is friendship. The book is entitled *Character Education: Friendliness*. It describes friendliness as the virtue of being kind and helpful and suggests ways in which friendliness can be shown. The book has very colorful illustrations and easy to read. It tells about being friendly to family and friends. It mentions about being friendly with oneself, too. Vocabulary words are defined at the bottom of each page. Friendliness is within self, family, school and community. Famous people with good character are depicted in the book. Children will find this book entertaining and learning about being friendly will be fun.

During my read aloud session, I will use this book to help students not only learn about character education but also further enhance their listening, speaking, and writing skills. The other books in the series are as interesting as the first one that I will use for my read aloud session. The students who are below reading level will like this book because of the colorful pictures and easy language.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

I will explain the teaching strategies in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. I will plan for different learning activities that are enjoyable for the students. For instance, I will brainstorm with them about whether they have experienced being respected by their peers. This discussion will lead them to relate their own examples.

After that I will list the different examples on a chart. Then I will ask students whether they have experienced or have seen incidents when they decided to be disrespectful. I will ask them to explain the consequences of disrespectfulness. A follow up question would be to ask them to think about how they would feel about that situation. I will emphasize to them that when they decided to take the risk of a behaving negatively, they needed to consider how would that make them feel? After discussing their responses, I would move on to asking why they shouldn't have done it.

Finally, I will the students how they could fix the negative behavior or the situation that they are in. Each student can express himself or herself on how to solve the situation. Through the cooperative learning method each group will work on the negative behavior, explain how they feel, the consequence of the negative behavior, and how to solve the bad situation.

My fourth graders enjoy role-playing, so it will be one of the activities that the students will be doing to model good behavior/resilience. My students will create their own script on how they have succeeded in developing their innate resiliency, making them “blooming flowers.” That activity will be video taped, and each student will have his or her own part. I will invite guest speakers who are the students’ role models. I will try to invite the successful parents to come to class and talk about their struggles and successes.

“Dear Miss Manners” would also be an interesting activity for risks and consequences. Integrating their writing, reading, listening, and speaking skills, I can divide the class into two groups, say A and B. I will let the A group write letters to Miss Manners about the negative behavior problem and then Group B will write Miss Manner’s answer on how to deal with that bad behavior or choice. A variation of this activity is for Group A to describe a risky behavior and ask whether it is a good idea. Then Group B could discuss the consequences.

In addition to the activities that I have mentioned, the next activity for a group of students will be asking the students to design their own character education risks and consequences board games. I will model the first part of the game board and then let them do the rest. Another idea is a memory card game. Students will create cards that have risks and consequences and will pair them up. The student with the highest number pair of cards wins the game.

CONCLUSION

The Risks and Consequences curriculum unit is designed to be an encouragement, to be a guide and to teach our students to be resilient. I would like to see my students succeed not only in academic areas but also with their social and emotional learning. I hope that my students will become resilient individuals and that they will understand that for every risk there is a consequence. It is important for me to teach resiliency because it will cultivate my student’s personality, enhance their behavior, and develop their reading and writing skills through character education.

Benard (1997) states that working from their own innate resilience and well-being, teachers engage those qualities in their students. If they can let go of their tight control, be patient, and trust the process, teaching will become more effortless and enjoyable and will be responding to recommendations from the research on resilience and on nurturing teachers and successful schools. It is important that teachers realize they are making the difference.

To make that difference the teachers have to be the students’ role models. We must show our students that we have self-control – we are patient and trustworthy. In doing so teaching math, science, reading, language arts, and writing will become more effortless and enjoyable. Learning will be effective and fun.

In addition, Benard (1997) emphasizes that when teachers care, believe in, and embrace “city kids,” they are not only enabling their healthy development and successful learning but also creating inside-out social change; they are building a creative and compassionate citizenry. Since we teach “city kids” in our school district, we should be able to focus not only on passing the promotion standards requirements but also on creating a thorough social change in the lives of our students.

I learned from Lifton (1994) that being resilient is the human ability to transform and change no matter what their risks. It is the ability to make good choices in any place at all times. Whenever there is a social problem or an academic problem, the students should be able to analyze and solve it. I would like to see them develop their sense of identity. Resiliency among my students is to learn that they can plan a good and hopeful future for themselves. With this curriculum unit I am hopeful that my students understand that their future will continue to make

this country the land of opportunity regardless of race, color, and socio-economic status. They can be the productive, creative, and compassionate global citizens.

In this curriculum unit, the lessons that I have prepared are to educate my students in an awareness of or knowledge that for every risk there is a consequence. Thus, the students are responsible for their own actions/decisions. They should be able to see that having a golden rule philosophy will lead them to the path of success not only in their academic areas but also in their social and emotional learning. My students should learn how to live together in a diverse classroom where people come from different cultures, ethnic backgrounds, and socio economic levels.

Hamburg and Hamburg (2004) state that prejudice and hatred exist all over the world, but there are also touching examples of tolerance, cooperation, and friendship between different groups. I hope that this curriculum unit is a step in teaching students to make good choices and to understand that for every risk there is a consequence.

Educators must make every effort to teach well our students in the areas of math and sciences (reading and writing connection), the value of good health (health education), risks and consequences (problem and solution) and equal educational opportunity for male and female. With this in mind, I hope that I can make a difference in the lives of my students.

LESSONS IN RISKS AND CONSEQUENCES

Lesson One: Be a Friend - Literature Friendliness

Objectives

- Students will understand the virtue of being friendly.
- Students will understand about the value of having good friends.
- Students will learn what makes a good friendship work.
- Students will be open to friendships with people who are different.

Materials

A character education book on friendship, newspapers, magazines, overhead projector, dry erase markers, a sticky chart, chalks, pencil and paper, crayons, scissors, and glue

Procedures

Before reading the story, divide the students into groups of three. Tell the students to read the following questions and answer them on a piece of writing pad or a chart.

Questions

1. Suppose one of your school group-mates is having a birthday party. You were invited, but your best friend was intentionally left out. What would you do? Why?
2. How does it feel when someone has been left out?
3. Have you ever been left out? What did you do?
4. Why do you think your best friend was not invited to the party?
5. How did your best friend feel when she was not invited to the party?
6. What was your schoolmate's problem?
7. Do you think best friends always have to do the same thing together? Why or why not?
8. Do you think best friends have to have the same friends? Why or why not?
9. Do you have a new best friend this year? What happened?
10. Are you a good friend?
11. What makes you a good friend? Explain.
12. Why do you think friends are important to us?
13. Do you know what the word "popular" means?

14. Is it important for you to popular?
15. Do you think popularity should be based on friendship?
16. What do you think is the basis of friendship?

Read and discuss the story. Ask the students comprehension questions and character education related questions after reading it.

Group Activities

1. Write on the chalkboard, “Be a good friend to others, so that others will be a good friend to you.” Discuss this quotation with your students. Let them explain to you/class why they are agreeable to disagreeable to the quotation. Ask the students to think of the good friends’ characteristics. Write on the chart and discuss each one.
2. Distribute newspapers or magazines to each group. Cut and paste examples of friendly behaviors or draw pictures of them. Ask the group to create a Friendship Collage. Students can also write their own quotations and posters about friendliness.
3. Create a mini play of how to make friends with a new student in class. Each group will plan, write, produce, and present their mini play. Give the new student a challenge to try to be friendly and be accepted into the class. After the class presentation, discuss with the students the friendly characteristics of the new student and his/her feelings of being new and being part of the group.
4. Write about a special person who you think is the friendliest person in the classroom or at home. Be able to describe his/her friendly characteristics.

Evaluation: Writing Tasks

Assign each student to think and write about a time when he/she and a friend had a great time together. Explain why they had a great time and what the student like about his/her friend that made it great to be together.

Pretend that your best friend moved to a new state and he/she would like you to hear from you. Write your friend an e-mail/letter about why you miss your friend and reminisce the good times you used to have together.

Lesson Two: Be Responsible - Literature Character Education Respect

Objectives

- Students will understand the virtue of being responsible.
- Students will learn that being responsible makes them feel good about themselves and makes others respect and appreciate them.
- Students will learn the attributes of a responsible person.

Materials

A character education book on responsibility, overhead projector, dry erase markers, a sticky chart, chalks, pencil and paper, crayons, scissors, and glue

Procedure

Before reading your book about responsibility (i.e. integrity, commitment, trustworthy) and brainstorm ideas on what it feels like to be a responsible person.

Discuss the following questions with your students:

1. What does it mean when someone says, “You are a responsible person?” Describe the person.
2. What are some of your responsibilities at home and at school?
3. What are some reasons that you consider yourself a responsible person?
4. What is the difference between doing “chores” and “responsibility”?
5. Do you know the meaning of the word “integrity”? Explain your answer.
6. How do you know that a person has integrity?
7. Would you like to be called a person of integrity? Explain your answer.
8. When someone is responsible, what are the rewards of being responsible?
9. When someone is being responsible or being irresponsible, how will it affect a person’s self-esteem?

Teacher led discussion.

Read the story with the class and ask questions about it.

Discuss the main character of the story and refer to the questions above.

Emphasize the core ethical value of responsibility.

Evaluation: Writing Tasks

1. Create a responsible person chart with two columns namely behavior and write the students’ examples.

How to Be a Responsible Person	Example
When you agree to do something, just do it.	
Answer for your own actions.	
Take care of your own matters.	
Be trustworthy.	
Always use your common sense.	

Think of examples of how to handle irresponsible behavior. Write the best ideas on a chalkboard or on a chart.

2. Think and write about a time when you did something really responsible. Be able to describe it. What was the result of your good behavior? How did you feel about it?
3. Create individually/group your very own Responsibility Board Game. Illustrate, color, and write your board game rules. Play with your group and be ready to present it to the class. Write about how you created your board game.

Lesson Three: Be Considerate - Literature Character Education Consideration

Objectives

- Students will understand the virtue of being considerate.
- Students will understand about the value of consideration.
- Students will learn the different ways of being a considerate person.
- Students will be considerate with people who are different.

Materials

A character education book on friendship, newspapers, magazines, overhead projector, dry erase markers, a sticky chart, chalks, pencil and paper, crayons, scissors, and glue

Procedures

Before reading the story about consideration, ask your students the following questions:

1. What does it mean to be a considerate person?
2. What are the qualities of a considerate person?
3. Can you name some ways that a considerate person is also a polite person?
4. Can you name some ways that you are a considerate person at home? At school and in your community?
5. Discuss the different ways that the students can do to be a considerate person.
6. Can you give examples for the different behaviors such as listening to others, sharing, taking turns, compromising, doing your part, showing appreciation, encouraging others, making people feel needed and not isolating or excluding anyone from your group?

Teacher led discussion. After reading the story, ask the different ways that each character showed his/her being considerate.

Evaluation: Writing Tasks

1. Think write about your being considerate. Create a checklist of considerate behaviors that are listed on the chalkboard. Give a rating for yourself on the scale of E for excellent, VG for very good, G for good, F for fair, U for unsatisfactory, and P for poor. What could you do if your have a Poor rating for that behavior?
2. Create a skit with your partner to describe a time when you had difficulty with consideration. What made it difficult for you to be considerate? What did you do about your behavior? How could you have it made easier?
3. Cut and paste pictures from newspapers and magazines that show consideration. Discuss it with your partner/group. Explain how the person feels when he/she is being considerate.

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<<http://www.GoodCharacter.com>>.

Lesson Plans and materials in this website are for teachers' use with permission from Copyright Elkind+Sweet Communications/Live Wire Media. Use this website to find lesson plans for the six core ethical values.

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