

# Back to School (Elementary)

## Overview:

“Actions speak louder than words” – American proverb

Students will discover the vocabulary of the Six Pillars of Character and how it relates to their classroom. They will incorporate the vocabulary into their goals for the coming academic year and discuss strategies to help reach them.

## Objectives:

- Students will familiarize themselves with the Six Pillars of Character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.
- Students will explore vocabulary associated with the Six Pillars and its relation to the school environment.
- Students will apply their knowledge to create goals for the school year.
- By creating a goal wall, students will recognize the importance of teamwork in accomplishing their goals in line with the Six Pillars.

## Materials:

- Search for Character Scavenger Hunt handout
- Six Pillar Vocabulary, hidden in the room
- Construction paper, precut into 6” by 4” rectangles
- Marker pens to write their goals on the rectangles
- Tape and a space to post the goals

## Materials:

- [Character Scavenger Hunt](#) handout

## Procedure:

1. Introduce the Six Pillars of Character to the class and tell them that the words (trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship) will inform them throughout the school year.
2. As you introduce each word, brainstorm ideas on how it applies to the classroom environment. Write the suggestions on the board.

## Back to School (Elementary)

3. Tell the class they will begin a scavenger hunt to find more ideas and ways that the words can help them throughout the year and why they're important to the class environment and their own progress.
4. Distribute the *Character Scavenger Hunt* handouts. Specify a time limit. Tell the students they should try to find as many of the words as possible.
5. When time is up, have students share the words they found. Did they relate to any of the ideas they suggested at the beginning of the class?
6. Tell the students to think about how the Six Pillars will help them through the year. They can choose personal goals or shared goals for the class.
7. Distribute the precut rectangles and markers. Tell the students to write their goals on the paper that will then be taped to the wall of goals.
8. When all the students have taped their goals to the wall, tell them this will be a personal reminder for them to try their best and to work in accordance with the values of the Six Pillars throughout the year.
9. Re-visit the Goal Wall throughout the year and remind the students at appropriate times of the goals they wanted to attain.

This lesson is part of a regular feature in Josephson Institute's monthly e-newsletter, the *Character Educator*. To subscribe, visit the CHARACTER COUNTS! website:

<http://www.charactercounts.org/chron/>

---

### McREL standards

#### Language Arts

**Standard 5.** Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process.

**Level II Benchmark 5.** Use a variety of context clues to decode unknown words (e.g., draws on earlier reading, reads ahead).

<http://www.mcrel.org/Standards-benchmarks/>