

Character Book

Overview:

In this lesson students will learn how the values of the Six Pillars of Character are reflected in their world. They'll identify behaviors that represent trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship and explore the relationship between good character and values.

Materials:

- Sample book to use as a guide
- Information on the [Six Pillars of Character](#)
- The *Six Pillar Shuffle* song ([print sheet music](#) or [purchase the CD](#))
- Images or illustrations that represent the Six Pillars of Character
- Photos and other images from magazines; glue, and scanner (if using collage)
- Pencils for first drafts of drawings (if using student illustrations)
- Water-based markers for final illustrations (if using student illustrations)
- Age-appropriate writing rubric
- Draft paper for writing
- Black ink for final writing

Procedure:

1. Introduce the class to the Six Pillars of Character using the *Six Pillar Shuffle* song or another idea that is age-appropriate to engage the students in the concept.
2. Ask them if they've ever heard of the words of the Six Pillars before (trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship). Go over each Pillar and ask the students to share where they've heard the word. Ask if they can give an example of what that word means. If you have a large number of English language learners in your class, prepare in advance translations of the Six Pillars to help them understand. You only need to use the translations if the students don't understand the English words or their synonyms.
3. Next, consolidate the learning by showing pictures of the behaviors represented by each of the Six Pillar values. As you show each picture or photo, have the class call out the name of the Pillar represented by the picture.

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4. Once everyone understands what the words mean, have them think about specific situations in their lives where they experienced one of the values. This can be a time when they demonstrated trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, or citizenship or a time when someone else demonstrated a Pillar behavior. Prompt them by sharing examples from books they know well or TV characters with whom they're familiar.
5. Tell them they're going to draw a picture that shows what happened when they saw or demonstrated good character. For older students, have them create a collage using photos cut from magazines. If your class is making collages, scan each one to the appropriate pages in the book once the writing is completed. If your students are drawing directly onto the pages, have them start with pencil so they can erase mistakes and do this part once the writing is completed.
6. Once the images are ready, tell the students to write about them. Use an age-appropriate writing rubric to guide their writing. Enlist older students to help with editing. Follow this writing process:
 - a. First draft
 - b. Edit and review
 - c. Proofread
 - d. Final text
7. When the paragraphs are ready, have the students write them onto the corresponding page on the paper you will use to publish your book.
8. Next, create the final images on the publishing paper. If you're making collages, scan those onto the appropriate page. If you're using drawings, follow the process in step 5.
9. When all the materials are ready you have your own classroom book!
10. When the book is completed, celebrate by having a Reading Event. Invite parents, students, and other guests to attend the reading. Have the students talk about what good character means to them in their lives and what they hope to see demonstrated by the adults in their lives that shows CHARACTER COUNTS! everywhere, all the time.

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For more activities about the Six Pillars of Character, check out our free lesson plan bank at charactercounts.org/lesson-plans.

McREL standards

Language Arts

Standard 1. Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process

Benchmark 3. Editing and Publishing: Uses strategies to edit and publish written work (e.g., proofread using a dictionary and other resources; edits for grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling at a developmentally appropriate level; incorporates illustrations or photos; uses available, appropriate technology to publish work; uses legible handwriting, shares finished product).

<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/index.asp>