



My Character: My Life, Your Life, Our Future

Name:

My School:

My Teacher:

My Class:

Review

The My Character Resources have been developed by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham, alongside young people across the UK. This is one of a set of 10 eResources, each aiming to encourage young people to be more future minded and to think about who they are and who they want to become.

The other eResources in this series are

Having a Dream
Saving for the Future
Having Patience
Helping Others
Being Determined
Having Courage
Working Together
Thinking Creatively

Please go to www.mycharacter.co.uk to download them.



Congratulations!

You should now know more about the Essential Character traits, and how they affect your progress in life and your interactions with people. You will also have started to develop some of those essential character traits!

Which character traits do you have and which do you need to work on more? You will have found that some of the character traits are stronger in you than others. Maybe you are really good at having a dream and are very determined and creative, but maybe you're not so good at helping other people? Or maybe you're good at saving for the future and having patience – but you find it difficult to be creative.

How have you started developing these character traits? What other things can you do? Think about how these things can help you in the future.

Being self reflective and thinking about your strengths, your weaknesses and your character means you have a much better understanding of yourself and the areas you need to develop. If you have the ability to do this, you are already well ahead of the game and on your way to a successful future!

Activity 25: Predicting My Future

Complete the following statements about where you think you will be in the future

I predict that when I am
20 years old.....

I will be a

I will / will not be married.

I will have the following pets

.....

I will be living in

I will have.....children

I will celebrate my 20th birthday by

.....

I will / will not be living at home

I will / will not be a millionaire

I will have visited these countries

.....

I will have developed the following skills

.....

My personal motto will be

.....

I predict that when I am
40 years old.....

I will be a

I will / will not be married.

I will have the following pets

.....

I will be living in

I will have.....children

I will celebrate my 40th birthday by

.....

I will / will not be living at home

I will / will not be a millionaire

I will have visited these countries

.....

I will have developed the following skills

.....

My personal motto will be

.....



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing a letter.

26 Activity 26: Dear Twenty Four Year Old Me

In the space write a letter to yourself when you are 24 years old. What do you hope you will have achieved by the time you are 24? What do you still hope you will achieve? What will you have done, what character traits and values will you have shown?

Make it personal and based on your dreams.



Activity 27 : Updating My Character Traits Audit...who am I now?

Have a look at the character traits at the front of this resource.

Write down below the five main character traits you have developed or recently improved.

1.
.....
.....

2.
.....
.....

3.
.....
.....

4.
.....
.....

5.
.....
.....

What can I do to develop my Character further?

Showing that you have good character and values will help you get into university or get that job you really want. There are lots of activities you can take part in to develop your character, both in school and in your community.

These include:

- Joining a band
- Joining a club
- Being a member of a sports team
- Doing the Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Volunteering
- Being a scout or guide
- Being a buddy, reading partner or peer mentor
- Being a prefect, school captain or on the school council
- Starting your own project / club or group
- Fundraising for a charity
- Joining a debating society
- Making a presentation
- Being in a play

...as well as many other things!

Which of these have you already done...and what would you like to do?

28

Activity 28: My Character Personal Statement

In the future you are going to have to write a personal statement. You might have to write several. You normally have to do one to apply to go to university or to apply for a job. Based on what you have learnt about yourself over this year, write a statement to a future employer about what character qualities and skills you have and why they should employ you. Remember to use evidence in your statement – so you are telling the employer not only that you have a particular character quality, but also giving them evidence to show that you have it.

Evidence for my character personal statement

A successful personal statement will be full of evidence of things you have taken part in and successfully achieved. These things say a lot about you and your character. You should make a list of all the things you have done in your life, in school and out of school, and then choose the ones that say the most about you to include in your personal statement.

These may include:

- Any bands you are a member of
- Any clubs you are a member of
- Being a sports captain or member of a sports team
- Doing the Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Any volunteering you have done
- Any trips in the UK or overseas you have made – particularly on your own
- Being a scout or guide
- Being a buddy, reading partner or peer mentor
- Being a prefect, school captain or on the school council
- Any projects you have managed

So what makes an excellent personal character statement?

A good personal statement makes you stand out from the crowd as someone whose academic achievements, interests and potential combined with their personal characteristics make them the perfect fit for a place. Sounds easy enough, doesn't it? But it's easier said than done, of course. So, how to go about it?

In short, being clever enough to do well at school is one thing – but to do well at university or in a job you need to be clever and have the right character too.

What qualities of character are needed, then? The best university students or employees are those who are independent and organised as learners, are resilient in the face of challenge and are persistent in the pursuit of their goals. It's these traits and others that you have to make clear in your personal statement. Hence: what have you done, in or out of school, that shows these qualities? Have you gone beyond the syllabus in your reading or thinking? Have you a relevant academic interest that you expect to pursue? What organisational skills has your life made you develop? What does your coursework show about your capacity to set your own direction? What challenges, academic, personal, physical, have you overcome? What evidence can you offer that you've achieved challenging goals on your own? What drives you? What makes you tick? What's unusual or different about you?

The evidence of these personal characteristics could come from extra-curricular stuff you've been up to. For instance, completing

the Pennine Way shows resilience and persistence; so does finishing an exam after an accident that left you needing 85 stitches. Reading every novel Jane Austen ever wrote makes you goal-oriented. Talking about reaching the UK Warhammer 40000 Semi-Finals in Birmingham makes you sound quirky, for sure...

In fact, many different kinds of evidence can show that you have the necessary 'fire in the belly' to be a superb employee or student. Remember: being clever is not enough – you must have Drive and you must have good Character.

Mr Bradshaw, Thomas Tallis School

What Does it Mean?

Important words

Character

is who you are. It is what makes you.....you. It is what you believe in and how you act with others and when on your own. It is your values and your virtues.

Character trait

a feature of an individual or group of people, it tells you about their personality.

Virtue

a quality that is considered desirable in a person, all the good things about you that can be used to describe your character

The Eight Character Traits

Being determined

the ability to keep going whatever happens

Having a dream

having an aspiration, ambition or goal

Having courage

the ability to do the right thing even when it is difficult

Having patience

The capacity to accept or tolerate delay, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious.

Helping others

Make it easier or possible for someone to do something by offering them help

Saving for the future

the quality of using money and other resources carefully and not wastefully

Thinking creatively

the use of imagination or original ideas to create something new

Working together

the combined action of a group, especially when effective and efficient

Other Character Traits

Ambitious

a person with a strong desire to want to achieve something or reach a certain goal

Anxious

a person that is often worried that something may go wrong or not as planned

Charismatic

a character trait that includes traits such as leadership, charm and persuasiveness, an ability to inspire other people. You might often hear people say that a certain person is a charismatic leader; it means that people are naturally drawn to them, they are inspiring.

Compassionate

a person with the desire to help others

Delayed gratification

the ability of a person to wait for something that they want and not get it straight away

Doggedness

determined in effort, a very determined person

Endurance

finishing an unpleasant or difficult activity or process without giving up

Fortitude

being courageous or brave in the face of something difficult, painful or scary

Frugal

being very careful with your money, buying only things that are needed

Honesty

the ability to be truthful, sincere and fair

Humble

to feel that you are no more important than anyone else no matter what the situation, even you are the Queen or richest person in the world

Humility

the ability to be modest and respectful

Innovative

a person that starts something new, creates something or comes up with new ideas or ways to do something

Inspirational

making you feel hopeful or encouraged

Integrity

the possession of firm principles, for example if you are willing to do the right thing – even if nobody is watching

Optimistic

being positive and confident about what will happen

Prudent

acting with and showing care for the future, a person who is careful and sensible

Resilient

the ability to recover quickly from something, for example change, misfortune, illness

Risk averse

the dislike of, and desire, to avoid any type of risk

Sense of humour

the ability to face danger, difficulty, uncertainty and fear

Tenacious

a person that has an opinion in a determined way

Thrifty

a person that is careful with money, avoids waste

Tolerance

the ability to be able to accept difference

Will power

ability to control your own thoughts and how you behave

Other words you may not know**Academic**

relating to school or higher education

Aspiration

a strong desire to achieve something

Audit

looking at previous records to see if they are correct

Credit card

a card issued by a bank for the purchase of items on credit – money that a person does not physically have but they are borrowing from a bank and will pay interest on (a percentage of extra money on top of what they are paying for an item)

Entrepreneur

a person who organises and works in a business, and takes on a financial (money) risk doing so.

Humiliation

to feel very embarrassed or ashamed

Mentor

a person who advises and guides people

Personal statement

a piece of writing about you to describe your character, what you are good at and your passion, normally to give to universities or potential employers.

Philanthropist

a person who makes charitable donations to help others, in time or money

Self-reflection

to think about yourself and reflect on who you are

Reflect

to think about

Resources

an available supply that can

be drawn on when needed, for example a natural resource is a resource supplied by nature including water, wood and air. Vocational providing skills and education that prepare you for a job

Volunteer

a person who does something without receiving money for their work or being forced to do it, normally involves helping other people in some way

We would like to thank the John Templeton Foundation for providing the generous funding for this project. We would also like to thank all the teachers, young people and the project advisory group who helped us to create the resources. Specifically we would like to thank the teachers and young people from the following schools:

Park View School, Birmingham

Stockport School, Stockport

Maltby Academy, Doncaster

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Ashbourne

Meadowhead School, Sheffield

Saltley School, Birmingham

For more information about the My Character Project or the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, please contact t.j.harrison@bham.ac.uk or see www.jubileecentre.ac.uk.

