



## My Character: My Life, Your Life, Our Future

Name:

My School:

My Teacher:

My Class:

## Having a Dream

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

Saving for the Future  
Having Patience  
Helping Others  
Being Determined  
Having Courage  
Working Together  
Thinking Creatively  
My Character – Review

Please go to [www.mycharacter.co.uk](http://www.mycharacter.co.uk) to download them.

Current location:



### Keywords

Goal

Fantasy

Desire

Objective

Ambition

Vision

Aspiration

Aim

Wish

# Having a Dream

Having an aspiration, ambition or goal



Many great things start with a simple dream. Successful people often say they were successful because they followed their dream. Their dream was to be an actor, doctor, teacher, nurse and this was what guided everything they did. Achieving your dreams often takes great determination, courage and talent. Having a dream is the starting point on the map of your life.

A dream is the first spark that lights the fire to your future.

# My Inspirations

My favourite quote is:

Because:

'Reach for the moon, and if you miss you will be amongst the stars' – **Anon**

'In dreams as in love there are no impossibilities' – **James Arny**

'Within our dreams and aspirations we find our opportunities' – **Sue Ebaugh**

'It takes a person who is wide awake to make his dream come true' – **Roger Ward Babson**

'When you have a dream you have to grab it and never let go' – **Carol Burnett**

'The only place where your dream becomes impossible is in your own thinking' – **Robert Schuiller**

'If you can imagine it you can achieve it; if you can dream it you can become it' – **William Ward**

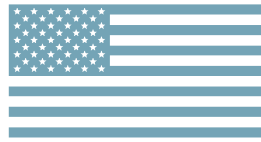
'Dreams are the touchstones of our character' – **Henry Thoreau**

'More important than talent, strength or knowledge is the ability to laugh at our self in pursuit of our dreams' – **Amy Grant**

'Champions are not made in the gym, champions are made from something they have deep inside them, a desire, a dream, a vision' – **Muhammed Ali**

# Inspirational People

Martin Luther King Jr (1929 - 1968)  
Non Violent Human Rights Leader



Martin Luther King Jr was one of America's most influential civil rights activists. His passionate but non violent protests helped to raise awareness of racial inequalities in America, and led to significant change. He was also an impressive speaker whose speeches still inspire people today.

Martin Luther King was born in Georgia, USA, and attended segregated schools where black and white students were educated separately. He was a very successful student, graduating early from high school and gaining several degrees. Then in 1954 he became Pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church.

Always active in fighting for the civil rights of African Americans, he became a member of the executive committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) and led the fight against the segregation on Public Transport. During this period of time, his house was bombed and he was arrested, but he began to be recognised as a powerful force in the fight for equal rights.

Inspired by Ghandi and by Christian ideals, he spent eleven years leading and taking part in non-violent protest and action, and speaking publically about his belief in the equality of people. He was named as Man of the Year by Time magazine in 1963, following his famous "I have a Dream" speech, delivered in Washington during a civil rights march.

In 1964, Martin Luther King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work towards social justice, and announced he would give the prize money of \$54,123 to the civil rights movement.



Image credit: Chicago Urban League Records, University of Illinois at Chicago Library

On April 4th 1968, King was assassinated. It was one day after he had delivered his final speech "I've Been to the Mountaintop". Martin Luther King is one of the most famous dreamers who ever lived, and he remains symbolic of America's fight for justice and racial equality. From an early age Martin Luther King dreamt of a world that was free of racial prejudice, and it was this dream that gave him his mission in life and shaped his work. He is particularly famous for his 'I have a dream' speech, in which in front of 250,000 people he explained his vision for a fair world, where people from different races were all treated equally.

# Inspirational People



**Bill Gates (1955 - present day)**  
Businessman, Philanthropist,  
Co-founder of Microsoft

Bill Gates is an American businessman, investor, philanthropist and author, who co-founded Microsoft. He is consistently ranked among the world's wealthiest people and in 2011 was the wealthiest American. After building Microsoft into a hugely successful company, his vision grew to encompass billionaires giving away money and working to alleviate poverty.

Bill Gates was born in Seattle in 1955 and from a young age showed a talent for and interest in computers and computer programming. The first computer programme he wrote was a version of Tic-Tac-Toe, allowing people to play the game against the computer.

Bill spent a lot of his time at school playing with computers, experimenting and exploring what they could do. He went to Harvard but decided to drop out to school to start a software company, something his parents supported.

Bill Gates and Paul Allen set up Microsoft in 1975. Under their leadership Microsoft rose to dominate the home computer operating system market and now, nearly every office in the world uses Microsoft Office!

Bill Gates became one of America's youngest self-made billionaires and became more and more interested in the idea of philanthropy. He set up a number of charitable foundations before he and his wife combined them to create the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2000. Their plan is to give away 95% of their wealth and are encouraging others to do the same thing – both Warren Buffet and Mark Zuckerberg have signed up.

In all parts of his life, Bill Gates has always had a vision and then worked



to turn that into reality. He had a vision of everyone using computers – and Microsoft – in all areas of life, and worked to turn Microsoft into the leader in its field, used by businesses everywhere. He had a vision of the wealthy donating huge percentages of their money to good causes, and has encouraged and inspired people to join him in making this possible.

“I really had a lot of dreams when I was a kid, and I think a great deal of that grew out of the fact that I had a chance to read a lot.” – **Bill Gates**

Add a Picture of  
your inspirational  
person here

## Having a Dream: My Hero

Is there an inspirational person who you think followed their dreams? This could be someone famous, or someone you know personally or someone who lives locally. Explain their life story and how they followed their dream:



# My Actions

4

## Activity 4: I Will Achieve My Dream

My Dream is

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

### Step One: Get the qualifications

In order to achieve your dream what qualifications do you need? Are there particular subjects (sciences, drama etc) or a particular level (a university degree, vocational qualification) that you need to achieve?

The qualifications I need to achieve my dream are:

.....

.....

.....

'The starting point for achievement is desire' – Anon

### Step Two: Get the Skills

What skills and knowledge do you need to achieve your dream? Do you need to get better at art, singing, football? Do you need to know more about history, music, psychology? List four skills that would help you achieve your dream.

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

4 .....

### Step Three: Get the Character

What character traits do you need to achieve your dream? Do you need to be really determined, caring, honest, have a good sense of humour? List four character qualities that will help you achieve your dream.

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

4 .....

I will achieve my dreams in \_\_\_ years

5

## Activity 5: Is it all about being good at I.T or having Integrity?

Do you know what employers are looking for in the people they recruit?

Look at the quotes below about what helps people get a job.

'Talent' means much more to us than simply getting good grades at school or college. We recruit people who have the courage and integrity to face difficult challenges head on, rather than taking the easiest pathway. We look for evidence that applicants have stood up for something they believe in. Our strong reputation depends on our people sharing in these core values'

Kate Waring, Student Recruitment Manager, PWC

'At BT we need staff that can support and inspire colleagues, who can turn talk into action, who can build on strengths and overcome weaknesses.'

Susan Anderson, Director, Education and Skills, CBI

If qualifications and training alone made one suitable for a job, there would be no need for an interview!

Tom Kimber, Kings College Cambridge

I think values are increasingly prominent and important when preparing for employment; they help contribute to a person's character. Core values enable a person to enter the world of work with the correct frame of mind and ensure they embark on their journey of employment with the skills demonstrated by the values.

Natasha Templeton, Trinity Academy

Now based on the quotes as well as your own experience, write down five character traits you think employers will be looking for.

**Part A:** List the five character qualities you think employers are looking for in the people they recruit:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.





## It's all about my exam grades....right?

Wrong....employers are just as interested in who you are as they are in what grades you have.

Employers are not only interested in how intelligent you are, but in who you are, and your character. They want to know that you have the skills for the job, but also certain key values and virtues. They want to know that you have courage to take on new challenges, a sense of humour and compassion to build relationships at work and the integrity to carry out the job honestly.

**Part B:** Now write down five things you can do to show future employers you have these character traits (i.e. I volunteer to show I have compassion for others)

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....



Five dreams I have already achieved:

①

②

③

④

⑤





# 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

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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](mailto:t.j.harrison@bham.ac.uk) or see [www.jubileecentre.ac.uk](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk).

