

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM



THE JUBILEE CENTRE
FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES

CHARACTER MATTERS

www.jubileecentre.ac.uk

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SECONDARY EDITION



BACK TO SCHOOL



CHARACTER MATTERS.

Character matters now more than ever.

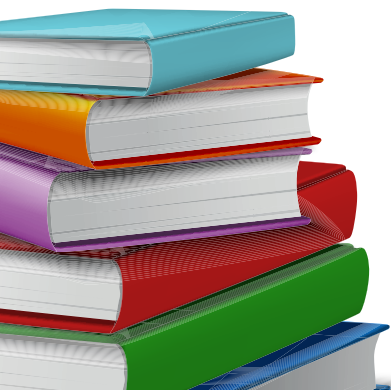
With the closure of schools in the United Kingdom since March 2020, many pupils, and teachers, have been anxiously preparing for their return to school to begin a new term, in a new environment. Whilst there is no denying that the education of our pupils should be a national priority, for many teachers and pupils, they will have to adjust to a new 'normal' in our educational settings. The first term of this new academic year brings with it not only an opportunity for pupils to socialise with their friends and teachers once again, but also an opportunity for teachers to help pupils reflect on their character and virtues after the UK lockdown.

These resources aimed at KS3 have been adapted from the Jubilee Centre's 'Character Curriculum' and provide a toolkit that helps pupils to begin to reflect on their character. The sessions on 'Feelings' enable pupils to think generally about how they may be feeling about returning to school and to focus on the importance of empathy, whilst the sessions on 'Community' encourages pupils to reconnect with the communities around them and recognise the importance of service. The 'Lockdown superheroes' lessons can be used to further explore civic virtues or can be used as a discrete resource to explore courage, resilience, compassion and creativity.

We hope you find Character Matters Secondary resource pack useful and that it helps your pupils to reflect on their character and virtues.

The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues is a unique and leading centre for the examination of how character and virtues impact on individuals and society. The Centre was founded in 2012 by Professor James Arthur and is based at the University of Birmingham.

It offers world-class research on the importance of developing good character and virtues and the benefits they bring to individuals and society. A key conviction underlying the existence of the Centre is that the virtues that make up good character can be learnt and taught. In undertaking its own innovative research, the Centre has developed a wide range of character resources for teachers in schools.



LESSON ONE

NAMING DIFFERENT FEELINGS

Use the PowerPoint resource to help guide the learning.

STARTER

Using mini whiteboards, get pupils to write down as many emotions that they can name – alternatively they could draw some facial expressions to describe them.

ACTIVITY 1: RESEARCH ON EMOTIONS

Look at the research presented in the Independent article. How many emotions have been recognised? Which parts of the face can help us read other people's emotions? Are there other ways we can tell how someone is feeling?

ACTIVITY 2: NAMING EMOTIONS

Ask pupils to focus specifically on emotions that others may have experienced over the last few months. Think of different groups of people and how they may have felt. Be mindful that pupils' experiences may have been very different. Whilst many have found lockdown very difficult, others have thrived.

ACTIVITY 3: DEVELOPING EMPATHY

Learning how others feel requires habituation of the virtue of empathy. Can pupils explain what empathy is? How can they practise empathy? Why is it important? Do they agree with Barack Obama that improving our capacity for empathy would change the world?

ADDITIONAL READING

The latter half of this article is a really useful resource to share with pupils:

www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jan/22/peter-bazalgette-what-i-learned-as-head-of-arts-council-england



LESSON TWO

MANAGING OUR FEELINGS

Use the PowerPoint resource to help guide the learning.

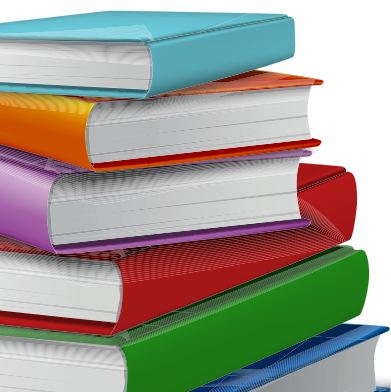
STARTER

Choose an activity that enables pupils to revisit the emotions they talked about in the last session. You could play 'charades' with pupils acting out different emotions that the teacher gives them or get pupils to draw an expression that others have to guess.

ACTIVITY 1: MANAGING OUR EMOTIONS

Read out the following statements. You can make up some more if you want to. Pupils then do thumbs up, thumbs horizontal or thumbs down to show how much they agree with the statement. It's OK if they change their minds, but they must be able to explain their answers when you ask them.

- I live close to school
- I enjoy coming to school
- Football is the best sport in the world
- Pizza is better than pasta
- I can choose how I feel
- It's important to share how I am feeling
- Sometimes you should keep your feelings private
- Sometimes it's impossible to control your temper
- I can learn to manage my emotions with practice



LESSON TWO

MANAGING OUR FEELINGS

ACTIVITY 2: STRONG EMOTIONS, HOW TO RECOGNISE THEM AND HOW TO MANAGE THEM

Sometimes, when we experience very strong emotions such as anger or disappointment or even happiness, we can act quickly and do something without thinking that we regret. You might want to give an example from your personal life or there is a short clip from Inside Out here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HQLg3ZwAs0 [accessed 20.05.2020].

Ask children if they have any examples where this has happened to them.

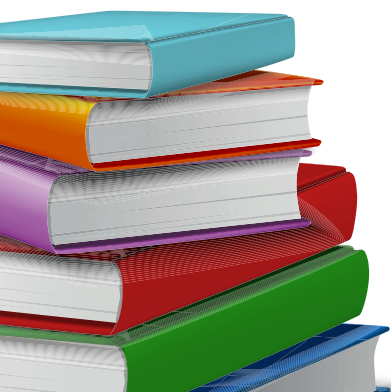
But it is possible to practise self-regulation and learn how to manage extreme emotions.

The first thing is to be able to recognise when you are having an extreme emotion. Have a look at the PowerPoint. What sorts of things can help you recognise when you may be losing your temper? Do other children experience other things?

The second thing to do is to have strategies to bring the emotion down to being manageable. Before we act, it is good to take a pause to think about how we are feeling and what we want to do next. Make a list of strategies that pupils come up with to help them calm down. It could be counting to 10, singing a tune, having a mantra (get them to make some up).

Once you have exhausted everything, if this hasn't come up, get the class to practise it: imagine they are getting angry. They have to think of one thing they can smell, two things they can hear, three things they can see, four things they could touch.

Look at the scenarios on the PowerPoint. Encourage children to think about what they might do without thinking/if they let their feelings control them. Then, explore what they might do if they take a pause and think before acting. Name the virtues they might need to act well in each scenario.



LESSON THREE

UNCOMFORTABLE FEELINGS

Use the PowerPoint resource to help guide the learning.

ACTIVITY 1: IS IT OK TO NOT BE OK?

Show the scenarios on the PowerPoint resource. Prompt children to use the virtue of empathy to think about how the person might be feeling and why. Encourage them to suggest what could happen next. Reinforce that it is ok to feel angry/sad/worried but there are strategies that we can use to help.

ACTIVITY 2: HOW TO MANAGE UNCOMFORTABLE FEELINGS

Look at the advice from Mind on how to manage difficult emotions. Watch the YoungMinds video about young people who experience anxiety and how they manage their feelings. Brainstorm the techniques that the people in the video used. What else do people do when they have uncomfortable feelings?

youngminds.org.uk/find-help/get-urgent-help

ACTIVITY 3: WHAT CAN I DO?

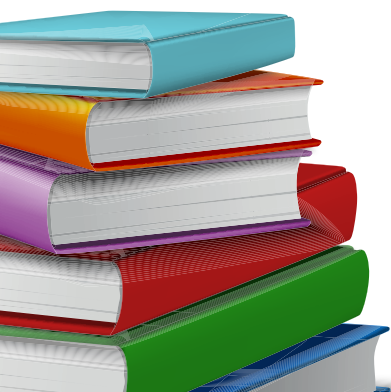
Get pupils to draw around their hand and draw something they can do to help themselves when they are experiencing difficult or negative emotions.

Sometimes, uncomfortable feelings don't go away even when we try all these self-help techniques. At this point, it's important to ask others for some help. Have a look at the organisations that can help young people and make them familiar with how to seek help.

www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/?gclid=CjwKCAjwyo36BRAXEiwA24CwGXFA70zGHvrvaESim-5cAWPIflsEI2FzlpX8ovvBUGs65D5ano8quRoCg58QAvD_BwE

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines

Plenary: As a group, practise some deep breathing techniques or find a mindfulness session on YouTube.



LESSON FOUR

COMMUNITY AND CIVIC VIRTUES

Use the PowerPoint resource to help guide the learning.

ACTIVITY 1: WHAT IS A COMMUNITY?

Ask students to consider what constitutes a community. What is a community? What communities do you belong to? What does it mean to be a part of these communities? How does the community function in a practical way? As a class draw up your definition of what a community is. Students brainstorm these ideas and discuss with a partner.

ACTIVITY 2: WHAT COMMUNITIES DO I BELONG TO?

Students produce a spider diagram which outlines all the communities that they are a part of. Students then look at the communities their partner belongs to and highlight which they are both connected with. Students choose one of these and feedback to the class why they enjoy being part of this community.

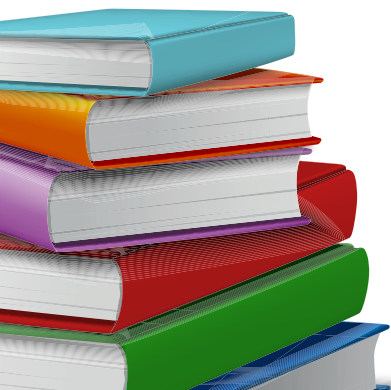
ACTIVITY 3: DIAMOND NINE

Looking at the 9 statements on the diamond, pupils rank a diamond nine in order of importance. Ask pupils why they have arranged them in that order.

What is most important in a community? Why do they believe that? What character virtues does someone have to use for those you have ranked highest?

ACTIVITY 4: NEIGHBOURLINESS

During lockdown, many of us have got to know our neighbours better. For many vulnerable people, these communities have helped them to stay safe and well. Explore whether children have gotten to know people in their community better during lockdown. Watch the short clip about clapping for the NHS. Why have communities come together to do this?



LESSON FIVE

COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTEERING

Use the PowerPoint resource to help guide the learning.

STARTER

There are many organisations in your community that are staffed, led and run by volunteers. Can you think of any? What roles do volunteers play in the organisations you've mentioned? What does the organisation do? In what way does it benefit the local community?

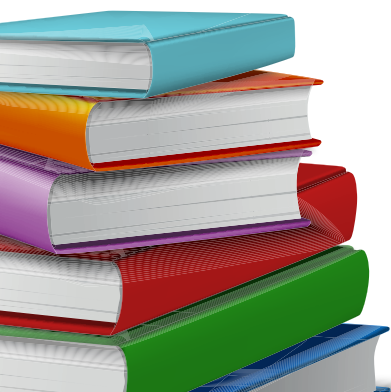
ACTIVITY 1: WHAT IS VOLUNTEERING?

Over 1 million people in the UK signed up to volunteer with NHS Responders – over 400,000 in the first week. What sort of volunteering were they doing? Why did so many people sign up?

What is volunteering? Come up with a definition of volunteering in a pair. Take feedback from definitions and discuss. Are you involved in any activities like this in your school or community? Where do people in your community already volunteer? Do you know anybody involved in this work? Write a short reflection piece on someone you know who volunteers explaining who they volunteer for and their motivation behind volunteering for that organisation (if a student can't think of an example from their own life, prompt them with an example).

ACTIVITY 2: WHY VOLUNTEER?

Students consider the motivation around volunteering and why they might get involved. What virtues do you think a volunteer would need in the different organisations you've mentioned? Why? What virtues might being a volunteer develop? How? In what other ways might your character develop through volunteering? What might people's motivation be for volunteering? Are motives always good/virtuous – if someone volunteers to improve their job prospects for example? Is that a problem?



LESSON FIVE

COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTEERING

ACTIVITY 3: YOUR COMMUNITY

How could volunteers help out to make your community a better place? Using the ideas and discussion in the previous activities, design a new volunteering scheme in your community. The scheme needs to respond to an issue or an organisation in your community and needs to highlight/promote:

- WHY it is needed
- WHERE it is needed
- HOW it would help the community and the individual.

It needs to promote the benefits of volunteering both to the organisation/issue and the individual taking part.

Plenary: what opportunities are there for volunteering in our school? How could we create more?



LESSON SIX

COMMUNITY AND OUR SCHOOL

Use the PowerPoint resource to help guide the learning.

STARTER

Pupils are going to create their utopian society. Use the PowerPoint to explain what 'utopian' means. On their own for five minutes pupils then answer the questions and think of their own ideas about what a utopian school might look like.

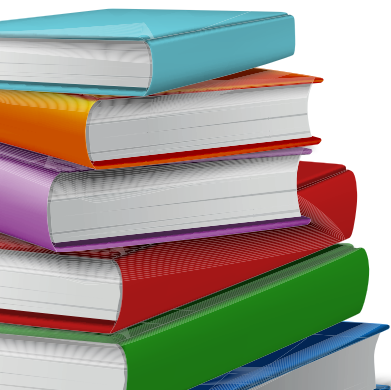
ACTIVITY 1

Pupils pair and share their ideas and refine them to present to the class.

ACTIVITY 2

Share ideas – are there any common themes? Do we all agree or are there widely differing views?

Plenary: what would each one of us need to contribute to make our community the utopian vision we want it to be? Which virtues would that require?



LESSON SEVEN

LOCKDOWN SUPERHEROES

SUGGESTED DELIVERY

These short lessons are a way of helping children recognise the importance of community and how thinking of others first not only enables communities to flourish, but helps the individual to flourish too. The lessons can be delivered in a 10-15 minute space in the curriculum, or as virtual assemblies. The format is meant to be straightforward, but there will often be lots of opportunity for further discussion.

STARTER

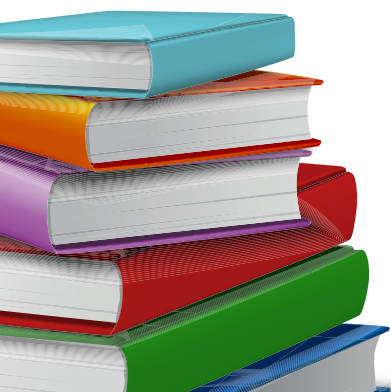
Remind pupils of their virtue literacy and revisit the vocabulary they will need to talk more fluently about Character Education. These words could be written on the board, or made into a word bank display in the classroom over time.

ACTIVITY 1

What's happening in the picture? Do they recognise the person? Can they guess what they might be doing to help their community? Are the children using any stereotypes that need to be unpicked?

ACTIVITY 2

Share more information about the hero. What virtues does the hero need to practise to carry out their actions? What barriers might there have been and which virtues may have helped them overcome them?



LESSON SEVEN

LOCKDOWN SUPERHEROES

ACTIVITY 3

Children think about the impact the actions may have had. Whose lives have been affected? How have they helped others to flourish? Have other lives been affected that we might not originally think about (the ripple effect)? How might these actions help the individual to flourish?

REFLECTION

Find a minute or two of quiet time for pupils to reflect; what have the children learnt? Which virtues might they want to practise and how can they find opportunities to do this?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

These activities enable the resource to be extended with more information, a chance for a wider discussion and some ways in which children can act on what they have learnt.

For more ideas which can easily be adapted to fit the Character Education framework, visit: no-outsiders-assembly.blogspot.com

