



My Character: My Life, Your Life, Our Future

Name:

My School:

My Teacher:

My Class:

Having Courage

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
Working Together
Thinking Creatively
My Character – Review

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

Current location:



Keywords

To believe	High Self esteem
Confident	Taking on challenges
Strong	Trying anything once
Stand up for yourself	Not afraid to back down
Stand up for others	I can
Not being scared	
No fear	

Having Courage

The ability to keep going whatever happens.



It is easy to stay in your comfort zone, close to your friends, in a place you know, doing the things you always do. It's easier than being brave and trying something different. But unless you are willing to try new things and step outside of your comfort zone, how will you ever find out what else is out there and what other surprises life has in store for you?

Doing something new often means we feel vulnerable and uncomfortable, and because we've never done it before we will probably make mistakes and could look silly in front of others. If we can be brave and still do these things anyway, we have expanded our lives and experiences, met new people and possibly learnt new skills. Being courageous could change your life for the better!

Sometimes being courageous means standing up for something you believe is right even when everyone around you thinks it's wrong. If someone you know is bullying someone or being sexist or racist, and everybody around you is laughing along with them, would you speak up? Even if everyone tells you it's just a joke, and to stop being so sensitive? It takes a lot of courage to go against the people around you.

Go on...be brave....try it.

My Inspirations

My favourite quote is:

Because:

'The greatest barrier to success is the fear of failure.'
– **Sven Goran Eriksson**

'Success is going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm'
– **Winston Churchill**

'The harder you fall, the higher you bounce' – **Anon**

'Courage is being scared to death...and saddling up anyway.' –
John Wayne

'Success is never final and failure never fatal. It's courage that counts' – **George Tilton**

'To be successful we must do things that unsuccessful people do not want to do. Those things require levels of courage.' – **R Harpe**

'Genius is talent set on fire by courage.' – **Henry van Dyke**

'I'd rather give my life than be afraid to give it.'
Lyndon Baines Johnson

'Every time you have the courage to face your fears, you become a stronger person.' – **Barbara White**

'Courage enables one to fly beyond limitations. It enables you to attain greatness. To fulfil your true destiny.'
– **B. Bhen**

'Everyone has talent. What is rare is the courage to follow the talent to the dark place where it leads.' – **Erica Jong**

Inspirational People

Anne Frank (June 1929 – March 1945)

Diarist



Anne Frank was forced into hiding with her family during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, where they spent 4 years hiding in her father's office building. She kept a detailed diary of these years, published after her death and now one of the world's most read books. Born in Frankfurt, Germany, Anne's family moved to Amsterdam soon after Adolf Hitler's Nazi party was elected, worried about the increase of anti-Semitism.

In 1940, the Germans invaded the Netherlands and all Jews were forced to wear yellow stars to denote their Jewishness. They weren't allowed to use public transport and Anne's father was forced to transfer his business to his Dutch colleagues as they were not allowed to own businesses.

In July 1942, prompted by a notification that Margot would be sent to a work camp, the Frank family went into hiding in the office buildings of Otto Frank's company. Anne was 13 years old.

The building was damp and dreary, and Anne and her family, the Van Pels family and a friend called Fritz Pfeffer, were confined in such a small space for such long periods of time that tension and conflict was inevitable. But Anne made the best of it, looking at it as a safe place to be until they could leave and be free, and was grateful for the risks their helpers took to bring them food and keep them hidden.

To fill the hours when she had to be completely silent, to save her from boredom and to express the personality she had to keep hidden and restricted during her periods in hiding, Anne wrote faithfully in her diary. After three long years spent in the Annex, they were betrayed and taken away to a concentration camp. Anne and her sister were sent to



a hard labour camp where they were stripped, disinfected, and tattooed with an identifying number. Anne, her mother and sister all died in the concentration camps, with only Otto Frank surviving. Anne's diary had been left behind at the Annex and was discovered and held by Miep Gies, one of those who had brought food to and protected the group in hiding. She passed it on to Anne's father.

All through the years the little community were in hiding, Anne faced many everyday practical challenges as well as the pain of knowing the life she was missing, but refused to give in to depression. She also had the courage to keep believing in the human race, that "in spite of everything ... people are truly good at heart"

I must uphold my ideals, for perhaps the time will come when I shall be able to carry them out. – Anne Frank

Inspirational People



Christopher Reeve (1952 – 2004)

Actor

Christopher Reeve is best known for his role in the Superman movies, playing the title role in four Superman films as well as the American spin off series Smallville, but throughout his life he was also an accomplished theatre actor, producer and director. In 1995 he had a horse riding accident and became paralysed from the neck down. Born in New York City, Christopher Reeve was an outstanding student both in academics and athletics. At the age of 9 he took part in an amateur production of The Yeoman of the Guard, and his desire to act was born.

He continued to act throughout his time at college and made a name for himself in theatre. His first Hollywood role was as a submarine officer in the film Grey Lady Down, and soon auditioned successfully for the role of Clarke Kent in Superman.

All through his acting career, Christopher Reeve had used his athletic ability to do his own stunts. After learning to horse ride for his part in Anna Karenina, he took up horse riding as a sport and began Eventing in 1989.

In 1995, he was riding when his horse refused a jump. He landed head first on the other side of the fence and sustained a spinal injury which paralysed him from the neck down.

He took several days to fully regain consciousness, but when he did, the doctors told him he had completely destroyed his first and second vertebrae. His life had completely changed and for a period of time he considered suicide. Doctors told him that any small improvements there may be to his condition would only come in the first six months after the injury, but in 2002 Christopher stunned the medical community

by revealing that he had gained movement in his fingers and toes and the ability to feel sensations on his skin. He continued with hours of exhausting and painful daily exercise and numerous rehabilitative therapies. Alongside this, he set up The Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation to raise money for research into cures for his condition.

In 2004 he developed a serious infection and sadly, on October 10th he had a cardiac arrest and died.

Christopher Reeve showed immense courage in facing his injuries and huge physical challenges, resisting the temptation to fall into depression and end his own life. The work he has done raising money for and supporting research into spinal injuries has made him a powerful symbol of hope and resolve.

“I refuse to allow a disability to determine how I live my life, I don’t mean to be reckless, but setting a goal that seems a bit daunting actually is very helpful toward recovery.” – Christopher Reeve

Add a Picture of
your inspirational
person here

Having Courage: My Hero

Can you think of an inspirational person who has shown great courage? This could be someone famous, or someone you know personally and lives locally. Explain their life story and what they did to show courage:



Activity 20: Times I have shown courage:

Write down one time when you shown courage in each of the following ways

I did the right thing, when others did not

.....
.....
.....

I tried a new activity

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.....
.....

I talked to someone new

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.....

I took on a difficult challenge

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.....

I told the truth regardless of the consequences

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.....

I learnt from one of my mistakes

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.....
.....

I did something despite negative pressure from my peers

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.....

I expressed myself even when others disapproved

.....
.....
.....

I solved a problem without shouting

.....
.....
.....

My Thoughts

Courage means doing the right thing even when it is the difficult thing because...

Have you ever gone along with the crowd even though you knew it was wrong? How did you feel about yourself? What did you learn from it?

Everyone is capable of showing courage. I agree/disagree because:

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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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.

