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About This Book

The need to teach manners in school seems to have grown as the number of parents working outside the home has increased. While few would argue that the basics of etiquette should be taught in the home, it is becoming more apparent that this is often not the case. Consequently, schools have begun to address this need in an effort to help children develop good character and social graces.

This book offers a connection between character development and good manners. The opening three chapters deal with the larger picture: the importance of manners, respect and courtesy. Chapters four to six deal more specifically with manners in particular situations such as the classroom, the school environment and other social situations. Chapter seven focuses on the benefits of good manners, helping students to see that they can both open and close doors to their future by their knowledge (or lack of knowledge) concerning appropriate etiquette. The final pages deal with the topic of responsibility, making it clear that it is everyone's job to accept the need to develop character in a way which is beneficial to both the individual and the greater society.

Many learning styles and levels of intelligence will find expression through the exercises in this resource. You will find activities involving music, dance, drama, art, videos, writing, critical thinking, analysing, synthesising and evaluating. Role-play is a part of almost every chapter, giving students a chance to act out situations in which manners are needed. Most students enjoy engaging in role-play and their active participation reinforces the concepts under consideration.

An important opportunity for creative expression and integration of the topics presented in this book is found in chapter five. This chapter requires the development of a manners game by students. To do this, students must both synthesise and analyse their knowledge about manners in school. They must also use their imagination, work cooperatively in groups, and produce a product which can be used effectively by others.

Another essential ingredient of the book is the 'Manners That Matter Journal Response'. These pages may be reproduced for students to collect and make into a book which they can keep at the end of their study. If you can, write your own responses to these pages and share them with students. They will appreciate your participation and emulate your example.

A point to note as you and your students progress through these exercises is the importance of a firm handshake and steady eye contact in many social encounters. Whenever possible, reinforce these concepts with your students and encourage them to practise them repeatedly as they engage in role play.

1

Character Development: Why Are Manners Important?

About This Chapter

It is important for students to understand that learning and practising the rules of basic etiquette not only make life more pleasant, but also give a person an advantage in life. Knowing how to act in different situations promotes self-confidence and provides the necessary ingredients for a successful life on many levels. In addition, observation of fundamental courtesies can help a student make and keep friends, as well as establish and maintain good employment relationships in the future. Attention to manners in the classroom also provides a 'good example'. If practising good manners is important in your classroom, students will begin to follow this example and lead others to follow it as well.

The activities in this chapter are designed to encourage students to think about what qualities and actions define and develop good character. Through this process, students will begin to clarify the path they need to follow as they continue to establish their own character. While working in groups and sharing personal thoughts and reflections, students will also be practising some of the basic manners (such as working together, waiting your turn, listening to others etc.) that they will be exploring in more depth later on in this book.



This chapter has three main goals:

1. To involve students in defining the essence of good character.
2. To help students work effectively in groups, appreciating other members' opinions and contributions.
3. To focus students on which aspects of their own characters are positive qualities and which aspects need improvement or change.

Quote Sheet on 'Character'

"It is not what you have, nor even what you do, which directly expresses your worth, but what you are."

-Henri Frederick Amiel

"Good habits are not made on birthdays, nor... at the new year. The workshop of character is everyday life."

-Maltbie D. Babcock



"Character is what you are in the dark."

-Dwight L. Moody

"The measure of your real character is what you would do if you knew you would never be found out."

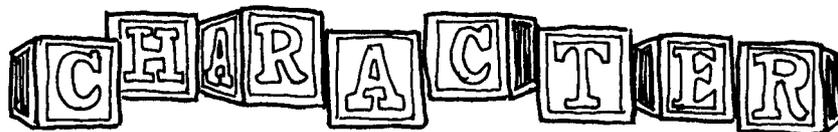
-Thomas Macaulay

"Reputation is what you are supposed to be; Character is what you are... Reputation is made in a moment; Character is built in a lifetime..."

-William H. Davis

"Be not simply good; be good for something."

-Henry David Thoreau



Role-Play 'Character'

ROLE-PLAY: SITUATION 1

Directions: Work with your group to create a skit which shows the following situation. You can add speaking parts or other actions that go with each scene.

A group of students, on the way to a football game, passes an overturned rubbish bin. One of the boys, Tom, kicks some of the rubbish into the street as he goes by. Two other students in the group, Lisa and Jamahl, stop and set the bin upright, picking up as much of the rubbish as possible. Their friends do not wait for them.

1. What can you say about the boy who kicked the rubbish into the street? From his actions, what kind of person would you say he was? _____

2. What can you say about Lisa and Jamahl? From their actions, what kind of people would you say they were? _____

3. What can you say about the overall character of this group? What makes you think this?

4. Which of these people would you like to have for a friend? Why do you make this choice?

5. Would you want to be a part of this group? Why or why not? _____
