



February 2007

Character Council Educator Quality of the Month Flexibility

I will:

Flexibility:
Willingness to change plans or ideas according to the direction of my authorities.

- not get upset when plans change
- respect the decisions of my authorities
- not be stubborn
- look for the good in changes
- not compromise what is right

Have you ever seen images of palm trees in a hurricane, how they often bend but do not break? Change is difficult for most of us, but without change we cannot grow. Like the palm tree, being firmly anchored in right standards and principles guarantees we will not be uprooted. This month, let's respond to the "winds of change" like the palm tree. Use flexibility to look beyond our fears and not only survive, but thrive through change.

- ☺ **Flexi-ball:** Wad a piece of aluminum foil into a ball. Make it the size of a ping-pong ball. Give several students some toothpicks and ask them to wrap them around the ball. Obviously, they can't. Next give them a handful of rubber bands and ask them to wrap them around the ball. This works much better. Give each student a rubber band. Pass the ball around and have each of them add their rubber band to the ball. As they do so, they should give an example of sometime in the past that they were flexible. For younger students, you may want to provide them a list from which to choose. Visit the following website for more information about the science of the rubber band.



http://www.teachingk-8.com/archives/integrating_science_in_your_classroom/rubber_band_science_by_john_cowens.html

- ☺ **The Winds of Change:** Pinwheels demonstrate the concept of flexibly (a pinwheel that doesn't turn will tear) and being anchored (pinwheels must be fastened securely or they will blow away). For the pinwheel you will need a square of paper. Cardstock works best. At each corner, cut a straight line towards the opposite corner. Cut a quarter of the way to the other side (halfway to the middle). You may want to draw the line to cut for younger students. Fold half of each corner so that the points are overlapping in the middle. On the points remaining, the students can write ways they can be flexible. It might be easier to write on the corners before you fold the other sides down. Use a drinking straw as the stick. Attach the pinwheel to the straw with a straight pin. You can use a scissors (you may need a pliers) to bend the pin against the straw. Fasten it with tape. Make sure that you attach it loosely enough that the pinwheel will spin.



- ☺ **Stubborn vs. Flexible:** Give each student a clothespin and several pipe cleaners. Have them bend the pipe cleaners into the shape of a stick-man. Let them draw a face on the clothespin. As you read through the following list, have them hold up the pipe cleaner-man if it is being flexible or the clothespin-man if it is being stubborn. You may also choose to use a rubber band, cotton ball or Play-doh for the flexible and a rock, bottle cap or Lego for the stubborn.

- crying when the rain cancels a picnic
- playing indoor games when it is too cold outside
- refusing to eat broccoli
- trying new foods
- throwing building blocks when a toy tower falls
- trying a different approach when a first attempt fails
- complaining about Mom's radio station in the car
- learning to appreciate different musical styles



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Jill Tomey, Director of Education, jtomey@charactercincinnati.org

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513.467.0170 mrussell@charactercincinnati.org

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