

Punctuality

Character... It starts with me!

MONTHLY EDUCATOR BULLETIN

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Vs. Tardiness

I WILL:

- Be at the right place at the right time.
- Prepare for unexpected delays.
- Do my work ahead of time.
- Plan a daily schedule and keep it.
- Not fall into the trap of “just one more”.

Showing esteem for others by doing the right thing at the right time

Every summer, The Weltes would plan a trip from Cincinnati, OH to Cocoa Beach, FL to visit relatives. The trip takes about 16 hours by car and they would divide the trip into 2 days, staying in Perry, GA overnight. They always planned to arrive around 2 pm and invariably they

would make that time within about 15 minutes each year. It never failed to amaze me how year after year, they were always on time. How did they do it? Planning and flexibility. They had a schedule and stuck to it. If there was construction and it slowed them down, they

made up for it with shorter meals and stops. If rainy weather was expected, they left earlier. Being on time governed every decision from the time they left the driveway until they arrived.

The Weltes are the parents of Jill Tomey and grandparents of Jacqueline Tomey, Co-Chairs of the Education Committee of the Character Council.

The Pony Express

The Pony Express is often used as an example of punctuality. The riders carried mail 2000 miles from coast to coast in 10 days. How did they do it? They carefully planned the entire trip, including the transfers down to the minute. Horses were changed every 10 – 25 miles depending on the terrain and riders were switched every 100 miles.

Staying punctual required anticipation – being ready to ride before the coming rider was even seen. According to the rules, the station manager was required to have the next horse warmed up and saddled at least 30 minutes prior to the expected arrival – they didn’t wait until the last minute. The next rider also

had to be ready at least 30 minutes beforehand.

Punctuality is not just a matter of arriving on time, it is anticipating the tasks that need to be accomplished in order to be ready on time.

To experience a little of what the pony express was like, set up a route through the school. Horses can be brooms or mops, and the mail can be a few days worth of junk mail in a tote. You will need two mail bags – one for westbound and one for eastbound. Determine how many feet a horse can go before changing and how long a rider can go. Set up the various stations and let the class ride the route. For the first time through, send the westbound bag through the whole route, then upon its



arrival on the “west coast”, send the eastbound bag back with the next rider.

After you do this once, ask the students about the efficiency of waiting on one bag before the return bag needs to go. You may need to diagram it on the board in order to make the plan. Time each attempt at delivering the mail. Be sure to set the rules of running in the halls – can they gallop? What happens if someone rushes too much and falls? What does that do to the schedule? When the activity is over, ask them what it means to be “in the saddle”.

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Punctuality Quotes

“Money, I can only gain or lose. But time I can only lose. So, I must spend it carefully.”

-Author Unknown

“If I have made an appointment with you, I owe you punctuality, I have no right to throw away your time, if I do my own.”

-Richard Cecil

“Know the true value of time; snatch, seize and enjoy every moment of it. No idleness, no delay, no procrastination; never put off til tomorrow what you can do today.”

-Lord Chesterfield

“I could never think well of a man’s intellectual or moral character, if he was habitually unfaithful to his appointments.”

-Nathaniel Emmons

“Few things to more to alienate friendship than a want of punctuality in our engagements. I have known the breach of promise to dine or sup to break up more than one intimacy.”

-William Hazlitt

“Punctuality is the soul of business.”

-Thomas C. Haliburton

“Unfaithfulness in the keeping of an appointment is an act of clear dishonesty. You may as well borrow a person’s money as his time.”

-Horace Mann

“One cannot manage too many affairs: like pumpkins in the water, one pops up while you try to hold down the other.”

-Chinese Proverb

“Better three hours too soon than a minute too late.”

-William Shakespeare

“Lost yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes; no reward is offered, for they are forever gone.”

- Horace Mann

“The while we keep a man waiting, he reflects on our shortcomings.”

-French Proverb

“Time is what we want most, but what we use worst.”

William Penn

“Better never than late.”

-George Bernard Shaw

“I owe all my success in life to having been always a quarter of an hour before my time.”

-Lord Nelson

“Punctuality is the politeness of kings.”

-Louis XVII

“You cannot kill time without injuring eternity.”

-Henry David Thoreau

Curriculum Connection Geography

Longitude

In the mid 1800’s, leaders met from all over the world and agreed on a line going north and south through Greenwich, England, as 0 degrees longitude, the Prime Meridian. This enabled time to be standardized around the world. Most progress in science and transportation could not have taken place without this standard of time.

This is a photo of the Royal Observatory in Greenwich. A laser projected from the building marks the Prime Meridian along the line identified in the stone.



Queen Victoria: Queen of the Clock

Alexandrina Victoria, May 24, 1819 – January 22, 1901, was the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland from June 20, 1837 until her death. The time of her reign is known as the Victorian era, a period of industrial, political, scientific and military progress within the United Kingdom. Queen Victoria's day was strictly orchestrated and her day's schedule was timed to the minute. Each year, she made visits to the outlying areas and these visits were the same time each year. Queen Victoria valued punctuality and considered tardiness a "heinous crime". One never kept the Queen waiting! The

quest for punctuality became a key trait of the Victorian era.



An important development during the Victorian era was the improvement of communication links. Stage coaches, canals, steam ships and most notably the railways all allowed goods, raw materials and people to be moved about, rapidly facilitating trade and industry.

Trains became another important factor ordering society, with "railway time" being the standard by which clocks were set throughout Britain. As the industrial revolution proceeded, clocks regulated the day of the employer and employee alike.

Punctuality Counts

For the full article visit <http://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/punctuality-counts.html>

- Being punctual matters, at least in today's Western societies. Being on time, every time, conveys far more than just a good sense of timing. It tells people that you're on top of things, that you're organized, that you can be counted on, that you value them, and, ultimately, that you value yourself.
- **Punctuality shows mastery.** Being on time consistently demonstrates foresight and adaptability. On the other hand, being late all the time shows that you are a victim of the winds of fate, that you're incapable of anticipating possible problems and either dealing with them or altering your course to avoid them. It sends the message that you're harassed by time, not in control of it.
- **Punctuality shows competence.** Someone who shows, over and over, that they are the master of their time is someone who will be taken seriously in areas far removed from time management. Conversely, people assume that if the chronically late person can't even consider the possibility of a little extra traffic, s/he won't be able to consider other obstacles that might stand in the way of getting a project or task done.
- **Punctuality shows integrity.** Punctuality is also a trust issue. The person who is always on time is someone others can trust to be as good as their word. In contrast, if your word isn't good enough about something as trivial as showing up on time, how can your word be any good about anything more important?
- **Punctuality shows you value people.** Being punctual shows, clearly and truly, that you value their time and, by extension, that you value them as a person.
- **Punctuality shows you value yourself.** Finally, being on time shows you value your time — and yourself. First of all, being repeatedly late is a self-destructive behavior — why else would you risk insulting those around you?

When you are on time, you are the

one in charge of your schedule. When you are habitually late, it shows a distinct lack of control. In order to get more control or *power* look at the reasons for being late. Have the students identify reasons people are late. Prepare a few ahead of time that are age appropriate in case you need to get the discussion going. Ask them to think about being late for school, church, sporting events, practices, etc. Trace being late back to the beginning – not putting a book bag where it belongs the night before, not writing down assignments. Identify that being late doesn't start the minute the clock ticks past a

deadline. It starts when they fail to plan. Tell the students they are punctuality detectives and have them search for when the tardiness actually begins for each reason that they list on the board. Once the reasons are identified, have them come up with suggestions of what they can do to prevent that from happening again. Try to have them come up with more than one solution.



Punctuality Booklist

Wait for Me! By Jane E. Gerver (ages 5 – 8)

No one will wait for a little boy who is always late until he finds a friend who is late, too!

The Secret Shortcut by Mark Teague (ages 5 – 8)

Because Wendell and Floyd have a problem getting to school on time, they decide to take a shortcut, which, however, leads to unexpected adventures.

It's Justin Time, Amber Brown by Paula Danziger (ages 5 – 9)

Amber Brown wants a watch for her birthday. Her best friend, Justin Daniels, should get one too. He is never on time! Will Justin be late to Amber's party, or will he be just in time to watch Amber open her gifts?

*List by:
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The Berenstain Bears Catch the Bus by Stan and Jan Berenstain (ages 5 – 9)

As the minutes pass and the school bus gets closer to their house, Brother and sister are in increasing danger of missing it!

From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler by L. Lonisburg (ages 9-12)

Claudia Kinkaid is almost twelve, a straight "A" student, only girl and eldest of four, who decides to run away to somewhere beautiful, comfortable, and preferably indoors. She is quite the organizer formulating a master plan to escape to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, enlisting her younger brother, Jamie, to join her. He has money, and can help with the serious cash flow problem.

Right on Time by Kelly Doudna (teens)

This book discusses how to show good character by being on time

and includes a brief story about Samantha being on time for her daily activities.

What Do You Stand For? For Teens: A Guide to Building Character by Barbara A. Lewis

True stories, inspiring quotations, thought-provoking dilemmas and activities help children build positive character traits.

Clockwise (teens)...video

Headmaster Brian Simpson insists on absolute punctuality from both his staff and students. When he is elected chairman of the National Headmasters Conference, he's deeply moved. But when he misses his train to the conference, he's off on one bizarre misadventure after another in a frantic attempt to make up for lost time.



*Laugh and the world laughs with you, be prompt
and you dine alone. - Gerald Barzan*

Croskey's Corner

The January Character Quality of the Month is Punctuality. It is defined as showing esteem for others by doing the right thing at the right time. One of the “I will...” statements is to prepare for unexpected delays. Seems like if you prepared for unexpected delays, you might end up arriving late instead of on time! Indeed, given the recent difficulties in air travel, being punctual sounds like it could lead to a lot of frustrated waiting. If you make sure you are on time for your flight, you will end up being there in plenty of time to wait in line. In school, if you show up for every meeting on time, you will end up sitting by yourself, waiting for others to arrive. I speak from experience.

Punctuality is one of those “will power” Character Qualities, which can end up sounding more like etiquette or politeness rules, rather than being guidelines for character. In such a case, there is the danger of assuming that only polite people “do” these things. It helps for us to remember that character is more than manners; it is an effective way of thinking about, interacting with, and treating people which makes the world a better place.

A central point to make is that in order to BE punctual, you have to be at the right place at the right time. That describes what we call “Timing.” Some people have it, some don’t. It matters when running backs are looking for “daylight” on the football field. It matters with baseball players hitting a fastball. But in addition to sports, Timing matters in our professional lives. Maybe you obtained a particular job because you happened to be hunting for a job on the day your employer was desperately looking to fill your job.

Good timing is one of those situations where “a miss is as good as a mile.” In no situation is this more crucial than with the well-timed comment by someone influential. Teachers are in this situation frequently. You have a room full of children, who all seem to be coming at you at the same time. For the teacher, timing is everything. Make the appropriate remark at the exact time, and you literally make a student’s day. Wait too long, or make a sarcastic or overly critical comment, and your timing will be awful. Probably most of us have seen that e-mail making the rounds which describes the suicidal teen who, because of a supportive comment, chooses not to go through with his plan to kill himself. Like you, I wondered if that was an urban legend or if it really happened. Regardless, it illustrates how crucial a well-timed comment can be.

Deborah Hansen, a veteran teacher from Florida, tells her story of moving into a new school at 5th grade and wanting to “make good.” The class was reading aloud, and Deborah counted ahead to figure out which paragraph she’d have to read when it was her turn. But, as prepared as she was, she read the text too quickly because she was in a hurry for it to be over. Her teacher said to the boy behind her, “Now, would you read that paragraph again so we can understand it this time?” Deborah says that the humiliation, and the shame, which she felt that day, are as fresh as the day she heard it. She spent 15 years as a teacher following the belief that a teacher’s words and attitudes have a lasting impact on the minds and souls of children placed in their paths and that teachers must treat these minds and souls with the tender care which such a gift deserves. (see http://www.edweek.org/tm/section/first-person/2008/06/11/tm_hansen_web.h19.html)

So, for 2010, I hope that you make all your flights, keep all your appointments, and never have to wait in line. But, more importantly, I hope that kind words come at just the right moment to you, and help you to learn and to grow. But I also wish for you the wisdom to know what to say, who to say it to, and exactly when to say it.

Happy New Year!

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Character...It Starts With Me!

Character in the Classroom *Continuously*

There are many ways that you can teach the Character Quality of Month. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Ask students to make posters to hang in the classroom or around the school.
- Challenge students to find quotes, news stories, current (or classic) songs or movies that portray the character quality of the month. Be sure to share these with the class and “archive” these to use in future years.
- Add the character trait of the month to the spelling word list. (Even if it is posted in the classroom to copy!)
- Offer for students to make a video or write a rap that demonstrates the Character Quality of the Month.
- If you teach younger students, see if you can “borrow” some older students to lead your students in an activity or switch the roles and have the younger students “teach” a rhyme to the older students.
- If you teach older students, you can be the initiator in the previous activities.
- Invite local business leaders or small business owners to talk about the importance of a character trait. If you teach older students, aim to get a representative from a business that typically hires teens so that they can relate the importance of good character when applying for and *keeping* a job.
- Men and women in uniform usually make impressive guest speakers. Police departments, fire departments and military recruiting offices are usually willing to come into a classroom. Do not be afraid to give them specific requests or guidelines for speaking so that it is pertinent to the lessons of the month.
- Always have a generic character activity planned and ready to go that you can use as filler when you have time to kill or that a substitute teacher can use in your absence.