



May 2008

# Character Council Educator Quality of the Month Wisdom

## I will:

- Listen to my parents and teachers
- Learn from correction
- Choose my friends carefully
- Remember there are consequences to all my actions
- Ask, "What is the right thing to do?"

## Wisdom: Making practical applications of truth in daily decisions

When we think of wisdom, we think of the wise old owl. Making good decisions requires getting the proper information. The owl has superb eyesight and excellent hearing which enables him to receive large amounts of information about his surroundings. This enables him to make wise decisions. Like the owl, we need to treat all of our decisions seriously, not just the big ones. Every good decision adds strength to our character. This month, keep your eyes and ears open and make all of your decision, wise decisions.

- ☺ **Choices! Choices!** You will need a fresh orange and a candy bar. Present both as options to the class and see which choice they make as a group or as individuals. If they choose the candy bar explain that it will satisfy them for the moment but that they will be hungry again quickly. If they choose the orange, it will stay with them longer. It is the wiser choice. Compare this decision to decisions that they face everyday.



Choose some age appropriate decisions and discuss wise choices and foolish choices.

- ☺ **Wisdom Jar** You will need a large clear container for this activity and some small items such as marbles, jelly beans, poker chips or any manipulative you may have in the classroom. Each time the students exhibit wisdom in applying any of the character traits to making good decisions or behaving in an expected manner, add an item to the jar.



Optionally, you can remove an item when students exhibit bad decision-making or poor behavior. State the goal of filling the jar by the end of a time period such as this month. Younger students may respond better with shorter time periods. Make sure that the size of the jar or container is appropriate for the size of the item used to fill it so that it is reasonable to expect to fill it in the time allotted. Be sure to give specific examples of decisions and behavior that will be rewarded. Periodically, as the jar is filling point out how many good decisions are being made. How many times a day are there opportunities to make good decisions? Be specific about relating good

behavior to good decisions.

- ☺ **Trade Ya!** Start with an ordinary deck of playing cards. Larger classes may want to use 2 decks. Give several cards (3 -10 depending on the age of the students) to each student and then encourage them trade cards back and forth in an attempt to get the best hand possible. Let them know that the value of each card will be revealed at the end of the game. Once the trading has stopped you can reveal the value of the cards. Choose values that do not necessarily correspond to what would be expected. (For a math connection, you can give them age-appropriate formulas to apply to the numbered cards such as multiply odd numbered cards by 2 and add 1 to even numbered cards.) When they have calculated their points, see who has the most and least points. Explain that they had to make decisions on what cards to keep and what cards to trade without having all of the facts about the value of the cards. It was difficult to be successful without having all of the information needed to make good decisions.



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