



May 2009

Character Council Educator Quality of the Month Honor

Honor: **Respecting others because of their worth as human beings**

I will:

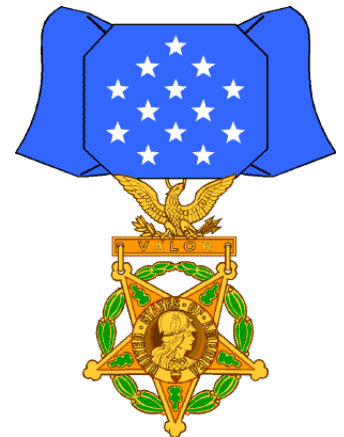
- be attentive to those who lead me
- show loyalty to my authorities
- speak only the truth
- obey cheerfully
- give place to those who are older or hold positions of prominence

Our definition of honor takes it off of the stage and out of the award and puts it directly into our hands everyday. It isn't only about honoring those who have achieved something significant but honoring everyone at all times. It's just that simple. This month, practice honor with everyone you meet.

☺ **What's it Look Like** – This activity can take on many forms. It is primarily a discussion that describes what a situation looks like when people are honoring those around them. You can do this as a single class discussion or break up into small groups and each take one topic. First, have the students describe what a classroom looks like when classmates are honoring each other. Ask what behavior you see (smiles, helping each other, completed assignments). Do the surroundings look any different? Ask what you don't see (shouting, put-downs, trash/graffiti on desks). Be sure to identify how each item is related to honor. You may choose to write the positives on the board. After you have completely described the classroom, broaden it to the school. Be sure to include the cafeteria, playground, and school assemblies. You may include the bus as part of the school or as a separate venue. Use other community based organizations that are appropriate to the age group such as playing sports, scouts, dance or karate class, church, the mall, football games, in a car, at the movies, etc. Once you have finished use the descriptions to come up with a Code of Honor. After several weeks, ask the students to evaluate themselves against the code. You do not need to have them acknowledge this publicly but to privately reflect on when they have behaved or not behaved according to the code.

☺ **Yes Ma'am, No Sir** - Challenge your students to use these honorable answers for the whole month. You may want to turn it into a competition – boys v. girls or by rows/tables of desks. Keep track when someone forgets to use the honorable answers. The group at the end with the least violations is the winner. Encourage them to use these answers with their parents, the cafeteria workers, with everyone they meet. Ask how others react to them when they use a respectful tone and answer. They will probably report feeling more respected themselves. Once the month is over, encourage them to continue to use these answers. If your school already has this behavior in place, ask them to take it with them where ever they go and report back the reactions they get.

☺ **The Medal of Honor**– No lesson on honor is complete without a reference to the Congressional Medal of Honor. It is the highest military award and is granted for major acts of bravery. Find some examples of medal winners (or have the students research medal winners) and discuss how they honored others with the behavior that merited them the award. At the end of this month, we celebrate Memorial Day. Why not have the students individually or as a class write a note of appreciation to a medal recipient or the family of a recently deceased medal winner? There are many sources for finding these names but one of them is www.cmoah.org.



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