



October 2008

Character Council Educator Quality of the Month Obedience

Obedience:

Quickly and cheerfully carrying out the wise direction of those who are responsible for me.

I will:

- obey my authorities immediately
- have a cheerful attitude
- complete all that I am expected to do
- not complain
- go the “extra mile”

All of us must deal with authority. Teachers report to principals; principals must answer to the school board and the school board is placed there by the voters, etc. As adults, we typically understand why we have the rules that govern our lives. The lessons this month help us understand that freedom is not the absence of restrictions.

- ☺ **Easy as Cookies:** Find your favorite recipe for chocolate chip cookies. Assemble all ingredients, but do not measure them. Break the class into large groups, and give each group a mixing bowl, measuring utensils, and mixing spoon. Do not give the students the recipe. Instead, challenge them to combine the ingredients to create a batch of cookies. You can limit the amount of each ingredient they use, so that they do not waste the ingredients. The students should put their cookies on a cookie sheet or piece of foil that can later be put on a cookie sheet for baking. Ask each group to write down how long and at what temperature they want their cookies baked. Bake the cookies according to the directions provided by the students. Let the students sample the recipe-less cookies first and get ready to be entertained by some interesting faces! Provide some cookies that you baked from a recipe or a box of similar store-bought cookies. How are they different? Did the cookies that followed the recipe taste better? Why? Following directions and obeying authorities works much the same way. What would happen if everyone made their own rules? How does having rules benefit the community?

- ☺ **Freedom:** Begin this activity by relating the following 2 stories:

1 - I once heard a story about a stubborn sea captain. One night at sea, this captain saw the lights of another ship heading toward him. He sent a message to the other ship. “Change your course 10 degrees north.”

The reply came back. “Change your course 10 degrees south.”

The ship’s captain answered. “I am a captain. Change your course north.”

Another reply came back. “I’m a Seaman First Class. Change your course south.”

The captain was not used to being told what to do and fired back, “I said change your course north. I’m on a battleship.”

The reply came back. “And I say change your course south. I’m in a lighthouse.”

2 - Picture a kite flying in the wind. The kite strains against the string fighting to break free. At last, the string breaks the kite flies wildly, free of its restraint until it drops to the ground unable to fly without being tethered.

Discuss with the students the point of these 2 stories. What do they have in common? What would you do if you had no rules? To reinforce the points, give the students a handout of a simple line-drawing of a kite divided into the traditional 4 triangles. Have the students write down 4 rules, 1 in each kite quadrant, that keep them safe. Let the students share the rules they have written. For older students, you may want to have them brainstorm rules or laws that they think should be enacted.

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