



September 2007

# Character Council Educator Quality of the Month Dependability

## Dependability:

**Fulfilling what I consented to do, even if it means unexpected sacrifice.**

## I will:

- keep my word
- be careful what I promise
- correct my mistakes
- pull my share of the load
- not have a bad attitude

Dependability is an important part of any relationship, whether between teachers and students, husbands and wives, or employees and employers. Being dependable starts with a promise, an agreement to fulfill certain duties. It is not made by force, but by personal consent. Dependability is also about price. Sometimes keeping a promise requires little sacrifice and other times it requires a great deal. This month remember that regardless of how costly it becomes, dependability is overcoming our resistance and fears to follow through on commitments.

☺ **Machines** Divide the class into groups of 6 - 8 students per group. As a group they are to imitate a machine, an appliance or a toy with moving parts, with each person becoming a part of the item. It can be a real item or one that they invent. For example: the group could imitate a washing machine. One person would stand in the middle and be the agitator. Three or four could form the tub. One can be an electric cord. One can be the input water hose and one could be output water hose. The group is required to demonstrate their machine in action. When you turn it on, the electric cord student has to "hum" with electricity. The input water student turns on and makes a water swooshing noise. Once it's filled the agitator student turns, then the tub students spin out and the output water student swooshes. You may want to use a group to demonstrate this concept first to give them the idea of what they are to do. For younger students, you may want each group to become the same machine (this one or use an object that applies to another current lesson). Once all groups have demonstrated their machine or activated their version of the class machine discuss how each of the parts is required for the machine to do its work. What would happen if the electric cord breaks or the agitator doesn't work? Each part of the machine depends on the other parts of the machine for whole machine to work.



☺ **Fire Brigade** Divide the class into 2 lines. The task assigned to each group is to move objects from one end of their line to the other as if they are passing water in a bucket line. You can use whatever objects you have handy. A paper cup of pennies, cotton balls, paper clips, a stack of text books etc. (The more unusual or outrageous the item, the more the activity will stick in their memory.) The students can use their hands to pass the items, plastic spoons, paper cups, etc. The object of the game is to create a sense of dependence on each person to pass it properly so that the items do not drop. If you make it a race, it adds some pressure to perform. After doing this once and discussing how it demonstrates dependability, do it again. This time, they must use their less dominant hand to pass the items. If the item you choose would not be enough of a challenge to pass this way then also add closing their eyes. Compare this exercise to performing while impaired. We can not be depended upon when we perform impaired. For older students relate this to alcohol or drug use. For younger students, relate it to not getting enough sleep or not eating properly. You can also associate this lesson to what happens to the entire class when students forget to bring in their supplies, their homework, etc. There is an impact on the whole class when students are not dependable.



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