

Tolerance

Character... It starts with me!

MONTHLY EDUCATOR BULLETIN

Vs. Prejudice

I WILL

- not confuse what is right with what is popular
- expect the same of myself as I expect of others
- look for ways to help others mature
- accept my own unchangeables and the unchangeables of others
- listen before I form an opinion

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Demonstrating respect for others who do not share my perspective

Dr. Seuss' story of the Sneetches points out how silly it is to exclude people who are different. We all have strengths and weaknesses that differ from the strengths and weaknesses of those around us. Tolerance is looking past another's weakness in order to appreciate the strengths. In business, some

leaders prefer to surround themselves with "Yes, men", individuals who see things as they do and are not likely to disagree. A stronger leader will choose to have different thinkers in their inner circle in order to broaden their vision and possibilities. In today's global economy it is more important than ever that

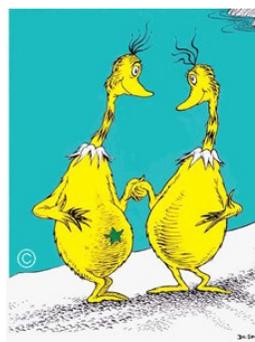
business and individuals are accepting of the differences in culture, faith and politics.

This month, be aware of differences with those around you and appreciate the diversity they bring to your life.

For classroom lessons using *The Sneetches* go to www.tolerance.org/activity/anti-racism-activity-sneetches

***When the Star Belly Sneetches had frankfurter roasts
Or picnics or parties or marshmallow toasts,
They never invited the Plain-Belly Sneetches
They left them out cold, in the dark of the beaches.
They kept them away. Never let them come near.
And that's how they treated them year after year.***

Dr. Seuss



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No Matter How You Say It

Tolerancia

vs. Prejuicio

Entender que cada persona se encuentra a diferente nivel en el desarrollo de su carácter



Go to the Root

The root of the word Tolerance comes from the Latin verb *Tolerare* which means “to bear”. Can you visualize Tolerance as the ability to bear a strain or difficulty with good perspective?

Idioms

Zero Tolerance absolutely no tolerance

Live and let live everyone deserves their chance

See www.thefreedictionary.com

Sign Language

Check out the ASL Pro website for the American Sign Language interpretation of the word Accept, Tolerate and Prejudice. Can you see how Tolerate is locking your lips so you just shut up and Accept takes it a step further by taking it in? Can you see the brick wall that Prejudice creates?

www.aslpro.com/cgi-bin/aslpro/aslpro.cgi

“People will accept your idea much more readily if you tell them Benjamin Franklin said it first.” -David H. Comins

Character Quotables

“In the practice of tolerance, one's enemy is the best teacher.”

Dalai Lama

“The test of courage comes when we are in the minority. The test of tolerance comes when we are in the majority.”

Ralph W. Sockman

“We should not permit tolerance to degenerate into indifference.”

Margaret Chase Smith

“There is so much good in the worst of us, and so much bad in the best of us, that it behooves all of us not to talk about the rest of us.”

Robert Louis Stevenson

“I would never belong to a group that would accept someone like me as a member.”

Groucho Marx

“Ultimately, America's answer to the intolerant man is diversity, the very diversity which our heritage of religious freedom has inspired.”

Robert F. Kennedy

“The price of the democratic way of life is a growing appreciation of people's differences, not merely as tolerable, but as the essence of a rich and rewarding human experience.”

Jerome Nathanson

“Don't stare.”

Mom

“Tolerance consists of seeing certain things with your heart instead of your eyes.”

Orlando A. Battista

“Getting a dog is like getting married. It teaches you to be less self-centered, to accept sudden, surprising outbursts of affection, and not to be upset by a few scratches on your car.”

Will Stanton

“Tolerance comes with age. I see no fault committed that I myself could not have committed at some time or other.”

Goethe

“Tolerance is a great trait to contain, but so is the ability to shut up.”

Source unknown

“Tolerance is the positive and cordial effort to understand another's beliefs, practices, and habits without necessarily sharing them.”

Joshua L. Leibman

“I used to think anyone doing anything weird was weird. Now I know that it is the people that call others weird that are weird.”

Paul McCartney

“If civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships - the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together, in the same world at peace.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Curriculum Connection



Science

We walk all over it, sit on it, drive on it and it still bounces back! GRASS! Do you ever consider how much abuse it takes and yet it still manages to bounce back straight and tall? This is the object lesson for tolerance – valuing others keeps us from getting bent out of shape by the faults (or perceived faults) of those around us. The secret of the tolerance of grass is *turgor pressure*.



Steven Spielberg- Tolerance Hero

You've probably seen one of his movies: ET, Close Encounters of a Third Kind, Jaws, Jurassic Park, or the Indiana Jones series. Steven Spielberg, an American film director, screenwriter, and film producer has had a successful career spanning over four decades and centering on many themes and genres over that time. He began with science-fiction and adventure films and in his later years, his films began addressing such issues as the Holocaust, slavery, war and terrorism.

Spielberg won the Academy Award for Best Director for *Schindler's List* (1993). The movie was based on the true

story of Oskar Schindler, a man who risked his life to save 1,100 Jews from the Holocaust. Its themes include intolerance, bigotry and hatred.

In an interview with Katie Couric on the Today Show on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the film, Spielberg says, "I hope I could look back some day and say, 'gee, there was something else I did that was equally as important,' but up to this point in my life, it's the most important use of film in my entire experience of living in film all these years."

Following the movie's release Spielberg created the Shoah Foundation, to honor and

remember the victims of the Holocaust. The Shoah Foundation, collected testimonies from 52,000 survivors -- their memories of their lives before, during and after those darkest times.



Did you know he was born in Cincinnati?

Team~Building Activity

Building a culture of good character requires building the class into a community. Here is this month's teambuilding activity:

Cartoon Characters

Everyone has a favorite cartoon character but that is not what this exercise is about. Each person needs to pick the cartoon character that they either want to be like or one that they think they are like. You can switch it to people in current commercials or sit-com characters if you wish. Preface the activity with picking a few well-known characters and having the class choose adjectives (preferably character traits) that describe them. Then let them think on the traits of other characters they know and pick one they want to be like or are already like. After each student has written down who they pick and why, pair up the students and let them share their pick. You can pair up the pairs and let them share again only this time the original pairs are introducing their partner as their character. You can do this pairing as many times as you wish. When the sharing is complete, ask if anybody picked a character that people didn't know, if anyone learned anything new about a classmate.

http://naucon.net/misc/tests/cartoon_char.htm This site provides a quiz on personality traits and picks a cartoon character for you. The site is geared for adults or older students so it may not be appropriate for all classrooms.



OUTBURST

This activity is based on the game Outburst where a team is given a topic (such as foods that are brown, 4 legged animals, breakfast cereals, TV shows, etc) and in 60 seconds they all shout out as many examples as they can in an attempt to match a pre-determined list. To use it in a classroom setting, start out by announcing a category and having each student write down their responses individually. Rather than match a list you could count the number each has. (Graphing or averaging the counts would add a math connection.) You may want to do this for several categories. Next, put the students in small groups who will work together on a common list. You can repeat the categories or choose new ones. Now that they have the idea you can actually play a few rounds of the game to add more energy to the lesson. To process this activity compare the number of answers when working alone to working together. By discussing the topic with others, you benefit from their answers based on their experiences and you may be able to think of more answers yourself based on their answers. Point out that we can all benefit from the different experiences of others and to value this difference.

Mix It Up at Lunch

A Mix It Up at Lunch event is a simple call to action: take a new seat in the cafeteria. By making the move, students can cross the invisible lines of school division, meet new people and make new friends.

This is a great activity that can be planned, organized and executed by the students. The mix up needs to have some level of control so that students aren't picking friends. There needs to be a randomness to the table assignment.

Be sure to have time in the classroom afterwards for the students to process the activity to receive the full benefit of exercise. This event can go beyond a simple lunch time change. Use it as a launch point for students to suggest other ways the school can approach diversity and tolerance.



The Rain

Stand in front of the seated classroom. It is important that no one speak during this activity to get the full effect of the rainstorm. Stand at one end of the classroom. Explain that they are to copy your action when you stand in front of their row, area, table etc. (It isn't necessary to walk around the room, just pace back and forth in front.) Start by rubbing your hands together. Walk from one side of the room to the other until everyone is rubbing their hands together. Everyone should continue to rub their hands until you give them the next action. Go back to where you started and begin snapping your fingers. On your next pass begin making a loud pattering sound by slapping your thighs. Optional: the height of the rainstorm is stomping feet. If this would be too much to control or too loud for your environment you may want to skip this step. Now it is time for the storm to subside. If you added the stomping feet, go back to the slapping thighs the same way you started each action. Then take everyone back to snapping fingers and then rubbing hands. Now it is time for the storm to end. Make the signal to be quiet as you walk across the room and slowly stop the hands from rubbing. Did it sound like rain in your classroom? How would this storm have sounded if everyone had the exact same kind of snap? The variations within each of us is what give this storm its depth. It needs a large group in order for the sounds to mix properly. A select few could not have made storm alone.



EVERYBODY COUNTS!

A Discussion of Tolerance would not be complete without an activity that includes disabilities. The Everybody Counts program which seeks to give students in grades K - 8 an understanding of disabilities, is being used in many local schools. For those without such a program, there are many activities that can be used to provide this understanding and acceptance.

A internet search on diversity activities or teaching about disabilities will yield many choices for classroom use. A good site for students with -- and without -- physical disabilities is Plane Math (www.planemath.com) This Internet-Based Curriculum on Math and Aeronautics for Children With Physical Disabilities site was developed in cooperation with NASA. It is designed to provide students in grades 4 and above with mathematics-based activities that don't require manipulative materials -- and are therefore accessible for people with physical limitations -- and that increase awareness of career opportunities in aeronautics. How cool is that for a student with disabilities to aspire to be a rocket scientist!

To see what other schools are doing with Everybody Counts, use the title in your favorite search engine.



One of the older versions of the *Character First!* definition for Tolerance had an “I will” statement which said, “I will curb the urge to judge others.” Judging others reminds me that one of the original leaders of the Character Council, Cincinnati Police Sergeant Steve Saunders, likes to say that we on the Council are not the Character Police. Absolutely not. And Steve should know who the police are! So Tolerance gets us thinking about times we are judgmental or prejudiced.

Croskey's Corner

A story may help. I have a former colleague, and friend, Julie Renner. She has been a teacher, principal, and athletic director. A while back, I listened to her describe her experience running the Flying Pig Marathon. Julie was sailing along and caught up with a woman who was running with a hurt leg. Clearly the woman was having difficulty continuing. Julie asked her if she could help by running with her for a while. That sounded great to the injured runner. Julie “curbed the urge” to try to surpass her personal best running time and chose instead to support the injured woman physically and emotionally. Talk about being aware that someone was functioning at a different level. I told my wife, Nancy, the story and she said, “Sounds like a good example of Tolerance!” (We talk a lot about Character Qualities at our house.)

I believe that one difficulty that people have with being Tolerant is sometimes connected to their own personal standards. Let's take you! You likely are somebody who really does try to do the right thing – practically every time. You place your students' needs first – ahead of your own. You want your school to be admired for substantial success, not public relations hype. In your personal life you believe in being loyal to your loved ones. You raise your children so that they will grow up to be independent, respectful adults. You appear to be really strong on your surface, but underneath you have doubts and fears. Nevertheless, you do what is right and pray you don't get hurt in the paybacks.

You ARE all of these things, but you find yourself in conflict with others who do not seem to hold the same high standards you do. One of your rules is that if you do not stand up for what you believe in, you are not being true to your ideals. You greatly fear a lack of integrity. So, you find yourself being judgmental of others who are a threat to your standards, Tolerance for another's different character development feels to you as if you are watering down your standards. “Different” character beliefs feel like “Inferior” character to you. (But you would rather not have to say this!)

Well, be of good cheer. Chill. Your level of standards scream at the rest of us. Watered down? No, they are 200 Proof. We know what you stand for. We DO respect you and your standards. (But, begrudgingly sometimes.) We DON'T always measure up to your standards; but we are having a hard enough time holding up our own standards. Still, we are learning from you. We are better because we get to be around you. You have changed us permanently. If you move on to another school, your standards will remain here as a legacy.

It must be lonely and tiring: battling, arguing, playing Devil's Advocate, going against the grain. You want us to change overnight. Well, we are afraid – and we're tired, too! So we won't change as fast as you'd like. But, remember what we were like when you came? We won't be returning there, either. It's because of YOU. You are just going to have to be Patient with us.

Bill Croskey is a retired
school psychologist
from the Loveland City
Schools

For the Family

We are studying the character quality of **Tolerance**: Realizing that everyone is at varying levels of character development.

To practice Tolerance I will:

- not confuse what is right with what is popular
- expect the same of myself as I expect of others
- look for ways to help others mature
- accept my own unchangeables and the unchangeables of others
- listen before I form an opinion



Family Activity:

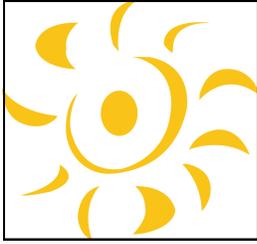
Peaceful Pancakes

Add some food coloring to 3/4 cup milk. In a large, clear jar, combine the colored milk with 3 tablespoons of cooking oil. Put the lid on and shake the jar to combine the ingredients. They will mix for awhile but then separate. Explain that the milk and oil are like 2 people who have a hard time accepting each other. Now stir 1 cup of flour into the mixture. Liken the flour to a dose of tolerance. Now that the milk and oil are mixed with tolerance, they stay mixed. Now, turn the mix into pancake batter by adding 1 tsp. of baking powder, 1/2 tsp. of baking soda, and 1 egg. The pancakes will be a funny color. Just one more example of accepting something that is different than what you are expecting.



Other ways to teach character in the home:

- Display the character quality and definition in a prominent place such as on the refrigerator or let each child decorate it for their bedroom door.
- At the dinner table ask if anyone noticed anyone (not just family members) demonstrating the character quality (or not demonstrating it).
- Point out news stories where character was or was not involved.
- Review the “I wills” and see if there are specific actions you can add to this list.
- During car trips, challenge the kids by describing scenarios and having them identify if it describes being the quality or being the opposite.
- Praise with character by recognizing the character quality involved rather than the achievement.
- For more ideas visit www.charactercincinnati.org/education.php



The Character Council of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky

P.O. Box 33144
Cincinnati, Ohio 45233

Phone: 513.467.0170

E-mail: mrussell@charactercincinnati.org

www.charactercincinnati.org

Written by Jill Tomey, Character Education
Consultant

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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.