

Orderliness

Character... It starts with me!

MONTHLY EDUCATOR BULLETIN

Vs. Confusion

I WILL:

- pick up after myself
- keep my work and play areas clean and neat
- put things back where they belong
- use things only for their intended purposes
- return lost things to their rightful owners

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Arranging myself and my surroundings to achieve greater efficiency

You have all seen how orderly a fire station is. From each person's clothing and equipment to the vehicles themselves, all are highly organized so as to save time and guarantee that nothing required is left behind. This order takes planning and forethought. It just didn't happen. It had to be consciously planned, tested and adjusted. The same is true for anything that we organize, from a

kitchen utensil drawer to a PTA fundraiser.

Planning and training are essential for first responders to effectively assess a situation in the midst of tragedy and chaos and perform their job.

All careers require some form of orderliness to be effective. Classrooms have rules that keep things orderly and families have daily routines that help

assure that all chores are completed.



This month practice orderliness by planning your work – then work your plan!

Orden vs. Confusión
Disponer mi persona y mi ambiente para lograr una mayor eficiencia



Go to the Root



Order comes from the Latin word *ordo* meaning "row, series". It was used to describe the battle formation of an army. Can you see how orderliness connotes bringing something into line with its purpose?

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

Character Quotables

“Electricity is really just organized lightning.”

George Carlin

“Information is a source of learning. But unless it is organized, processed, and available to the right people in a format for decision making, it is a burden, not a benefit.”

William Pollard

“A good system shortens the road to the goal.”

Orison Swett Marden

“Order is the sanity of the mind, the health of the body, the peace of the city, the security of the state. Like beams in a house or bones to a body, so is order to all things.”

Robert Southey

“To put the world in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order, we must put the family in order; to put the family in order, we must cultivate our personal life; and to cultivate our personal life, we must first set our hearts right.”

Confucius

“An instructed and intelligent people are always more decent and orderly than an ignorant and stupid one.”

Adam Smith

“An Englishman, even if he is alone, forms an orderly queue of one.”

George Mikes

“Order marches with weighty and measured strides. Disorder is always in a hurry.”

Napoleon Bonaparte

“An idea can only become a reality once it is broken down into organized, actionable elements.”

Scott Belsky

“Scientists were rated as great heretics by the church, but they were truly religious men because of their faith in the orderliness of the universe.”

Albert Einstein

“Organization isn't about perfection; it's about efficiency, reducing stress and clutter, saving time and money and improving your overall quality of life.”

Christina Scalise

“A place for everything, and everything in its place.”

Proverb

“Good order is the foundation of all great things.”

Edmund Burke

Curriculum Connection



English

Whether you are writing a term paper or a letter to a friend, your writing should be orderly in both content and presentation. If not, the document will create more confusion than communication. From the individual fundamental paragraph to a 10 page paper following MLA standards, there are rules to follow to keep the writing orderly and effective. Even a kindergartener who is just learning to write letters must learn to form them correctly and neatly.



Austin Meggitt, Model of Orderliness

In 1997, Austin Meggitt, age 9, was riding his bike to the ball field for a baseball game when he nearly had a serious accident. He was trying to carry his baseball glove, bat and ball and steer and stop his bike at the same time. To battle the confusion and danger this caused, he went to his basement and designed a rack to go over the handlebars to organize his equipment for safe transport. His Battie Caddy™ will hold a bat, ball and glove. Meggitt was inducted into the National Gallery for America's Young Inventors (Hall of

Fame) 1999. He won the National Grand Prize in the Discovery Network and MediaOne Broadcasting's Ultimate Invention Contest and has appeared on several television news programs.

In 2000, he received U.S. patent no. 6,029,874. In 2008, 19-year-old Meggitt struck a deal with Base4 of Dallas, Texas to license the Battie Caddy and turn it into a commercially available product.



Meggitt knew the importance of safety while on a bike and used the quality of orderliness to make his and other's rides to the park less dangerous.

Team-Building Activity

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

The Longest Sentence

Divide the students into groups of 3 or 4 but have an even number of groups. A scribe is appointed in each group. Give the class a sentence starter such as "The purring kitten...". Each group must create a sentence with the goal being the group who creates the longest sentence. You may want to create some rules such as no more than 3 modifiers per word and no more than 4 uses of "and", etc. To make it more appropriate, you can use a seasonal phrase, a topical phrase that deals with a recently completed history or science lesson or one that deals with the character quality of the month. When the sentences are complete, have each group combine with another group and see if there are parts of the two sentences that can be combined to make an even longer sentence. Have each group report out their sentence and number of words. Point out similarities and differences. Did making the group larger make the sentence longer? What would happen if you counted just the nouns or just the adjectives or total number of letters? Would the same group still win? Did the longest sentence make the most sense? Which sentence was the funniest? most positive? After hearing all of the sentences, can any of them be made any longer? Point out that everyone can contribute to group projects.



Sharing Organization Tips

Make a class assignment for the students to talk to their parents and get tips on how to organize time and space. You can then have students share these tips with each other, either in a class discussion or by the students sharing one a day. You may wish to include questions about how order is important in the careers/jobs of the parents. Where are a surgeon's tools when they begin an operation? What about a repairman's tools? How are offices organized? – you can refer to the school office for examples. What about touring the school cafeteria and noting how food and equipment is organized, labeled, and stored. Why is it bad to store a cleaning product next to a food product or a raw meat product on a shelf above a raw fruit product? Discuss why this order is important for food safety and efficiency.



Resolution Time

The beginning of the calendar year is the time when we typically make New Year's Resolutions. Why not make the beginning of the school year time for New School Year resolutions? Encourage the students to make a resolution to be more orderly. Be sure to give age appropriate suggestions. Many of these resolutions will require the creation of new habits. The psychological press reports that if you do the same thing for 20 days it will become a habit. Encourage the students to count these 20 days. Take frequent checkpoints to see if they are on target. For the benefit of those that may not be as on-target as they should, demonstrate the following story on the board. Draw 2 cities at either end of the board. Draw a solid line between the 2 cities. Draw an airplane leaving one of the cities. Use a dotted line to show the airplane's path. It will weave its way back and forth across the solid line between the two cities until it arrives at the destination. Point out that the airplane is constantly making corrections to stay on target. We need to evaluate our work in the same way in order to stay on target.



Mix it Up

Another way to help students to understand and appreciate order is to create dis-order in the classroom. Make some changes in the classroom that show disorganization. Ask students to get things from their normal place and be flustered when the item is not there. Do this for several items in a row until they get the idea that the misplaced items were on purpose. Ask them to look around and see what else is amiss. Have them help in setting the classroom back to the way it should be. Sometimes students will take your carefully ordered space for granted. This gives them a way to appreciate your orderliness. End the activity by having them clean out their desks/lockers. Hold a discussion on ways to best organize study spaces. If they have desks at home, are they organized? What are some ways you can bring order to a space and make it easy to maintain that order so that a month from now the space is still orderly?



Director and Builder

For this game, divide the classroom into groups of four. One student (the director) in each group takes 10 building blocks. Another student (the builder) takes an identical set of 10 blocks. The two remaining students are deliverymen. In a separate room, the director creates an object out of the building blocks, writing the instructions for the building on index cards. The deliveryman takes these index cards to the second delivery man, shuffling the cards as he walks. The second deliveryman takes these directions to the builder, again shuffling the cards. After receiving the index cards, the builder attempts to organize the directions correctly and build a copy of the director's structure. The winner is decided by which team's buildings match each other. When the game is over discuss how difficult it was to order the cards appropriately. Where were there word clues in the directions that helped? How much easier would it have been if the directions were in order?



Suit Sort



Another important aspect of organization is sorting. Employ a simple sorting game with students with an ordinary deck of cards. Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4. You will need a deck for each group. Lay the cards face down on the table in a stack. Designate 4 spots for each of the card suits in a circle around the deck. You may want to mark the spots with the Ace of each suit to start. The first student then picks up the cards, one by one and sorts them by suit into the correct spots as quickly as possible. When the first student finishes, check all the piles of cards for accurate organization. The student who has scored the most points wins. Alternately, you can make the game shared between all of the students in the group by having the students take turns taking a card and sorting it. The competition can be between groups. You may also use half-decks if time is an issue. When the game is over, discuss how things are sorted. Ask for suggestions on what other criteria you could sort the cards (color, number, face vs. number, etc). Discuss why you need to know how to sort things so that you can order things appropriately. Use the items in the classroom to discuss why things are sorted together. Are all of the art supplies together (sorted by purpose). Is the garbage can by the door? (convenient for janitor to empty). Why wouldn't you put all of the purple things in the room together? Are all of your books for your afternoon classes together in your desk? (based on when they are used). How difficult would it be to find things if we didn't organize them or organized them on the wrong criteria?

For the Family

We are studying the character quality of **Orderliness**: Arranging myself and my surroundings to achieve greater efficiency

To practice Orderliness I will:

- pick up after myself
- keep my work and play areas clean and neat
- put things back where they belong
- use things only for their intended purposes
- return lost things to their rightful owners



Family Activity:

The “Lean” Home

Businesses have been studying the positive effects of being orderly. This is one of the concepts behind Lean Manufacturing. You may have heard the term “5 S” in relation to that. The 5 S’s are:

- Sort - the first step in making things cleaned up and organized
- Set In Order - organize, identify and arrange everything in a work area
- Shine - regular cleaning and maintenance
- Standardize - make it easy to maintain - simplify and standardize
- Sustain - maintaining what has been accomplished



Take all five of these steps and apply them to your home. In many cases, you have done these steps but walking through and identifying how they look in the house will give the family an appreciation for the order that is there. It also makes them more aware of their role in maintaining that order. Now challenge them to take the 5S to their bedroom or play space.

For more information see:

http://www.ehow.com/how_5834440_5s-home.html

<http://www.manufacturing-operations-management.com/manufacturing/2011/05/are-we-teaching-young-kids-lean-practices.html>

<https://www.isixsigma.com/community/blogs/lucky-kat-six-sigma-kids/>

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

“Croskey’s Corner”

Ah, New Years Resolutions! What a way to kill the holiday spirit! I will share with you my Resolution for this year; I resolved to buy and eat only quality donuts. No day-old pastries. No bargain basement delicacies. No stale, unglazed, cardboard imitations of the real thing! You'd be surprised how difficult that was! Of course, then I discovered that the UDF near the park where my dog and I walk carries Busken's Kettle Danish! I have been more successful at this resolution than almost any I have ever made. (Confession, I have also tried to cut out real butter on my bread. So, I am not a complete glutton.)

What did you resolve for this year? Or did you resolve not to resolve? In either case, you may often begin the year declaring that you will be more organized than previously. In the case of school, your resolve to be more Orderly may carry over to your students. Mike loses his homework in the mess that is his backpack. Jameel has a desk that is cluttered and beyond help. Ashley forgets her materials and must either borrow or sit and do nothing. Students are infamous for lacking Order in their school work habits. This Orderliness problem should probably be called Order-Less-ness. There is NO Order.

Of course, we know that many students improve their Orderliness as they mature and a big part of school involves teaching these skills. Sure, the Kindergarten teacher spends a great deal of time teaching kids how to do school in an Orderly way. But, similarly, the high school teacher instructs students in how to conduct research in an orderly manner or how to follow an experimental procedure in the correct Order. School at all levels is about Order.

There is fancy jargon for this aspect of doing school. It is called Executive Functioning skills. Peg Dawson and Richard Guare define Executive Functioning as a neuropsychological concept referring to a set of cognitive processes that are required to plan and direct activities. In plain English, that means we are talking about the ability to start a task (initiative), follow through on the work of the task (attention), keep in mind the information useful to succeeding at the task (working memory), sustain attention to the task, monitor one's performance, ignore distractions, resist the temptation to quit the job (impulse control), persist to the goal... and turn in the completed work when and where it is supposed to end up! I would add that it also involves the ability to stop in the middle when the teacher interrupts, put the task away when a schedule - or a CHANGE in schedule - demands, and be able to pick the task up later, find where one left off, and continue.

In a December, 2012, article in *Communique*, a publication of the National Association of School Psychologists, the authors of the article, Rachelle H. Cantin, Trisha D. Mann, & Alycia M. Hund, note that a student's level of Executive Functioning is the single best predictor of school readiness. It influences social-emotional competence, emotion regulation, academic performance, success in dealing with developmental disorders such as autism spectrum disorder, and the ability to cope with psychological difficulties such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). They also point out that Executive Functioning emerges in the first few years of life, develops fully by late adolescence, and declines with normal aging. As I approach 65 years of age, I can attest to that decline in... hmmm.. what was I saying...boy it has rained a lot lately... OH! Are you still here?

Sorry. Educators have an in-bred skill at teaching Executive Functioning skills. Indeed, if you ask teachers who the smartest kid in their class is, they will ignore IQ and tell you about the student with the best Executive Functioning skills. So, I am not going to lecture you on how to get students to be more skilled at starting, sustaining, completing, and not interrupting their work. Rather, I have two questions for you to ponder. First, what are your own Executive Functioning Skills like? It is a given that teachers find students with strong Executive Functioning easier to teach. But how well do you do? For example, can you work well at home, away from the gaze of your principal? Do you handle your graduate courses well? Do you procrastinate? In committee work, are you task-oriented or social? In other words, look within yourself to see if you struggle with the same obstacles that your students do. That may give you some empathy for their challenges.

More importantly, what tricks or shortcuts help you stay Orderly? Accordion files? To-do lists? Cell phone alarms to remind you of where you are supposed to be? An unstimulating environment to help you focus? But, Part 2: just because these help you, will they help everybody? Teachers have a tendency to figure out their own organization needs and to impose them on their students. Yet helping someone be Orderly is a Consultation process, not a One-Size-Fits-All endeavor. Case in point: if you decide to buy a Franklin Planner, you do not just buy a uniform set of materials. You buy a consultation and training with a Franklin Planner expert. Why? Because the consultant is going to assess your Orderliness needs and sell you what you need. Or at least what he or she thinks you need! Teachers might do well to be Executive Functioning consultants for students. Accordion file? Helps some, not others. To-Do/Done colored folder. Helps many, not all. Handcuff a briefcase to the kid's wrist and lock his homework in it? Might help somebody. So, assess their needs and then “sell” them the materials they need to Function Executively! Happy New School Year!

Bill Croskey is a school
psychologist from the
Loveland City Schools

Robin's Reading List



Grades Pre - 3

Caillou Puts Away His Toys by Joceline Sanschagrin

Caillou cannot wait to have some of Mommy's delicious chocolate pudding, but first he must put away all of his toys. Luckily, Daddy has a neat new idea to help Caillou keep his toys tidy.

Aunt Minnie McGranahan by Mary Skillings Prigger

When Aunt Minnie McGranahan inherits nine orphaned nephews and nieces, the neighbors think it will never work. Aunt Minnie is small and tidy, and she lives alone in a neat little house. She has a neat little garden and a neat little barn, and she has a system for everything. Certainly there's no place in her life for children. But Aunt Minnie is a problem solver, and she surprises everyone by bringing home all nine children and coming up with clever new systems to accommodate her expanded family. It turns out Aunt Minnie likes children after all! This funny, fresh story, told in verse and accompanied by whimsical watercolors, is based on the life of the real Aunt Minnie, a member of the author's family who adopted nine children in 1920.

Robin Castetter is a Retired Elementary Teacher Loveland City Schools

The

Berenstain Bears and the Messy Room by Stan and Jan Berenstain

The room shared by Brother and Sister is a mess because the cubs argue over who should neaten up instead of working together. Sure to make toddlers smile while they absorb an implied lesson.

Frankie Pickle and the Closet of Doom by Eric Wright

Like most kids, Frankie Pickle hates cleaning his room. But what happens when his Mom says he never has to clean it again? Frankie and his unstoppable imagination mean fun. He and his side-kick Argyle become explorers swinging on vines, forging paths through piles of clothes, and scooting past lava pits. They perform flawless surgery on a broken action figure. They spend time in the big house. They even become superheroes. But will all this imagining be enough to conquer... the closet of DOOM?

Jillian Jiggs by Phoebe Gilman

Jillian Jiggs, who spends most of her time making up games and playing dress up, is much too busy to clean her room!!

Get Organized Without Losing It by Janet S. Fox

Kids today have a lot to keep track of—and keep organized. Schoolwork, friends, activities, chores... rooms, backpacks, lockers, desks...and what about fun? Here's friendly, practical, humorous help for kids who want to manage their tasks, their time, and their stuff—without going overboard or being totally obsessed. Tips, techniques, strategies, and examples empower kids to conquer clutter, prioritize tasks, handle homework, prepare for tests, plan projects, stop procrastinating, and start enjoying the benefits of being organized: less stress and more success. Lists and steps make it doable; jokes and cartoons make it enjoyable. Recommended for any kid who's frustrated, overwhelmed, and sick of hearing "Clean your room!" "Where's your homework?" and "You're going to be late AGAIN!"

Grades 4 - 8:

Among the Hidden by Margaret Petersen Haddix
Born third at a time when having more than two children per family is illegal and subject to seizure and punishment by the Population Police, Luke has spent all of his 12 years in hiding. His parents disobeyed once by having him and are determined not to do anything unlawful again. At first the woods around his family's farm

Robin's Reading List



are thick enough to conceal him when he plays and works outdoors, but when the government develops some of that land for housing, his world narrows to just the attic. Gazing through an air vent at new homes, he spies a child's face at a window after the family of four has already left for the day. Is it possible that he is not the only hidden child? Answering this question brings Luke greater danger than he has ever faced before, but also greater possibilities for some kind of life outside of the attic. This is a near future of shortages and deprivation where widespread famines have led to a totalitarian government that controls all aspects of its citizens' lives. When the boy secretly ventures outside the attic and meets the girl in the neighboring house, he learns that expressing divergent opinions openly can lead to tragedy. To what extent is he willing to defy the government in order to have a life worth living?

The War With Grandpa
by Robert Kimmel Smith

Young Peter was thrilled to hear from his younger sister, Jennifer, that Grandpa Jack was coming to live with the family. That is until he learned that Grandpa Jack would be taking over his bedroom, forcing Peter to move into the dark, scary guest room on the third floor. Thus begins Peter's quest to force his grandpa out of his bedroom using devious plans and tricks. The escapades of Peter and his Grandfather embrace the action steps of orderliness.

A Whole Nother Story by Cuthbert Soup

The three Cheeseman children, their father, and their psychic dog are all on the run. Well from the CIA, naturally. But also corporate agents #5, #29, and # 207, plus two international superspies -- one of whom happens to be a chimpanzee. They all want Dr. Cheeseman and his late wife's greatest invention—a machine with unspeakable powers. It's an adventure novel like no other as the Cheeseman family and friends protect not just their parents' invention, but their mother's memory as well. There is also the entertaining, plot-exposition filled, unsolicited and orderly advice you'll receive along the way?

The Last Holiday Concert
by Andrew Clements

For Hart Evans, being the most popular kid in sixth grade has its advantages. Kids look up to him, and all the teachers let him get away with anything -- all the teachers except the chorus director, Mr. Meinert. When Hart's errant rubber band hits Mr. Meinert on the neck during chorus practice, it's the last straw for the chorus director, who's just learned he's about to lose his job due to budget cuts. So he tells the class they can produce the big holiday concert on their own. It's all up to them. And who gets elected to run the show? The popular Mr. Hart Evans is chosen to run the show. Hart soon discovers there's a big difference between popularity and leadership, and to his surprise, discovers something else as well -- it's really important to him that this be the best holiday concert ever, and even more important, that it not be the last. The book is a great example of arranging one's surroundings to achieve greater efficiency...a lesson Hart learns.

Mockingbird by Katherine Erskine

In Caitlin's world, everything is black or white. Things are good or bad. Anything in between is confusing. That's the stuff Caitlin's older brother, Devon, has always

Robin's Reading List

explained. But now Devon's dead and Dad is no help at all. Caitlin wants to get over it, but as an eleven-year-old girl with Asperger's, and the need for orderliness, she doesn't know how. When she reads the definition of closure, she realizes that is what she needs. In her search for it, Caitlin discovers that not everything is black and white—the world is full of colors—messy and beautiful.

Grades 9 - 12:

Where's My Stuff? The Ultimate Teen Organizing Guide

This book gives comprehensive advice on how to organize school-work, lockers, bedrooms, and even one's schedule. Written in collaboration with professional teen organizer, Lesley Schwartz, this book includes a hilarious quiz and provides great advice about things like decision making and closet purging. With fun and useful illustrations, easy-to-follow charts, and ample doses of humor. This book is an incredible asset for anyone who wants to get it together...and keep it together, for good.

It's All Too Much, So Get It Together by Peter Walsh

Peter Walsh has helped thousands of adults clear

mental and physical clutter from their lives, and now he's turning his focus to the unique issues teens face. The stresses of making important decisions and controlling personal finances for the first time can be overwhelming—but a little de-cluttering can go a long way. Walsh helps readers identify problem areas and outlines unique steps to streamline the process of clearing out the clutter and addressing everything from dealing with family to evaluating goals. At a time when teens are under more pressure than ever, this is the go-to guide for getting it all under control—and getting ahead!

Organizing from the Inside Out for Teenagers: The Foolproof System for Organizing Your Room, Your Time, and Your Life by Julie Morgenstern

Morgenstern, author of *Organizing from the Inside Out* (1998) for adult readers, teams up with her daughter Jessi to offer practical advice to teenagers who want to get organized. After considering what might be holding them back and the three steps to success (analyze, strategize, attack), the discussion shifts to the two major areas of concern: managing space and managing time. Readers who aren't interested in reshaping

their entire lives could benefit from reading a section of the book devoted to a specific challenge, such as getting long-term school projects done. To her mother's practical approach, Jessi adds her own comments and experiences as a teenager learning to bring order to her messy room and overcrowded schedule. In addition to small charts and diagrams that bolster the text, occasional cartoon drawings enliven the presentation.





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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.