

**Integrating Core Value  
Activities  
Into the Classroom:  
A Resource for  
Middle and High School  
Teachers**



**Dr. Dionne Ward  
School Turnaround Manager**

**Willie Mae Edmonds  
Reading Specialist**

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# SEPTEMBER

Core Value: **RESPONSIBILITY**

## Week One:

Discuss with the students what responsibility is and how to be a responsible person (and feel great about it!)

**When you agree to do something, do it.** If you let people down, they will stop believing you. When you follow through on your commitments, people take you seriously.

**Answer for your own actions.** Don't make excuses or blame others for what you do. When you take responsibility for your actions you are saying *"I am the one who's in charge of my life."*

**Take care of your own matters.** Don't rely on adults to remind you when you're supposed to be somewhere or what you're supposed to bring. You take the responsibility.

**Be trustworthy.** If somebody trusts you to borrow or take care of something, treat it like it's the most valuable thing on earth and return it on time.

**Always use your head.** Think things through and use good judgment. When you use your head you make better choices. That shows your parents they can trust you.

**Don't put things off.** When you have a job to do, do it! Doing things on time helps you take control of your life and shows that you can manage your own affairs.

## Week Two:

**Read the story below to the class:**

Rhonda and her friends are dividing up tasks for a school science project which must be completed over the weekend. But Rhonda is so irresponsible that her friends don't trust her to do anything important, and this makes her feel very bad. When she begs them for a chance to redeem herself by taking on a key task, they reluctantly go along. But just when she's getting down to business, another friend invites Rhonda to go away and spend the weekend at Disneyland. This, of course, would mean shirking her responsibility and letting down her friends again. What a dilemma! *What should she do? Is it important that Rhonda win the respect of her friends? Will she feel good about herself in the end?*

## Week Three:

Talk with your students about responsibility. Tell them that responsibility isn't just doing chores; it's following through on commitments, answering for their own actions, being reliable, using good judgment, taking care of their own affairs. Let them know that these are signs they are growing up and can be trusted with greater freedom. Ask them to get in groups of three or four and share how they can be more responsible. Have them report out in 5 minutes.

## Week Four:

Tell students to keep a daily record of all of their responsibilities. Include social commitments, homework, household chores, everything. At the end of the week, tell them to give themselves a grade on how well they did in carrying out your responsibilities. Report out next week.

# OCTOBER

Core Value: **RESPECT**

## Week One:

Discuss with the students what respect is and why it is important to give respect in order to receive respect. Ask students to give their definitions of respect and give examples of disrespect. Ask them to answer these questions by a show of hands:

### Are You a Respectful Person?

(Take this self-evaluation and decide for yourself.)

- | True                     | False                    |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I treat other people the way I want to be treated.         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am considerate of other people.                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I treat people with civility, courtesy, and dignity.       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I accept personal differences.                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I work to solve problems without violence.                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I never intentionally ridicule, embarrass, or hurt others. |

I think I am/am not a respectful person because: \_\_\_\_\_

## Week Two:

Imagine you are a camp counselor for a group of 9 year olds who are constantly putting each other down. Plan a series of three activities that will encourage them to respect each other.

**Alternate Activity:** Ask students these questions: *How do you feel when someone judges you without knowing you or giving you a chance? How do you feel when someone you disagree with calls you a name? How do you feel when someone bumps into you in the hall and does not apologize?*

## Week Three:

Ask students to create a code of respect for their class. Include guidelines that promote respectful behavior for both teachers and students to follow toward each other. Ask them to present the code to the class and explore the possibility of implementing it in the whole school.

**Alternate Activity:** *Bullies are often trying to make people "respect" them. Is this really respect, or is it fear? What is the difference? How is bullying and violent behavior an act of disrespect?*

## Week Four:

Write a dialogue presenting a situation where two people—parent/child, teacher/student, classmate/classmate, etc.—disagrees, but still respect each other. With a partner, present your dialogue to the class. After the presentation, discuss as a group why we need to respect others even when we disagree with them.

**Alternate Activity:** Think of a person that you wish you had shown more respect to. Write a letter to that person, explaining what behavior you think was disrespectful, why you behaved that way, and how you wish you had behaved. If you are comfortable doing so, send the letter.

## NOVEMBER

Core Value: **COMPASSION**

**Week One:**

Discuss what compassion means. Share examples such as: being a giving person, being helpful, sacrificing for others, showing love and sympathy, encouraging others, not being greedy with money, energy or time; Being gentle, willing to help, friendly, and considerate of others; Understanding, sensing, and sharing in the feelings and emotions of others. Allow students to give examples.

### **Week Two:**

Discuss a few these quotes and ask students what they mean: 1. If you find it in your heart to care for somebody else, you will have succeed. - *Maya Angelou*; 2. If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else. - *Booker T. Washington*; 3. You can teach someone who cares to write columns, but you can't teach someone who writes columns to care. - *Ellen Goodman*; 4. Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.- *Leo Buscaglia*; 5. How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because some day in life you will have been all of these. - *George Washington Carver*; 6. Compassion is a foundation for sharing our aliveness and building a more humane world. - *Martin Lowenthal*; 7. The more you care, the stronger you can be. - Jim Rohn; 8. Love life and life will love you back. Love people and they will love you back. - Arthur Rubinstein; 9. A good heart is better than all the heads in the world. - *Edward Bulwer-Lytton*; 10. We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies.- Martin Luther King, Jr.

### **Week Three:**

Explain to students that bullying is at an all-time high. Bully boys and mean girls have taken on a whole new meaning. Sadly, it is not only in playgrounds, it is now in cyberspace. Parents can no longer confront little Billy and talk to his parents face-to-face. Today's headlines draw attention to the reality of children and adults who live daily without caring or compassion for others. If you are lucky and can confront the bully, the response may be, "It was just a joke." If you are not so lucky, you may be met with cold eye and silence. Ask the students these questions: What can be done to change a child's behavior? Can you really teach students or bullies to be more compassionate? Why do you think so many people are not compassionate? What should parents do to help? What should principals do to prevent bullying in school and to teach students to have more compassion?

### **Week Four:**

#### ***Role-playing compassion***

**Ask students what compassion would look like if:**

- Someone was sad because her father was sick and in the hospital.
- Your mother seemed so tired after work.
- A friend was confused about what a teacher said.
- A peer at school was diagnosed with cancer.
- A bully was picking on some of the other students in school.
- The teacher accused your friend of cheating, but the friend was innocent.
- One of your peers and his family lost everything in a fire.
- A new student who looked and acted differently came to your school.

**DECEMBER**  
Core Value: **COURAGE**

**Week One:**

Discuss with students courage. Tell them how important it is to be brave and stand up for what they believe in. Ask students to define courage in their own words and tell ways they have demonstrated courage in their life. Give the antonym for courage. Ask students to answer the statements below by a show of hands.

## Are You a Person of Courage?

(Take this self-evaluation and decide for yourself.)

- | True                     | False                    |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I stand up for what is right even if I stand alone.                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't cave in to negative peer pressure.                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fear of failure does not prevent me from trying things.                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am not afraid to express myself just because some people might disapprove. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I work to solve problems without violence.                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I never intentionally ridicule, embarrass, or hurt others.                   |

I think I am / am not a courageous person because: \_\_\_\_\_

**Alternative Activity:** Tell students to describe a time in their life when they were not courageous and/or responsible and how their actions made them feel. Then ask students to describe someone they know (or know of) who is or was courageous. Also ask students: *Who was Rosa Parks? Why was she so courageous?*

### Week Two:

Read the scenarios to students and then discuss the questions. **(1)** There is a new student in your class in school. This student has just moved to the area and does not know anyone. Your friends do not like the student and refuse to speak to him/ her or to include him/her in their activities. *What would you do? Why?*

**Alternative Activity:** Tell the class about a time you went along with the crowd and knew it was wrong. Share how you felt about yourself and what you learned from it. Ask students: *What does it take to stand up against peer pressure? Discuss the kinds of peer pressure that exist at school. What are some good strategies to stand up to them?*

## JANUARY

Core Value: **HOPE**

### Week One:

Hope is wishing for something and believing that wish will be fulfilled. Hope leads to the drive to set and pursue goals, to take risks, and to initiate action. Ask students: *What do you hope to become? What do you hope for others (friends, family, etc.)? What do you hope for the world?"*

Have students to share stories they have heard that remind them of the good things that happen every day.

**Alternative Activity:** Have students to share what they wished or hoped for Christmas and why or why not if they received the gift.

### **Week Two:**

Remind students that hope is not just passively wishing and waiting for something to happen. Hope leads to the drive to set and pursue goals, take risks, and initiate action.

Ask students: *What goals do you want to pursue for yourself, school, and family? What steps can you take while waiting?* List 3-5 steps to take as individuals and/or class.

**Alternative Activity:** Have students to interpret the meaning of “Keep hope alive.”

### **Week Three:**

Tell students to think of superstars, athletes, and civil rights leaders who have risen to fame because of the hope they had for what they would become. Discuss. Tell students their families taught them how to set goals, think positively, and developed rewards that enabled them to go after whatever they wanted out of life. Have students to create a goal reward system for the class or individual to reach for their goals.

**Alternative Activity:** Tell students to list the responsibilities and expectations they may need to pursue in passing the Standards of Learning (SOL).

### **Week Four:**

Create “vision board” of students’ goals. Tell students to draw pictures, use cutouts, and glue their wishes on a sheet of paper.

**Alternative Activity:** Have students to start a journal or blog how they will accomplish moving to the next grade.

### **Week Five:**

Review students’ events, goals, and actions for their hopes. Students should write two paragraphs of what they hope for by the end of the school year and how they plan to achieve it.

**Alternative Activity:** Students should discuss obstacles they may encounter in achieving their goals and tell how they will overcome them.

## **FEBRUARY**

Core Value: **JUSTICE**

### **Week One:**

Begin the discussion by asking students to define “justice.” Write students suggestions on the board. Next, write a class definition for justice on chart paper. Summarize by telling student justice is being fair and reasonable. Discuss questions: *Do you like to play sports or games? When you play, how do you try to be fair? Why would your opponent or teammate*

*consider you to play fair? What does it mean to be a bad sport? Which is more important to you: winning a game or feeling good about how you played? Why?*

**Alternative Activity:** Tell students: Thurgood Marshall was appointed to the Supreme Court by President Lyndon Johnson in 1967. Marshall was the first African American Supreme Court Justice. Marshall was instrumental in numerous civil rights cases. In 1954, he argued and won the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* case, in which the Supreme Court declared segregation of public schools illegal. Discuss the following statement by Thurgood Marshall with your students: "If the First Amendment means anything, it means that a state has no business telling a man, sitting alone in his house, what books he may read or what films he may watch." Invite students to think about Marshall's statement by considering each piece of the comment. Then discuss.

### **Week Two:**

Explain to students that unsportsmanlike behavior is an example of not being just or fair. Divide the class into two groups. Give each group a chart paper to trace the outline of a student. Have one group to draw a player who shows good sportsmanlike and the other group to draw a player who is not sportsmanlike. Students should include captions to explain their illustration. Then have some of the groups to present and post all charts to remind students how to be just or fair.

**Alternative Activity:** For instance, begin by reading the First Amendment and talking about the civil rights that the amendment guarantees. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." Then create a K-W-L chart with your students and discuss. Have students give examples related to their life or someone they know.

### **Week Third:**

Read aloud the fable, "The Two Bags": Every man, according to an ancient legend, is born into the world with two bags suspended from his neck – all bag in front full of his neighbors' faults, and a large bag behind filled with his own faults. Hence it is that men are quick to see the faults of others, and yet are often blind to their own failings. **OR**

**Read (lower level):** According to a legend, each person is born with two bags hanging from his neck. A small bag is brimming with that person's neighbors' faults. A larger bag is brimming with the person's own faults. Each person looks at the bag full of his neighbors' faults but often cannot see past it to see his own overflowing bag. –Aesop  
Discussion questions: *What lesson can be learned from this fable? Why do people often judge others before getting to know them? What does it mean to be open-minded? What is meant by "Don't judge a book by its cover?"*

**Alternative Activity:** Tell students that most Americans do not realize that they do not have the right to vote and no affirmative right to vote exists. However, there are three amendments to the U.S. Constitution that prohibit voting discrimination based on race (15th), sex (19th) and age (26th). Remind the students that President Barack Obama is running for a second term. Tell them they have been selected to be his campaign manager. Have students to create a print ad for a billboard, poster to be placed in the front yard, a button, or a bumper sticker to persuade people to vote for President Barack Obama. Students may work individual, partners, or groups.

### **Week Four:**

Talk with your students about some of the rights and privileges they have in school today. Explain that it hasn't always been that way for all students. Ask students, *“Do you feel any injustices in school today? How do you feel about RPS policy on cell phones, dress code, and zone school?”*

**Alternative Activity:** Read this case study about a student’s speech at an assembly: At a voluntary school assembly, a public high school student delivered a speech nominating a candidate for student government office. Approximately 600 students, many of whom were 14-year-olds, attended the school-sponsored activity during the school day. The student used a graphic, sexual metaphor throughout the speech. The speech began, “I know a man who is firm — he’s firm in his pants, he’s firm in his shirt, his character is firm — but most ... of all, his belief in you, the students of Bethel, is firm.” Prior to the assembly, two teachers had advised the student, Matthew Fraser, not to give the speech because it was inappropriate. The next day the assistant principal notified him that his speech was in violation of the school’s “disruptive-conduct rule.” He was given an opportunity to explain his conduct. After admitting, he knew he was using explicit sexual innuendo, Fraser was suspended and his name was removed from the list of potential graduation speakers. *Why is this speech in violation with RPS student code of conduct? How might harm occur because of the speech? What other value or right is conflicting with this speech?*

## **MARCH**

Core Value: **WISDOM**

### **Week One:**

Write the term “wisdom” on the board. Ask students to define the word. Have students to reflect on their lives and think of a time when they were "in trouble" and had to choose a path out of the difficulty. Ask them to reflect on their decision-making process and determine if their decision was the right thing to do. Ask students: *What advice would they give others based on their own experience with difficult times?*

**Alternate Activity:** Students will create posters that graphically represent examples of decision-making or advice recommended for those facing difficult situations.

### **Week Two:**

Tell students in the novel, "The Bean Trees" by Barbara Kingsolver, there is some solid advice on how to live your life embedded in the book. Read or write on the board the quote to students from "The Country Wisdom" - Taylor's Mom says in chapter 5 - "The way I see it a person isn't nothing more than a scarecrow. . . The only difference between one that stands up good and one that blows over is what kind of stick they're stuck up there on." Ask students: *What advice does she give? What advice would you give?* **Answer:** She's telling us that the only difference between someone who succeeds (the scarecrow that stands) and someone that fails (the one that falls) is the type of backbone they have. How much they try and how much they are willing to endure. That is the strength of the stick.

### **Week Three:**

Tell students: Today you will give wisdom on a phone-in advice program or talk show in which students seek answers to questions about the problems of smoking, drinking alcohol, drugs, obesity, or poor nutrition. Divide students into groups, so that one group is generating questions. The other group member should take turns answering the questions.

**Alternate Activity:** Pair students so they can formulate questions about problems they have encountered in life. Students should form a talk show (Dr. Phil or Dr. Oz) and give some advice or choices.

### **Week Four:**

Tell students baseball players are usually drafted out of high school. You have a choice of going to college on a four-year baseball scholarship or playing professional baseball.

*Which would you choose? Why?*

**Alternative Activity:** Wisdom is being concern for others and making good choices. Ask students: *How would you interpret these quotes?* Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain, but it takes character and self control to be understanding and forgiving. Patience is the companion of wisdom. The trouble with life isn't that there is no answer, it's that there are so many answers. The doors of wisdom are never shut. A man begins cutting his wisdom teeth the first time he bites off more than he can chew.

# APRIL

Core Value: **INTEGRITY**

## Week One:

Ask students: Have ever heard? “Your word is your bond or Go by your gut feeling.”

*What does it mean to you?* Discuss with students that integrity is to know and do what is right. Ask students to give synonyms and antonyms for the meaning of integrity. Ask the class to brainstorm ways to tell whether something is the right thing to do. List their ideas on the board.

**Alternative Activity:** Write at least five things you can say to yourself when you are tempting to do something wrong. Share them with the class. Then post them near your bed so you can read them from time to time.

## Week Two: Spring Break

## Week Three:

Divide the class into small groups. Half of the group will role-play (scenarios below) the right thing and the other half the wrong thing. Discuss the results.

\_\_\_\_ You pass an empty old house. In front of it there’s a “**No Trespassing**” sign. But the front door is open. You really want to go in and see what is there. No one is around.

*What do you do?*

\_\_\_\_ A group of kids who you think are really cool are picking on another kid. They want you to join them, and they say you are a punk if you do not. You do not want to be left out, but you think picking on the other kid is unfair. *What do you do?*

\_\_\_\_ Your best friend asks you to help him cheat on a test. He has never done it before and he promises he will never do it again. *What do you do?*

**Alternative Activity:** Have students to compose their own poem or rap song about courage.

## Week Three:

Discuss some of these quotes and ask the students what they mean to them. 1. “Don’t measure your neighbor’s honesty you your own” -American Proverb. 2. “The time is always right to do the right thing”- M. L. King, Jr. 3. “A promise must never be broken”- Alexander Hamilton 4. “Real integrity is doing the right think, knowing that nobody’s going to know whether you did it or not”- Oprah Winfrey 5. “If you can not find the truth where you are, where else do you expect to find it?”-Ralph Waldo Emerson 6. “If you have integrity nothing else matters”-Alan Simpson 7. “What is right is often forgotten by what is convenient”-Bodie Thoene 8. “Whenever you do a thing, act as if the entire world is watching”-Thomas Jefferson 9. “Laws control the lesser man. Right conduct controls the greater one.”-Chinese Proverb 10. “Love all, trust a few. Do wrong to none”-William Shakespeare

**Alternative Activity:** Think of someone in public life who you think has demonstrated a lack of integrity. List what he/she should do to shape up.

## Glossary

- 1. Compassion** - com pas sion [kuh m-pash-uhn] –noun 1. a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.
- 2. Courage** - cour age [kur-ij, kuh-r] –noun 1. the quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc., without fear; bravery. 2. *Obsolete.* the heart as the source of emotion.
- 3. Hope** - hope [ho hp] –noun 1. the feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out for the best: *to give up hope*. 2. a particular instance of this feeling: *the hope of winning*. 3. grounds for this feeling in a particular instance: *There is little or no hope of his recovery*.
- 4. Integrity** - in teg ri ty [in-teg-ri-tee] –noun 1. adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty. 2. The state of being whole, entire, or undiminished: *to preserve the integrity of the empire*. 3. a sound, unimpaired, or perfect condition: *the integrity of a ship's hull*.
- 5. Justice** - jus tice [juhs-tis] –noun 1. the quality of being just; righteousness, equitableness, or moral rightness: *to uphold the justice of a cause*. 2. rightfulness or lawfulness, as of a claim or title; justness of ground or reason: *to complain with justice*. 3. the moral principle determining just conduct.
- 6. Respect** - re spect [ri-spekt] -verb (used with object) 1. to hold in esteem or honor: *I cannot respect a cheat*. 2. to show regard or consideration for: *to respect someone's rights*. 3. to refrain from intruding upon or interfering with: *to respect a person's privacy*.
- 7. Responsibility** - re spon si bil i ty [ri-spon-suh-bil-i-tee] –noun, plural -ties. 1. the state or fact of being responsible. 2. an instance of being responsible: *The responsibility for this mess is yours!* 3. a particular burden of obligation upon one who is responsible: *the responsibilities of authority*.
- 8. Wisdom** - wis dom [wiz-duhm] –noun 1. the quality or state of being wise; knowledge of what is true or right coupled with just judgment as to action; sagacity, discernment, or insight. 2. scholarly knowledge or learning: *the wisdom of the schools*. 3. wise sayings or teachings; precepts.

# Notes