

Self-Awareness

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Chapter 1

My Character

1.1 Qualities of a Good Character

Objective:

The student will identify examples of a person showing good character traits.

Comments:

The notion of having good *character* is somewhat intuitive—you know good character when you see it. In this lesson, students are introduced to the idea of character as something positive, whether it is an action or a thought that leads to an action. It has nothing to do with physical attributes such as how someone looks or their physical limitations.

Introductory Activities:

1. Write the word *character* on the board and ask students what they think “good character” means.
2. As you go through their ideas, ask if they think character is something *inside* a person; that is, how they think or act—or *outside* a person; that is, the way a person looks.
3. Come up with a working definition of *character*: traits or inner qualities of a person that would make them outstanding or worthy of positive attention.

Activity:

“Qualities of a Good Character” is an introductory worksheet for students. The concept of character is presented by examples showing good citizenship, treating others well, or making good choices. Students are to match these three traits to the examples. Several answers can be correct as long as students can justify them. *Answers:* 1. B (or C) 2. A 3. C (or B) 4. A 5. B 6. C 7. B 8. A (or C)

Discussion:

Go through the worksheet items and discuss why students selected their answers.

1. Did any of the examples mention the way a person looked? (No.)
2. In examples 3 and 6, what choices did the people have? (Be angry or wait; skip school or not.) How did the good choices help the people? (Avoided a possible argument; allowed Denny to take the test he needed to take.)
3. How do examples 2, 4, and 8 consider others while being a good citizen? (Make the park a nicer place for others; safety issue for the person and the drivers; provide relief for the man who lost the wallet.)

Extension Activities:

1. Have students search through photographs, magazines, or the Internet to find pictures that portray someone in the act of showing good character.
2. List characters familiar to students in movies, books, or other common venues who are good examples of someone with good character. Discuss why this person seems to have good character. What about this person is outstanding?

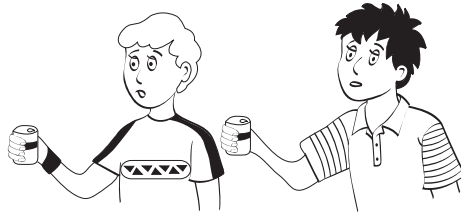
Evaluation:

1. Give an example of someone being a good citizen.
2. Give an example of someone treating others well.
3. Give an example of someone making a good choice.

1.1**Qualities of a Good Character****Directions:**

These students are showing good character traits. Write the letter of the trait next to each example.

A = Good citizen B = Treats others well C = Makes good choices



- _____ 1. Eloise's father asked her to be at home right after school so she could babysit for her little sister and brother. She told her friends that she wouldn't be able to go out with them after school and came home.
- _____ 2. Danny and Henry were walking through the park near their home and noticed a lot of litter. They picked up some cans and threw them into a bag to be recycled.
- _____ 3. Alison was angry at her best friend for forgetting to return a necklace that she borrowed. Alison wanted to yell at her friend, but decided to calm down and wait before talking to her friend. The next day she didn't feel angry, and her friend apologized.
- _____ 4. Tony needed to cross a busy street to get to the store, but instead of rushing into the street to make the cars stop for him, he went to the street corner and waited for the crosswalk light to change. Then he walked across.
- _____ 5. Sara knew that her mother was worried about losing her job. Sara decided to make her mother a nice salad when she came home, and she cleaned the house without being asked.
- _____ 6. Denny's friend wanted him to join them in skipping school. Denny had a big test that day and told his friends that he needed to go to school.
- _____ 7. Kara was walking down the hall when a girl accidentally knocked into her and made her drop her books. The girl felt very bad and almost started to cry. Kara laughed and told her not to worry about it.
- _____ 8. Pete and Devon noticed a wallet on the street with some money, credit cards, and photographs inside. They picked it up and found enough identification to locate the owner, so they called him and returned the wallet.

1.2 Honesty

Objective:

The student will identify ways that someone could show honesty in given situations.

Comments:

To be thought of as an honest person, someone needs to continually demonstrate that quality, including (especially?) in situations that are not readily observed by others. Think honesty at all times! This worksheet offers examples of situations in which a person has an opportunity to act honestly.

Introductory Activities:

1. Talk about what *honesty* means—telling the truth or behaving in a way that is consistent with what is true.
2. Ask students to share examples of observed honesty in others.
3. Ask students to share examples of their own honesty.

Activity:

Explain that students will read about honesty in the examples on the worksheet “Honesty.” *Answers (Examples):*

1. Return the money.
2. Tell your mother why you didn’t get the chores done.
3. Tell your friend that you already committed to an event but will spend time with him or her later.
4. Take the boxes to the post office.
5. Discreetly let the usher know which kids were involved.
6. Better to admit that you didn’t get your math done.

Discussion:

Discuss how each example showed honest behavior and the positive results that came from that act.

1. How are other people affected by the honest behavior in these examples?
2. In item #1, why would returning the money matter if the clerk didn’t know she had made a mistake? (Might catch up with her later and she would have to pay for the mistake.)
3. How was being honest taking a risk in #5? (Could be anger on the part of the kids if they found out.) Why would it be worth the risk? (So the theater would be a friendly place for others in the future.)

Extension Activities:

1. Discuss the difference between being “brutally honest” and being tactful.
2. Have students think of someone whom they consider to be a very honest person. Write a short paragraph describing the person and the person’s honesty.

Evaluation:

How could you show honesty if you bought a sweatshirt at the store and when you looked in the bag, you had accidentally taken some socks that you didn’t pay for?

1.2

Honesty

Directions:

How could these people demonstrate good character by using *honesty*? Write your answer next to each item.



- 1. I gave the clerk a \$10 bill and she gave me way too much money back.

- 2. My mother asked if I finished all of the chores I was supposed to do. I didn't get them done, but it was because I had to help my next-door neighbor. I am not sure my mother will listen to my excuses, though.

- 3. My friend invited me to go bowling, but I already promised someone else that I would go out with him. I don't want to hurt my friend's feelings.

- 4. My aunt asked me to take these boxes to the post office before noon so they could get out in today's mail. She is gone, so she won't know whether I did it or not.

- 5. Some kids were throwing popcorn around in the movie theater. The usher asked me which kids were causing the problem.

- 6. I was rushing to get my math assignment done. Carol said I could copy her paper if I wanted to.

1.3 Kindness

Objective:

The student will identify an act of kindness that could be shown to someone else in a given situation.

Comments:

A popular idea going around is that of doing a “random act of kindness” toward others—usually a surprising and pleasant act, going way beyond what is necessary to show kindness to someone. The act of kindness is not expected, is not necessary, and in many instances is not even acknowledged. Encourage students to be creative in their ways of showing kindness toward others.

Introductory Activities:

Give students plenty of examples of random acts of kindness and the spirit behind the movement by using the books *Random Acts of Kindness* (Daphne Rose Kingma and Dawna Markova, Conari Press, 2002) and *Kids’ Random Acts of Kindness* (Conari Press, 1994).

1. Ask students to tell about acts of kindness that have been done to them.
2. Ask students to give examples of any acts of kindness that they have done to others.

Activity:

Students are to read each example of a situation in which an act of kindness could be done. Students should use their own unique personalities to come up with their responses. Encourage students to be creative, yet realistic. What would they really do? *Answers (Examples):*

1. Pay the cashier and don’t tell the girl that it was you.
2. Write Ben an anonymous note telling how much someone liked his work.
3. Send the girl flowers.
4. Make sure that Mrs. Miller receives a card from every student in her class.

Discussion:

There is no single correct answer to these situations. Some students may be able to describe an act of kindness, but would never follow through on it. Ask students to be honest about their responses.

1. Would you want someone to know if you did something kind for somebody? Why would you want to be recognized?
2. How much did each of your deeds cost in terms of time, money, energy?
3. Does doing an act of kindness make the kind doer feel good? Is that why people do these things?
4. After hearing what other people came up with as far as ideas, would you change what you would do? Do you like other ideas better now than your own?
5. Which of these acts of kindness would you ever really do?

Extension Activities:

1. Plan to do a wild, exuberant act of kindness. Plot whom you will target and what you will do, then carry it out. What was the reaction of the person you targeted? How did it make you feel? Did you do it secretly or did you want to be discovered?
2. Read the book *Random Acts of Kindness*. Which were your favorite anecdotes? Why?
3. Compile a class book of acts of kindness. What starts happening when people start being outrageously kind to each other?
4. Refer to www.actsofkindness.org to investigate lots of ways people have shown kindness to others.

Evaluation:

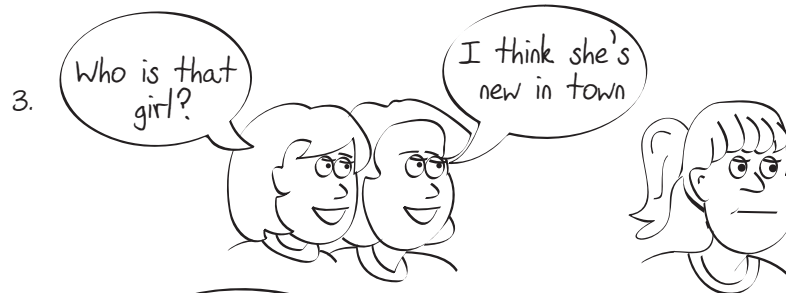
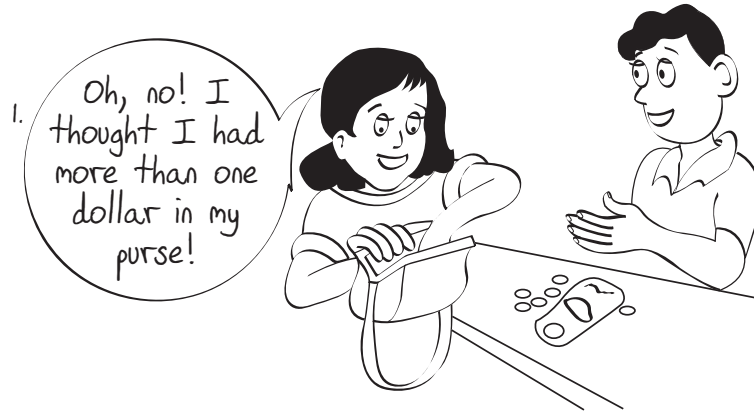
1. Give a general example of a random act of kindness.
2. Give a very specific example of an act of kindness that you have personally been involved in.

1.3

Kindness

Directions:

How could the person in each picture below demonstrate an act of kindness? On the back of this sheet, draw or write about a good example.



1.4 Loyalty

Objective:

The student will give an example of loyalty to someone or something.

Comments:

Being loyal to someone or something involves providing your support even during times of turmoil or misunderstanding. It is important to develop loyalty within friendships, family, and other groups that share a common bond or passion. Knowing that someone will stick with you or stick up for you whether you are there or not, whether you are having a good day or a bad day, is a true test of loyalty.

Introductory Activities:

1. Ask students to share the name of their favorite sports team. Why do they support this team?
2. Talk about what *loyalty* means—being supportive of someone or something in good times or bad. What does this actually look like?

Activity:

The worksheet “Loyalty” gives examples of students who are/are not showing loyalty to someone or something. The student is to circle the names of the loyal students. *Answers:* 1. Allan 2. Jill
3. Katie 4. David

Discussion:

Go through each example and discuss why each person is or is not showing loyalty.

1. In each example, are the people showing loyalty to a person or to a team or organization? (To people: 2, 3, 4; to a team: 1.)
2. Why does it matter if Frank changed his mind about cheering for the team? (It shows he only cares about who is winning.)
3. In example 2, how would the sister feel in each case? (Loved; alienated.)
4. How does example 3 show a good solution? (Katie wants to invite the friend.)
5. Why would it be hard to be loyal to someone like the boy in example 4? (He is not a fun friend.)
Do you think it is a good time to be loyal? (Probably; it might help him.)

Extension Activities:

1. Dogs are often given the label “man’s best friend” because of their loyalty. Talk about what this means. Example?
2. Have students find examples in stories or movies of extreme loyalty.
3. In what ways do we show loyalty to our school, family, house of worship, country, and so on?
4. Collect items that depict loyalty, such as: sweatshirts, baseball caps, pins, pennants, school colors, bumper stickers, and so on.

Evaluation:

1. How could you show loyalty to a member of your family?
2. How could you show loyalty to an organization such as a house of worship, school, or team?

1.4

Loyalty

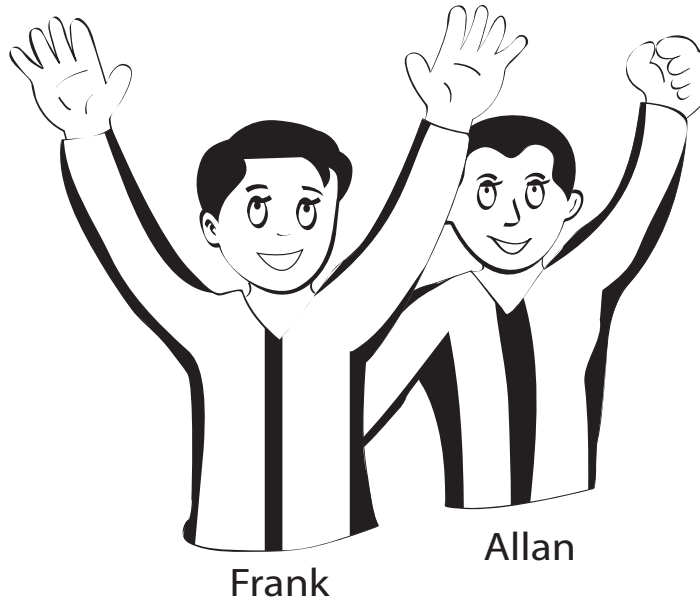
Directions:

Which of these students is showing loyalty to someone or something? Circle the name of the loyal student in each case.

1.

ALLEN: Go team! I will support our team, win or lose!

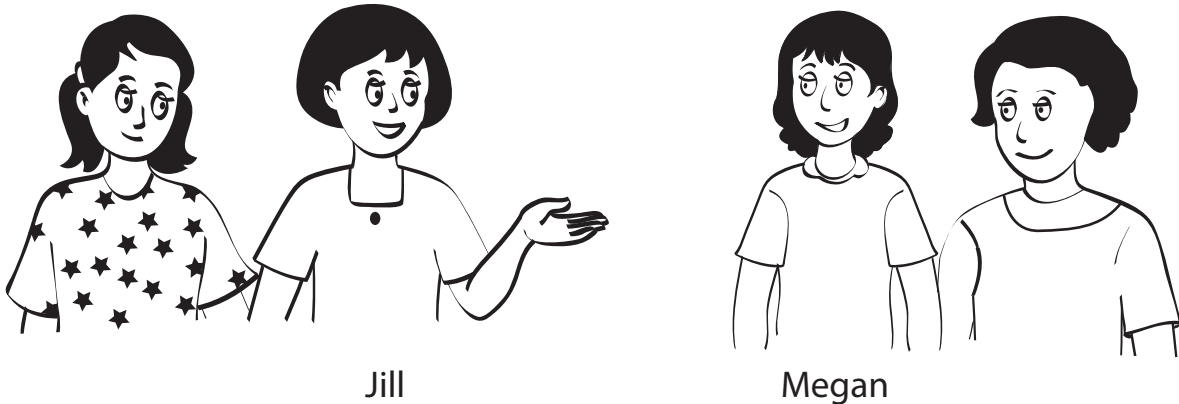
FRANK: Oh man, they are losing terribly! I think I'll start cheering for the other team.



2.

JILL: You are my sister, and no matter what, I care about you.

MEGAN: You look really weird. Don't tell anyone we are related.



1.4 Loyalty (*Continued*)

3.

ELLEN: Hey, we are going to Pat's house after the game. Want to come?

KATIE: Do I! Yes! Hang on . . . Hello, Sue? Something came up, and now I can't go out with you.

ABBY: Sorry, I already have plans.



Ellen



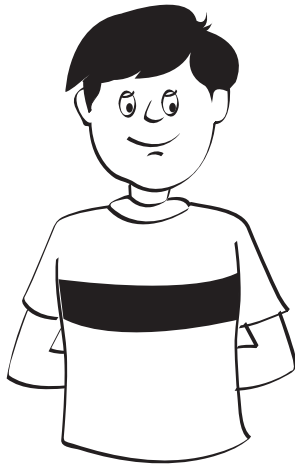
Katie

Abby

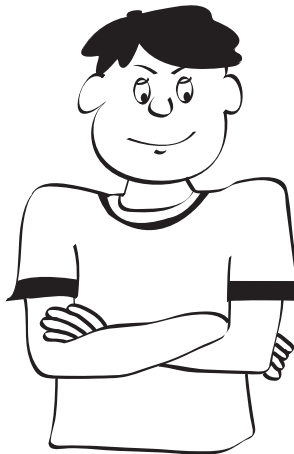
4.

MICHAEL: Rick is acting strangely these days. I don't think I'll hang out with Rick anymore. He is boring and doesn't want to do anything.

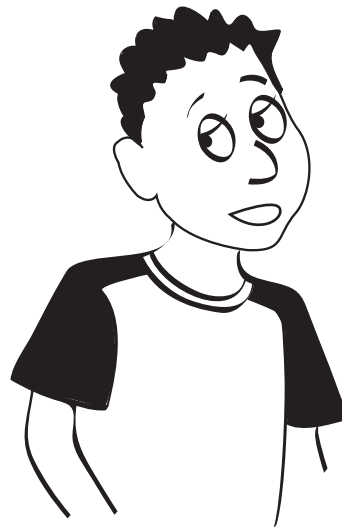
DAVID: I think he needs a friend, so I'll spend some time with him.



David



Michael



Rick

1.5 Responsibility

Objective:

The student will give an example of showing responsibility in a given situation.

Comments:

Being responsible means that you will do or be whatever is needed, whether or not someone is there to supervise you. It is important to be trusted to do what needs to be done, with or without someone directing you.

Introductory Activities:

1. What is the most important job you have ever been given? Who gave you the job? What did you have to do? How did it go?
2. Have you ever disappointed someone by not doing what they expected you to do?
3. What does being *responsible* mean to you?

Activity:

The worksheet “Responsibility” shows examples of a person being given a task to do in settings of home, school, and work. The students should write how they could show responsibility in each situation.
Answers (Examples): 1. Make sure everything is cleaned up and the door is locked. 2. Stay at home until your sister is there, then leave with friends (or don’t leave at all). 3. Make a daily schedule to walk the dog; walk the dog with friends. 4. Take out your assignment book and write the dates on a calendar. 5. Be careful driving; fill the car up with gas when done.

Discussion:

For each example, identify the task involved, who assigned the task, and how to make sure it is carried out responsibly.

1. In these examples, the task is specified by a boss, adult, or another person. Can you think of some tasks that you just have to be responsible for on your own, without a reminder from a person? (Habitual chores, paying bills, exercising.)
2. What are some consequences that could happen in each example if the person did not take responsibility?

Extension Activities:

1. Research the responsibilities and job descriptions of several different occupations (perhaps the president, a surgeon, a cashier). Why is it important to take any responsibility seriously, whether it involves “big” issues or somewhat smaller issues?
2. Invite guest speakers from different types of careers to talk to your class about their responsibilities. When they are looking to hire someone, how important is the characteristic of responsibility?

Evaluation:

1. How could you show responsibility at home?
2. How could you show responsibility at school?
3. How could you show responsibility at work?

1.5 Responsibility

Directions:

How could you show responsibility in each of these situations?

1. BOSS AT WORK: I won't be here when you leave, so would you please put everything away and lock up when you go?



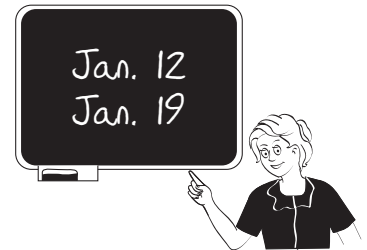
2. FATHER: Make sure your little sister gets home safely before you go out with your friends.



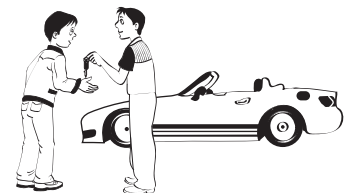
3. MOTHER: You said you wanted a dog. Well, this one needs to be walked every day or he'll tear up the room.



4. TEACHER: Here are the dates of the next two tests. I am not going to remind you every day, so do what you need to do to remember.



5. FRIEND: Here are the keys to my car. You can borrow it tonight, since you don't have one.



1.6 Flexibility

Objective:

The student will give an example of how someone could show flexibility in a given situation.

Comments:

Being flexible involves being able to make changes to existing plans (such as going to a later showing of a movie), accommodating things that you weren't expecting (such as sitting with your unexpected cousin instead of your friends), or making something work that wasn't originally in the plans (such as finding out the movie was cancelled). In all respects, it involves being able to change with as much ease and grace as possible. Special learners often find comfort in regular, predictable patterns. It requires flexibility to deal with a change in routine.

Introductory Activities:

Write the word *flexibility* or *flexible* on the board and have students give examples of what they think this means. What does *flexible* mean to a gymnast? What does it mean when applied to a rubber band? What do those examples have to do with a personality trait?

Ask students to give examples of times when they have had to be flexible in a situation.

Activity:

On the worksheet "Flexibility," students will read examples of people who have had to show flexibility in order to make an unexpected situation be acceptable. In some cases, it might mean giving up something in order to reach the best outcome for all parties.

Answers (Examples):

1. Jacob could see a different movie, go by himself, or go later in the week.
2. The girls could make separate books, or Emily could negotiate and have Emma change only three photos.
3. Joshua could play his position as well as possible, but ask to be a backup quarterback.
4. Madison could explain what happened and ask for time to redo the messy pages.
5. Andrew could be considerate and make his cousin happy.
6. Hannah could wear something else, or Hannah could change her outfit to be mainly pink.

Discussion:

As you discuss the questions, talk about how change might be a factor caused by other people, as in some of the examples, but that flexibility might be required when unexpected things happen that are not specifically caused by people (for example, a train running late, bad weather spoiling a picnic, a tree falling)

1. In examples 2 and 5, other people could possibly be flexible to change the situation. How?
2. Flexibility can show up in many different ways. How could example 1 be resolved in several different ways? (Change movie, change time, change date.)
3. What good things could come from showing flexibility in these situations? Are there any that are no-win situations even if the person is trying to be flexible?

Extension Activities:

1. Have students keep track of how many changes of plans happen to them in a single day. Try to categorize the events—people, schedules, weather?
2. Find out contingency plans for an organization that is driven by schedules, such as a train or bus station. What happens when a train runs late? What is the backup plan for equipment failure? How does flexibility help in keeping the overall system working well?

Evaluation:

1. How could you show flexibility if you had made plans to go swimming and it turned out to be a rainy day?
2. How could you show flexibility if you were planning on meeting two friends for pizza, but five friends showed up?

1.6

Flexibility

Directions:

How could each of these people show the quality of flexibility? Write your answer on each line.



1. Jacob was expecting his friend Michael to show up at 6 o'clock so they could walk to the movie theater. Michael called and said that his family had unexpected company, so he wouldn't get to Jacob's house in time to walk with him to the movie. Jacob was counting on seeing the movie that night.

2. Emily and her sister Emma were working on a family photo project. Emily decided to change all of the photos of herself because she didn't like the way she looked in them. Emma had a plan made up for how the photos should go in the book, and now that Emily wanted to change them, it wouldn't be the way she wanted.

3. Joshua had his heart set on being the quarterback for the team he played with, but the coach told him he thought Joshua would be a better running back, at least for this season.

4. Madison finished her homework and had it all set next to the door so she wouldn't forget it. When she got to school, she noticed that her dog had walked across her paper—the one that was supposed to be turned in today. There were brown footprints across the first three pages.

5. Andrew hated to get his hair cut because he liked the way it looked. His mother said that he had to at least get a trim before the family went to his cousin's wedding. In fact, his cousin had specifically asked whether Andrew would take the pink dye out of his hair before they did the wedding pictures.

6. Hannah ordered a blue-and-white-striped sweater online. She ordered it in plenty of time to wear it to a big party that weekend. When the box arrived the day before the party, she opened it to find a lovely pink-and-white-striped sweater.

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1.7 What Are Values?

Objective:

The student will list at least five common values and give an example of each.

Comments:

Each of us has a value system. There are certain things we place great importance on, and we act accordingly. Our values may be gained from our parents, our experiences, our education, and other sources, but it is important to know what we value. In this lesson, students are introduced to the concept of values and are given examples.

Introductory Activities:

1. Tell students you are going to say some words. Have them write one word that comes to mind that seems to include your examples.

\$1,000,000 . . . gold coins . . . winning the lottery → Money, wealth
mom . . . dad . . . uncle . . . brother . . . Aunt Ginny → Family
blue ribbon . . . trophy . . . diploma → Achievement

2. Define *value*. (Something of great importance to someone.)

Activity:

On the worksheet “What Are Values?” students are to match examples of values in action with the value listed. *Answers:* 1. e 2. h 3. c 4. i 5. b 6. g 7. j 8. a 9. k 10. d 11. l 12. f

Discussion:

Have students discuss any of the items that are unclear to them. Explain that these are just examples—there are lots of other ways to demonstrate the value.

1. Which of the values on the worksheet are important to you?
2. What are some other examples of demonstrating the values on the worksheet?
3. Which values do you think would be important to these people?

Elderly Person Mother Athlete Teacher Lawyer Model

Extension Activities:

1. Have students collect or record bumper stickers they have seen or heard of. What values are indicated by the stickers? What clues were given?
2. Listen to speeches by politicians or school board members (election times are good times to work on this activity). What values are brought up?

Evaluation:

1. List five to seven common values.
2. For each value listed in (1), give an example of how someone could demonstrate that value.

1.7

What Are Values?

Directions:

Match the value on the left with an example on the right of your demonstrating that value.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Health _____ | a. Wanting your own bedroom |
| 2. Wealth _____ | b. Watching a comedy show on television |
| 3. Family _____ | c. Spending time at the movies with your brothers and sisters |
| 4. Friendship _____ | d. Working out at a health club three times a week |
| 5. Humor _____ | e. Making sure you have had your flu shot |
| 6. Education _____ | f. Doing what you enjoy, allowing yourself to have fun |
| 7. Beauty _____ | g. Going to graduate school |
| 8. Space _____ | h. Opening a savings account |
| 9. Food _____ | i. Sticking up for your friends, even when nobody else will |
| 10. Exercise _____ | j. Planting flowers in front of your house |
| 11. Music _____ | k. Preparing a gourmet meal |
| 12. Happiness _____ | l. Learning to play the piano |