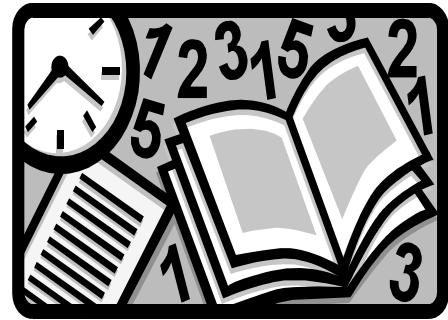




# **COURAGE**

## Classroom Activities

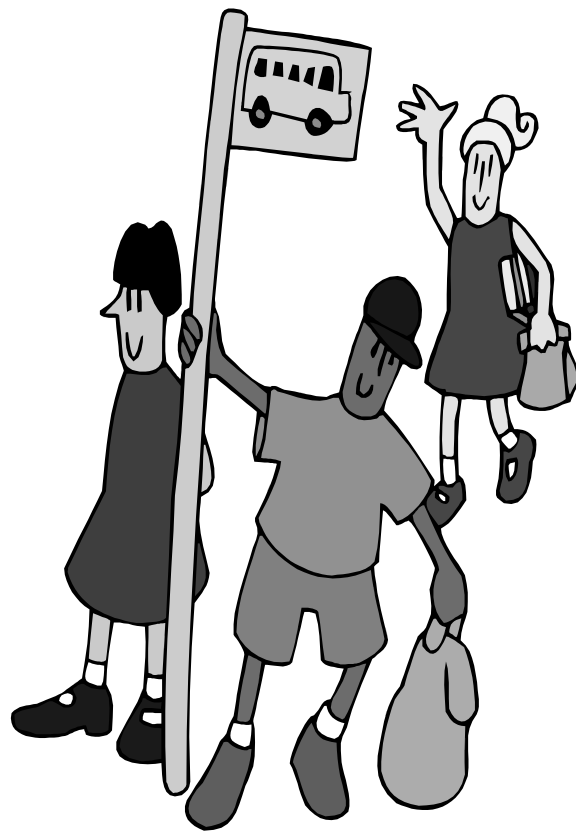
Grades K - 6



1. Have the class brainstorm ways to tell whether or not something is the right thing to do. List their ideas on the board. Compare their list with the one on the opposite page.
2. Divide the class into small groups. Give each group one of the following situations to role play. In each role play half the group wants to do the wrong thing and the other half wants to do the right thing. Each half tries to give strong reasons for their side. Discuss the results in class.  
Situations:
  - 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's 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're a nerd if you don't. You don't want to be left out, but you think picking on the other kid is unfair. What do you do?
  - You're walking home from school, and you're really hungry because you forgot to bring your lunch that day. You pass by a fruit stand, and the fruit looks so good you can almost taste it. "They'll never miss just one apple," you think to yourself. And no one is looking. What do you do?
  - Your best friend asks you to help him cheat on a test. He's never done it before and he promises he'll never do it again. What do you do?
3. Encourage the children to make up their own situations, and continue the role plays. Pretend you're giving a speech on the topic "It's never okay to do the wrong thing." Write at least four reasons to back up the statement for your speech.
4. Write about a time when someone tried to get you to do something wrong. What did you say or do? How did you know whether it was right or wrong?
5. Write about someone you admire for doing the right thing in a difficult situation. Describe what you admire about this person.
6. Write at least five things you can say to yourself when you're tempted to do something wrong. Post them near your bed so you can read them from time to time.

Grades K – 6 continued .....

7. Write a short story about someone who did the right thing when friends wanted him or her to do the opposite.
8. Write about a time when someone helped you do the right thing. Or: write a letter to that person thanking him or her for helping you.
9. Write a letter to someone in the news who did something that you don't think was right. Say why you don't think it was right, and why you think the person is setting a bad example for kids your age. Mail the letter.



# **COURAGE**

## Classroom Activities

Grades 7 – 12



1. What does it take to stand up against negative peer pressure? As a class, discuss the kinds of peer pressure that exist at your school. What makes it difficult to resist these pressures? Develop some good strategies for standing up to them. Compile this into a written report for the students in your school.
2. Profiles in Courage: Have the students, either individually or in groups, identify acts of courage by people in the news or by people in your school or community. Then have each individual or group make a presentation to the class and conduct a discussion. What do these selections have in common? What are their differences? What can the students learn about themselves from the selections they made? What have they learned from the people they selected?
3. Have your students bring in articles from magazines and newspapers describing situations in which moral courage is an issue. Conduct a discussion in which they decide who is acting courageously and who isn't. What difference does it make?
4. Role play some typical situations which require taking a courageous stand against a group or an individual. After each improvisation have a discussion. What important principle or issue was at stake? How well did the individual stand up? What could he/she have done better? What did you learn from this?
5. Describe a situation in which you showed moral courage. What was hard about it? What did it accomplish? How did people respond before you took your stand? What did they say to you afterwards?.
6. What was the hardest stand you ever had to take with your friends? Did it cost you anything? What were the benefits?
7. Have you ever gone along with the crowd even though you knew it was wrong? How did you feel about yourself? What did you learn from it?
8. Write about a time when you had to give up friends because they became a negative force in your life? In what way did that take courage?
9. In what ways have you demonstrated courage in your life? (Write an essay about it.)

Grades 7 – 12 continued .....

10. Consider the following behavioral definition of what courage means:

- Stand up for what is right, even if you stand alone.
- Don't cave in to negative peer pressure.
- Don't avoid trying something for fear of making a mistake or failing.
- Don't be afraid to express yourself just because some people might disapprove.

Write an essay on any or all of the points in this definition of courage.

11. Write a letter to someone in the news whose courage has impressed you.

12. Write an essay about a historical event in which courage played a major role. (The civil rights movement offers many good examples.)



# **COURAGE**

## **Quotes for Character Education Skills**

These quotes related to our AISD Touchstone of character skills can be used in a variety of ways by the entire campus and in classrooms. The quotes are designed to be used as practical, applicable, and easily modified enhancements to your Character Education plan. They can be used to help you plan a variety of activities that reinforce the character skills in many ways. Remember, effective character education is not a program or an initiative, but rather the continuous and deliberate process and practice of teaching, modeling, and reinforcing these skills to enable each of our students to reach their full potential by putting forth their maximum effort to succeed.

Here are some specific suggestions for using these quotes:

- Read or have students read a quote each day as part of the announcements for the skill you are teaching.
- For our younger students, paraphrase the quotes so they can understand the meaning.
- Make bulletin boards featuring the character skill of the month.
- Use the quotes as banners, posters, coloring sheets, bumper stickers, and/or computer screensavers.
- Print quotes in the newsletters and in communications to parents.
- Post the quotes on the school web site and on the school marquee.
- Have students compose their own character quotes, songs, raps, bumper stickers, poems, etc.
- Use character quotes for student writing prompts and/or journal writings.
- Use the quotes for classroom discussion.
- Have students create their own classroom/campus character pledge.
- Create a Character Quote mural or collage by having students do drawings or bring pictures from magazines that illustrate the quotes.
- Have students create a character message or story using several of the quotes.
- Have students do a report on the people quoted in the character quotes and explain what character skills these people demonstrated in their lives.
- Ask students to bring in songs that are related to the specific character skills in the quotes and play the songs along with the quote.

**Remember, "People of character are the conscience of society." Ralph Waldo Emerson**

# **COURAGE**

**2007-2008**

**October-November**

"Courage is the resistance to fear, mastery of fear – not absence of fear." *Mark Twain*

"Courage is grace under pressure." *Ernest Hemingway*

"Stand up for what is right even if you stand alone." *Anonymous*

"Courage without conscience is a wild beast." *Robert Ingersoll*

"Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage." *Anais Nin*

"In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing." *Theodore Roosevelt*

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience,  
but where he stands in times of challenge and controversy." *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

"It takes great courage to faithfully follow what we know to be true." *Sara Anderson*

"To seek what is right and not to do it is lack of courage." *Confucius*

"What everyone else is doing is quite irrelevant when it comes to doing what is right."  
*Russell Gough*

"Standing for what is right when it is unpopular is the true test of moral character."  
*Margaret Chase Smith*

"The world is desperately in need of men and women who have the courage to do the right thing  
about wrong conditions." *Dr. Norman Vincent Peale*

"You will never do anything in this world without courage. It is the greatest quality of the mind  
next to honor." *James Allen*

"Courage is the quality which guarantees all others." *Winston Churchill*

"Courage is not freedom from fear; it is being afraid and going on." *Anonymous*

"Courage is the integrity of strength that causes one to overcome tragedy." *Eugene Brussell*

"Courage is doing what you are afraid to do. There can be no courage unless you are afraid."  
*Eddie Rickenbucker*

"Courage is being the only one who knows you are afraid." *Anonymous*

"The courage to speak must be matched with the wisdom to listen." *Anonymous*

"Stand with any man when he is right, and part from him when he is wrong." *Abraham Lincoln*

"If you don't stand for something, you will fall for everything." *Anonymous*

"To accept responsibility for a mistake takes true courage." *Anonymous*

"Faced with a crisis, the man of courage fall back on himself." *Charles DeGaulle*

"It takes desire to be a person of character, it takes courage to demonstrate it." *Duane Hodgin*

"The strength of our character is in direct proportion to our willingness to demonstrate the  
courage to do the right thing." *Duane Hodgin*

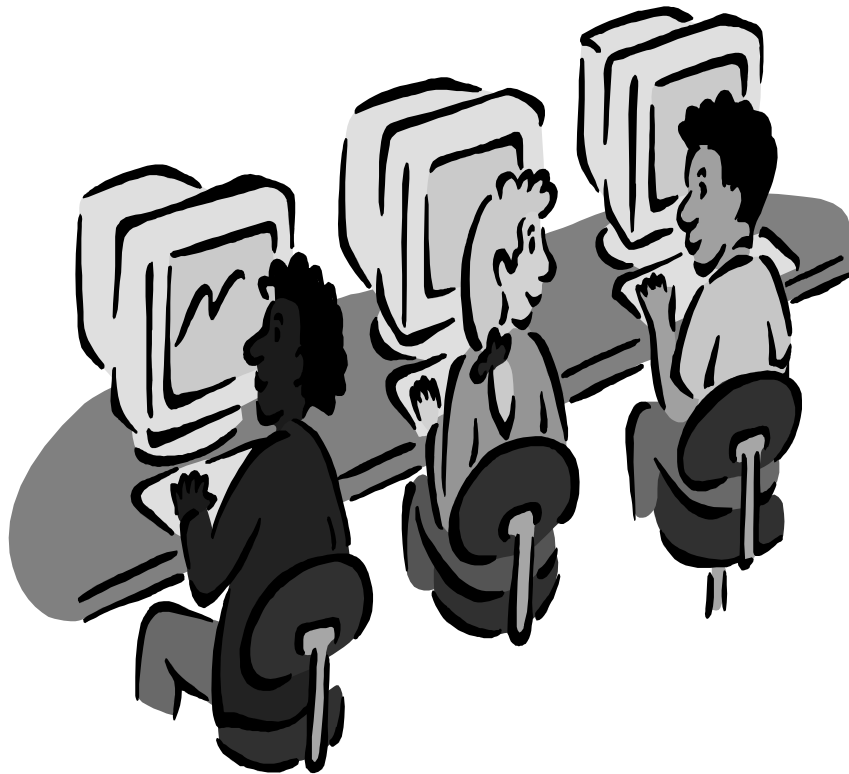
"To stand alone for what's right is one of life's most noble deeds." *Duane Hodgin*

# **COURAGE**

## Inappropriate Behaviors Related to Specific Character Skills in the AISD Touchstone

### **Courage**

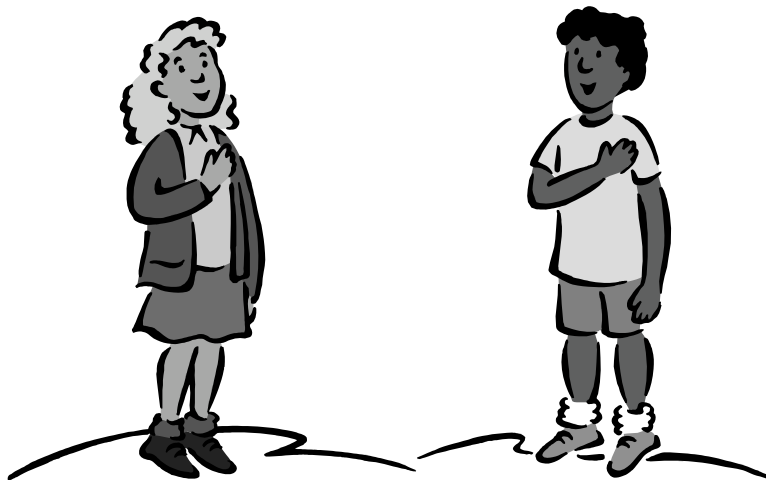
- Bullying
- Ganging up on others
- Harassment
- Making fun of others
- Rumors
- Use of drugs/alcohol/tobacco
- Threatening others
- Victimization



# **COURAGE**

## **Classroom Management Strategies**

- Increase positive interactions (greet students as they enter the room, talk quietly with one or two students as they walk in the hallway, discuss work with students individually during independent work time, engage students in tasks like putting up bulletin boards before or after school or during lunch or recess).
- Teacher organizes the daily schedule to reflect consistency and variety with academic lessons that are clearly focused and relevant to students.
- Teacher establishes smooth, efficient classroom routines and procedures.
- Teachers interact with all students in a positive, caring manner.
- Teachers provide incentives/recognition/rewards to promote excellence.
- Teachers set clear expectations/standards for classroom behavior and apply them fairly and consistently.
- Teacher engages students in helping solve classroom problems.
- Teacher moves around room for increased proximity to students.
- Teacher visually scans the room for opportunities to acknowledge responsible behavior.
- Teacher makes eye contact with students and smiles.
- Teacher acknowledges responsible behavior verbally or with tangible rewards (like a written note from the teacher). Teacher sends a written note to parents about the responsible behavior.
- Teacher establishes a positive attitude about the potential for success for every student.
- Teacher models and reinforces the expected behaviors.
- Teacher provides opportunities for positive practice of expected behaviors.



# **COURAGE**

## **Classroom Level Interventions**

- Teacher places hand on student's shoulder to remind and show support.
- Teacher gives a verbal reminder to redirect behavior.
- Teacher corrects behavior errors in a manner that provides instruction.
- Teacher makes accommodations in areas such as daily schedule, class structure, physical arrangement of classroom to increase the student's chance of success.
- Teacher develops lessons to help students manage situations that cause difficulties. Some examples are: transitions between lessons and activities, how the rules relate to various activities in the classroom, conflict resolution strategies, and study strategies.
- Student is given quiet time to think about behavior.
- Student and teacher discuss better choices.
- Student is given time-out in the room.
- Teacher and student develop a signal to help the student realize when he/she is engaging in inappropriate behavior.
- Teacher uses a pre-correction to help a student avoid an inappropriate behavior when there seems to be a good chance of the inappropriate behavior occurring based on prior history.
- Teacher Ignores behavior to deprive student of desired attention.
- Teacher contacts parent.
- Teacher consistently praises expected behavior and/or gives consequences for inappropriate behavior (such as loss of recess time, loss of other privileges, etc.).
- Teacher follows through on problem behavior with predetermined consequences.
- Teacher changes student's seat in the room or physical arrangement of the room to enable teacher to respond consistently to minor misbehavior, to prevent misbehavior from escalating, and to engage more frequently in positive interactions with students.
- Have student fill out a Behavior Improvement Form.



# **COURAGE**

## **Service Learning Projects**

“To develop character, students need opportunities for moral action.” Thomas Lickona

We want our students not only to learn about 10 character skills in our touchstone but also to have the opportunity to internalize them by practicing them through community service and/or service learning. In the purest design for service learning, students should be given the opportunity to reflect on their service, identify what they have learned from the service, and to celebrate their contributions to the community. It is best to allow students to identify a campus or community need or issue that focuses on a particular character skill and plan a project to address that need or issue. The more ownership we give our students in these projects, the stronger their leadership will become. Below are some suggestions for service learning opportunities for each of the character skills to help you in getting started:

- Create a school musical or play in which the main character demonstrate courage in various situations, and present the production to the community.
- Build a courage fence in a common area featuring the pictures and names of people who have displayed great courage and a brief statement about how they were/are courageous. These profiles can be used on morning announcements (done by students). Some possibilities are, George Washington, Rosa Parks, Cesar Chavez, Columbus, etc.
- Have students or a student group create skits of situations in which a person needs to be courageous (peer pressure, bullying, being truthful, being afraid, etc.) and write some discussion questions for the audience after seeing the skit. Allow the students to present these skits to other students, younger students at feeder schools, community groups, etc. and discuss the skill of courage with each audience.
- Target an need in the community or on the campus that requires courage to address such as homelessness, new immigrants, voter apathy, racism, sexism, bullying/harassment, etc. and organize a project to address this need.
- Have students create a “Get Out and Vote” campaign to encourage the community to be courageous as citizens.