

Suggested Reading List



- From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler by E.L. Konigsburg. After running away with her younger brother to live in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 12-year-old Claudia strives to keep things in order in their new home and to become a changed person and a heroine to herself. Ages 10-13
- Island of the Blue Dolphin by Scott O'Dell. Records the courage and self-reliance of a Native American girl who lived alone for 18 years on an isolated island off the coast of California. Ages 10 and up
- A Likely Place by Paula Fox. A boy who can't spell or ever seem to please his parents spends a week with a kooky baby-sitter and makes a special friend. Ages 9-12
- My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George. A young boy builds a tree house in the Catskill Mountains and lives alone for a year, struggling to survive and ultimately realizing that he needs human companionship. Ages 11-14
- When the Phone Rang by Harry Mazer. When their parents are killed in an airplane crash, three siblings try to keep the family together in the face of over-whelming personal and financial problems. Ages 12-16
- Baby Rattlesnake by Te Ala. Willful Baby Rattlesnake throws tantrums to get his rattle before he's ready, but he misuses it and learns a lesson. Primary
- Elbert's Bad Word by Audrey Wood. After shocking the elegant garden party by using a bad word, Elbert learns some acceptable substitutes from a helpful wizard. Primary
- I Was So Mad by Norma Simon. Text and pictures relate situations which sometimes result in such reactions as frustration, anxiety, humiliation, and loss of control. Primary
- Journey to Topaz by Ushiko Yuchida. The bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 shatters Yuki's eleven-year-old world. Her family is of Japanese descent. They are uprooted from their home in California and sent to a resettlement camp in the Utah desert. Intermediate
- Slave Dancer by Paula Fox. Kidnapped by the crew of an African-bound ship, a thirteen-year-old boy discovers to his horror that he is on a slaver and his job is to play music for the exercise period of the human cargo.
- Seven Days to a Brand New Me by Ellen Conford. A shy girl follows the suggestions in a self-help book to win the attention of the handsome new boy whose locker is next to hers. Middle
- It's Not About the Bike: My Journey Back to Life by Lance Armstrong. Lance Armstrong, a world-class athlete nearly struck down by cancer, recovers and wins the Tour de France.
- When She Was Good by Norma Mazer. Em is forced to find a way to face her mixed feelings and survive on her own when her sister dies unexpectedly.

The World of Work

As we travel from the world of home and school to the world of work, we become more responsible for our own actions and success. The nurturing school or home environment is replaced in the work place with greater expectations of independence and self-control. The following are examples of self-control in a mature, responsible employee:

- Behaving and performing from an internal desire to succeed, not because someone else stands over you to make it happen
- Understanding and projecting oneself into another person's world, and therefore developing greater understanding, acceptance, and compassion for others
- Making up one's own mind about the boundaries of behavior and respecting those boundaries regardless of pressure from others
- Being able to forego one's own pleasure and immediate gratification for the greater good
- Setting goals and working hard toward them
- Taking responsibility for one's mistakes and working to correct the situation

—Adapted from *20 Teachable Virtues* by Unellj Wyckoff

Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks

Pre-K-2 grade:

HE.B.3.1.8 - Identifies healthy ways to handle feelings.

TH.LI .1.3 - Uses role-playing to resolve everyday conflict situations

3-5 grade

HLB.3.2.7 - Knows the difference between negative and positive behaviors used in conflict situations. (talking vs. hitting, passivity vs. action)

LAB. 2.1.2 - Uses knowledge and experience to tell about experiences or to write for familiar occasions, audiences and purposes.

6-8 grade

HE.B. 2.3.2 - Knows how information from peers influences health.

LAC. 3.3.3 - Speaks for various occasions, audiences and purposes including conversations, discussions, projects and informational, persuasive or technical presentations.

9-12 grade

HE.B.2.4.3 - Knows how information from peers, family and the community influences personal health.

LAC. I .4.3 - Uses effective strategies for informal and formal discussions, including listening actively and reflectively, connect to and building on the ideas of a previous speaker, and respecting the viewpoints of others.

GOAL 3 STANDARDS AND OUTCOMES

Standard 5 - Responsible and Ethical Workers show self-management skills.

Discussion Topics

- What if an assignment your literature teacher has given is going to require you to read an extra book in a week? You think it is unfair and the assignment is too much in too short a time. What do you do?
- What if your piano teacher wants to enter you into a state piano competition? It is a great opportunity for you, but is going to require much more practice than usual to prepare and you may have to give up time with your friends.
- What would you do if your doctor has told you that your weight is creating health problems and you need to lose 10-15 pounds?
- In the hall, a boy is not watching where he is going, bumps into you and you drop all of your books. Everyone around starts laughing. What should you do?
- What would you do if your cousin asked you to cheat on a test?
- Why don't people use self-control?
- Discuss ways we learn self-control at various stages in our lives.
- Discuss how anger is only one letter away from danger.
- Why is it important to manage your actions and emotions?
- Why can't a person always do what they want?
- What are some incidents which could challenge self-control?
- How does peer pressure influence self-control?

Bulletin Board Ideas

- Decorate a bulletin board with the statement **OUR CLASS PRACTICES SELF-CONTROL.**
 - ◇ Cut out large shapes of hearts, triangles, squares, stars, circles, etc., from construction paper.
 - ◇ Discuss class rules (hands to yourself or no interrupting, raise your hand, wait your turn, etc.).
 - ◇ Write the rules on the shapes and let the students tack on the bulletin board.
 - ◇ Tie in how self-control allows students to obey those rules and helps the classroom run smoothly.
- Put a student figure going up stairs and on each step write techniques for self-control: such as count to ten, stop and think, make wise food choices, consider the consequences, etc.

Parent



Corner

The following is a list of old and new messages that children receive from adults. The new messages will help children and adults develop self-control and reduce conflicts.

—Adapted from *Parents Teens and Boundaries* by Jane Bluestein

Old Messages	New Messages
If only my kids, friends, parents would change, my life would be better.	If my current behaviors aren't helping me reach my goals, I am willing to change them.
Other people's words, actions and attitudes make me feel good or bad, and therefore cause me to act certain ways.	My reactions to other people's actions, words and attitudes create my feelings; I am responsible for my subsequent actions.
This is just the way I am. I can't help it.	I always have choices about my own behavior and attitude.
Sometimes you have to act angry, helpless or sad to get what you want.	I avoid using my feelings to try to change other people.
I am responsible for my children's behavior, appearance and performance.	I can guide and support my children and still leave them responsible for their own behavior.
Peace at any price.	I am willing to risk conflict to draw necessary boundaries for my children.
My house, my rules.	We all live here together. While I may have the final say in a lot of situations, their needs and feelings always matter.



Setting Goals

When setting goals, there are basically two types of goals: **Short-range goals**—goals you wish to accomplish fairly soon and **Long-range goals**—goals you wish to accomplish within a longer period of time.

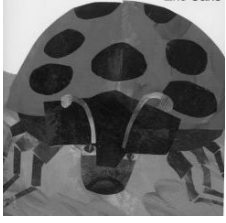
Think of a task or objective you would like to accomplish in the next week. Write a goal that would enable you to accomplish this task and steps you will take to attain this goal.

Now think of one thing that you would like to accomplish in the next five to ten years. Write a specific goal that would help you accomplish this task and steps you will take to attain the goal.

When you follow the steps you set to attain your goal, you will be well on your way of becoming a person who practices self-control. Keep making goals and plans for doing your best to accomplish them.

Read "Goals and a Superman".

The Grouchy Ladybug
Eric Carle



Early Childhood Activities

The Grouchy Ladybug, by Eric Carle.

A ladybug is very grouchy to a variety of animals as she travels seeking food. At each encounter she asks the animal if it wants to fight. She eventually ends up where she started and is invited by another ladybug to share aphids.

- Discuss: sharing; being kind; what it means to fight; using self-control.
- Read the book.
- Discuss how the ladybug put herself in a dangerous position; discuss thinking before you act.
- Small group - Provide red paint, small paper bowls, pre-cut black dots and wing shapes and feelers, glue, and black pipe cleaners for legs. Invite the children to make ladybugs.

Quotations for Early Elementary

“Better safe than sorry.” ~ Author unknown

“Swallowing angry words is much better than having to eat them.” ~ Grit

“Anyone who angers you, conquers you.” ~ Sister Kenny’s Mother

“Even a woodpecker owes his success to the fact that he uses his head.” ~ Author Unknown

“Nature gave us one tongue and two ears so we could hear twice as much as we speak.” ~ Epicetus

“He who throws dirt, loses ground.” ~ Author Unknown

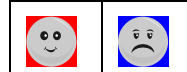
“It is wiser to choose what you say than to say what you choose.” ~ Author Unknown

“No man can think clearly when his fists are clenched.” ~ Author unknown

Self-Control Activity For Elementary

- Talk about having self-control in every day habits. Talk about how it helps you get through the day’s activities and routines.
- Give the students a copy of the following survey.
- Student will complete his/her own personal inventory and total the yes answers (6 out of 10, 5 out of 10, etc.).
- Have students write one or two paragraphs expressing how they could improve upon their self-control and why it would be important for them to maintain self-discipline.

How Self-Controlled Am I?



1. I get myself up in the morning.		
2. I go to bed when I am supposed to without arguing.		
3. I get dressed I plenty of time.		
4. I take care of myself by brushing my teeth, hair, and bathing.		
5. I keep up with my school books and library books.		
6. I help my parents when they ask me.		
7. I keep my desk area neat and clean.		
8. I always have my homework turned in on time.		
9. I control my anger well.		
10. I share well with others while playing.		

Self-Control Middle School Activity

1. On Monday, place a beautifully wrapped package in the center of the classroom. Place some type of reward in the package, such as a statement that they will have a pizza party or an out-of-uniform day.
2. Wrap the lid separately so that the package can be opened without tearing.
3. Tell the students that there is something special in the box, but they cannot open it before Friday or they will not get what’s inside.
4. On Friday, open the package and give them the reward, if they earned it.

Discuss whether or not it was difficult to wait. Talk about how this exercise compares with other things in their lives for which they have had to wait. Discuss how being able to control yourself has rewards.

Reference: *Lesson From the Rocking Chair: Timeless Stories for Teaching Character*, By Deb Austin Brown.

Self-Control/Self-Discipline Secondary Activity

Objective:

For the students to see how self-control affects their experiences in life and how self-discipline is related to accomplishment levels and time.

Discuss self-discipline as a class in terms of certain habits that characterize self-control.

Have students spend 5 minutes or so doing the self-assessment activity.

Have students write a vignette on themselves telling how they rate in terms of self-control.

How Disciplined Am I?

Answer the following questions about yourself as honestly as you can. Check Always, Sometimes, or Rarely for the answer that best describes you.

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely
1. I get myself up in the morning without being called several times.			
2. I get dressed in plenty of time and have time to straighten my room.			
3. I take care of myself and my clothes, toiletries, personal items.			
4. I keep up with my schoolbooks, library books, and assignments.			
5. I complete my homework before I do the activities I want to do.			
6. I control my temper when things don't go my way.			
7. I do my daily responsibilities at home without being reminded.			
8. I keep my room and work area at home neat and tidy without being nagged.			
9. I practice my hobby or sport without being asked.			
10. When my parents tell me "no", I am able to accept it without arguing.			
11. I set goals for myself regularly.			
12. I have good health habits.			
13. I think before I act.			
14. I take responsibility for my actions.			
15. I spend time practicing for extra-curricular activities (sports, music, etc.)			

Give yourself 5 points for every Always answer, 3 points for every sometimes answer, and 1 point for every rarely answer.

How Did you Score???

61-75 points — Great. You are a very self-disciplined individual. Keep it up. 45-60 points — Not bad. You are self-controlled in some areas and not in others. Keep making progress, 15-44 points — Keep trying. Although you are not very self-controlled now, you can really practice and make up for lost time!! Keep working!

Herschel Walker

Read this story about a self-controlled All-American Football Player to the students. Ask them to answer the questions that follow.

Herschel Walker learned self-discipline and self-control long before he became an All-American Football Player. His greatest lesson in self-control did not even come on the football field. When Herschel was growing up he could barely talk. He had a speech impediment, so putting sentences together was difficult for him. His parents would not let him use his speech impediment as an excuse for not learning or not working to improve his speech. Some of Herschel's teachers didn't work with him like they did with the other kids. His parents still insisted that he study. Herschel worked hard and disciplined himself to work on his speech. Herschel's speech did get better. When he graduated from high school, guess who was the class valedictorian—Herschel!

Herschel Walker first learned about self-control on the football field?

T F

Herschel Walker had to have self-control to overcome his speech impediment?

T F

Herschel Walker graduated as the valedictorian of his class?

T F

Answers—(1) False (2) True (3) True

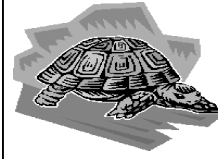
Goals and a "SUPERMAN"

Christopher Reeve, the actor who portrayed Superman in several films, was confined to a wheelchair and breathed through a respirator after a fall during an equestrian jumping event that fractured his two top vertebrae.

Suddenly, the goals associated with acting were supplanted by goals of survival. Simple, unconscious acts like breathing and speaking became major hurdles of adjustment.

Learning to live with disability is emotionally and physically draining. Reeve said he allowed himself to cry in the morning and experience feelings of loss but then he would set his mind to goals for personal progress. One long-range goal he dreamed of achieving was to be able to stand by his 50th birthday.

Reeve envisioned a day when spinal cord injuries like his would not impair individuals. He worked to make that goal a reality by serving as director of the American Paralysis Association and actively lobbying government agencies to change laws and increase research funding. After issuing a challenge to the scientific community to find a cure within seven years, Reeve learned that new discoveries might produce the cure within that time.



Just a Thought

Self-controlled people who succeed in life, set goals on a regular basis. Establishing goals is one of the most difficult tasks in life. Goals help to get us where we need to go. We need to formulate goals that are flexible enough to adjust to life's challenges and at the same time big enough to keep us motivated. In Aesop's fable of the hare and the tortoise, the hare was defeated because his overconfident attitude obscured his goal of winning the race. In life, persistent effort and single minded focus can often win over talent and ability, so keeping the goal always in mind is very important.

Feeling good does not equal *being* good—to "be good" requires self-control. At times, doing the right thing can be very difficult. Remember that true self esteem comes from achievement based on hard work, not just how a person feels about him/herself.

Beware of the tyranny of the moment and peer influence. To escape you must think about what you want long term, beyond what's happening right now.

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Self-Control Profile



Lance Armstrong is a self-controlled champion biker. Lance was a swimmer and tri-athlete in high school. At age 17, he began training with the Junior National Championship Cycling team. In 1991 Lance was the U.S. Amateur Champion. By 1993 he had helped his team, the Suburban Montgomery Pro/Amateur Racing Team, reach number 5 in the world. Lance became the top U.S. racer over the next three years.

In 1996, Lance planned to race in the Tour de France and was expected to win. However, he was diagnosed with cancer. The cancer was in his lungs, abdomen and brain. He was given only a 50% chance to live. For a year, he went through chemotherapy and surgery. By 1997 he was free of cancer.

In order to master a sport, a person needs the self-control to train hard. Lance overcame a very difficult obstacle and began to train hard again over a year later. He came in fourth in the World Championships.

Self-Control is the KEY...

Journal Topics

- Each student should choose one of the quotes which has personal meaning for him or her. The student will make a journal entry each day in October explaining how this related to his/her life, using specific examples.
- Students brainstorm heroes that they have known from any source. How did these people demonstrate self-control?
- You have observed some friends demonstrating risky behaviors. You do not approve of these behaviors because you understand the risk. They are trying to influence you to join them. What can you do?
- You have seen people lose their temper and be out of control. You know that it only gets them in trouble. What techniques have worked for you so that you can control your temper?

Florida Writes Prompts

Persuasive:

Writing Situation: Losing self-control often has negative consequences.

Directions for Writing:

- Think about a time in your life when you lost self-control, later regretted it and how you felt at the time.
- Now write to convince your peers of the importance of self-control.

Expository:

Writing Situation: Anger can cause loss of self-control.

Directions for Writing:

- Think about a time in your life when you were so angry or frustrated that you thought that you would lose self-control but were able to manage your behavior and get control.
- Now write to explain the circumstances and the techniques you used to get yourself under control.

Writing Situation: People are often tempted to do things that they believe to be risky or wrong.

Directions for Writing:

- Think about a time when you were tempted to do something you did not want to and what were you thinking and feeling at the time?
- Now write describing the circumstances and how it affected you.

FCAT Prompt Elementary

Short Response—Read the story “The Damage of Anger,” and then answer this question. How can losing control of anger be harmful?

Long Response—Read the story “The Damage of Anger,” and then answer the questions. Use information and details from the story to support your answer. Why is it important to control your temper? What are the possible results of losing control?

The Damage of Anger

There was a little boy with a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, to hammer a nail in the back fence. The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence.

Then it gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence. Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper.

The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, “You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say ‘I'm sorry’, the wound is still there.”

FCAT Prompt Middle/High

Short Response—Read the article “Yelling at Trees,” by Robert Fulghum, and answer the question. In what way are words more harmful than sticks and stones?

Long Response—Read the article “Yelling at Trees,” by Robert Fulghum and answer the questions. Support your answer with details from the article. What is the impact of angry words and volume? How can anger and words negatively affect people?

Yelling at Trees

In the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific some villagers practice a unique form of logging. If a tree is too large to be felled with an ax, the natives cut it down by yelling at it. (Can't lay my hands on the article, but I swear I read it.) Woodsmen with special powers creep up on a tree just at dawn and suddenly scream at it at the top of their lungs. They continue this for thirty days. The tree dies and falls over. The theory is that the hollering kills the spirit of the tree. According to the villagers, it always works.

Ah, those poor naïve innocents. Such quaintly charming habits of the jungle. Screaming at trees, indeed. How primitive. Too bad they don't have the advantages of modern technology and the scientific mind.

Me? I yell at my wife. And yell at the telephone and the lawn mower. And yell at the TV and the newspaper and my children. I've been known to shake my fist and yell at the sky at times.

Man next door yells at his car a lot. And this summer I heard him yell at a stepladder for most of an afternoon. We modern, urban, educated folks yell at traffic and umpires and bills and banks and machines—especially machines. Machines and relatives get most of the yelling.

Don't know what good it does. Machines and things just sit there. Even kicking doesn't always help. As for people, well, the Solomon Islanders may have a point. Yelling at living things does tend to kill the spirit in them. Sticks and stones may break our bones, but words will break our hearts...



SELF-CONTROL QUOTES

Week One

"You need self-control to be successful."

~ Marie Montessori

"So live that your friends can defend you but never have to." ~ Glasgow

"He that would govern others, first should be the master of himself." ~ Philip Massinger

"Character does not reach its best until it is controlled, harnessed, and disciplined." ~ Author Unknown

"Seek always for the answer within. Be not influenced by those around you, by their thoughts or their words." ~ Eileen Caddy

Week Two

"At no time is self-control more difficult than in time of success."

~ Author Unknown

"What chance can a man have to control his destiny when he can't control himself?" ~ Author Unknown

"To enjoy freedom, we have to control ourselves." ~ Virginia Woolf

"If you lose your head, how do you expect to be able to use it?" ~ Author Unknown

"What is right is right, even if no one is doing it. What is wrong is wrong, even if everyone is doing it." ~ Author Unknown

Week Three

"Anybody can become angry, that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not within everybody's power and is not easy." ~ Aristotle

"The best time for you to hold your tongue is the time you feel you must say something or bust." ~ Josh Billings

"I've learned that it is easier to stay out of trouble than to get out of trouble." ~ H. Jackson Browne

"We are our choices." ~ Jean Paul Sartre

"Self expression is good; self-control is better." ~ Author Unknown

Week Four

"Lack of will power has caused more failure than lack of intelligence or ability." ~ Flower Newhouse

"Discipline is doing what does not come naturally." ~ Author Unknown

"There is only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that's your own self." ~ Aldous Huxley

"Be strong enough to control your own anger instead of letting it control you." ~ Author Unknown

"Crisis and conflict may reveal one's character while self-control strengthens it." ~ Author Unknown

Self-Control Activities

- Find pictures in magazines, newspapers, etc. that demonstrate self-control and make a mobile.
- Have students compare self-control to accomplishment and time. How does self-control affect accomplishing goals? How does it relate to time spent in different areas?
- Write an acrostic poem about self-control using your name to start each line.
- Write an essay of at least 3 paragraphs about a time that you achieved something that was important to you by staying focused and thinking about the long-term benefits, instead of what you want at the moment.
- Have students collect/generate examples of both physical and verbal self-control. Create skits and role-play situations that show the different consequences when people use or do not use self-control.
- Explain to students that feelings are OK, it's the way we respond to these feelings that can get us into trouble. It takes a lot of self-control to do things differently from the way we have done them before. Ask students to brainstorm a list of emotions then list good choice actions and bad choice actions for each emotion. Discuss the different consequences of each.
- Ask students to describe what a conflict is. Discuss that to resolve a conflict it is necessary to make a plan to solve the disagreement or problem in a helpful, not harmful manner for everyone involved. Sometimes it takes a lot of self-control not to act in an angry manner, but instead to think about solving the problem without attacking the person. Read "The Wolf's Chicken Stew" and discuss the conflict and how it was resolved.
- Help students relate self-control to the expression of emotions. Read "On Monday When It Rained." Have students write or discuss appropriate ways of expressing each emotion discussed in the book.
- **Health** - Identify foods that represent healthy choices. Ask students to chart and/or discuss how they feel when they eat healthy and exercise. Ask them to experiment by leaving out one unhealthy food they eat a lot of for one week, ask if they feel different.
- **Physical Education** - Talk about athletics and the kind of self-control it takes to become good enough to get million dollar jobs. Point out that self-control is a learned skill, just like sports.
- Select a "Do the Right Thing" person every month. Acknowledge and recognize incidents of self-control.
- Conduct a school-wide "anti-cursing" campaign. Connect this to self-control. Make posters and write poetry or songs stressing the importance of this type of self-control.