



October's Key to Character—2011

Definitions

Elementary: Having power and control over one's own actions

Secondary: Having power and control over your emotions, words, actions, impulses and desires; showing perseverance and commitment to achieving goals.; delaying gratification

Related Words

restraint	reserve	attitude
composure	discipline	obedience
poise	willpower	discretion
determination		

Sunshine State Standards

HE.K.C. 1.1/HE.1.C.1.1—Recognize healthy behavior.

SS.K.C.2.1—Demonstrate the characteristics of being a good citizen.

SS.1.C.2.1—Describe the characteristics of responsible citizenship in the school community.

HE.3.P.1.1—Practice responsible personal health behaviors.

HE.4.C.1.2—Identify examples of mental/emotional, physical and social health.

HE.5.C.1.1—Describe the relationship between healthy behaviors and personal health.

HE.6.B.2.1/HE.7.B.2.1/HE.8.B.2.1—Determine strategies to improve effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills to enhance health.

HE.6.P.1.1/HE.7.P.1.1/HE.8.P.1.1—Explain the importance of assuming responsibility for personal health decisions.

HE.9.12.B.2.1—Explain skills needed to communicate effectively with family, peers and others to enhance health.

HE.9.12.P.1.1—Analyze the role of individual responsibility in enhancing health.

What does self-control look like?

People practicing self-control:

1. Think before they act.
2. Control their temper.
3. Make good choices.
4. Follow through with plans and tasks.
5. Behave, even when no one is looking.



What does self-control sound like?

People practicing self-control make statements like:

- "I feel angry, I need to calm down."
- "I will call you after I finish my homework."
- "I know there is a reason for rules, so I obey them."
- "I have to finish my chores before I can watch T.V."
- "I'd love to eat all of the cookies, but I am only going to have one."

What does self-control feel like?

When self-control is practiced, a person:

- Feels a sense of accomplishment when reaching a goal.
- Enjoys the trust of others.
- Feels more equipped to handle unexpected problems.
- Makes and keeps friends easily.

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



Parent Corner



A mother walks into a grocery store with her kindergarten-aged youngster in tow. As they pass the cookie aisle, the child squeals, "Cookies!" and runs to grab a bag of Oreos. The mother responds "no" and continues down the aisle. The child makes a dash for the cookies and defiantly tries to put the cookies into the shopping cart. The parent wrestles the package of cookies away from the child's death grip and scolds her. The child pouts and follows her mother around the store for the next 20-minutes begging, pleading, and crying for the Oreos, through the breads, sodas, frozen foods, fresh fruit area, all the way to the check-out line and into the parking lot. This is not an unusual situation. Most of us have not only witnessed it, but we have experienced this embarrassing situation with our own children. In order for children to be able to relate to others and follow authority, children must learn to handle their feelings when they want something they cannot have. Understanding how to handle "no" is an important step in developing self-control.

Teach your children to use the following steps when they are angry or sad or envious because they are told "no."

1. Say to themselves: "I would like to have ---, but I can't right now."
2. Think about their choices:
 - Ask again later.
 - Find something else to do.
 - Ask to borrow it.
 - Ask to share it.
 - Ask to do chores to earn money to buy one.
 - Wait your turn.
 - Accept "no" for an answer and say to themselves, "It's ok."
3. Act out the best choice.

Have some family fun using paper bag puppets to act out typical situations to give practice in using these skills. Use typical situations that occur in your family and neighborhood. Some ideas are:

- ◇ A friend has a new action figure that you have been wanting for weeks.
- ◇ You want to play with your friend, but his family is going away for the afternoon.
- ◇ Someone took your toys or backpack without your permission.
- ◇ You need a new bike to ride to school and don't want to wait until Christmas.

Source: "Self Control Skills for Children" by Louise Eckman NASP 1998

To help your child develop self-discipline:

- ◇ Help them to set a realistic goal, make a plan to achieve it and stick to it.
- ◇ Create a reward that they are working toward to develop persistence - putting off immediate pleasure for later fulfillment.
- ◇ Deal with emotions that interrupt such as anger, envy and a lack of confidence.
- ◇ Help your child break big tasks into small tasks that can be accomplished one at a time.

"Preparing for Winter"

An Aesop's Fable retold by Manisha Deveshvar

Autumn was coming to an end. All the insects and animals were working very hard to stock their larders with enough food to last them the winter. They all knew that winter time would be tough - it would be cold and food would be scarce. As it would get dark really soon, it would be difficult to go looking for food.

Therefore, everyone was working hard, all except Mr. Grasshopper. He loved autumn. Autumn was a time when the leaves changed color. It was all so pretty. The trees seemed to be on fire with red, yellow and orange leaves, which then fell off and covered the ground. There was a pleasant breeze too.

Mr. Grasshopper spent his days playing. He jumped from leaf to leaf and from one fallen twig to another. What he liked best was the way the leaves bounced when he jumped off them, and how the leaf he landed on swayed with his weight. "Yoooooooooooo. Life is lovely, the world is beautiful, and I want to play forever..." he sang.

Just then little Miss Ant happened to pass by. She was dragging a heavy grain of rice behind her. "Oowf. This is so heavy. I wish I could get some help with this. I should have asked my brother to come along to help me," she was muttering. "Oh, do you need help?" asked Mr. Grasshopper.

"Yes, sir. Would you give me a hand? My ant hill is just a few trees away, but this is so heavy," replied the ant happily "Naw. First you come and play with me for some time, then I shall gladly help you. What are you toiling for anyway? Autumn is so beautiful, you too should enjoy the weather while you can," the grasshopper said.

"No, Mr. Grasshopper. You too must start collecting your food for the winter. Otherwise it will be tough as there won't be anything to eat," said the concerned ant.

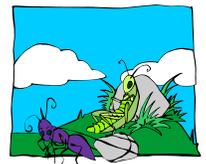
"Nothing doing. I will go out and find all the food I want when I am hungry. Right now it is time to play and have a party," the silly grasshopper replied. So Miss Ant just shook her head and went on - "Huff, puff, huff, puff."

Then winter came. It was so cold that the ants didn't dare to come out. But their tummies were full and they were warm and happy. Actually, everyone was warm and happy, except for Mr. Grasshopper. He was cold and hungry. As he went hunting for food only when it was less cold than usual, he got very little to eat and soon became weak with hunger.

"Oh, why did I spend my days playing? I should have listened to the ant..." he thought with regret.

Thought Questions:

1. Who was the smarter of the two characters, the ant or the grasshopper?
2. Why do you feel the character you chose was the smarter of the two?
3. Why is it important to prepare for a test in school?
4. Why is it important to prepare for college?





Boy Wanted

By Frank Crane

This "want ad" appeared in the early part of the 20th century.

Wanted—A boy who stands straight, sits straight, acts straight and talks straight;

A boy whose fingernails are not in mourning, whose ears are clean, whose shoes are polished, whose clothes are brushed, whose hair is combed, and whose teeth are well cared for;

A boy who listens carefully when he is spoken to, who asks questions when he does not understand, and does not ask questions about things that are none of his business;

A boy who moves quickly and makes as little noise about it as possible;

A boy who whistles in the street, but does not whistle where he ought to keep still;

A boy who looks cheerful, has a ready smile for everybody, and never sulks;

A boy who is polite to every man and respectful to every woman and girl;

A boy who does not smoke cigarettes and has no desire to learn how;

A boy who is more eager to know how to speak good English than to talk slang;

A boy who neither bullies other boys nor allows other boys to bully him;

A boy who, when he does not know a thing, says, "I don't know," and when he has made a mistake says, "I'm sorry," and when he is asked to do a thing says, "I'll try";

A boy who looks you right in the eye and tells the truth every time;

A boy who is eager to read good books;

A boy who would rather put in his spare time at the YMCA gymnasium than gamble for pennies in a back room;

A boy who does not want to be "smart" or in any wise to attract attention;

A boy who would rather lose his job or be expelled from school than tell a lie or be a cad;

A boy whom other boys like;

A boy who is at ease in the company of girls;

A boy who is not sorry for himself, and not forever thinking and talking about himself;

A boy who is friendly with his mother, and more intimate with her than anyone else;

A boy who makes you feel good when he is around;

A boy who is not goody-goody, a prig, or a little pharisee, but just healthy, happy, and full of life.

This boy is wanted everywhere. The family wants him, the school wants him, the office wants him, the boys want him, the girls want him, and all creation wants him.

Literature: *The Children's Book of Virtues*, ed. Bennett, William J.

Virtues: Self-Control, Self-Respect for Others, Courtesy

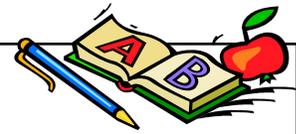
ACTIVITY: 21st Century Want Ad

Children will be intrigued by hearing that this story was run as an "ad" in a newspaper in the early part of the 1900's. This ad is a reminder of how important our actions are to all of the people in our lives.

Materials: Newspaper, pens, writing paper, black pens or markers.

Have students discuss the purpose of a want ad. Give out newspapers and have them circle a want ad in the paper. Ask them to point out things in the want ads that are consistent. Tell the students to think about writing a want ad. Discuss what things they could write ads for. Assign the class to write a want ad that would be like the one they already have, but for the 21st century. After the class does this activity, have them write ads for a topic they choose.

Teacher's Corner



To develop self-control in children is the first purpose of effective classroom management. Academic achievement is often relative to the amount of control the student has developed. In his pamphlet, "Experience and Education," first published in 1938, John Dewey writes: "The ideal aim of education is creation of the power of self-control" (Dewey, 1963, p. 64). Ruth Charney, in her book, *Teaching Children to Care* (2002) sees that power in children as the ability to enter a new group and say hello, to make new friends, to choose activities, and to hold fast to inner thoughts and beliefs.

Charney gives us the specific classroom details we should expect to see in a classroom that teaches children self-control and helps them feel connected to others through community. For example, we teach children to care and graciously be cared for when we expect them to:

- ◇ Learn each other's names and get to know each other's interests and feelings
- ◇ Take turns without arguing, pouting or quitting
- ◇ Share supplies, snacks, attention from classmates, private time with the teacher and so on
- ◇ Make room in the circle even for children who aren't "best friends"
- ◇ Join small groups in a constructive way and invite others to join
- ◇ Greet and include others (not only friends) in conversation and activities
- ◇ Work on projects, solve problems, and play games with input from everyone
- ◇ Solve conflicts by talking and reaching mutually acceptable decisions without name-calling or hurtful behavior.

Charney tells us that children must be consciously taught, step-by-step in order to develop self-control. She presents the "Three R's" for teaching self-control:

- ◇ *reinforcing* expected behaviors by commenting on what children do right
- ◇ *reminding* children of expected behaviors before things go wrong
- ◇ *redirecting* children when they have gone off track

Handling anger and frustration are key steps in developing self-control. They must learn to identify their feelings and express how they feel in an appropriate way. Understanding the connection between our feelings and our behavior will help students develop self-control. Teach the students to follow these steps:

- ◇ THINK about what happened
- ◇ THINK about how their body feels (work on body cues. See chart.)
- ◇ RECOGNIZE the feeling.
- ◇ Say, "I feel _____."

FEELING	BODY CUES
HAPPY	Smile, Laugh, Calm—even breathing, Very Relaxed
SAD	Frown, Cry, Head down, Slow Moving
ANGRY	Red Face, Frown, Crossed arms, Fast breathing
SCARED	Eyes wide-open, Stand very still, Fast heartbeat, Quiet

1. Ask students to share a time when they felt happy, sad or angry.
2. Brainstorm with students allowing them to name as many feelings as they can and to decide what body language each might create. (happy, joyful, proud, embarrassed, etc.)
3. Decide if each feeling is comfortable or uncomfortable. Record them in two columns on the board.
4. Discuss some of the following topics:
 - ◇ When you have comfortable/uncomfortable feelings, how do you show them to other people?
 - ◇ How do you think other people feel when we show our comfortable feelings?
 - ◇ How do you think expressing our feelings might help us to get along with one another?

Source: *Self Control Skills for Children* by Louise Eckman 1988 NASP

Character Education Bulletin Board Ideas



- ◇ For a bulletin board to be left up all year, choose a student who exemplifies the character trait of the month, take their picture, and announce their name during morning announcements. Have the students vote on who in the class they think best represents the trait, selecting a new child each month. Students should have to give specific reasons for their nominations and think critically about what it means to have good character. Title the bulletin board "Character: the Core of our Lives!" and place the title under a picture of an apple core in the center of the board. Place the character trait at the top of the board or on the apple core if large enough. Add a trait and the picture of the selected student to honor each month. Be sure to place the character trait for which the student is being honored under his/her picture.
- ◇ Decorate a bulletin board with the title "Our Class Practices Self-Control". Cut out large shapes of hearts, triangles, squares, stars, circles, etc. from construction paper. Review class rules and write one rule on each shape to place on the bulletin board as a reminder of the rules. Discuss how self-control is needed to obey the rules and help the class run smoothly.

Websites

www.goodcharacter.com (this website offers character materials for purchase, but also has some excellent web resources and links)

<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/character/activities.cfm> (this website offers a variety of free lesson plans designed around Character Counts! 7-pillars of character.)

<http://www.teachersandfamilies.com/open/parent/control5.cfm> (website has practical ways to teach children to maintain self-control in a variety of circumstances)

http://kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/behavior/self_control.html (website offers helpful advice on teaching self-control to ages thru teen)

<http://www.cbn.com/family/parenting/teaching-teens-boundaries-self-control-gregston.aspx> (website offers tips on how to set boundaries and build self-control in teenagers)

Activities that Teach Self-Control

General:

- ◇ Try to balance a "self-controlled" cardboard wand on open palms and then a cardboard strip that was bent and weak with no "self control".
- ◇ Allow opportunities for students to practice self-control by giving them specific responsibilities.
- ◇ Role-play how to talk to a younger brother or sister who is demonstrating a lack of self-control.
- ◇ Make a daily plan to focus on a way to strengthen your self-control, such as selecting a treat and giving it to yourself after completing a task or making a chart to document that you are doing something you have not been doing regularly.
- ◇ Brainstorm a list of problems that might result from a lack of self-control and discuss how they might affect personal appearance, health, success at school, friendships, job performance, family events or relationships, etc.
- ◇ Find pictures in magazines, newspapers, etc. that demonstrate self-control. Create a mobile or collage from the pictures.

Science:

- ◇ Interview scientists, engineers, and doctors to learn what role self-control has played in their lives. Compile the interviews into a booklet to keep in your school library's biography section.
- ◇ Investigate different animal species to learn if they use self-control. Do gorillas, wolves, and lions discipline each other and themselves? Is one animal in charge of the others? Do they punish misbehavior? Don't forget to include birds, fish, and insects. Make a chart of your research to compare species.

Math:

- ◇ Fibonacci numbers turn up everywhere showing the order and self-control in nature. Check out the website <http://www.mcs.surrey.ac.uk/Personal/R.Knott/Fibonacci/fib.html>. Tons of fun and interesting information can be found in this award winning site. The focus is in numbers in a sequence.
- ◇ Interview a professional who uses math daily in their job (accountants, bookkeepers, surveyors, pilots, ship captains, engineers, statisticians, or architects). Ask them to help you describe the self-control that it takes to train the mind to think analytically.

Language Arts:

- ◇ On colored cards have students write different words or phrases describing actions that show self-control (see related words on page 1). Make two of each card and create a memory matching game.
- ◇ Students can illustrate short sentences or paragraphs that explain things they have to do that require self-control.
- ◇ Students can write a paragraph describing how a story would be different if a character showed a different amount of self-control.
- ◇ Write an acrostic poem about self-control using your name to start each line.

Art:

- ◇ Students can draw cartoons showing examples of self-control vs. no self-control or someone being tempted to do something wrong but choosing to show self-control.
- ◇ Students can make a mural with two sections: one with students showing self-control and the other with students not showing self-control.
- ◇ Compare types of paintings and discuss the amount of control that is shown (a portrait, impressionistic, abstract, etc.).

P. E.:

- ◇ Discuss the amount of self-control needed in sports. Compare the amount of self-control needed to play an individual sport and a team sport.
- ◇ Brainstorm a list of sports then put them in order according to the amount of self-control needed to be successful.

Social Science:

- ◇ Invite a police officer or representative from the Juvenile Detention Center to visit your class and talk about the consequences of a lack of self-control.
- ◇ Research a historical event and discuss the level of self-control shown by the population and government. If a different amount of self-control had been shown, might things be different? Stage a class debate to share the opinions of the students.

Music:

- ◇ Write new lyrics to a popular song or children's song that would encourage self-control.
- ◇ Discuss the amount of control it takes to sing softly or loudly. Explore the musical dynamics when you alter the volume control on your stereo. How does the change in volume make you feel?



Elementary:

K-2

The Stonecutter: A Japanese Folktale, Demi
The Tale of Jeremy Fisher, Beatrix Potter
The Hating Book, Charlotte Zolotow
The Shaker Boy, Jeanette Winter
It Could Always Be Worse, Margot Zemach
The Best Prize of All, Mark Taylor
Self Control, Henrietta Gambell
How I Feel, June Behrens
Don't Pop Your Cork On Mondays, Adolph Moser
Sugar Gum Tree, Patricia Wrightson

3-5

Annie and the Old One, Miska Miles
Ben and Me, Robert Lawson
The Crane Wife, Sumiko Yagawa
Great Gilly Hopkins, Katherine Paterson
Sometimes It's Up, Ruth Carlsen
Pollyanna, Eleanor Porter
Missing May, Cynthia Rylant
"Casey at the Bat", Ernest L. Thayer

Middle School 6-8

Little Women, Louisa May Alcott
Souder, William Armstrong
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Roald Dahl
Anastasia Absolutely, Lois Lowry
Scorpions, Walter Dean Myers
The Trouble with Lemons, Daniel Hayes
The Story of My Life, Helen Keller
Anne of Green Gables (series), Lucy Maud Montgomery
Wringer, Jerry Spinelli

High School 9-12

Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austin
Crime and Punishment, Fyodor Dostoevsky-
Man's Search for Meaning, Victor Frankl
"The Odessey", Homer
A Separate Peace, John Knowles
Nothing but the Truth, Avi

"Sparky Hooves"

by Pedro Pablo Sacristan (freestoriesforkids.com)

Rocky was on the patio, crying. Some of his schoolmates had been picking on him, as they did quite often. Nothing upset him more. But no matter how much he told them, shouted at them, or threatened them, they wouldn't stop. An older boy, who had seen all this, came over and said:

"If you want this to stop you'll have to be like the little bull, Sparky Hooves. Should I tell you his story?" "Yeah!" said Rocky.

"Sparky Hooves was a fighting bull. His field was next to the farmer's house and Sparky could see through the farmer's window. One day Sparky stood next to the house, watching the farmer's TV, and they were televising a bullfight. Sparky realized that this is what lay ahead of him, and so he spent the rest of his life preparing for that day, the day of his fight.

Soon that day arrived. When Sparky entered the bullring, he was jabbed in the back. It was very painful, and Sparky felt like his blood was boiling, screaming for revenge. But he knew exactly what he needed to do, and he remained still. Soon the bullfighter appeared, trying to provoke Sparky, swishing his cape in the air. Sparky felt like sticking his horns deep into this stupid guy, but he swallowed his anger, kept still, and waited.

No matter what they did, trying to provoke him with jabs, waved flags, and red capes, Sparky kept still. After some time, the crowd started whistling and booing. It got so bad that the bullfight organizers decided to change the bull. This had been the most boring bull anyone could remember. So Sparky Hooves was returned to his field, and allowed to live out his life in peace. Never again did they put him in a bullring, because everyone knew that he would provide no amusement."

"Yeah, but what does this have to do with me?", asked Rocky.

"Well, everything, my friend. They took Sparky to a bullring because they wanted to have fun at his expense. The more he would have responded to the provocation, the more they would have enjoyed themselves, and they wouldn't have stopped until the thing was finished. The same is happening to you when they make fun of you. They enjoy it because they see how angry they make you. But if you did what Sparky Hooves did, not reacting to anything, they'd get bored and look for someone else to pick on, someone who provides more amusement."

Rocky believed none of it. However, in the next few days, he gradually tried to put this advice into practice. At first it wasn't easy, but as Rocky kept to his plan, the bullies got bored with him. In a few days they found more interesting things to do than pick on Rocky.



FCAT Writing Prompts:

(These can be assigned as a five paragraph essay or one paragraph according to the level of the student.)

1. Think about a time when you succeeded at something because you made it a goal and committed to it. Describe what happened and how it made you feel.
2. Think about three things you would like to accomplish in the next several months. These should be things that are really important to you and within your power to accomplish. Describe in detail what you will need to do to succeed and describe your plan of action.
3. Think about goals and how important they are to success. Write to convince your reader that it is better to set high goals that are challenging rather than low goals that are easy.
4. Think about the character of a person that you greatly admire. Write about how that person's self-control impressed you.



Quotes About Self Control



Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
<p>“By constant self-discipline and self-control, you can develop greatness of character.” —Grenville Kleiser</p> <p>“No man is fit to command another who cannot command himself.” —William Penn</p> <p>“Prudent, cautious self-control is the wisdom’s root.” —Robert Burns</p> <p>“Self-discipline begins with the mastery of your thoughts. If you don’t control what you think, you can’t control what you do. Simply self-discipline enables you to think first and act afterward.” —Napoleon Hill</p> <p>“Govern thyself, then you will be able to govern the world.” —Unknown Source</p>	<p>“I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; for the hardest victory is over self.” —Aristotle</p> <p>“I have not failed. I’ve just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.” —Thomas Alva Edison</p> <p>“The sign of an intelligent people is their ability to control their emotions by the application of reason.” —Marya Mannes</p> <p>“We all have dreams. But in order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline, and effort.” —Jesse Owens</p> <p>“Without discipline, there’s no life at all.” —Katherine Hepburn</p>	<p>“Self determination is fine but needs to be tempered with self-control.” —Anonymous</p> <p>“My fault , my failure, is not in the passions I have, but in my lack of control of them.” —Jack Kerouac</p> <p>“Rule your mind or it will rule you.” —Horace</p> <p>“Industry, thrift and self-control are not sought because they create wealth, but because they create character.” —Calving Coolidge</p> <p>“Respect your efforts, respect yourself. Self-respect leads to self-discipline. When you have both firmly under your belt, that’s real power.” —Cint Eastwood</p>	<p>“He that would govern others first should be the master of himself.” —Phillip Massinger</p> <p>“There’s only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving and that’s your own self.” —Aldus Huxley</p> <p>“You may find that having is not so pleasing a thing as wanting. This is not logical, but it is often true.” —Lieutenant Commander Spock</p> <p>“With self-discipline most anything is possible.” —Theodore Roosevelt</p> <p>“Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.” —Benjamin Franklin</p>

“The Little Glutton”

by Pedro Pablo Sacristan (freestoriesforkids.com)

Once upon a time there was a little glutton who only ate sweets and candy. One day, in an antique shop he found an old magnifying glass. He liked it very much, and his parents bought it for him. He was so happy with his magnifying glass! As soon as he could, he used it to look at a little ant. It was great! The ant looked so big. But then a strange thing happened. When he took the magnifying glass away, the ant stayed the same size it had appeared through the glass.

Very surprised, the boy kept experimenting, and he found that anything he looked at through the magnifying glass would get bigger, and stay that way.

Suddenly, he realized how he could best use this special ability, and he ran home. At home he took all the candies and sweets, and he made them gigantic with his magnifying glass. Then he completely stuffed himself with them, until he could eat nothing more. However, the next morning he woke up totally swollen, a bit purple, and with a huge bellyache. When the doctor came to see him, he said it was the worst case of upset tummy he had ever seen. Night and day, the little glutton suffered so much that for a long time he didn't want to hear mention of large amounts of food. His parents were happy about this. Thanks to their son's latest gluttony their pantry was full of the food he could not eat. What's more, he gave up being a glutton who only ever ate sweets and candy. He wanted nothing to do with them.

And so it was that the little glutton learned that even with the best things in life, if you have too many of them, you will end up feeling ill. He decided to keep the magnifying glass in a box until he found something that would really be worth making bigger.

How about you? What would you use the magnifying glass for?



Important Notice

Character Counts Week is October 16-22,2011.

For free materials go online to www.charactercounts.org/ccweek/index.php