

Character Education

“Positive Attitude” Grades 9-12

DEFINITION:

A positive attitude is the ability to have positive thoughts about one's self and one's environment even when things are not going as one would hope.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

Help students understand that they have a choice on how they respond to events in their day-to-day lives. The outcome is a result of their choices.

- Ask students to compare/contrast the definition of a group and a team. How is a positive attitude essential to both?
- Have students' research women and/or men whose positive attitudes have influenced history. Examples might include Wilma Rudolph, Golda Meir, Indira Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Ray Charles, or Mother Teresa. Have students write a bio-poem or use another poetry form to illustrate how they have demonstrated a positive attitude in their own life's accomplishments.
- Have students use their research from the above activity to role-play the person whom they researched. Encourage several students to form a panel for a role-play presentation. Ask the class to develop questions for the panel.
- Encourage students to respond to visual art from a magazine, book or art book depicting a positive attitude, teamwork, or enthusiasm. Discuss how creating a positive image or attitude is important in advertising. What methods are used?
- Have students create an art gallery of photos, sculptures, or paintings that display the theme of individual enthusiasm. www.si.edu (Smithsonian Institute)
- Ask students to write a tribute to a current day person in the news whose display of enthusiasm or a positive attitude has been an inspiration.
- Upon completion of a novel, story or speech, design a flow chart illustrating the theme of "greatness is not accomplished alone." Examples might include *Annie Sullivan; I have a Dream, Great Expectations, Red Badge of Courage, The Great Gatsby, or Pygmalion.*
- Use the theme "greatness is not accomplished alone" to build on the importance of others in one's life whether it be sports, fine arts, or friendship.

- Use a thesaurus or dictionary to create a crossword puzzle with synonyms for enthusiasm, teamwork, and positive attitude.
- Give students a writing assignment with the following scenario: You have been hired to write a resume for Huckleberry Finn who is applying for a job as a motivational speaker. Type and submit his resume to his future employer.
- Encourage students to practice standing up for their beliefs. Skim a newspaper, magazine or newscast for an issue that students feel strongly about. Have students take a stand for their beliefs and write a persuasive speech to present to other students.
- Have students serve as a newscaster called out to cover a sporting event. Have students create the event and list ten "cheers" and ten "jeers" for the efforts of the teams/individuals.
- Discuss a character on your favorite TV program and whether the character usually has a positive or negative attitude.
- Select a movie clip. Discuss the differences or similarities in the attitudes of two chosen characters.
- Discuss the kinds of attitudes students have after they play certain video games. Why?
- Ask students to share about an experience where a negative attitude got them into trouble. Home? School? Community? End the discussion with students reflecting about times when they showed a positive attitude in a difficult situation.
- Have students write an essay or journal entry on one of the following quotes:
 - "For every minute you are angry you lose sixty seconds of happiness." -Ralph Waldo Emerson
 - "Human beings can change their lives by changing their attitudes of mind." -William James
 - "Attitudes are contagious; is yours worth catching?" -Anonymous
- Revisit activities for previous grades for ideas to adapt.

RESOURCES:

www.gamesforgroups.com (Book/game store)

www.pecentral.com (Activity site)

www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/ (sponsored by United Nations)