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Character Education

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       Charactered.net provides easy access for parents, students and teachers to resources and activities that promote character education. The Character Education Network also provides a system for schools to record their experiences by using the website to share with other schools, families and students.

       The "Student Notebook" page of the website contains grade-level mini lessons related to selected character traits. It has a section for students to keep their work organized and serves as a reference guide they can refer back to. Each mini-lesson is 15 minutes long and includes audio-read along for those with learning differences. When students complete the mini lesson, they are rewarded with a certificate, which is a great way to boost morale. The "Sharing Stories" webpage shares school experiences about character education and gives students the opportunity to reflect on their behavior. The most useful areas of the site is the "Do it yourself'' and "Classroom Activities" page because of the worksheets and lessons plans that are offered. The resources that are available on this site makes character education attainable and sets realistic goals that students, families, and teachers should meet.

       I was drawn to this website because it is accessible to families and students. Charactered.net is easy to navigate and provides intentional and engaging activities that develop good character. I would use this website with my students to explain the morals of good character.

Charactercounts.org is a website with resources based on the Six Pillars of Character. The home page lists trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness caring and citizenship along with a description and tab for each trait. The website also includes grade-level lesson plans on SEL along with resources for families.

The lesson plans tab provides numerous lesson plans from respecting each other's difference to digital citizenship. This emphasizes that charactercounts.org is up-to date with best practices because they included a digital citizenship lesson for those who are teaching and learning virtually, this year. The website also features articles and blogs for viewers stay up to date with SEL and character education.

"The Store" tab features items that promote character traits and education for sale. The store has planners, wall posters, bracelets, affirmation books/journals and school supplies. The student planners feature lesson plans and activities on the 6 Pillars of Character that students can do at home.

Something useful I found on the cite was learning about the benefits of character education. Not only does it mold character, it also boosts self-confidence and academics. According to Charactermatters.org, "Number of failing grades reduced by 26%" (Riverside Brookfield High, IL) and "88% of teachers say students are more emotionally and physically safe because of CHARACTER COUNTS!" (Puerto Rico).

Something else I find useful is the lesson plans for SEL. The lesson plans that are featured are created by teachers and ensures that lessons are intentional, engaging and grade-level appropriate. I would use this website with my students, but instead of having them choose which lessons they would like to work on, I would assign the ones I feel are most relevant to our school values.

Goodcharacter.com is another great website that offers SEL resources to teachers. The website emphasizes the connection between character and the choices we make. It encourages adults to teach children about the power of choices. The website addresses how to deal with relationships, bullying, mindfulness, responsibility, and conflict resolution. It also features a list of principles that in which the founders believe character is based on.

What drew me to the Goodcharacter.com is the resources that are available to the public. The website is organized and features a tab for elementary, middle, and high school SEL lesson plans which makes it easy for teachers and families to navigate through. Each lesson offers a questionnaire, discussion questions, a video and writing assignment.

For example, when I clicked on elementary school, I chose trustworthiness. For this lesson, students will answer questions about being trustworthy followed by the discussion questions like "can you imagine starting a friendship with someone you didn't trust? What would that be like?" and "How do you define a lie?". These questions boost morale which would lead to the writing assignment prompt: "If your friends were here right now, would they say you were trustworthy? What would your parents say? Are you more trustworthy with your friends are with your parents? Do you think your parents should trust you automatically? Why or why not?" Not only would students be learning about character, they would also be practicing writing and critical thinking skills, as well.

Overall, I appreciated the detailed and intentional lesson plans that are offered to teachers on Goodcharacter.com. When using lesson plans from this cite, not only are students learning about good character, they are also practicing academic skills that are aligned with Common Core standards.

Learningtogive.org is a non-profit organization that features character education lesson plans on their website. Each lesson is student-centered and emphasizes the importance of good character. The website emphasizes that character education improves critical thinking and leadership skills along with improving school culture and giving learners a deeper sense of purpose.

What drew me to this website is that it caters to middle school students, specifically. Students start to understand and develop their character in middle school, and this website offers lessons and hands-on activities that teach children about what makes good character. The website also includes a section of articles for teachers to make connections between lesson content and SEL. It also features information for SEL webinars that teachers and families can attend, at no cost.

Something else that drew me to this website is the list of literature that can be used in classrooms to teach character education. For example, if a teacher wants the class to read a book on kindness, the website offers a list of books that can be used along with lesson plans that teach character in connection to the literature. The "taking action" tab features information in how students can become active members of their community. It also emphasizes the power of reflection and includes a survey that students can take to reflect on how they are making a difference in the world.

I would use the lessons on this website as part of advisory lessons for my 7th grade homeroom. The lessons and content are relatable and age appropriate. I appreciate that the lesson plans are detailed, and that families could access the lesson tabs at home without having to subscribe to the website.

References

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