



# Exploring Leadership

## PERSONAL LEADERSHIP: CHARACTER

Character is a deep and personal quality that's difficult to measure. It's rooted in a person's values and motivations, which we can't always see. People of good character take the right actions because their values guide them, not for the reward or recognition. Understanding character can be challenging for adolescents, so it helps to break it down into smaller traits like honesty, integrity, courage, and loyalty.

### CONVERSATION STARTERS:

When someone asks you to donate to a good cause, do you? Would you still do it even if no one asked? If so, you're showing what it means to have good character.

Character is more than just how we act; it's about who we are at our core. People with good character follow their values—whether anyone is watching or not. They make choices because they believe they are right, not because of external pressure or reward. It's not always easy to tell someone's character based on their actions, but over time, people can build their character by living according to strong, positive values.

## EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

Cartoon "Character" - In this activity, you'll work together to create a cartoon character that shows good character through their actions.

### FACILITATION TIPS:

- Highlights Magazine once featured a comic strip called Goofus and Gallant. Goofus lacked good character, while Gallant made the right choices for the right reasons. The strip was aimed at children and was direct in its message.
- Optional: Find a few examples of this comic strip to spark ideas.
- The posters in this lesson should be subtler, but examples online can inspire creative ideas.

### KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Identify core traits of good character and their impact on actions.
- Engage in a fun activity demonstrating good character.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Flip chart or poster paper
- Markers
- Art supplies
- Scissors, tape, etc.
- Computer and projector

- Divide participants into groups of 2-3. Ask each group to create a cartoon character that demonstrates good character through their actions. The character can be anything—an animal, a shape, or a person—so feel free to get creative!
- Using the poster board and markers, instruct the groups to:
  - Draw their character performing a positive action, such as helping others or being honest.
  - Add a "thought balloon" above the character to show the core value behind the action (e.g., kindness, honesty, responsibility).
- Once finished, have each group share their poster and explain the values behind their character's actions.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Why do you think we can never truly know if someone has good character? How do we make judgments about others' character?
- Does it matter if someone has good character as long as they're doing good, helpful, or virtuous things? Why or why not?
- Who are some people you admire for their good character? Why do you think they stand out?

## APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- Why is character an important quality for employers, even though it can't be easily measured?
- Have you ever done something good, but for the wrong reasons? Did it make a difference?
- Do you think it's important to be a person of good character? Why or why not?



## CONCLUSION:

Being a person of good character means doing the right thing for the right reasons, even when no one is looking. While it's easy to do good for recognition, people of character do the right thing because it matters to them. It's important to remember that actions don't always show someone's true character, but we can always improve our character by staying true to what we value most.

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## REFERENCES

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- Journal Buddies: <https://www.journalbuddies.com/teacher-parent-resources/what-is-good-character/>