



Character Counts

Brainstorm

Ask students: *What is a character trait? List a few that you believe apply to you as well.* Ask students to list 5-8 things on a piece of paper.

Discuss

Call on student volunteers to share items from their list. As they do, make a list on the board. After you complete the list, continue: *In today's lesson we're going to discuss character traits and how they shape who we are. There are positive and negative character traits! Let's divide the ones on the board into two categories. Positive character traits bring you up, support your well being, help you achieve your goals and make you a kind and caring human. What are some examples of character strengths that you can think of?* Accept student responses and add them to the list on the board.

Dive in!

Distribute the worksheet to students. Detail: *There are many character strengths. Most character strengths can be organized into six categories: Courage, Humanity, Justice, Temperance, Transcendence, and Wisdom & Knowledge.* Review each category and examples with students. Explain: *These are just some of the ways we demonstrate character strengths, but there are many others. Not everyone is going to be strong in every area, but it's important to recognize and embrace your strengths in order to build your self-esteem and self-confidence.*

Courage - the ability to do something even if it seems impossible or intimidating.
Connecting character traits: bravery.

Humanity- having empathy and compassion for others.
Connecting character traits: loyalty, kindness, warmth, understanding.

Justice- Treating others fairly, reasonably, and respectfully
Connecting character traits: honesty, respect, trustworthiness, leadership.

Temperance- All things in moderation-balance.
Connecting character traits: humility, modesty, cautiousness, self-discipline.

Transcendence- Moving your learning to the next level, applying learning from one experience to new experiences.
Connecting character traits: adaptability, resilience, optimism, gratitude.



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Wisdom & Knowledge- using your knowledge, experience, and understanding, to guide your influence and actions. Having the ability to learn, interpret, and understand.

Connecting character traits: open mindedness, moral reasoning, patience, creativity, curiosity, truth seeking.

Character traits are like a compass which guide you on a path that reflects your values. Our character traits reflect those values and when we are not living in line with our values, we can become burnt out, frustrated, depressed, or agitated to name a few. When we are not living in line with our values, negative values can take hold of us. For example, if we value kindness and honesty, yet we have friends who constantly gossip, it can be difficult to not partake in gossip telling and down the line we have compromised our values in order to participate.

What are values?

Values are factors that drive what we believe are important to us.

Character traits are actionable in that they help shape our personalities and aid us in forming our values. These traits point the way for what we are likely to be motivated to do. When we work in accordance with the two and lives in a way that reflects our values, we are likely to feel most like ourselves.

Activity

For this task, students can work individually, in pairs, or in groups, but each student should complete their own worksheet. Explain: *Now you're going to identify your character strengths and reflect on how they guide you/your values. Think about the overarching 6 character trait categories.*

For example, if a character trait that you have is being assertive, you may values hard work and dedication to your craft.

As students work, circulate around the room, assisting as needed. When students are done, call on volunteers to present their findings to the class.

Reflect

To close the lesson, ask students to respond to the Reflect question verbally: *Is it difficult for you to identify your strengths? Why? How does knowing your character strengths help you guide your values?*

Optional Home Connection → Have students share their strengths with their family and ask them to identify other strengths.



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Professional Development

Take 5 minutes and reflect on your own strengths. Find at least one in each of the six categories and describe how it connects to your values.

For Further Study:

[Character Traits List with Examples - TeacherVision](#)

[How Do Personality Traits Influence Values and Well-Being? | Psychology Today Canada](#)

[Examples of Core Life Values and How To Determine Yours | Indeed.com](#)