



High School

National FFA Organization

Lesson HS.35

ETHICS AND PERSONAL CHARACTER

Unit. Stage One of Development—ME

Problem Area. How Do I Begin to Grow?

Precepts. N3: Make ethical decisions.

National Standards.

NPH-H.9-12.5 Using Communication Skills to Promote Health — Analyze how inter personal communication affect relationships.



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 List characteristics that make up a strong character.
- 2 Define the thirty most important traits of a strong character.
- 3 Explain the relationship between personal character and professional ethics.



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Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.

Resources

The Virtues Project: Simple Ways to Create a Culture of Character, Linda Kavelin Popov. Jalmar Press, Torrance, CA, 2000.

✓ **Tools, Equipment, and Supplies**

- ✓ Overhead projector
- ✓ Writing surface
- ✓ HS.35.AS.A Characteristic Definitions
- ✓ HS.35.TM.A List of characteristics
- ✓ HS.35.TM.B Connections
- ✓ HS.35.Assessment.A
- ✓ Colored pens, markers, pencils or crayons
- ✓ Tape or thumb tacks
- ✓ Bell, whistle or other noisemakers—air horn?
- ✓ One sheet of 8”x 12” construction paper/student
 - ✓ 30 slips of paper in a cup or basket with one characteristic written on each slip

🔑 **Key Terms.** The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

- ▶ Assertiveness
- ▶ Characteristics
- ▶ Commitment
- ▶ Compassion
- ▶ Confidence
- ▶ Cooperation
- ▶ Courage
- ▶ Courtesy
- ▶ Creativity
- ▶ Detachment
- ▶ Determination
- ▶ Diligence
- ▶ Enthusiasm
- ▶ Ethics
- ▶ Flexibility
- ▶ Forgiveness
- ▶ Friendliness
- ▶ Honesty



- ▶ Humility
- ▶ Idealism
- ▶ Integrity
- ▶ Justice
- ▶ Loyalty
- ▶ Modesty
- ▶ Orderliness
- ▶ Patience
- ▶ Personal Character
- ▶ Reliability
- ▶ Respect
- ▶ Responsibility
- ▶ Self discipline
- ▶ Tact
- ▶ Tolerance
- ▶ Trustworthiness



Interest Approach

Begin the lesson by providing a journaling activity as students enter the classroom. Before class begins, write, “List all the characteristics that a good leader should possess” on the writing surface. Allow students two or three minutes to make a list as you are taking attendance.



Welcome to class today. Please begin thinking about the journal topic on the board as you take out your materials. Write your list on your own paper. You have three minutes.

Monitor and encourage individuals to put their thoughts on paper. While they are writing, write the words “characteristics,” “personal character,” and “ethics” spaced evenly on the writing surface.



Put your pencils down. Today we're going to figure out what the connection is between the words “**characteristics**”, “**personal character**” and “**professional ethics**”. As you know from our previous lesson, **ethics** are standards for behavior that are established by a particular group and communicated to its members.

Write the definition on the board next to the word “ethics:” standards for behavior that are established by a particular group and communicated to its members.



SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. List characteristics that make up a strong character.



We've had a few minutes to think to ourselves about what it takes to be a good leader, so now, let's compare your lists of characteristics to a master list and see how well we did. Our goal is to create a list of the 30 most important characteristics that a team member or leader should have. Put a check by each characteristic on your list as I read from the master list, and add the characteristics you didn't have time to think of to the bottom of your list.

Compare individual lists to the master list (HS.35.TM.A). Put the transparency on and compare by crossing off the words on the transparency as you read them aloud to the class and they edit their lists. Discuss any differences between the class list and the master list.



So, where are we now? We've come up with a list of 30 important characteristics for a leader or team member to have. How should we define the word characteristics?

Anticipated Response: Characteristics are personality traits. Write the definition under the term "Characteristics".

Objective 2. Define the 30 most important characteristics of a strong personal character.



The next question is: do we all agree on what these characteristics look like, or how they are defined? In communication, one of the most common problems is that our understanding of the terms we use varies. So, let's take a look at some definitions, so we can ensure that we all have the same understanding about what these terms mean.

Give each student a piece of construction paper, and have them fold it in half across the width of the paper. Have the students randomly select one characteristic at a time from the slips of paper in a container. Students should write the characteristic on the front of their paper and their names on the back of the folded paper. Pass out HS.35.AS.A.

Assertiveness: *being positive and confident. Think for yourself and ask for what you need.*

Commitment: *willingness to follow through on your decisions.*

Compassion: *having kind and supportive feelings towards someone.*

Confidence: *having faith in yourself or others.*

Cooperation: *Working together for the good of the group.*

Courage: *Personal bravery in the face of adversity.*



Courtesy: Acting in a way that makes others feel valued and respected.
Creativity: Seeing something in a new way. Using imagination.
Detachment: Acknowledging your feelings without being controlled by them.
Determination: Sticking with a task until it is finished.
Diligence: Doing the best job you can. Thinking first and paying attention to detail.
Enthusiasm: Having a positive attitude. Being excited, eager and cheerful.
Flexibility: Open to change. Willing to try a new way.
Forgiveness: Moving ahead, not holding grudges. Giving others and yourself another chance.
Friendliness: Taking an interest in other people.
Honesty: Telling the truth and being trustworthy.
Humility: Admitting your mistakes. Recognizing the importance of others. Willing to serve.
Idealism: Caring about what is right and meaningful and acting according to your beliefs.
Justice: Sense of fair play. Standing up for your rights and the rights of others.
Loyalty: Staying committed to someone or something you believe in even when things are tough.
Modesty: Quiet self-acceptance and pride. Accepting praise with humility and gratitude.
Orderliness: Being neat and organized. Working step-by-step to accomplish a task.
Patience: Being calm and tolerant in the face of adversity. Investment in the future.
Reliability: Being predictable and dependable.
Respect: Valuing others and ourselves. Acting with care and dignity towards others.
Responsibility: Able to respond. Being accountable for your actions.
Self-discipline: Deciding how you will act and speak instead of being controlled by emotions.

Tact: Thinking before you speak. Telling the truth gently.

Tolerance: Accepting differences with patience and flexibility.

Trustworthiness: Others can rely on you to be honest and follow through with commitments.

Tell students to refer to the handout and write the term and the definition they've chosen on the inside of the construction paper. Write large enough to fill the inside of the paper, so it can be read easily from a distance. Then use a Picasso Moment for students to illustrate what the characteristic means on the front of the paper.



You're going to have five minutes to use your artistic talents and your reading skills to create a flash folder that will explain what each characteristic is, so while we're passing out materials, begin thinking about



how you can draw the definition of the characteristic you pick. Each member of the group will select one word from the basket. You should receive one piece of construction paper for each member of your group. Use the handout to find the official definition. Be sure to draw the meaning on the front and write the definition on the inside. When you are finished you will post your flash folder on the wall. What questions do you have about the flash folder project?

Answer any questions students have about how to conduct the activity, and encourage them to use their own imagination to create the illustrated definition on the cover.



Let's get started.

Use a noisemaker to signal the beginning of the activity.

Monitor class progress and keep students on task. Hang the flash folders on walls or bulletin boards as students finish them. Space them out around the room so that students can walk around the room and see all the work when it is finished.

Use a noisemaker to signal the end of the activity



Time to stop working. Put your flash folders on the wall. Since we have a class full of proud, artistic, learners, we need to take a moment to share our art with the rest of the class. You will have five minutes to walk around the room and see all of the art. Try to identify the term that is being illustrated on each flash card. Remember we've all spent time and effort on this work, so treat it with respect as you look inside to see the characteristic. Begin.

Allow students five minutes to move around the room and look at each others' work. Use a noisemaker to signal the end of the activity and to get the class' attention.



Everybody go back to your seats. Which pictures were the most clear and imaginative? Which pictures would you like clarification on?

Allow students to ask about the terms. Have the student who illustrated the term in question explain it to the class.



Objective 3. Illustrate the relationship between personal character and professional ethics.



Now let's wrap this lesson up by connecting personal character to professional ethics. First of all, let's look at the board. We've had three terms up there all period long. Let's see if we can define them now.

Little Professor Moment . Discuss and write the definition on the writing surface. Characteristics are specific personality traits that govern a person's decisions and relationships.



Do personal characteristics come from within a person or do others impose them on them?

Discuss. Students may say both (nature vs. nurture), but the characteristics that make up our character, while influenced by a variety of things, are within our power to control, therefore they are internal.



Now, what is personal character?

Little Professor Moment . Write the definition on the writing surface. Personal character is the sum of the personal characteristics that a person possesses. They influence a person's decisions, actions and relationships.



Is our personal character governed from within or does it come from external factors?

Students may say that personal character is influenced by external factors, but the ultimate decision to be or act a certain way is ours, therefore personal character is an internal concept.



Lastly, what are professional ethics?

Little Professor Moment . Write the definition on the writing surface. Professional ethics are a set of behavioral expectations developed by a company or group, and communicated to the members of the company or group.



Are professional ethics governed from within or are they imposed on us by outside forces?

Students may say that ethics are a reflection of our personal character, but ethics are developed by groups of people and communicated to all the members of the group, therefore they are imposed on us from an external source.



What is it that connects Professional Ethics and Personal Character? What trait is it that enables people to act true to their character and behave ethically?

It starts with an "I" and has nine letters. *Pause* . Yes, good guess, its *integrity* .

Little Professor Moment . Integrity is the ability to act consistently according to your character in a way that fits with the ethics of the group or industry you're involved with.

Put HS.35.TM.B on the overhead projector and explain the analogy.





Characteristics are like the bricks of a building. Personal character is a pile of bricks. The mortar that holds the bricks together is integrity. Professional ethics are the building's purpose. Just as not all buildings make good barns, some people make better policemen than teachers. Each person performs better when the code of ethics they are working within fits their character.



Review/Summary

Use a *Cartographer Moment* for students to illustrate the relationship between characteristics, personal character, integrity and professional ethics. Collect the student personal characteristic lists and the cartographer moments from the students.



We're almost finished. Let's show me what you remember by completing a review test, but first you can put everything away except a pen or pencil.

Handout HS.35.Assessment.A. Have students complete the test and turn them in as they leave class.



Application

►Extended Classroom Activity:

Have students create an analysis pizza for a personal characteristic. (Categories should be: definition, importance, actions, and benefits.) Create a collage of pictures that represent a personal characteristic.

►FFA Activity:>/b>

Job Interview Contest, PALS

►SAE Activity:

Work Experience Project



Evaluation

Evaluate performance based on participation in the flash folder activity and completing the activity sheet. Assess understanding of the relationship between personal character and professional ethics by evaluating the Cartographer Moment illustrations.

Answers to Assessment:

1. integrity
2. characteristics
3. idealist



4. ethics
5. diligence
6. characteristics
7. integrity/character
8. ethics/character
9. ethics
10. characteristics
- 11–15. sample response: Modesty: Quiet self-acceptance and pride; Cooperation: Working together for the good of the group; Courage: Personal bravery in the face of adversity; Determination: Sticking with a task until it is finished; Commitment: willingness to follow through on your decisions (refer to HS.35.AS.A for alternative responses).



CHARACTER CONNECTIONS QUIZ

Fill-in-the-blanks using the following terms:

character

characteristic

ethics

diligence

integrity

idealist

1. _____ is the trait that enable(s) a person's actions to reflect their beliefs.
2. _____ are traits that influence how people relate to others.
3. Someone who really cares about what is right and meaningful in life is an _____.
4. _____ are established by groups of people.
5. _____ is working hard and doing the best job you can.
6. _____ are a part of the personality.
7. Having a strong character is the result of adding _____ to _____.
8. It is important to work in an environment where the _____ fit your _____.
9. _____ vary from industry to industry and group to group.
10. Honesty is an example of a _____.
- 11–15. List and define five personal characteristics that are not listed above.



PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| ◆ Assertiveness | ◆ Honesty |
| ◆ Commitment | ◆ Humility |
| ◆ Compassion | ◆ Idealism |
| ◆ Confidence | ◆ Justice |
| ◆ Cooperation | ◆ Loyalty |
| ◆ Courage | ◆ Modesty |
| ◆ Courtesy | ◆ Orderliness |
| ◆ Creativity | ◆ Patience |
| ◆ Detachment | ◆ Reliability |
| ◆ Determination | ◆ Respect |
| ◆ Diligence | ◆ Responsibility |
| ◆ Enthusiasm | ◆ Self discipline |
| ◆ Flexibility | ◆ Tact |
| ◆ Forgiveness | ◆ Tolerance |
| ◆ Friendliness | ◆ Trust worthiness |



CONNECTIONS

Personal Characteristic: trait that adds to the personality.

Source: Internal

Analogy: A BRICK

Personal Character: A set of traits that influence how a person relates to others.

Source: Internal

Analogy: PILE OF BRICKS

Integrity: Ability to make one's actions reflect one's character.

Source: Internal

Analogy: CEMENT (Holds the bricks together)

Professional Ethics: A set of behavioral expectations determined by a business or industry that are communicated to its employees or members.

Source: External

Analogy: BUILDING'S PURPOSE

Therefore:

Professional Ethics (Personal Character + Integrity) =
Ethical Behavior

A building is only useful when its construction is suited to its purpose.

A person acts ethically when their character and integrity is suited to a company's professional ethics.



PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Assertiveness: being positive and confident. Think for yourself and ask for what you need.

Commitment: willingness to follow through on your decisions.

Compassion: having kind and supportive feelings towards someone.

Confidence: having faith in yourself or others.

Cooperation: Working together for the good of the group.

Courage: Personal bravery in the face of adversity.

Courtesy: Acting in a way that makes others feel valued and respected.

Creativity: Seeing something in a new way. Using imagination.

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Forgiveness: Moving ahead, not holding grudges. Giving others and yourself another chance.

Friendliness: Taking an interest in other people.

Honesty: Telling the truth and being trustworthy.

Humility: Admitting your mistakes. Recognizing the importance of others. Willing to serve.

Idealism: Caring about what is right and meaningful and acting according to your beliefs.

Justice: Sense of fairplay. Standing up for your rights and the rights of others.

Loyalty: Staying committed to someone or something you believe in even when things are tough.

Modesty: Quiet self-acceptance and pride. Accepting praise with humility and gratitude.

Orderliness: Being neat and organized. Working step-by-step to accomplish a task.

Patience: Being calm and tolerant in the face of adversity. Investment in the future.



Reliability: Being predictable and dependable.

Respect: Valuing others and ourselves. Acting with care and dignity towards others.

Responsibility: Able to respond. Being accountable for your actions.

Self discipline: Deciding how you will act and speak instead of being controlled by emotions.

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