

Civil War Personalities Lesson Plan

INDIVIDUAL EXAMPLES OF CHARACTER

CIVIL WAR TRUST

Grades: 4-7

Length of Time: Approximately two class periods. (40-50 minutes)

Goal:

Students will be aware of and be able to identify various traits held by individuals that make up good character.

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to provide two examples of traits that make up good character.
2. Students will be able to identify an individual with good character and explain their reasons for their choice in written form
3. After reading a biography of an individual from history students will be able to identify and record at least 3 positive character traits of that individual as well as point out in the text where they recognized these traits.

Materials:

1. Biography handouts
2. Journals or writing paper
3. Highlighters

Anticipatory Set/Hook

Who do you admire? Why do you admire them? Who do you think is a good person? What makes them a good person? Can you think of some good qualities of someone you know?

Procedure:

1. Ask the students: If someone has good character, what does that mean?

Definition: *A person with good character is a strong person. A strong person possesses and*

practices values that make him or her stand out from the crowd. People with good character... (Have the student help create a list of traits)

Are trustworthy

Are fair

Are responsible

Are respectful (treat everybody fairly and with dignity)

Care for other people

Make good decisions

Think of others first

Work hard

Are strong of heart

Are honest (they don't lie or cheat)

Keep their promises

Are loyal to family and friends

Don't let other people make them do or say bad things

Stand up for their beliefs

Show courage

Work for everybody's good

Are generous (with their possessions, their heart, their time, and so on)

Are helpful

Aren't afraid to be seen as "different" from their peers

2. Ask students to think if they think **THEY** fit the bill for a person with good character. What about their friends? What about themselves would they change if they had the chance? Have students write a response in their journal or in writing in a journaling format.

3. Give the class one handout from the biography section of the Civil War Trust's two-week curriculum. Read the section (or parts of it) aloud. On the board, work as a class to identify personality traits that show "good character" in the reading.

4. Break the class into several small groups. Have each group read a different biography handout. Have the students identify and write down the character traits each reading exemplifies. Have the students highlight the text where they found the evidence to support their identified trait.

Saved by the Enemy: Francis Barlow (USA) & John B. Gordon (CSA) PDF

Best Friends & Enemies: Winfield Scott Hancock (USA) & Lewis Armistead (CSA) PDF

No Bows, No Curls, No Jewelry: Dorothea Dix PDF
Mary Walker PDF

There are many more biographies in our curriculum, in the history center, and in print. Feel free to use whatever examples might suit the needs and interests of your students, see our Ideas Page (PDF) for more info.

5. Ask students to write down one character trait that is extremely important to them, and then try to think of a living person, famous or obscure, who exemplifies that trait and could be considered a “role model”. Ask for volunteers to share their role models with the rest of the class. Students should be prepared to defend their choice as a “role model” and not a “popularity figure”.

6. Optional activity: Ask students to write a letter to their role model. Explain to this person why you have chosen them as a role model and an example of “character.”

Closure:

Why should we learn about good character? Do you think that it’s important to be a role model to someone? What are some ways you can be a role model?

Assessment:

Student should complete the objectives by orally providing two traits that make up good character, writing a journal entry on a person who holds traits of good character, and reading a biography as a group and writing down character traits that individual holds while providing evidence in the text.