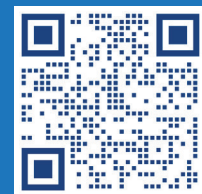


middle school edition

WAY TOGO WORKBOOK

SET C

Way to Go posters and quotations created by
Michael Josephson.
Content authored by Dr. Gary Smit.



charactercounts.org/C4



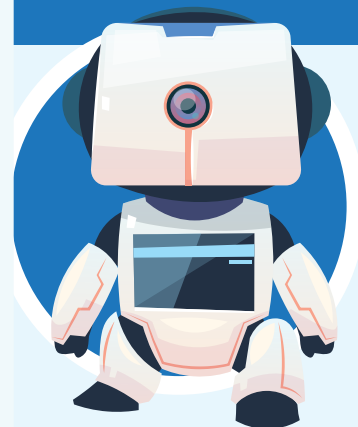
1. What does the quote mean? How can this quote apply to you as a student?

2. In what way do you think your attitude determines the way things turn out?

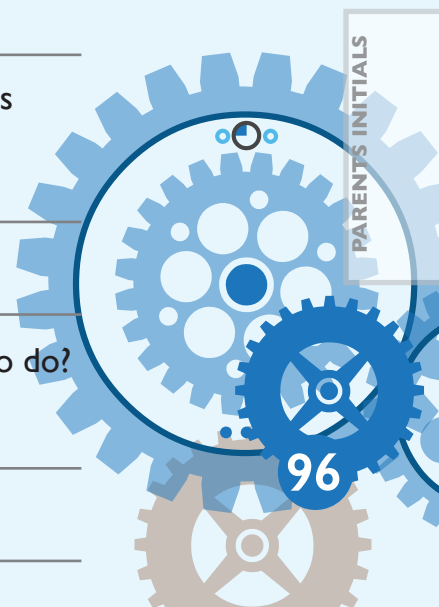
3. How might you show kindness to someone who is angry?

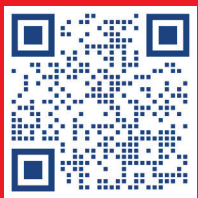
4. Based on this proverb's advice, what could you do if someone says something that's not true about you?

5. If you were the girl on the swing, what would you like someone to do?



You are smart enough to learn what you need to know and do to be successful. Learning to understand and do new things often takes diligent hard work.





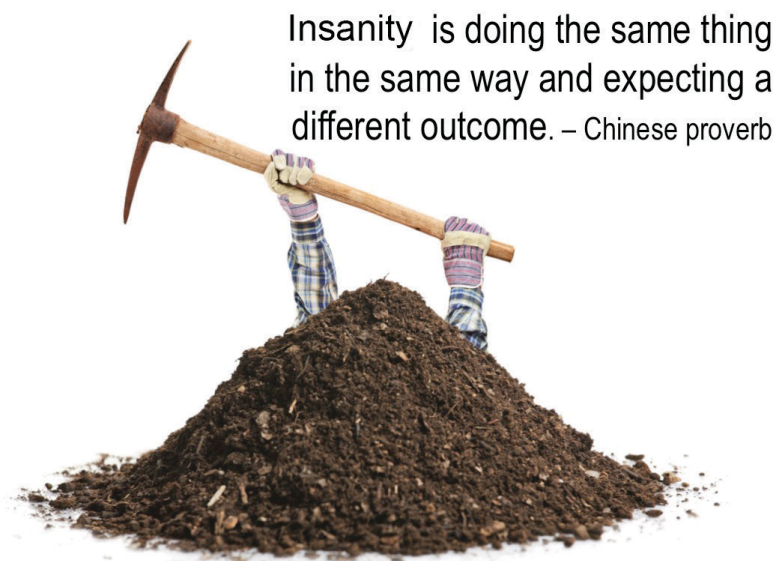
charactercounts.org/SE4

SE4 SUCCESS SKILLS AND ATTITUDES

SE4.10 Flexibility



Learn to adapt to changes rather than relying upon what might not have worked before. Adjust your attitude, approach and actions in order to cope with and get the best possible result from the new situation.



Insanity is doing the same thing in the same way and expecting a different outcome. – Chinese proverb

- 1.** If this proverb is true, what is the best way to avoid facing a situation that may not produce the best possible result?

- 2.** Why do you think people often choose the same decision again and again? How could you encourage a friend to make a different choice or to recognize the bad patterns and the choices he or she makes?

- 3.** Think of a situation where you made basically the same decision more than once. And it turned out badly both times. What caused you to keep making that decision?

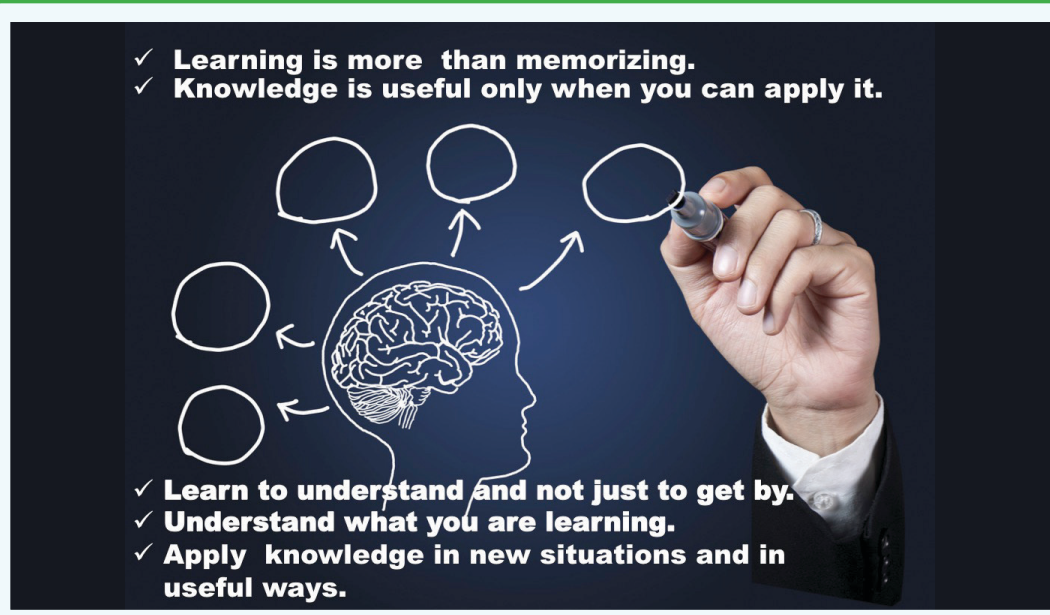
- 4.** What poor decisions have you seen those around you make?

- 5.** How can you learn from their mistakes and not have to make them yourself?





charactercounts.org/A4



School is more than the content found in the textbook. Think of what you are learning and how it can be applied to other situations. That is true for right now in middle school and the years to follow.

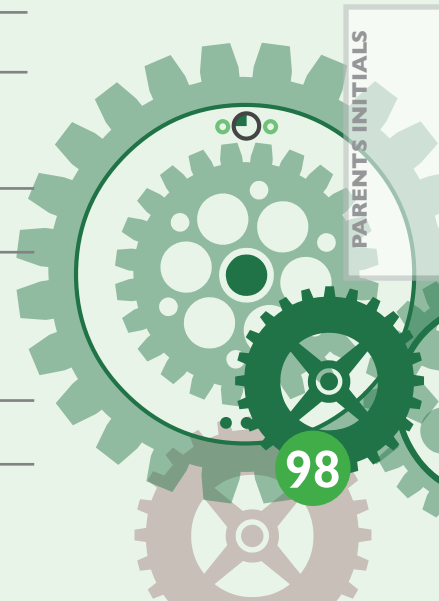
1. In what way does the picture reflect the five statements about learning?

2. If you could fast-forward your life, how old would you want to be and why?

3. How will what you are learning in school apply to what you want to do with your life? Why is this a hard question to answer?

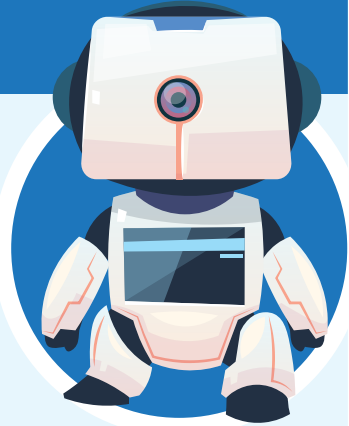
4. If you could have any three wishes granted, what would they be?

5. What is the best piece of advice you have been given?





charactercounts.org/CI



Learn to make positive decisions in difficult situations. Even though it may be a challenge, try to resist peer pressure and exercise self-control.

CI CHARACTER

CI.3 Responsibility for Character

If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to treat everything as if it were a nail. - Abraham Maslow



Read the following story:

There was a boy who had a bad temper. His dad gave him a bag of nails and told him to hammer a nail into a fence every time he lost his temper. The first day there were 37 nails. The boy worked to control his anger. As he did, the number of nails hammered dwindled down. It was easier to hold his temper than to drive nails into the fence. Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his dad who suggested to pull out one nail for each day he held his temper. Finally, all the nails were gone. "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. Even saying you're sorry, the wound is still there."

1. What does the quote mean? Compare the quote with the story.

2. How can a verbal wound be as bad as a physical one?

3. How can your words hurt others?

4. What would our school be like if everyone was treated with kindness and respect? Why is that hard for some students in middle school?





charactercounts.org/SEI

Life can be
difficult but
it's easy to
make it
better.



All you have to do is train your MIND to CELEBRATE the GOOD
and BEAUTIFUL in EVERY DAY. – Michael Josephson



*It's important
to recognize
the attitudes
and beliefs you
have about
things.*

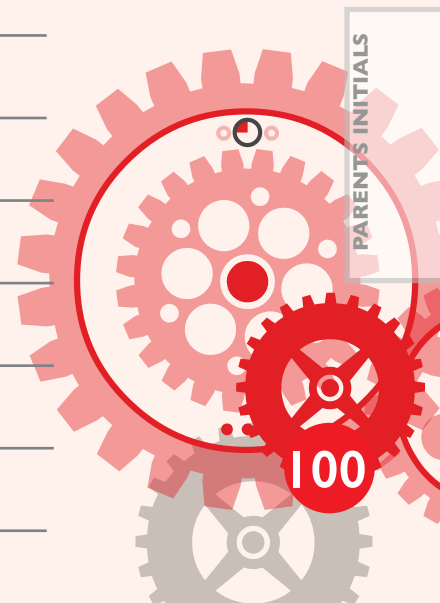
This is an opportunity for you to write 4 questions based on the picture and quote. After you write your questions, share with a partner. Then take both sets of questions and rewrite what could be part of a lesson for other middle school students.

1.

2.

3.

4.





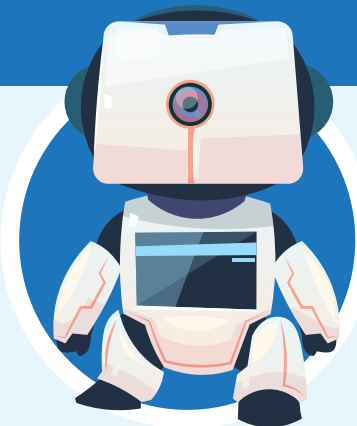
charactercounts.org/C2

C2

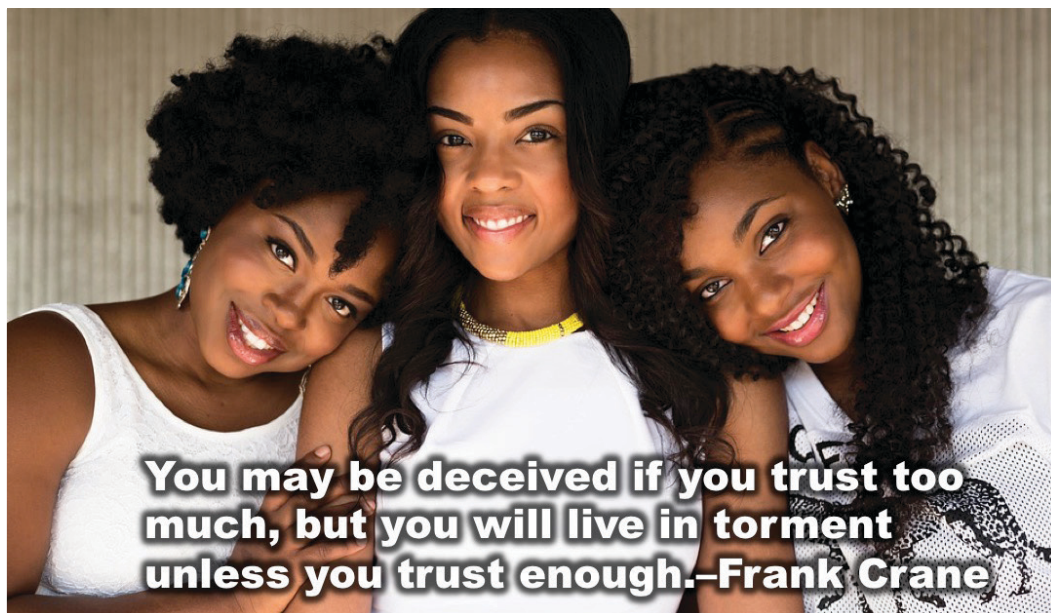
TRUSTWORTHINESS

C2.6

Loyalty



Strive to earn the trust of others by demonstrating the ethical virtues of integrity, honesty, promise-keeping, and loyalty.



You may be deceived if you trust too much, but you will live in torment unless you trust enough.—Frank Crane

1. Why will you live in torment unless you trust enough?

2. Would you rather be lied to or stolen from once in a while because you trust people, or always be right, but never able to depend on anyone for help? Explain your answer.

3. What would be examples of a situation when a person has no choice but to trust other people?

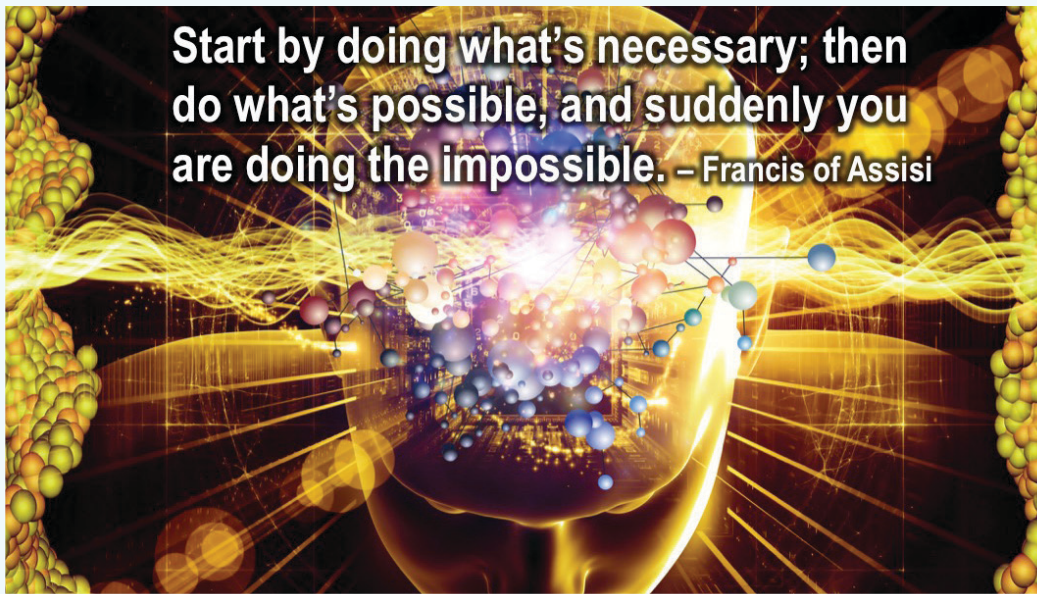
4. Think of a time when someone whom you trusted deceived you. What were the consequences?

5. Is it possible to be too trusting and not to be taken advantage of at some point? Explain your answer.





charactercounts.org/A3



Start by doing what's necessary; then
do what's possible, and suddenly you
are doing the impossible. – Francis of Assisi

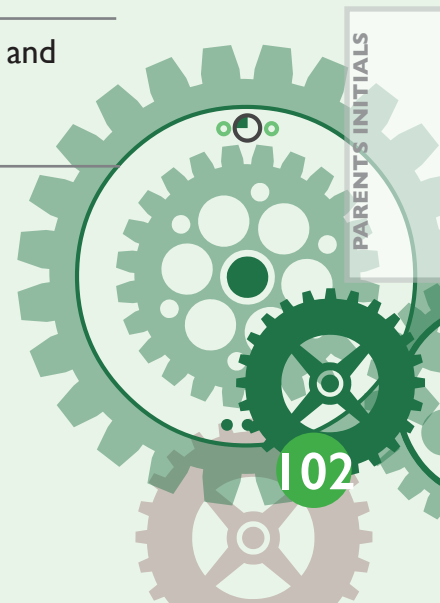


Read the following quote.

“I want to say to all the young women out there: There are going to be people along the way who try to undercut your success or take credit for your accomplishments or your fame. But if you just focus on the work and you don't let those people sidetrack you, someday, when you get where you're going, you will look around and you will know — it was you, and the people who love you, who put you there. And that will be the greatest feeling in the world.”

– Taylor Swift

1. Explain the connection between the quote and the story by Taylor Swift.
2. Why do you think it is important to start first with doing what's necessary?
3. Maybe you find yourself content to do the minimum to just try and get by. Is that a good thing? Why or why not?
4. Complete the following sentence prompts:
I consider myself a good...
What I enjoy most is...
The person I admire the most is...
I have a natural talent for...
Goals for my future are...
I know I will reach my goals because I am...
I feel good when I...
I've been successful at...





charactercounts.org/A2

A2

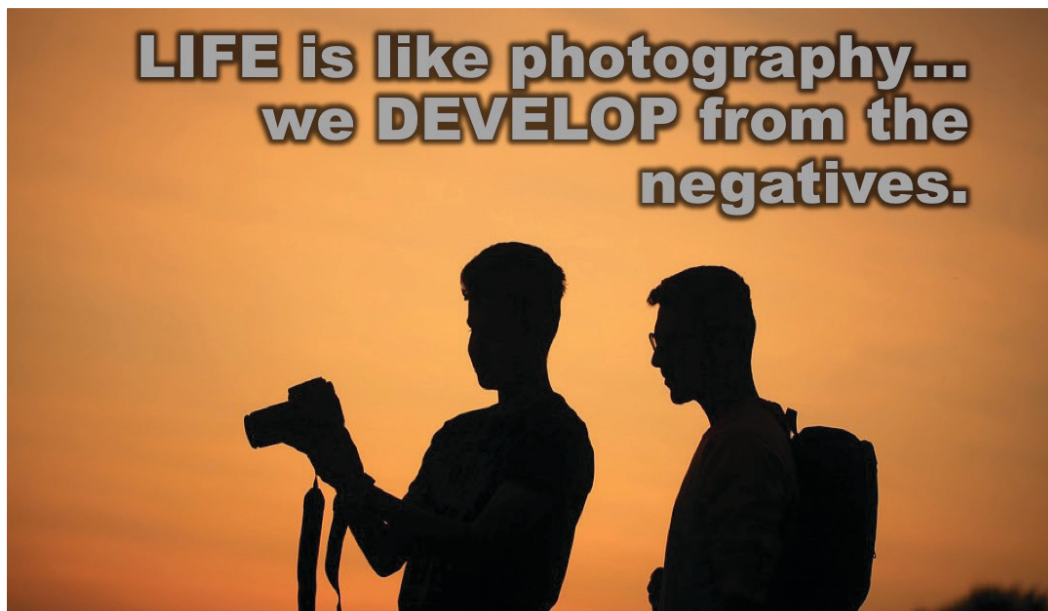
CONFIDENT AND DILIGENT LEARNERS

A2.2

Learning From Mistakes



If you do well in school, you will learn lessons from every failed attempt, using these unsuccessful efforts as stepping stones to new knowledge and skills.



Read the following story:

In the dark, the human eye adapts by enlarging the pupil. This allows as much light as possible to pass into the eye and onto the retina. If a bright light suddenly blazes—for instance, if a camera flashes or headlights abruptly come into view—large amounts of light pour through the pupil and can overwhelm the retina, leading to a condition called “flash blindness” when one’s vision is partially or even totally impaired. The brighter the light and the deeper the darkness, the more intense the effects of flash blindness are.

1. What is the connection between the story of flash blindness and the quote?

2. What would your definition of failure be?

3. What would you predict would happen if you fail at something and then give up?

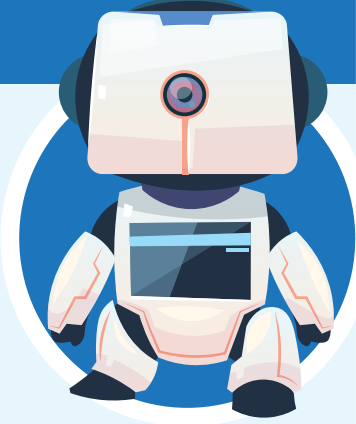
4. Why shouldn’t one think that failing at something means you’re unsuccessful?

5. What does this quote mean for a student? An adult in the workplace?





charactercounts.org/CI



Character not only defines who you are; it determines your future. It does not depend on how smart you are or the abilities you have as a student. The choice is yours.

CI COMMITMENT TO CHARACTER AND ETHICS

CI.2 Importance of Character



1. What does this quote mean to you? Agree? Disagree?

2. In what way can you say that character is a choice?

3. How about talent? Is this something you are born with as a gift or is it something you acquire? Explain your answer.

4. Why is character so important?

5. Is character about you and your values or is it about your interactions with others and their values? Explain your answer.





charactercounts.org/SEI



Being successful is about doing the best you can do in helping others. Only you can make things better in your own life.

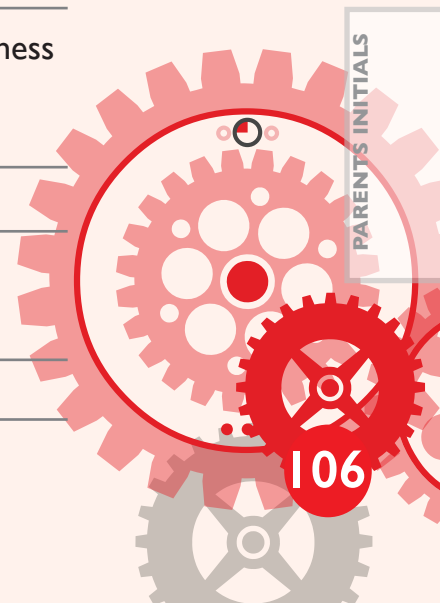
1. Why should you be kind? How can just saying 'hi' make someone's day?

2. When you say something nice to someone, do they have to say something nice back? Why or why not?

3. Why do you think everyone at your school is not nice to each other?

4. What little act of kindness have you shown lately? What act of kindness can you show today or this week?

5. In what way is happiness a character trait?





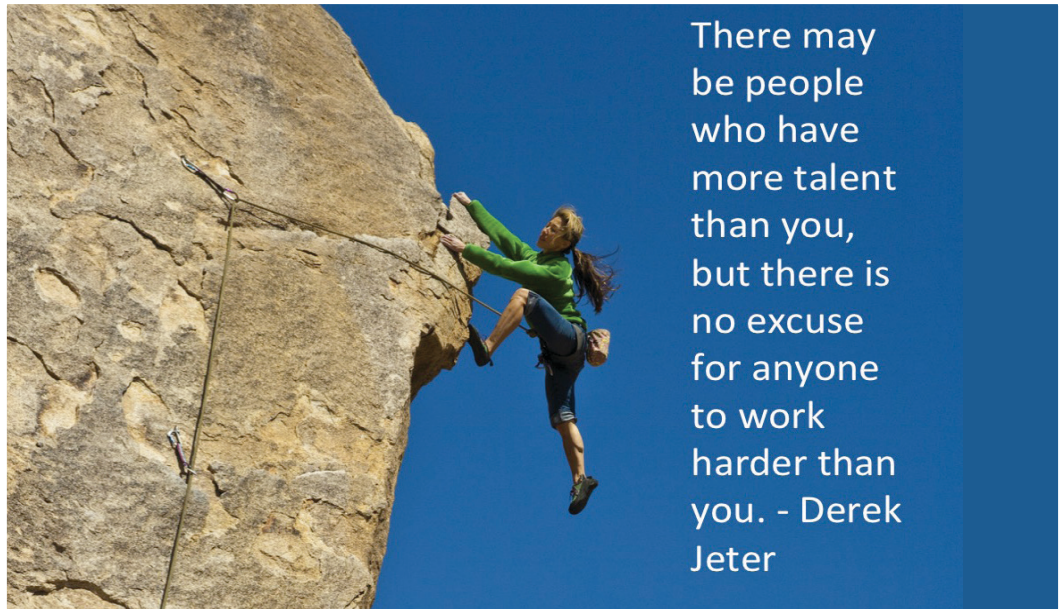
charactercounts.org/SE4

SE4 SUCCESS SKILLS AND ATTITUDES

SE4.7 Perseverance



Don't give up or quit. Choose instead to persist as long as you are able. Avoiding or quitting is often just an excuse for not wanting to work hard.



There may be people who have more talent than you, but there is no excuse for anyone to work harder than you. - Derek Jeter

Read the following story:

Beginning in Georgia's Amicalola State Park, a relatively unassuming path runs to the top of Springer Mountain. The hike is rigorous, ascending 2,000 feet over the course of 8.5 miles with particularly intense climbs near the end. Upon reaching the summit, however, hikers are summoned onward, for there you find the southern starting point of the Appalachian Trail, which stretches for another 2,181 miles. Now, that would be a hike!

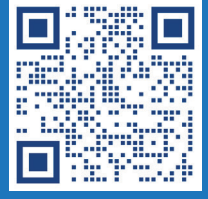
1. How hard do you work for your goals? How may you achieve your goals?

2. What does this quote mean for you as a student?

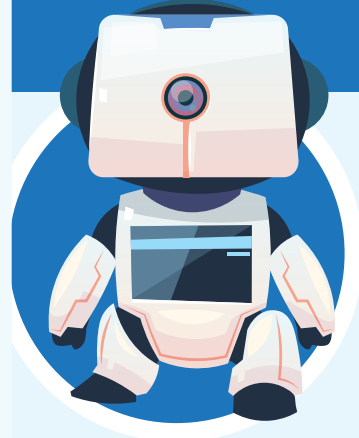
3. Grit is defined as passion and perseverance in pursuit of long-term goals. When you face a tough challenge, do you tell yourself the job is too hard or do you ask yourself, why not me? Explain your answer.

4. When you find yourself faced with an obstacle, what steps do you take to begin the process of overcoming this challenge?

5. Argue for or against the statement: "If you never quit, you'll never fail. You may lose, but you'll never fail."



charactercounts.org/C4



Realize that everyone needs to do what he or she can, even if they have other people willing to do everything for them.



If everything is done for me... how will I ever learn?

-John Flanagan,
The Emperor of Nihon-Ja

1. What does this quote mean to you?

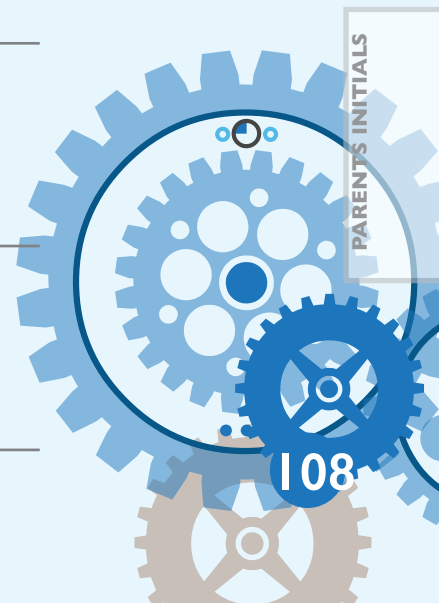
2. What kind of person do you think would have the biggest problem with this quote?

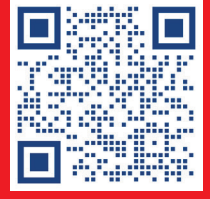
3. How can you apply this quote to your life?

4. If you had the option of having someone else do all of your work, would you let him or her? Why or why not?

5. Do you think there is any connection between being responsible and being trusted? Between being responsible and being respected? Explain your responses.

6. "Is this going to be on the test?" Why do students ask this question? Compare and contrast this statement with the quote from the Emperor of Nihon-Ja.




charactercounts.org/SEI


Only I can
change
my life. No
one can
do it for
me.

- Carol Burnett



You can't often
control what
happens in life,
but only you
can choose
how you want
to deal with
problems you
face.

1. How can someone relate to this quote? How can this quote be applied to your everyday life?

2. Do you agree or disagree with this quote? Why? Or why not?

3. Would you want someone to change your life? Why?

4. How or in what way would you make your life better?

5. In what way are all of the motivational sayings in the picture about change?



charactercounts.org/SE4

SE4 SUCCESS SKILLS AND ATTITUDES

SE4.8 Resilience



No one said it's easy. But do all you can to resist temptations and pressures to give up or quit. Choose instead to persist as long as you are able.



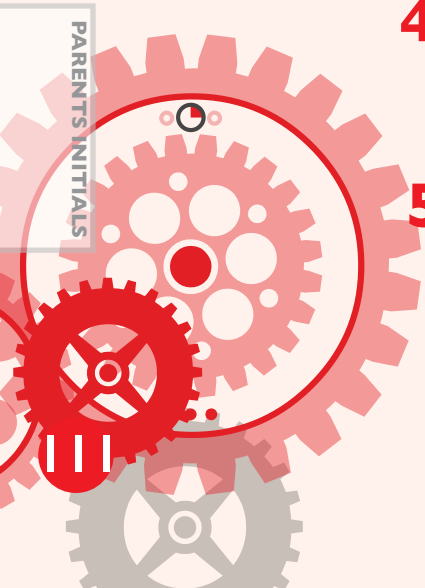
1. Do you agree or disagree with this quote?

2. Do you think that this is important in your everyday life as a student? Why or why not?

3. In your own words, can you change this quote? If so what could you change it to?

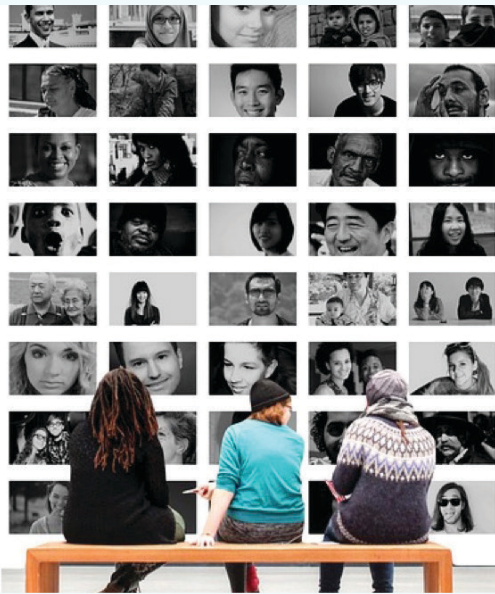
4. Do you think success is a gift or does it just show up randomly?

5. A student may say, "That's just the way I am." This implies that you have to be smart to get good grades and be a successful student. Do you think this is true? Explain your answer.





charactercounts.org/SE3



**People will
forget what
you said,
people will
forget what
you did, but
people will
never forget
how you made
them feel.
– Maya Angelou**



*You need to
be able to
recognize how
other people
are feeling
and then act
accordingly.*

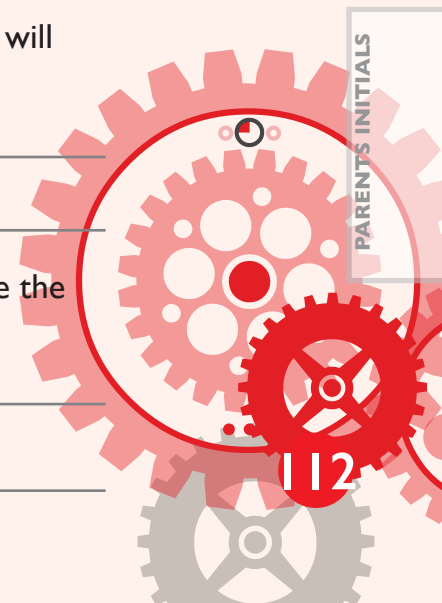
1. Why do you think Angelou emphasizes that you have an impact on the feelings of others?

2. What can you do to make sure that your words and actions make people feel good about themselves?

3. Do you agree or disagree with the idea expressed in this quote? Explain your answer.

4. Do you think most people consider how their words or actions will impact others' feelings? Why or why not?

5. How would being aware of your impact on others' feelings shape the way that you interact with them?





charactercounts.org/A2

A2 CONFIDENT AND DILIGENT LEARNERS

A2.1 Growth Mindset



You can change yourself for the better. Just be a little bit brave by trying new things. Happy and successful people are always trying to improve themselves.

You can do it!
In fact, you can do anything you put your mind to.



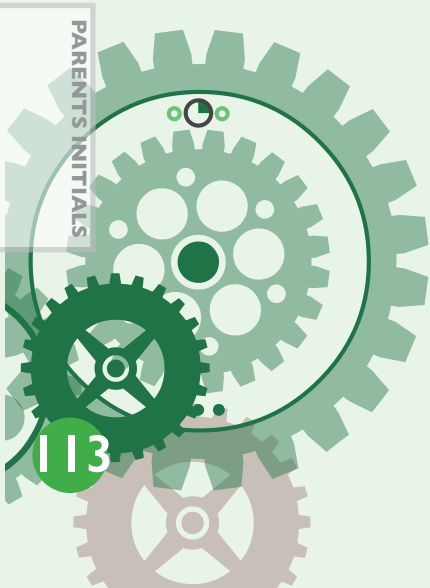
1. Have you ever tried to change one thing about yourself, or try something new? If so, what did you try to do?

2. Why are we afraid to try to do new things?

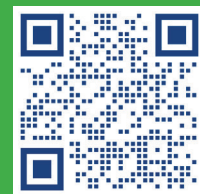
3. Who believes you can succeed? Why did you choose this person? How do you know he/she believes in you?

4. Name one new thing you have tried to do in the last month. Could you do it? What new thing are you willing to try this week?

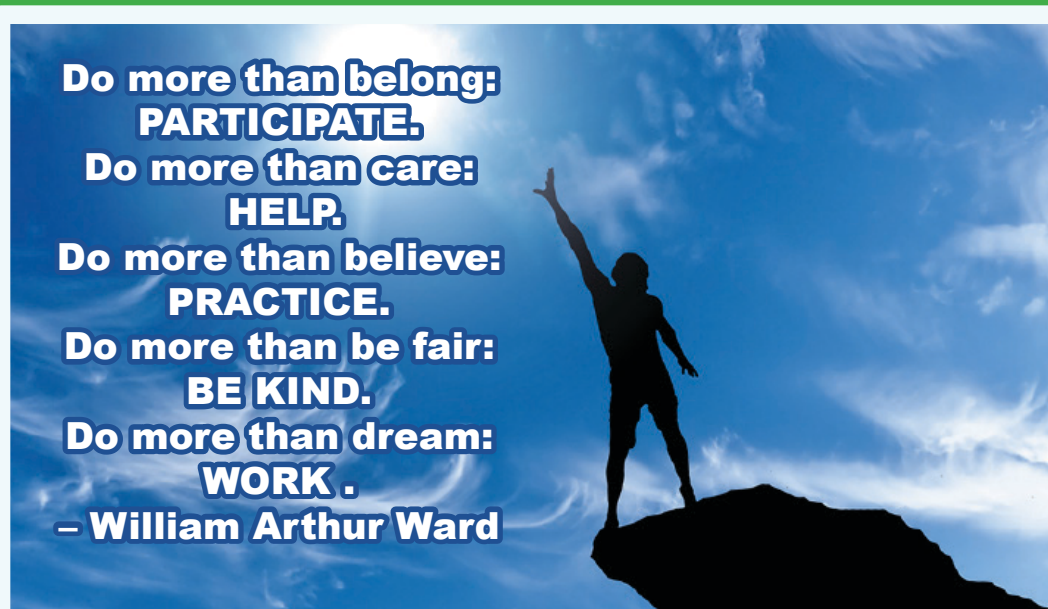
5. Why is it important to believe that you can do better? Is it true that only smart kids do well in school? Why do you feel this way?



PARENTS INITIALS



charactercounts.org/A3



1. Share something that you are proud of that you have done recently at school. It could be learning a new skill, reading a book that was not required for school, practicing to improve your ability to play an instrument, or mastering a computer game.

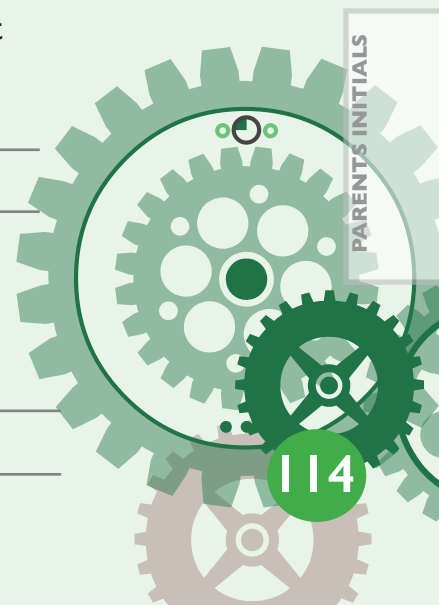
2. What does the quote have to say to you about being a student who is engaged in learning?

3. Was there anything that you thought you could not do? If so, what was it?

4. In addition to the skills found in the quote, list all of the ways that you can show your engagement at school.

5. You have been asked to share with 5th grade students, who will attend your middle school in the fall, key points about what it takes to survive middle school. What advice would you give?

As hard as it may be at times in school, be engaged in learning. Avoid just sitting there and waiting for the teacher to fill your head with knowledge only to be forced to recall what you have learned on the next test. You will be happier and more successful if you take charge of your learning.





charactercounts.org/SEI

SEI

SELF-AWARENESS

SEI.1

Traits and Attributes



It's important to recognize the attitudes and beliefs that you have about things.

Some people are like clouds. The day brightens when they go away.



Attitudes are contagious. Make sure yours are worth catching.

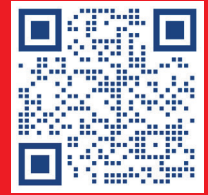
- 1.** Is there something you can learn from this quote as to how you should live your life?

- 2.** How would the world be different if everyone lived by this quote?

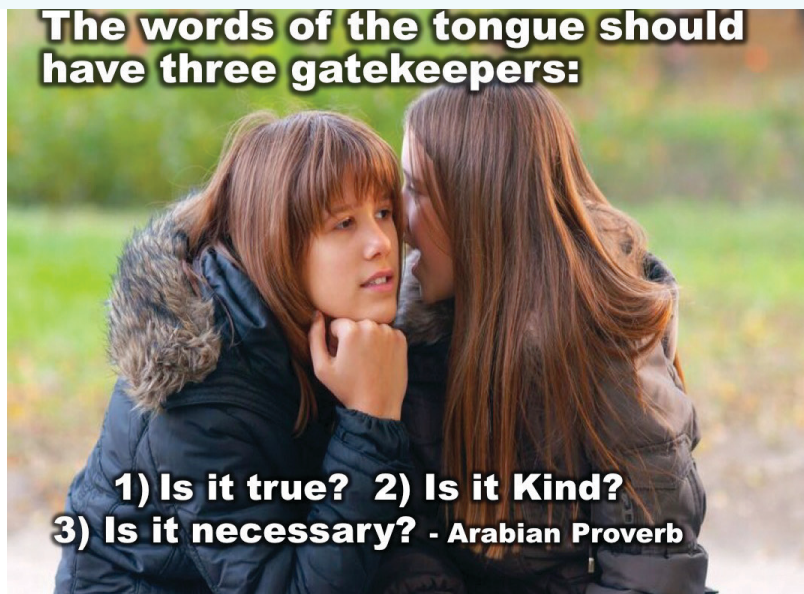
- 3.** How would the world be different if no one lived by this quote?

- 4.** You know that there are some students who have a negative attitude about everything at school. If you are with them, does that negativity spill over onto you? Or, do you try and avoid them? Why did you respond this way?

- 5.** Is this quote realistic or idealistic? Explain your reasoning.



charactercounts.org/SE3



You have a responsibility to communicate clearly with others. In all you say, make sure to express your views respectfully.

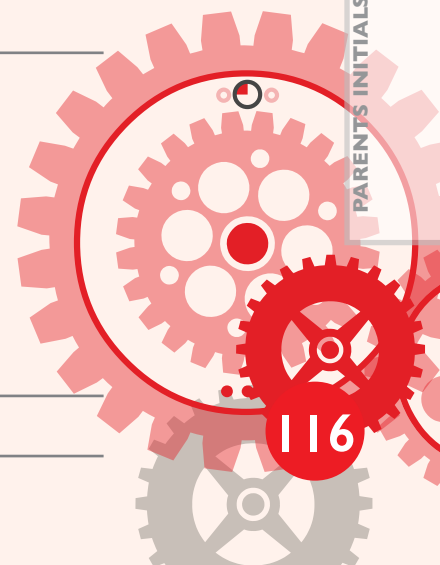
- 1.** What does this quote have to say about communication?

- 2.** What would school be like if everyone considered the three gatekeepers when communicating with others?

- 3.** Why is being a good listener an element of being one who communicates well with others?

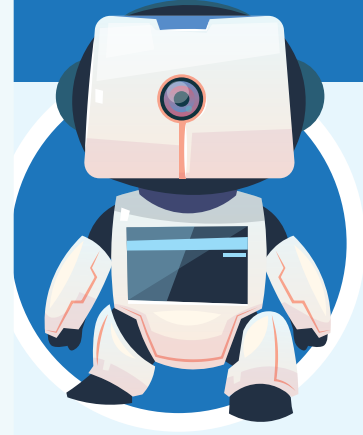
- 4.** What role does communication play in your role as a middle school student? How about when you have a job?

- 5.** A high school teacher identified procedures for having a conversation that includes appropriate non-verbal behavior. The strategy was identified as S.L.A.N.T. (Sit up straight. Listen. Answer and ask questions. Nod to show interest. Track the speaker.) In what way does each of the letters in “Slant” have something to do with being an effective communicator?





charactercounts.org/C4

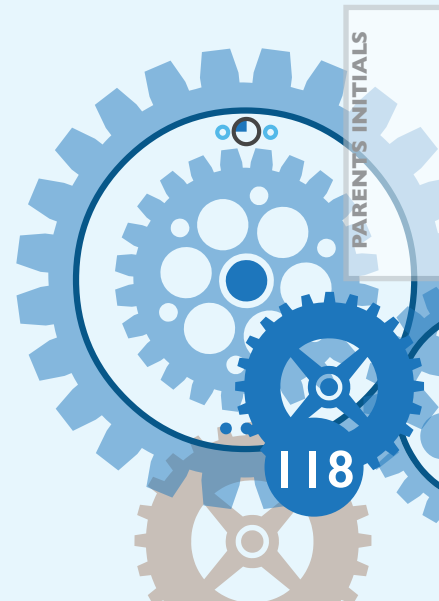


1. Complete the following sentence starter:

- When talking with other people, I am ...
- I can be a better listener by...
- When people make fun of me, I feel...
- I have the power to ...
- Insulting others is...
- My parents know I am responsible when...
- Consequences are ...

2. After writing complete sentences, now turn four of your statements into questions that could be asked of someone else in your class.

What you say affects other people. Use your words to affirm, support, and encourage others rather than humiliate, discourage, or demean them.





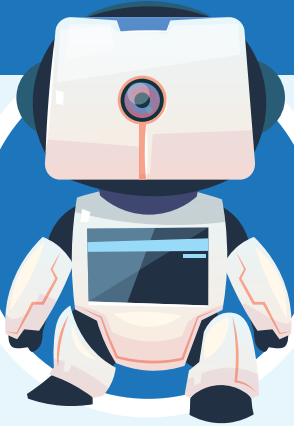
charactercounts.org/CI

CI

CHARACTER

CI.4

The Six Pillars of Character



This is your opportunity to share what it is you have come to learn about the importance of the Six Pillars of Character. The blank page is there for you find or draw the picture. It can be about one of the Pillars or good character. Then, add a quote either from someone else or write your own maxim, statement or quote. Finally, write 5 questions based on the picture and quote.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____