

CHARACTER CONNECTION

MAPLE AVENUE SCHOOL

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SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Positivity is a powerful change agent. For one thing, people who go through life with the positive perspective that the glass is half full are much happier and more productive than those who see it as half empty. It has nothing to do with how much water is really in the glass. What matters is how we think about how much water is in the glass.

In J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, the protagonist Frodo Baggins, laments to the great wizard Gandalf, "I wish it need not have happened in my time."

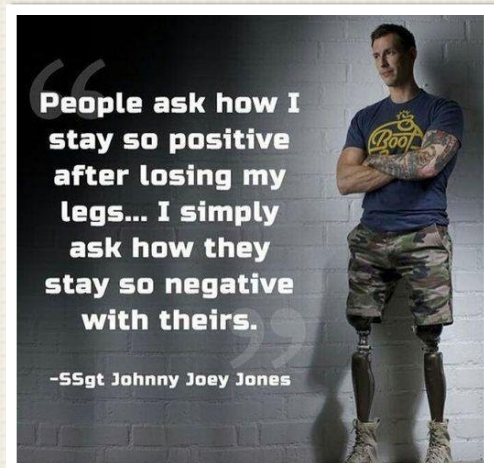
"So do I," Gandalf replies, "and do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."

It is safe to say that none of us wish that this pandemic had happened in our time. Nevertheless, from what I see and hear, the empowered teachers I know have decided what to do with the time that has been given to them. Without a doubt, that is to do the best they can to teach the children who are no longer occupying a seat in their class but are still a precious resource that has been entrusted to their care. Positive people build others up. They motivate and inspire. Those who are negative just blame and complain.

Positivity and optimism, then, are intrinsically beneficial states of mind. But that's just half of it. Positivity can actually change reality. People with positive outlooks are far more likely to overcome challenges and achieve success because they try. People who think they can and people who think they can't are both right because these beliefs are self-fulfilling prophecies.

I'm told that if you put fleas in a jar, they will jump out, but if you put a lid on the jar, the fleas will eventually learn to jump

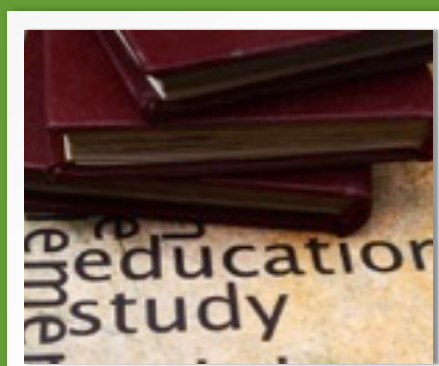
just high enough to avoid hitting the lid. If the lid is later removed, the fleas, conditioned by past failure, will still not jump high enough to get out of the jar.



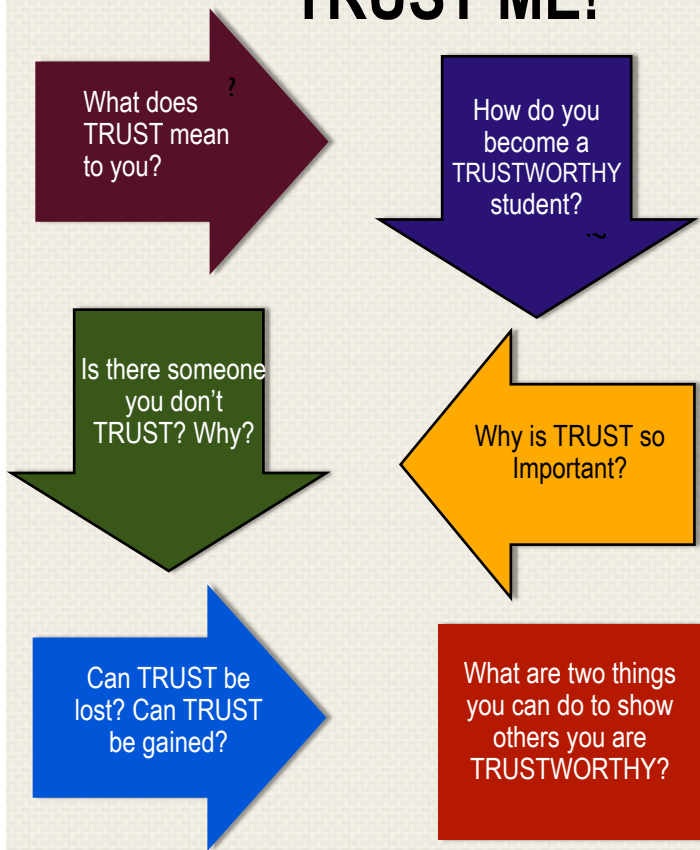
Let's be honest. If you are like me, in spite of the seemingly never-ending challenges facing us, we can remember that the bright days and dark days, triumphs and defeats can be viewed through the lens of positivity or disappointment. The lens you choose will determine how you experience these last weeks of a school year. Let's do this with hope and enthusiasm and not worry or fear. Choose the lens of positivity.

Gary Smit

"Choose to be optimistic, it feels better." Dalai Lama



TRUST ME!



Are You a Trustworthy Student?

True False

1. I keep my promises; I am a person of my word. **T F**
2. I am reliable; I follow through on what I am suppose to do. **T F**
3. I am honest. **T F**
4. I keep secrets; I never betray a confidence or a trust. **T F**
5. I have integrity; I don't cave in to temptation. **T F**
6. I am loyal when loyalty is appropriate. **T F**

I think I am/am not a trustworthy student because:

KEY BELIEFS ABOUT TRUSTWORTHINESS

- ❖ Trust is essential to all my important relationships.
- ❖ Honesty is the best policy.
- ❖ It is not worth it to lie or cheat because it hurts my character.
- ❖ Integrity is making sure what you do matches what you say.
- ❖ It is important to keep promises and do what I said I would do.

LESSON IDEAS ON TRUSTWORTHINESS

- Create your own chart on Trustworthiness like the one above and answer the questions in each box.
- Choose a trustworthy character from one of your stories or a book you are reading. Write about how this person shows trustworthy behavior.
- Search for examples of untrustworthy behavior in stories. Rewrite the story replacing untrustworthiness with behavior that is honest and reflects integrity or promise-keeping.
- Create a play, skit or puppet show that shows trustworthy heroes.
- Prepare a two-column poster with a list of do's and don'ts for increasing trust.

STUDENT VIDEO LESSONS

- **Liar, Liar** – A lawyer cannot lie due to his son's birthday wish. He argues that everyone has to lie, but his son won't buy it. <https://bit.ly/2VMW0px>
- **Purse** – Watch to see what happens when you think the young man is stealing a purse. <https://bit.ly/2KkTdyw>
- **Cool Runnings** – An Olympic bobsled coach explains to a member of his current team why he cheated in the past. <https://bit.ly/2VpF6y8>

Answer these questions:

1. Where in these videos is an example of someone who is trusted?
2. Where did you see untrustworthy behavior?
3. Why is being trustworthy hard?
4. What happens when you are caught telling a lie? How about if you are caught cheating?

TRUST IS LIKE AN ERASER, IT GETS SMALLER AND SMALLER AFTER EVERY MISTAKE.

GREAT JOB IN MAKING SURE CHARACTER COUNTS AT MAPLE AVENUE

Congratulations to the Maple Avenue team for all the ways you are still making character count in your virtual work and communications with students. Thanks to the many many teachers who have added a CHARACTER COUNTS tab, with great information, to their Niagara Falls teacher web page. Kudos!!