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The Nature of Transfer from the Concepts and Vocabulary Taught in a Character Education Unit to Students Classroom Discourse

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ABSTRACT

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This action research study was conducted to inform my teaching practices on character education. The purpose of this study was to better understand the nature of transfer from the concepts of character taught in lessons to students' classroom discourse. Data were systematically collected from student comments, class meetings, and student reflection journals during a 13-week character education unit. Their discourse was coded and analyzed for evidence of transfer through an iterative process that allowed for ongoing comparison of the data. Evidence of transfer was identified only once prior to the eleventh week of the study. However, during the eleventh week, evidence of transfer was identified in the discourse of nine out of the 31 student-participants and continued to be evident in the data throughout the remainder of the study. Implications for my teaching based on the findings of the study focused on the importance of time in relation to transfer, the role of specific strategies for enhancing transfer, and the importance of understanding how to identify evidence of transfer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Tragedies occurring within the past several years, such as the Columbine High School Massacre in 1999 and the Virginia Tech Massacre in 2007, have contributed to a nationwide concern for the moral decline of American's youth and a renewed interest in character education (Bryant, 2008). Signs of moral decline such as violence, vandalism, stealing, cheating, disrespect for authority, peer cruelty, bigotry, offensive language, sexual promiscuity, self-destructive behavior, abuse, increasing self-centeredness, and declining civic responsibility have increased in the United States over time (Lickona, 1991). This degeneration has not gone unnoticed by the public, and many question who is responsible for educating the nation's youth in the values essential for developing moral character. While most would agree that parents hold the primary responsibility for teaching their children moral values (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999), others believe that public schools and the community should assume the responsibility for preparing children with the knowledge and skills needed to lead principled lives. Ultimately, however, character education is considered a shared responsibility of parents, teachers, and the community (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

The responsibility for character education in the schools becomes the stewardship of the classroom teacher. While character education is not typically part of the core curriculum for which teachers are held accountable, the majority of teachers recognize the need for character education as part of instruction (Mathison, 1998). In spite of acknowledging the importance of character education, many teachers have been criticized for not including character education in their classroom teaching (Milson & Mehlig, 2002). Educators have identified time restraints (Mathison, 1998) and high expectations for students' academic achievement (Chang & Munoz,

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2006) as the main reasons for not including character education in their instruction. Nevertheless, former Secretary of Education, Margaret Spelling, affirmed that public education is not limited to academic preparation when she declared "Education at its best should expand the mind and build character" (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Statement of Problem

Addressing both academic and character education in the school curriculum presents a challenge to classroom teachers who report that meeting even minimal expectations for accountability is limited by the time and resources available to them. Including all areas of the curriculum within the time frame of the school day and year requires teachers to strategically plan their curriculum as efficiently and effectively as possible (Mathison, 1998). Educators often integrate character education into those areas of the curriculum for which they are held most accountable—specifically literacy (Edgington, 2002; Lickona, 1991; Sanchez & Stewart, 2006; Smagorinsky, 2000). Integrating character education into the literacy curriculum allows the teacher to present concepts of character through texts (e.g., written, oral, visual), discourse, and experiences embedded in literacy instruction. Simply including character education in the curriculum, however, does not ensure that students are transferring the concepts and skills to live moral lives (Lickona, 1991; Perkins & Salomon, 1988, 1992).

Statement of Purpose and Research Question

Since limited research has been conducted on the impact of character education on students' real life understandings and behaviors, there is a need for further inquiry into the usefulness of character education in classrooms (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvez, 1999; Leming, 1993). My purpose for conducting this study was to better understand the impact of character education on the lives of my students. I also wanted to understand effective strategies for enhancing the acquisition of

character traits taught during class instruction. The question guiding my study was "When a character education unit is integrated into the language arts curriculum, what is the nature of transfer from vocabulary and concepts taught in the unit to students' class discourse?"

Definition of Terms

The following definitions were created to provide clarification of the terms used in this study.

Approximations: Ongoing demonstrations of understanding by learners that indicate they are progressing toward transfer of learning.

Character education: Curriculum fostering ethical, responsible, and caring young people through deliberate and proactive emphasis on universal moral values. Universal moral values include but are not limited to: respect, responsibility, honesty, fairness, tolerance, prudence, self-discipline, helpfulness, compassion, cooperation, and courage. Because of the close relationship between character education and moral education, the terms are used interchangeably.

Classroom discourse: The oral and written language, which teachers and students use to communicate with each other in the classroom.

Human decency: Treating others with kind or respectable behavior.

Human dignity: Feelings of self-worth.

Respect: Treating others with consideration and regarding places and things with esteem or honor.

Responsibility: Being accountable for one's own actions and being accountable for someone or something else.

Texts: Representational forms used to communicate, synthesize, or express ideas are referred to as texts. Texts include written language, oral language, and visual images.

Transfer: The application of learning from one context to another context.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Prior to this study I conducted a review of the literature to gain background knowledge I needed to support my investigation of the research question. I examined research on character education, transfer of learning, and approximation, which are each discussed in the context of this chapter.

Review of Character Education History

The terms *character education* and *moral education* are frequently used interchangeably (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006). Both relate to fostering ethical, responsible, and caring young people through deliberate and proactive emphasis on universal moral values, values which include but are not limited to respect, responsibility, honesty, fairness, tolerance, prudence, self-discipline, helpfulness, compassion, cooperation, and courage (Character Education Partnership, 2010). These principles are considered to be universal values because they affirm universal human worth and dignity (Lickona, 1991).

Since the time of Socrates, numerous political systems have struggled to shape the character of their young people (Glanzer & Milson, 2006). Early in the history of the United States character education was emphasized and has continued to be a subject of debate as decisions continue to be made about whose values are represented and where they should be taught (Glanzer & Milson, 2006). In the following sections the history of character education in America will be briefly outlined.

Character education in the 1600s. The history of moral education in America begins with the early American settlers who sought to cultivate moral character in their young (Davis, 2006; Laud, 1997; Lerner, 2007; Meyer, 1990). Written texts assumed an important role in

transmitting concepts associated with principled character. The moral precepts of the Bible, many colonists believed, would lead to individual salvation and ethical citizenship. In schools that emerged in early 17th century, America placed great importance on moral education and used the Bible as a textbook (Davis, 2006; Laud, 1997), in addition to the *New England Primer*, *McGuffey Reader,* and hornbooks. These limited selections of Christian-based texts became the method for transmitting moral and character values within school settings (Ellenwood, 2007, Laud, 1997).

Character education in the 1700s—1800s. In the mid-1700s, texts continued to be the main source of transmitting character values. Benjamin Harris' *New England Primer* replaced hornbooks as the major text to convey moral ideas. Teachers used the primer to teach character directly, so there was little room for misinterpretation. The primer included the letters of the alphabet as part of short moral poems, statements of resolve, and catechisms. Each component placed emphasis on the values of respect, obedience, honesty, human kindness, hard work, and forgiveness. Nearly every page related to moral values, particularly to those also taught in the Bible (Laud, 1997).

After the American Revolution, the national government passed the Act of 1787, which named religion, morality, and knowledge as necessary to government, schools, and education. This was the first time in the United States that knowledge was identified as a basic premise for education. Consequently, the *New England Primer*, revised in the early 1800s, held fewer Biblical references although moral messages continued to dominate the context (Laud, 1997). The *McGuffey Reader* of the late 1800s had a still further reduced Biblical tone, but nevertheless reinforced the importance of principled citizenship through examples of the rewards of moral behavior and the consequences of amoral behavior (Ellenwood, 2007; Laud, 1997).

After the Act was passed, the number of public schools funded by the federal government continued to grow, and as the general population of the United States grew, the federal government was unable to meet localized needs. As a result, state governments were given responsibility for the education system. Making decisions about whose values would be taught in the school curriculum and what methods would be used to teach them became new issues for states across the nation to address (Davis, 2006). The Bible and other texts traditionally used to transmit moral and character ideals were questioned for their appropriateness in representing the religious and moral positions of the increasingly diverse populations within the states (Davis, 2006).

The role of religion and moral values in public education was the cause of heated debates throughout the states during the early 19th century as religious pluralism increased (Davis, 2006). In one such argument at a Philadelphia school board meeting in 1844, 13 people were killed during a disagreement that erupted concerning the character and religious content that should be adopted by the schools. While this represented an extreme response to the issue, there were other such reactions that were illustrative of the emotionally held commitments of citizens to ensure that specific moral values were included in the school curriculum (Davis, 2006). In spite of differing views on what should be taught, character education remained part of the public school curriculum, in some form, throughout the states.

Character education in the 1900s. Just after the turn of the 20th century, character education had become a nation wide movement. Rapid growth of the national population along with mandatory school attendance laws increased educators attention to not only preparing larger numbers of youth academically, but also on the need for life skills and moral values (Provasnik, 2006). Emphasis on character development increased to address these needs.

By the late 1920s, however, many in American society became focused on the new "scientific approach" that came out of the philosophies of scientists and educators such as Dewey (Lerner, 2007). Efforts by educators to adjust the public school curriculum so that these new philosophies were reflected created tension among those who espoused traditional values and felt that religion and morality were undermined by the new scientific values (Cunningham, 2005; Lerner, 2007). The debates over what should be included in the curriculum continued at various levels of intensity throughout the 1920s and 1930s as questions continued to prompt introspection and argument over whose values should constitute the basis for the character education curriculum taught in the schools (Cunningham, 2005).

Following World War II, character and moral education were again emphasized in the public school curriculum. In response to the prejudicial crimes enacted toward people based on their race or religion during the war, the American public and the National Education Association agreed that schooling should include religious and moral values (Lerner, 2007).

In spite of the increased commitment to character education after World War II, by the mid-1950s character education was once again a subject of scrutiny and question. The American public began to raise issues directed at the religious overtones associated with character education being taught in the public schools, placing suspicion on educators who were charged with the responsibility of teaching character. The Red Scare and fear of communism also added to a nation-wide concern over the content being taught in schools. Teachers became fearful of losing their jobs and were reluctant to engage in discussions involving morals or values. (Cunningham, 2005; Lerner, 2007). As a result, character education was ignored and academic subject areas became favored, as they were the less controversial components of the curriculum.

By the 1960s religious education and character education in public schools became separate entities. In 1962, the Supreme Court prohibited school-required and school-sponsored prayers in the *Engel v. Viale* decision, and just one year later, banned mandatory Bible readings in their *Abington School District v. Schempp* ruling. These Supreme Court decisions impacted character education in the schools by eliminating prayer and the use of the Bible to teach values (Glanzer & Milson, 2006). For the first time since the early colonists had incorporated moral education in the schools, the Bible no longer could be used as a text for teaching character and values. While legislation had removed religion and the Bible from public education, moral values and character education remained a part of the public school curriculum. Ellenwood (2007) stated,

> On matters of values in a free and diverse society, ultimately it is probably not possible for schools to mandate values or coerce them on their students. But neither is it possible to remain purely value-neutral . . . No matter what schools do, even if they remain totally silent on moral or value issues, they will communicate a set of values to young people.
>
> (p. 26)

Davis (2006) added that, "While teachers cannot teach students to be religious, they can still teach them to have values and character" (p. 9). Without the availability of the Bible to teach moral values, new secular approaches to character education began to develop (Glanzer & Milson, 2006).

By 1966 a new approach to character education, *values clarification* (Raths, Harmin, and Simon, 1966), was fully entrenched into school systems across the nation. Values clarification encouraged students to consider the moral, ethical, and social implications of their decisions in light of their personal understandings, values, and preferences (Davis, 2006; Ellenwood, 2007).

This philosophy and method for teaching character education affirmed the personal values of the individual, no matter what they were, as long as the person could provide justification for their decisions. Although the values-clarification movement contributed to the return to teaching values in schools, the method it promoted has been the subject of considerable criticism (Ellenwood, 2007). Many educators and politicians condemned values clarification for promoting value neutrality and supporting self-indulgence (Harmin, 1988) instead of promoting moral discussions that help students develop sound values (Bennett, 1988; Davis, 2006; Glanzer & Milson, 2006; Lickona, 1991). Eventually the founders of values clarification recognized the shortcomings of their program and acknowledged:

> Our emphasis on value neutrality probably did undermine traditional morality . . . As I look back, it would have been better had we presented a more balanced picture, had we emphasized the importance of helping students both to clarify their own personal values *and* to adopt society's moral values . . . It makes a good deal of sense to say that truthfulness is better then deception, caring is better than hurting, loyalty is better than betrayal, and sharing better than exploitation. (Harmin, 1988, p. 25)

It was not long until other approaches to moral education began to rival the values clarification movement (Lickona, 1991).

As public support for character education continued throughout the 1960s and the early 1970s, interest in moral development as an area of psychological study also came into public awareness. Most notable of those who studied moral development was Kohlberg. Kohlberg theorized that the ability to reason through moral issues was developmental and occurred in a series of stages (Davis, 2006; Ellenwood, 2007, Lickona, 1991). He maintained that people always move from one developmental stage to the other sequentially without ever skipping a

stage, rarely regressing (McClellan, 1999). Kohlberg's theory of moral development provided a foundation for character education programs that addressed the sequential development of moral understandings in students (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989).

During the late 1980s and 1990s, advocacy for character education increased across the nation. Better understandings of moral development and a new focus on virtue instead of values clarification became the new agenda for the curriculum of character education (e.g. Bennett, 1988; Lickona, 1991; Ryan, 1986). Programs were promoted that made character education more explicit and part of the expected curriculum in every classroom (Glanzer & Milson, 2006). New programs were developed and produced that addressed the qualities of respect, responsibility, honesty, kindness, fairness, and other values that would serve as guiding principles of character. Community members, business leaders, educators, and parents were consulted in determining the values taught and the ethical issues addressed by schools and classrooms (Jones, Ryan, & Bohlin, 1998). National and statewide conferences were held to address the need for character education in schools and to prepare teachers in the curriculum of character education. Legislation to support character education was enacted by individual states, and the U.S. Department of Education granted millions of dollars to support the states in their efforts. For the first time since its secularization, character education held a place of importance in the public school curriculum (Glanzer & Milson, 2006).

Character education today. Character education in the 21st century has continued to build upon the success established in the late 1990s. State legislation has universally supported character education by creating new laws or changing old laws related to moral and civic education (Glanzer & Milson, 2006). The current trend in character education is to focus on teaching universal core values (Ellenwood, 2007). However, character education today is much

more complex than the traditional character education of past decades. As indicated by Glanzer and Milson, "Most character educators today acknowledge the variety of factors that contribute to character development and advocate approaches that consider both the individual and the social dimensions of character education" (2006, p. 533). This conception is labeled *comprehensive* character education.

Addressing the complexity of character education requires educators to understand and use a variety of strategies for teaching that enhance student learning. Modeling and the use of literature to teach moral virtues have been found to be most effective for teaching moral decision-making (Prestwich, 2004). Educators are particularly important as role models to students. Character traits and virtues modeled by significant adults allow students to have first hand exposure to positive examples and encourage similar behaviors (Glanzer & Milson, 2006).

Using quality literature as a basis for character education is similar to earlier practices of using the Bible and other texts to teach values and character. The goal of literature-based character education is that students will transfer the knowledge about character gained from text into social, moral, and personal identities that will ultimately transfer into their everyday lives (Bean & Moni, 2003; McCarthey & Moje, 2002; Worthom, 2004).

Transfer of Learning

Transfer of learning is one of the fundamental goals of education and is an essential aspect of character education (De Corte, 2003). The application of learning from one context to another is referred to as *transfer* (Perkins & Salomon, 1988, 1992). In an educational setting, it is one thing for students to be able to comprehend a new concept or skill, but it is another thing for them to be able to apply the concept or skill in a setting outside of the classroom.

Character education lessons and units are created with the purpose of providing a context for learning that will encourage students to make connections between what they learn in the classroom and situations that arise in their everyday lives (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn, & Smith, 2006; Berkowitz, 1998; Lickona, 1991; Perkins & Salomon, 1988, 1992; Revell, 2002). Classroom teachers cannot provide their students with all of the experiences and information they need to confront every situation they will encounter. However, teachers can provide opportunities for their students to apply their learning to different types of situations by using effective strategies for enhancing transfer (Mayer & Whittrock, 1996). These strategies are also effective in preparing students to transfer the concepts and skills they learn from the classroom context to the real-life contexts they will encounter outside of school (Perkins & Salomon, 1988). In the next sections, types of transfer and effective strategies for enhancing transfer will be discussed.

Types of transfer. There are two basic types of transfer, *near transfer* and *far transfer* (Perkins & Salomon, 1988, 1992). Acquiring near and far transfer is equally important for students since they will eventually face situations during their lives requiring both near and far transfer (Perkins & Salomon, 1992). Near transfer refers to transfer between contexts that are very similar (Perkins & Salomon, 1992). An example of near transfer is applying the ability to drive a standard transmission Honda Civic to driving a standard transmission Toyota Corolla. In this type of transfer, the knowledge and skills needed to drive the Honda are very similar to those needed to drive the Toyota (Wilhelm, 2008).

In contrast, far transfer refers to transfer between contexts that appear, on the surface, to be unrelated (Perkins & Salomon, 1992). An example of far transfer is applying the ability to drive a standard transmission Honda Civic to driving a Massy-Ferguson tractor that has three

clutches (Wilhelm, 2008). Near transfer is achieved through memorization and routine performance, whereas far transfer entails searching for connections and patterns that can be used to create new meanings and apply knowledge in a new way (Wilhelm, 2008). Both near and far transfer are required for students to apply academic learning and concepts of character education.

Strategies to enhance transfer. It is important to understand strategies to enhance both near and far transfer, because transfer oftentimes does not occur unless instructional strategies are purposefully incorporated in the curriculum (Mayer & Whittrock, 1996; Perkins & Salomon, 1988, 1992). Strategies to enhance transfer in classroom settings often include using literature, encouraging reflections, and promoting social interaction.

Using literature. The study of literature has been advocated as an effective strategy to transform the social, civic, and moral behaviors of youth (Edgington, 2002; Lickona, 1991; Sanchez & Stewart, 2006; Smagorinsky, 2000). At the center of the themes found in literature are questions concerning identity and values associated with moral character. Ellenwood and McLaren (1994) suggested that "literature is an effective antidote to the intrinsic impulsiveness of adolescents" (p. 2) and that a useful practice of good teachers is to connect the ideas found in literature to the choices found in real life. As students read and discuss these themes, they can better understand how to approach the formation of their own social, moral, and personal identities (Bean & Moni, 2003; McCarthey & Moje, 2002; Worthom, 2004).

The relationship between literature and identity formation demonstrates that both readers and writers can come to understand themselves better through engaging with text (McCarthey & Moje, 2002). One of the reasons that literature is such a powerful tool in transforming and shaping the identity and character formation of adolescents is that literature has potential relevance to their lives (Edgington, 2002). Literature relating to the real problems and

experiences of adolescents is often referred to as adolescent literature. In general, adolescent literature is written for readers between the ages of 12 and 18 and is therefore often found in upper-elementary classrooms, middle schools, and high schools (Naidoo & Bryant, 2007). Adolescent literature is of particular relevance to students in the adolescent age group in that it addresses issues commonly confronted by adolescents, including racism, pregnancy, divorce, substance abuse, family conflicts, and political injustice (Bean & Moni, 2003).

The life experiences of children and youth can be enriched through literature partly because the study of literature provides adolescents with the opportunity to contrast their experiences with the experiences of the characters found in literature (Bransford & Schwartz, 1999). Students may view the characters found in literature as living people, wrestling with problems similar to those they themselves face (Bean & Moni, 2003; Bean & Rigoni, 2001). Literature invites the reader to care about the characters and become vicariously involved with their fate (Ellenwood & McLaren, 1994).

Encouraging reflections. Reflection has also been identified as an effective strategy for enhancing transfer of learning (De Corte, 2003). As students reflect on the decisions of those they observe in real life or on fictional characters within texts, they can decide how they personally would have responded to those decisions. Each personal reflection has the potential to gradually influence the thoughts and actions of the reader (Developing Character Through Literature, 2002). Thus, personal reflection increases the probability that transfer will occur (De Corte, 2003). For this reason, it is essential for teachers to guide students to develop the habit of personal reflection (Ellenwood & McLaren, 1994).

Collaborative reflection is equally important in fostering transfer and character development in children (Lenters, 2006; Reeves, 2004). A collaboratively reflective classroom

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promotes discussions concerning the themes of literature and moral identity and invites articulation along with reflection. Carefully guided collaborative reflection opportunities in the classroom can be particularly effective with young adolescents who are able to form alliances with their peer groups and be validated in their thinking as they develop their understandings of moral issues (Spano, 2004). The communication associated with collaboration and reflection enables students to glean from each other's understandings and personal reflections.

Promoting social interaction. In addition to using literature and encouraging personal reflection to enhance transfer of learning, teachers should routinely provide opportunities for students to reflect and interact socially with their peers (Bean & Moni, 2003; De Corte, 2003). Learning in a majority of settings is part of a social activity (Lyle, 2008). Therefore, an environment that provides multiple opportunities for social interaction facilitates transfer of learning (De Corte, 2003). Social interaction in classroom settings is not difficult to promote, but for transfer to occur the interactions must be purposefully directed (Lickona, 1991).

Regularly scheduled class meetings provide a context to support transfer of character education and promote social interaction as students work together to solve problems. Using class meetings leads to the development of listening skills, empathy, and a positive classroom climate (Wolf & Rickard, 2003). Such meetings emphasize interactive discussion and collaborative decision-making among class members (Glasser, 1978; Lickona, 1991). During class meetings students are given the opportunity to share the current events in their lives and communicate their grievances (Lickona, 1991; Passe, 2006; Triplett & Hunter, 2005). These meetings provide a context for students to transfer concepts of character education to their everyday lives by discussing potential solutions to real problems (Lickona, 1991).

Approximation of Learning

Approximations are ongoing demonstrations of understanding by learners that indicate they are progressing toward transfer of learning. Transfer of learning seldom occurs all at once. Ongoing approximations are part of the learning process and aid students in eventually transferring ideas from one context to another. When students are learning a new concept or skill, they should not be expected to understand all aspects of the concept before demonstrating what they know. Approximations allow students to eventually find and make connections between what they have learned previously and the new concept they are studying (Cambourne, 1995).

Close approximations to a new concept should be expected and encouraged by classroom teachers. Approximations indicate that students are beginning to "take control of the concept and knowledge involved" as they are learning (Cambourne, 1995, p. 188). In other words, approximations indicate that students are taking steps towards transfer. It is important that teachers recognize approximations as indicators of learning so they know how well their students are progressing toward transfer. This understanding also helps teachers to appropriately apply additional strategies to enhance students' transfer as needed (Cambourne, 1995).

Chapter 3

Methods

I conducted this study to further my understanding of the transfer of learning from a character education unit I taught in my classroom to my students' discourse. One question guided my inquiry: When a character education unit is integrated into the language arts curriculum, what is the nature of transfer from vocabulary and concepts taught in the unit to students' class discourse? In this chapter the design, data sources, character education unit, setting, participants, procedures, data collection, data analysis, and limitations of the study are described.

Design

I employed an action research design to conduct this qualitative study. An action research approach allowed me to examine my own instructional practice and to improve my teaching. The steps in conducting an active research study are cyclical in their progression starting with a research question to guide the study. After determining the question of my study, I systematically collected and analyzed data, reflected on the findings, and made plans to implement changes to my practice based on what I learned from the study (Creswell, 2008).

Data Sources

Data sources for this study emerged from my regular classroom routines and practices. These data sources included weekly student comment slips, transcripts of weekly class meetings, and student reflective journal entries. These will be clarified under the heading *implementation of the character education unit* later in this chapter.

Character Education Unit

To create a context for studying transfer, I developed a character education unit focused on the concepts of *respect* and *responsibility* (see Appendix A). These particular character traits were selected because they are generally considered to be universal values that promote the good of an individual as well as the good of society as a whole (Lickona, 1991). These values were also identified as concepts to be taught as part of the sixth grade curriculum in the Utah State Core Curriculum Standards for Social Studies (Utah State Office of Education, 2008).

Setting

The study took place at a suburban elementary school in the Intermountain West. The school population was 1,048 students in grades K-6. The student body of the school was comprised of 91% Caucasian, 5% Hispanic, 2.5% Asian, 1% Black, and 0.5% American Indian. To accommodate the large student population, grades three through six followed an extended day schedule. The extended day schedule divided each student's day into two parts. Three and one half hours of the day were spent in core class where a core teacher taught mathematics, reading, writing, spelling, and language. The remaining portion of the student's day was spent in specialty classes. While students from a morning core class attended specialty classes, in the afternoon a core teacher taught a class of students who had attended specialty classes in the morning. Specialty classes included a yearlong science and social studies class and, depending on the quarter of the school year, either an art class, music class, computer class, or, PE and health class. Specialty classes were taught by specialists in the particular content areas and not taught by the core teachers. Having specialty teachers allowed core teachers to focus on the mathematics and literacy development of students in their two core groups.

Participants

Since this action research study would inform my own teaching practice and required that a unit be taught to a group of students, teaching my own students was necessary and convenient. All 31 students in my sixth grade p.m. core class participated in this study and in the unit I taught, including attending class meetings, making journal entries, and contributing weekly notes to a class comment box. I received permission from all 31 students as well as from their legal guardians to use the data I collected related to the study (see Appendix B). The identity of all participants was protected by insuring that I was the only one who could access the data collected and used in the study, and by assigning pseudonyms to each student mentioned in this report.

The class of students was made up of 17 girls and 14 boys, all between 11 and 12 years old, representing a variety of academic abilities. All of the students were Caucasian except one who was Asian. Of the students, nine received special education services throughout the study and seven of those nine received services in specific areas of the language arts curriculum. Many of the students came from home and community cultures supportive of moral values and character education.

As a teacher researcher, I was also a participant in this study. My role was to question my students, facilitate class meetings, and analyze students' discourse. Over the last four years, I had consistently incorporated character education explicitly and implicitly as part of my curriculum. However, previous to this study, I had never attempted to study my students' ability to transfer concepts from our character education lessons to their own lives.

Procedures

The procedures used in conducting this study aligned with those of action research. This section describes the procedures I followed in the process of the study starting with the implementation of the character education unit, then data collection, and finally data analysis.

Implementation of the character education unit. Nearly three months into the school year, my students were introduced to the character education unit I had designed for the study (see Appendix A), this unit was embedded in the language arts curriculum. I introduced the character education unit, *Respect and Responsibility,* to my entire class in November and concluded my instruction the following February.

In each of the weekly lessons, I presented content associated with various aspects of the values of respect and responsibility. In designing the unit I was mindful of incorporating appropriate strategies (e.g., using literature and a variety of written, oral, and visual texts; employing a variety of instructional formats; encouraging reflection; allowing for social interaction) in an effort to enhance my students' transfer of learning from the unit lessons to their daily discourse. I encouraged my students' social interaction and reflection by incorporating a comment box, class meetings, and reflection journals into our classroom routine. Each of these elements is described in the next three sections.

Comment box. At the end of the school day students recorded their concerns, suggestions, questions, or praises on a slip of paper that was submitted to the comment box. All comments contributed by students were submitted anonymously into a sealed box with a small hole in it as it was passed around the classroom. In circumstances where students did not have any comments to contribute, they wrote a phrase on their slip indicating that they did not have anything to contribute for that day and placed it in the box. Having each student write something

on a slip of paper helped to ensure the confidentiality of the comments that were submitted because every student was contributing a piece of paper to the box, regardless of what was written on it. By ensuring confidentiality, I felt that students would be more inclined to raise issues that were of real concern to them.

Each week, I read through all of the compliments, suggestions and concerns recorded on the slips in the comment box. Students were unrestricted in the topics or issues they submitted to the comment box, yet I found that the majority of their concerns pertained to their interpersonal relationships at school (see Appendix C). Because of the large number of comments submitted during the week, each Friday morning I sorted through the slips and selected those comments that reflected the common issues of the class and also related to the unit themes of respect and responsibility.

Class meetings. The comments submitted to the comment box each week became the topics of discussion during our Friday class meetings held during the 13-week character education unit. On average, class meetings were 25 minutes long, ranging from 10 to 36 minutes. In the hope that the students would feel safe in sharing their opinions, feelings, and questions more openly during the class meetings, I attempted to establish a sense of belonging within the classroom by implementing community-building activities every Monday. The weekly community building activities did not provide data for this study; their sole purpose was to foster a sense of trust and caring among the students so they would feel comfortable making contributions to class meetings.

As I introduced class meetings as part of our routine, I guided the students in establishing rules and norms for behavior and ways of interacting that also promoted community. In the class meetings, I encouraged my students to reflect and openly comment on the issues raised on the

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comment slips. Although I facilitated the weekly class meetings, my students generated the dialogue in the meeting discussions. I intervened in the discussions only when it was necessary to help students remain on topic or to stay within the bounds of the class meeting rules. I was mindful not to use these conversations for clarifying or reteaching concepts taught in the unit. However, I occasionally asked questions to encourage student reflection.

Reflective journals. On Fridays, my students were specifically asked to reflect in their journals following the class meeting, putting in writing what they were feeling or thinking subsequent to the discussion. Journal writing allowed students to internalize the class meeting conversations and to express what they may not have vocalized during the class meeting because of time restrictions, reluctance to comment, lack of understanding, or other restraints. To foster student reflection, I would regularly provide my students with multiple writing prompts (e.g., What did you agree with during the discussion? What did you disagree with? What did you want to contribute to the discussion but didn't get the chance to say?).

Data collection. Data were collected starting in November and continuing through the middle of March. I collected the slips submitted by my students to the comment box each week and electronically recorded the comments according to the date they were submitted. I audio-recorded the 11 class meetings that were held during the 13 weeks the character education unit was taught and transcribed them for later analysis. After my students wrote in their reflective journals each Friday, I collected their dated entries for analysis. These data were collected consistently throughout the study.

Data analysis. Methods and procedures for analyzing the data of this study were based on qualitative research methodology (Miles & Huberman, 1994). All three data sources (i.e., comment slips, transcriptions of class meetings, and students' reflective journals) were analyzed

and coded separately. Data were coded as *transfer* only if the students explicitly used the vocabulary (e.g., respect, responsibility, dignity, decency, or any derivatives of these words) from the unit appropriately, or stated a concept taught in the unit (e.g., all people deserve to be treated respectfully, we have a responsibility to respect the environment, treating people with respect helps them to have feelings of dignity and self-worth, we are responsible for others) in the context of their discourse. All other use of vocabulary (e.g., synonyms) or alluding to, but not explicitly stating, unit concepts related to the unit were coded as approximations to transfer.

Data identified as evidence of transfer were further analyzed according to two a priori codes: *use of vocabulary from the unit* and *references to concepts from the unit*. Using iterative analysis, I repeatedly compared the data most recently collected to all previous data collected during the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This method allowed me to make week-to-week comparisons of the transfer that occurred during the character education unit.

Limitations

As in all research, there were limitations associated with this study. It was not possible for me to observe and account for all evidences of students' transfer of learning throughout each school day during the study. Therefore, evidences of transfer for this study were limited to specific classroom situations and discourse (i.e., comment box slips, class meetings, and reflective journals) that I predetermined to be predictable for data collection.

Additionally, it was not possible for me to account for prior character or moral education that students may have had, nor could I account for the transfer of learning that may have previously occurred. Therefore, it was not my intent to make causal claims to transfer of character education understandings based on this study.

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Chapter 4

Findings

In this chapter I present the results of this study of students' transfer of learning from concepts taught in a character education on respect and responsibility to their classroom discourse. These results informed my understanding of the nature of transfer of learning and its application to my teaching as I studied my own teaching practices. Findings of the study are reported as evidence of transfer according to students' use of vocabulary from the unit and students' references to concepts from the unit. These sections are followed by a summary of the findings.

Evidence of Transfer

Analysis of the data collected for this study revealed that transfer of learning, as well as approximations leading to transfer of learning, were evident in the students' discourse. The findings are reported according to the a priori categories used for coding the data: *use of vocabulary from the unit* and *references to concepts from the unit*. Approximations and evidence of transfer are reported in each section as appropriate to the findings.

Use of unit vocabulary. Approximations and transfer of vocabulary taught in the unit were evident in the data. Approximations were noted in the data from the beginning of the study. Three students used approximations for the vocabulary terms introduced in the unit in the first class meeting and three students used approximations in reflective journal entries. Synonyms were used in place of the unit vocabulary words *respect* and *responsibility,* such as "mean," "not nice," or " rude." The second week two students made approximations toward transfer on comment slips, one student used an approximation during the class meeting, and four students

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used approximations in reflective journal entries. Each of these approximations used similar synonyms as those used in the previous week.

During the third week of the study, there were five comments slips submitted that alluded to the vocabulary words of the unit, and nine students including Kody, Mary, and Melissa, used these same synonyms several times in the class meeting to refer to a student who used nicknames for class members as a way to secretly talk about them.

Kody: I think that would not be very nice to the person and that the person should do something like tell the teacher or get mad at them.

Mary: Well I don't think that they are talking about them in a nice way; maybe they meant they had certain nicknames for people so they could talk about them behind their backs like in a rude way. I don't really get why people would do that because that's really, really rude. I don't know why someone would do that because you can never be mean to people without them somehow figuring it out—it's still not nice.

Melissa: I think that's really mean because if you're going to talk about someone— don't, because it's really mean. If you think that person did something and you want to tell someone behind their back, just don't tell anybody, because you should just keep it to yourself. (Class Meeting 12/18/09)

Notice in the transcript of the class meeting that students used "not be very nice," "really rude," and "mean" in place of the vocabulary words. In this example, students' use of words similar in meaning to respect and responsibility indicated approximations to transfer of learning.

From data collected during week four, a total of six approximations to the unit vocabulary were identified on the comment slips, during the class meeting, and in journal entries.

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In week five there were nine approximations made on the comment slips, in the class meeting, and in journal entries.

The first indication that vocabulary from the unit moved from making approximations to actual transfer of learning into students' discourse occurred during the sixth week of the study. One comment slip in the box read, "Some people are so irresponsible." Use of the word *irresponsible* indicated direct transfer from vocabulary learned in the unit to the student's use of that vocabulary. Aside from this single use of a vocabulary word on a comment slip during week six, there was no further evidence of direct transfer of vocabulary used by the students until the eleventh week of the study.

Data collected during week seven indicated that two students used approximations during the class meeting. During week eight I did not collect data because Friday of this week was a school holiday and therefore we were unable to have our weekly class meeting. In week nine there was one student who used an approximation for unit vocabulary on a comment slip and an additional two students used approximations during the class meeting. During week 10 I did not collect any data for this study since I was attending a reading conference and was not in the classroom to collect comment slips or conduct the class meeting.

Week 11 the evidence of transfer from the vocabulary used in the unit to the students' discourse was identified more often than during any other week of the study. This was also true for the number of approximations to transfer identified. During this week, evidence of transfer was identified 16 times in students' use of vocabulary on their comment slips, in their class meeting conversations, and in their journal responses combined. There were 25 approximations in the students' discourse during this same week.

The students used the words respect and responsibility, or their derivatives, as they demonstrated evidence of transfer in their discourse during week 11. The focus of their attention on comment slips, in the class meeting, and in their journal reflections was on their experience with a substitute teacher who took my place while I was at a reading conference. Three of the comment slips submitted included the word respect: "The sub was mean, but we were still respectful," "The sub is so mean, he only thinks about himself, I thought we were talking about respect," and "He was teaching us about respect when we should have been teaching him about respect."

During our Friday class meeting five students (i.e., Amanda, Cami, Jake, Jamie, and Mary) continued to use approximations to report their experience with the substitute teacher. However, of these five students, three of them (i.e., Cami, Jamie, and Mary) also used the word respect or one of its derivatives. In total, six students (i.e., Mary, Cami, Martha, Jamie, Melissa, and Henry) used the words respect or responsibility during the class meeting. These students said things such as, "It's not very respectful if he's saying things that we don't know because it will make us feel like he's talking about us in bad ways," "I was kind of mad that he was being disrespectful to my friends," or "When somebody asks you to stop, you should stop, not keep doing it! —Because it's polite and it's respectful…" (Class Meeting, 2/26/10).

This indication of transfer continued as three students (i.e., Cami, Mary, and Melissa) also began incorporating the word responsibility into the class meeting. Mary and Melissa used the word responsibility when discussing how the substitute gathered the students from recess and brought them back into the classroom. Typically, classroom teachers and substitute teachers go to the playground and accompany the students back to the classroom after recess. The students

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had determined that the substitute teacher had shirked his responsibility when he did not follow the typical routine.

Melissa: He just stood there in the window like, come on, and we weren't looking [because we didn't know he would be at the window] and it just made me think, why doesn't he [open the door]? And the second day…he had another girl come tell us he was there, he didn't even come out [to get us]. I though it was kind of weird…that he would have another student come get us when he had the responsibility to make sure that we came in.

Mary: His responsibility was to do what you needed, because subs are substituting for teachers and they are supposed to do what teachers do, but he was doing practically the opposite. (Class Meeting, 2/26/10)

Students' use of the words respect and responsibility during the class meeting during week 11 indicated that transfer of learning was occurring for some of the students, although there were others who had also made approximations to transfer on the comment slips and in the class meeting.

Also during week 11 evidence of transfer continued after the class meeting as students used the words respect and responsibility in their reflective journals for the first time. On this occasion, six students (i.e., Melissa, Mary, Martha, Jamie, Sara, and Lincoln) used the word respect eight times and the word responsibility twice. They wrote statements such as, "It is not very respectful to give people nicknames that they do not like," or, "I did not like the sub because of…the disrespectful attitude he had, and I didn't like how he didn't listen to us." They further reflected, "I really don't like it when people are disrespectful to me like the sub, it makes me feel mad," "When someone tells you to stop [what you are doing to them], you should stop,

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because it is your responsibility to respect others," and "I agree with everyone, that [the substitute] . . . didn't follow his responsibility." Data identified in the reflective journals of these six students indicated that they had used the content from the unit and applied it to their experiences with the substitute teacher.

Evidence of transfer of vocabulary from the unit to the students' discourse was identified twice during the twelfth week of the study. One comment slip appeared in the box that used the word respect, and in the class meeting one student used the term *human decency,* which was taught during the character education unit. There were also two occurrences of approximation this week, one on a comment slip and one during the class meeting.

During the thirteenth and final week of the study, vocabulary from the unit was used on a comment slip, during the class meeting, and in students' reflective journals. One comment in the box read, "The service project is a ton of responsibility to do! I wonder if I can actually do ALL of it." The student was referring to a class assignment requiring each student to plan and carry out an individual service project. Though this comment slip was in the box, it was not discussed during the class meeting.

Another comment slip was used to direct the conversation of the class meeting. The topic concerned throwing things and shooting spitballs in the classroom. Terms from the unit were used three times by students (i.e., Justin, Riley, and Brice) as they made comments during the discussion. Vocabulary from the unit was also used in the reflective journal entries of five students (i.e., Kody, Amanda, Abby, Brenda, and Mary) following the class meeting. Of these five students, four of them wrote that throwing things during class was "disrespectful." Kody, however, made use of additional vocabulary from the unit by remarking, "I think that people should respect people and learn and listen to their rights." The concept of universal human rights

in relationship to showing respect and assuming responsibility had been taught in the seventh lesson of the unit. In his journal entry, Kody not only used the word respect but he also mentioned *human rights*.

References to unit concepts. Findings regarding students' transfer of concepts taught in the unit to their classroom discourse were identified in the data collected during the last three weeks of the study. While I examined and re-examined the data, there was no evidence that indicated that the students had made any approximations of transfer of the concepts from the unit to their discourse. Therefore, I will only report evidences of transfer in this section.

The first evidence of transfer of concepts taught in the unit to students' discourse was during the eleventh week of the study as students responded to the substitute teacher's behavior mentioned in the prior section *use of vocabulary from the unit*. A comment slip submitted anonymously by one student read, "The sub was mean, but we were still respectful." Showing respect even when others have not been respectful was a character concept presented in the unit. Jamie also demonstrated transfer of this same concept in her reflective journal entry by writing, "[The substitute] was being awful to us even when we did all we could to respect him." These students' experiences with the substitute teacher provided the context for them to make connections from the concepts that had been learned in the unit to the situation in the classroom. It also allowed them first hand experience in comparing the behavior of the teacher to the behavior of the class and to evaluate it against an expectation of respectful behavior that had been taught in the unit.

During the class meeting of this same eleventh week, Mary evidenced her own connection between instruction on responsibility and her experience with the substitute teacher.

Teacher: Let's talk about that, because you said that [the substitute teacher] didn't do his responsibility, right, to follow the lesson plans. So why is it a problem when people don't take responsibility for what they are supposed to?

Mary: Well, like that one movie we watched with the girl who was trying to watch the dog for her aunt. If the aunt would have just left and thought, I've left her a note, she'll just come, I've got to go. Then the poor little doggy wouldn't have gotten food. (Class Meeting, 2/26/10)

Mary drew an analogy between a movie used as part of the instructional unit and her understanding of the substitute teacher's responsibilities to the class. She referenced the unit concept of consequences associated with not being responsible by referencing back to the possible consequences of not taking care of the dog, which was highlighted in the movie. Mary's comment evidenced she had transferred the concept from the unit to her recent experience with the substitute teacher.

In this same class meeting, another student, Henry, referenced a concept from the unit. As part of the unit, we talked about how a lack of treating someone with human decency can take away a person's *human dignity*. When defining human decency, we discussed how treating a person with a lack of respect could make that person feel worthless, and it demonstrates a lack of decency. Some of the students equated this definition to making a person "feel like trash." Though it is a less formal concept and definition than the one introduced in the unit, Henry used this idea to explain how being disrespected makes a person feel.

Teacher: So what do you think Henry? Why do you think, even though those names might be a little bit funny, why do you think people don't like that?

Henry: Because they're not getting respect.

Teacher: And so how does that make them feel?

Henry: Like they just got trashed. Like thrown out to the trash on the curb. (Class

Meeting, 2/26/10)

In his explanation Henry demonstrated his understanding of the concept of *human decency* and

how it related to the concept of human dignity. Relating these concepts from the unit to the issue

discussed in the class meeting provided evidence of Henry's transfer of concepts learned in the

unit to his own understanding.

Martha also provided evidence of transfer in her journal entry during the eleventh week.

She wrote, "It is your responsibility to respect people." Respecting other people regardless of

their race, religion, or political views was addressed in one of the prior lessons taught in the

character education unit. Martha interpreted the lesson through her own experiences and the

lessons of the unit. She determined that respecting people was not just a character trait, but, in

her view, a responsibility.

One week later, during the twelfth week of the study, Brandon also referenced a unit

concept during a class meeting. A comment slip from the box that week read, "[A person in this

class] is being disrespectful to me by wanting someone else to sit in my spot—it makes me feel

like I don't belong." While Brandon incorrectly used the term human decency in the class

meeting to describe the concept of human dignity in his response to the issue, nonetheless, he

demonstrated appropriate understanding of the concept.

Teacher: Why is it a problem if you're sitting next to someone and you ask, hey,

can so and so sit next to me instead? Why is that a problem?

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Brandon:	It makes the person feel like, without human decency, or whatever we were talking about.
Teacher:	So why is it important that we treat people, like Brandon says, with human decency?
Brandon:	Because they might feel like they are still a person, but then they might feel they're not as good as everybody else, and then they think they are worthless. (Class Meeting, 3/4/10)

Brandon's comment revealed that he had transferred the concept of treating people with dignity and respect learned from a prior lesson and class meeting discussion to the new situation presented on the comment slip by one of his peers. While much of what was learned in the lesson was similar to the situation discussed in this class meeting, Brandon demonstrated near transfer in his response.

In the class meeting the thirteenth and last week of the study, a comment slip was discussed the class meeting that stated, "Someone in this class keeps throwing things at me and my neighbor. We asked that person to stop and they say no and keep doing it." Two students demonstrated transfer as they responded to this comment slip during the class meeting.

Justin demonstrated transfer when he stated, "In the responsibility R & R thing [*Respect and Responsibility* unit], it's your responsibility to help other people learn, and throwing spitballs is really disrupting and painful." Similarly, Riley added, "…it's disrespectful and if you're doing your work and they're throwing stuff at you, it's really hard to concentrate. In my experiences of years going by, people have been spitting spitballs and it's gross" (Class Meeting, 3/12/10). Justin and Riley's responses to this comment slip demonstrated not only transfer of vocabulary

used from the unit, but also that they had transferred the concept *protecting the rights of others* taught from a lesson taught in the seventh week of the unit to this situation.

Summary of Findings

Students' in my class evidenced transfer during weeks 11, 12, and 13 of this study in their use of vocabulary and their references to the concepts from the character education unit to their oral and written discourse. Fifteen out of the 31 students who participated used unit vocabulary and eight of those fifteen referenced a unit concept. None of the students referenced a unit concept without using the unit vocabulary. Six comment slips were submitted that provided evidence of transfer through use of unit vocabulary but because they were anonymous they could not be attributed to any students.

From the onset of the study, students began using approximations in the form of synonyms for the vocabulary words that were identified in the data each week of the study. Analysis of the data showed that 22 of the 31 students in this study made at least one oral or written approximation to transfer of vocabulary during the 13-week unit. Of the nine students who did not make approximations, there was evidence that two of them made transfer from the vocabulary used in the unit to their discourse. It is also interesting to note that during the eleventh week there were nine students who used unit vocabulary in their discourse for the first time, during the twelfth week there was one student that used vocabulary who had not used it during the prior week, and in the thirteenth week there were five students who used terms from the unit that had not used it in any of the previous weeks.

Evidence of transfer from concepts taught in the unit to students' discourse was not identified in the data until the last three weeks of the study. In data collected during these weeks eight of the 31 student-participants demonstrated transfer by explicitly referencing a unit concept

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in their discourse. Throughout the duration of the study, each of these eight students made reference to a unit concept only once.

        The first evidence of transfer of learning was during the sixth week of the study when a single student used the word "irresponsible" on a comment slip. It was not until the eleventh week of the study that multiple students demonstrated transfer in both their use of unit vocabulary and their references to unit concepts as they addressed concerns and issues that arose in the classroom. It is important to note that in data for week 11 of the study, the students' experiences with a substitute teacher served as a catalyst for both written and oral discourse that evidenced students' approximations of unit vocabulary and full transfer of the unit content.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The findings of the study focused on the evidence of transfer that was found in students' discourse. These understandings of the nature of transfer provide implications for my teaching and possibly for increasing the understanding of others interested in transfer as it relates to effective teaching practices. The following discussion, based on the findings of this study, includes these sections: reflections on the nature of transfer, implications for teaching, and recommendations for future research.

Reflections on the Nature of Transfer

The purpose of this study was not to imply a causal relationship between the character education unit taught and the transfer that occurred. Instead, my intent was to examine how and when transfer occurred and how making sense of the findings could inform my own practice. My reflections on the findings from this study caused me to consider the relationship between time and the occurrence of transfer, the role of specific strategies (i.e., reflection, social interaction) in enhancing transfer, and whether students' use of vocabulary and references to concepts were appropriate criteria for indicating that transfer had occurred.

Relationship between time and transfer. The relationship between time and transfer was an important realization that came from the findings of this study. I had projected that transfer from unit content to student discourse would occur much sooner than it did. At the beginning of the study students immediately began using words in the comment slips, class meetings, and their journals that were similar in meaning to the vocabulary taught in the character education unit. These consistent approximations lead me to expect that transfer was imminent. However, week after week, students continued to make approximations for transfer

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but these approximations failed to meet the criteria for transfer that I had set at the beginning of the study.

After six weeks one instance of transfer had occurred. Then, finally, in week 11, the discourse of nine students indicated that transfer had taken place for them. During the next two weeks, six more students also demonstrated transfer. Research on transfer has shown that transfer often does not occur at all (Perkins & Salomon, 1988), therefore, having 15 out of 31 students demonstrate transfer during the study was significant to me.

The ongoing evidences of transfer gave me cause to believe that there is a relationship between time and transfer. In reviewing the literature, it was interesting to note that predicting time to transfer is appreciably absent. While there are suggestions for how to enhance the possibility of transfer, there are a host of factors identified that affect individual students learning that makes it impossible to accurately estimate when and how transfer will occur (Perkins & Salomon, 1992).

Role of specific strategies. Research on transfer suggests that students need to be given opportunities to engage in reflection and social interaction in order to enhance the possibility of transfer (Mayer & Whittrock, 1996). In preparing the character education unit for this study, I purposely incorporated both of these strategies in an effort to give the students every advantage toward making transfer. In my findings I discovered that attending to both reflection and social interaction influenced transfer.

Reflections. Opportunities for students to reflect, both personally and collaboratively, were a consistent and important part of the design of the study. Specifically, students participated in class meetings and kept journals where they reflected on issues not directly related to the lessons of the unit. However, the issues and situations discussed allowed a context for transfer to

occur since students could apply what they learned as they responded to these issues and situations. It was clear that for the 15 students who achieved transfer opportunities to reflect either in the journals or class meetings were an important tool in learning and applying the vocabulary and concepts. In addition, both the class meetings and the journal entries allowed me to track and verify the occurrences of transfer as they happened. Therefore, reflection became a vehicle for both recording and achieving transfer.

Social interaction. Weekly class meetings also provided opportunities for students to interact socially. During the class meeting of week 11 the students discussed the substitute teacher who had taught the class the previous week. They expressed dissatisfaction in his lack of respect toward them and felt that he had not fulfilled his responsibilities as a teacher. The students perceived the behavior and attitudes demonstrated by the substitute teacher to be contrary to what they had been taught in the character education unit.

The social interaction that had occurred between the students and the substitute teacher became the catalyst for them to seek validation of their understandings of what it meant to be respectful and responsible. They brought their issues to the next class meeting and shared their feelings of being marginalized by someone they felt should have practiced the very concepts of respect and responsibility they had been learning about. Though unplanned, it may be possible that this single interaction with the substitute teacher provided the most meaningful and pertinent real-life transfer opportunity the students had during the study.

It appeared that the social interactions evident in the class meeting as the students discussed the substitute teacher influenced transfer. As a few students began sharing their understandings, other students seemed to be encouraged to join in the conversation using unit vocabulary in their discourse. Furthermore, after the class meeting more students continued to

reflect in their journals on the experience and used unit content in their writing. The social interactions of the students during the class meeting seemed to be influenced by their earlier social interactions with the substitute teacher. Not until the students shared this experience was there any real evidence of transfer in the study.

Criteria for transfer. Establishing criteria for what constitutes evidence of transfer is important to any study of transfer. After having conducted this study, I realized the importance of the criteria I established for identifying the occurrence of transfer. My criteria required that my students specifically used the precise words taught in the unit in their discourse, and that they explicitly referenced the unit concepts taught. In coding the data for evidence of transfer, it became apparent to me that I had limited the evidence that could be coded as transfer. My established criteria for coding the data as *transfer* may have limited other evidence of transfer that I had not anticipated prior to the study.

In analyzing the data, I found that students had often used synonyms in place of the actual vocabulary words from the unit. I coded those incidences as approximations toward transfer. In some cases, the context of those approximations made it clear to me that transfer had occurred, while in others, the context was not clear enough for me to determine whether or not transfer had actually occurred. In studies of transfer of learning, criteria become an essential factor in identifying whether or not students have made transfer and can actually obscure the extent of transfer.

Implications for Teaching

My reflections on the nature of transfer provide implications for my teaching as I seek to improve my instruction to help my students build character and develop moral values. The findings of this study have specific implications on the amount of time I allow for transfer to

happen and for the opportunities I provide for reflection and social interaction. Each of these implications will be discussed in the following sections.

Allow time for transfer. Transfer appeared to be influenced by the length of time my students were engaged in the unit. This implies that, as a teacher, I need to be patient and offer ongoing, systematic instruction in the concepts I would like my students to acquire. Occasionally engaging my students in meaningful social activities or only sporadically providing opportunities for them to reflect on character and moral values will probably not lead to transfer (Perkins & Salomon, 1988). When considering transfer, I should therefore be purposeful in planning character education learning experiences that regularly provide multiple opportunities over an extended period of time for my students to be exposed to texts that emphasize universal moral values. Time and continued opportunities for my students to apply what they are learning will produce a greater result in transfer.

Any attempt to influence students' transfer of character education should be consistent and systematic. This suggests that I plan for and take advantage of the occasional character education presentations typically found in the school curriculum, as well as prepare an ongoing character education curriculum. Understanding that transfer occurs overtime helps me to realize that character education programs that expect students to transfer concepts of character into their lives with only limited exposure are not likely to be effective.

Provide opportunities for reflection. Personal and collaborative reflection gives students the opportunity to consider what they have learned, and is an effective strategy for enhancing transfer. As a teacher I must first teach students the skill of how to reflect and then provide regular opportunities for them to consider concepts and experiences that will further their understanding of moral and character values. Though in this study I used journals and class

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meetings as contexts for reflection, other media (e.g., visual representations—pictures, movies, political cartoons, drawings) could be used to encourage students to reflect on values.

Provide opportunities for interaction. Social interaction also enhances transfer of learning. This means that as a teacher I need to routinely plan opportunities for my students to engage in meaningful, and pertinent discussions. Class meetings provide one type of venue for social interaction and for enhancing transfer. This strategy requires me as the teacher to prepare the students with the knowledge and skills for appropriate social interaction, and then for me to facilitate those interactions to ensure that students are focused on productive discourse.

Opportunities for students to participate in social discourse puts the teacher in a role of facilitator and means that I may need to refrain from controlling the class conversations and encourage my students to share their understandings with each other. Along with this is the implication that teachers have responsibility for making sure students feel safe to share their comments with their peers and not be fearful that they may be misunderstood or ridiculed for their contributions to discussions.

Recommendations for Further Research

The last step in an action research design is to generate new questions and to propose recommendations for future research that would give me further insight into my teaching practices. Based on the findings, discussion, and implications of this study, the following recommendations are offered.

I suggest that this study be used as a model for another study of transfer using different character or moral values and new criteria for determining transfer. In doing this study, I suggest that research focus on the time it takes for transfer of learning to occur.

I also suggest that research be conducted on topics for discussion topics that might be effective for promoting transfer of character and moral values to students' discourse, behaviors, and attitudes. Understanding this relationship would focus my class meeting discussions, engage my students in more meaningful discourse, and enhance transfer.

Though not addressed in this study, I suggest that further research be conducted on the effectiveness of different types of teaching strategies and genres of texts that best facilitate transfer. This information would be valuable to me, and to other teachers, in creating lesson plans and designing character education instruction.

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Appendix A

Character Education Unit

Lesson 1

Learning Objective: Student will define respect and responsibility.

Literacy Objective: Students will use dictionaries and thesaurus' to determine the meaning of
unknown words (USOE Standard 6 Objective 2a).

Procedures:
1. Ask students to participate in a dictionary word chase by looking up the following words
as quickly as they can in a dictionary: honest, fair, tolerant, self-discipline, compassion,
and courage. Write the words on the board as they are given to the students so that they
know how to spell them. As students find the words the teacher allows one student to
read the definition aloud to the class.

2. Use the Write Source 2000 (1999 Edition) p. 326-327 to discuss the features of a
dictionary. As part of a class discussion, ask students to answer the following questions:
Which words on p. 327 start with a capital letter? (Grieg, Grier); *How many syllables
does the word gridiron have?* (3); *griffin?* (2); *grief?* (1); *Which part of speech is the
word grieve?* (verb); *griddle?* (noun); *grievous?* (adjective); *Grier?* (name or proper
noun); *Where are the guide words?* (top of the page); *What are guide words?* (first and
last entry word on page, help you to know which words fall in alphabetical order between
the entry words); *How many entry words can you find on the page?* (11); *Which word has
an illustration with it?* (griffin); *Why do some words have an illustration?* (make the
definition more clear); *What are the synonyms for grieve?* (lament, mourn, sorrow); *What
are the antonyms for grieve?* (rejoice); *Do all dictionaries have synonyms and antonyms?*
(no).

3. Direct students to look up the words *respect* and *responsibility* and answer each of the
questions on the dictionary worksheet for both words.

4. Use the *Write Source 2000* (1999 Edition), p. 325, to discuss the features of a thesaurus.

5. Look up the word *responsibility* in the classroom thesaurus and work together as a class
to create a word map for *responsibility.* Writing a new vocabulary word in the center of a
piece of paper and boxing the word create a word map. Synonyms for the vocabulary
word are then added by drawing a line from the box towards the edge of the paper and
writing a synonym on the other end of the line (See included sample).

6. Students work independently to create a word map for *respect* using a thesaurus. Once
students have added all of the synonyms for respect to their word map they are asked to
circle the synonyms. Students then look up each of the circled words in the thesaurus and

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add the synonyms of the circled words to the word map by drawing lines from the circle towards the edge of the paper and writing a synonym on the other end of the line.

7. Have a brief discussion emphasizing that not all synonyms found in a thesaurus can directly replace the word you look up. Words must be used in context. Use the following sentence and synonyms for *love* as an example. Replace the word *love* with some or all of the synonyms and discussing what it does to the meaning of the sentence. I **love** my cat. Synonyms for love: adore, like, care for, be fond of, fancy, idolize, cherish, have eyes for, be set on, go for

8. As a class decide which synonyms for *responsibility* accurately describes doing what you say you'll do or what you know you should do.

9. In pairs, have students evaluate which synonyms for *respect* accurately describes caring about the way another person feels and how you treat them.

Assessment:
1. Students will write reasonable definitions for *respect* and *responsibility* in their own words on the dictionary worksheet.
2. Students will correctly identify synonyms from a thesaurus that can be used in place of the word respect while working with a partner.

Dictionary Worksheet

Directions: Look up the words *respect* and *responsibility* in the dictionary and answer each of the following questions for both words.

respect	responsibility
1. Is the word respect capitalized?	1. Is the word responsibility capitalized?
2. How many syllables does the word respect have?	2. How many syllables does the word responsibility have?
3. Which part of speech is the word respect?	3. Which part of speech is the word responsibility?
4. What are the guide-words at the top of the page?	4. What are the guide-words at the top of the page?
5. Does the dictionary list any synonyms or antonyms for respect? If so, what are they?	5. Does the dictionary list any synonyms or antonyms for responsibility? If so, what are they?
6. How many definitions are there for respect?	6. How many definitions are there for responsibility?
7. Write down the first definition.	7. Write down the first definition.
8. Write down the third definition.	8. Write down the second definition.
9. Write down the fourth definition.	9. Write down the third definition.
10. Write a definition for respect in your own words.	10. Write a definition for responsibility in your own words.
11. Give an example of respect.	11. Give an example of responsibility.

Responsibility
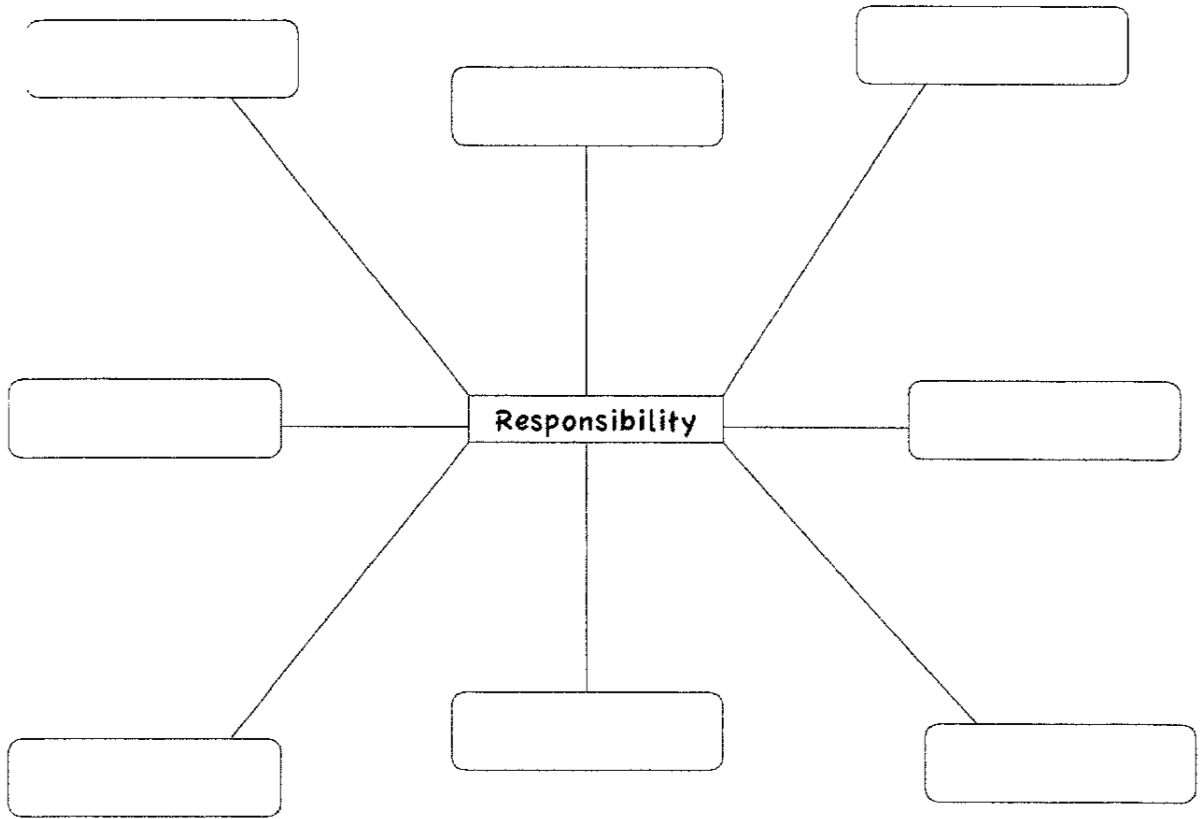
Lesson 2

Learning Objective: Students will identify situations in which people have not been treated respectfully.

Students will identify situations in which people have been and are being treated respectfully.

Students will identify situations in which people have not been responsible.

Students will identify situations in which people have been and are showing responsibility.

Literacy Objective: Students will make and confirm or revise predictions while reading (USOE Standard 7 Objective 2d).

Students will make connections to text (USOE Standard 7 Objective 2a).

Students will identify author's purpose (USOE Standard 7 Objective 1b).

Students will identify characters and theme (USOE Standard 7 Objective 3a).

Procedures:
1. Invite students to participate in a book box activity (Yopp & Yopp, 2010) for the novel *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry. Without revealing the name of the book show students the following objects one at a time: candle, necklace, sugar, photo album, newspaper, girl's black dress shoe, and picnic basket.

   Each object is a clue to what the text is about. As the teacher holds up each object, in small groups the students discuss predictions about the object and how it relates to the book. Several predictions are then shared with the entire class. Then the next object is shown and once again students discuss predictions in small groups before sharing their thinking with the entire class.

   After students have been shown all of the objects they work individually to record their final predictions about each object on the prediction page.

2. While reading *Number the Stars* students will complete literature maps (Yopp & Yopp, 2010). Folding a piece of 11x17 paper into four sections and labeling each section with a category name creates a literature map. Categories will include "Annemarie Johansen," "Ellen Rosen," "respect," and "responsibility." As students read they will write down words, phrases, sentences, quotes, or other information relevant to the category in each

section. When possible, students should include page numbers with the information they write.

Emphasize that while reading students should be observing the traits and behaviors of all the characters and looking for good examples as well as bad examples of respect and responsibility.

Every three to four days collect student literature maps to compile a class literature map. Share some of the responses with the class and occasionally allow students to share what they have written about each category with a partner or a small group.

3. Assign students to read two chapters from *Number the Stars* each school day. Time will be given to read one chapter during the school day and the other chapter will be assigned as homework. If students choose to, they may read ahead and finish the book early. Students may also choose to listen to the book on tape and follow along as it is being read. All students should be finished reading the book after nine school days. On each of these nine school days, before giving students time to read *Number the Stars* during class time, read and discuss with them sections from *Tell Them We Remember: The Story of the Holocaust* by Susan D. Bachrack. Read the following sections: *Hitler Comes to Power* p.8*, The Nazi Terror Begins* p. 10 (Read p. 8 and p.10 on the same day)*, Nazi Racism* p.12*, The Boycott of Jewish Businesses* p.14*, Nazi Propaganda and Censorship* p.16*, The Nuremberg Race Laws* p.18 (First paragraph contains sensitive material), *"Enemies of the State"* p.20 (Last paragraph contains sensitive material) *The War Begins* p.30*, The Murder of the Handicapped* p.32*,* and *Rescue* p.64.

Each day, ask students to make connections between the true stories of the Holocaust found in *Tell Them We Remember: The Story of the Holocaust* with the fictional story of *Number the Stars.*

4. Once students have finished reading *Number the Stars* discuss their literature maps and what they learned and observed about the two main characters. Ask students to identify the other characters in the book.

5. Explain to students that the theme of a book is its main subject or topic. The theme may also include a message about the topic the author is trying to communicate. Ask students to identify the theme or themes of *Number the Stars*. (Holocaust, friendship, courage, etc)

6. Explain to students that author's purpose refers to the reason why the author wrote the book. Generally there are three main purposes an author will compose a piece of literature: to inform or teach, to persuade or convince, and to entertain. Ask students to identify Lois Lowry's purpose for writing *Number the Stars* by briefly discussing it with a partner. Students should give evidence to support their choice. After students have had a chance to share with a partner discuss author's purpose as a class (Accept any reasonable answer). Explain that in some instances the author may have more than one purpose.

7. Collect and keep student literature maps so that they may be used as part of other lessons in this unit.

Assessment:
1. Students accurately identify situations involving respect and responsibility from *Number the Stars* on their literature maps.
2. Students have given reasonable predictions related to the story and/or revised their predictions to make them relevant to the story during reading.
3. Students accurately connect the factual events in *Tell Them We Remember: The Story of the Holocaust* to the fictional events of *Number the Stars* that are based on real facts.
4. Students correctly identify characters in the story during class discussion.
5. Students give reasonable explanations relevant to the story when identifying theme and author's purpose.

Prediction Page

Item in Box	Prediction #1	Prediction #2	Prediction #3	Actual
Clue #1: *Sugar*				
Clue #2: **Newspaper**				
Clue #3: **Candle**				
Clue #4: **Photo Album**				
Clue #5: **Necklace**				
Clue #6: **Dress Shoe**				
Clue #7: **Picnic Basket**				

Lesson 3

Learning Objective: Student will identify situations in which people have been and are being treated respectfully.

                                          Students will identify situations in which they can apply such behaviors

Literacy Objective: Students will make connections to text (USOE Standard 7 Objective 2a).

                                          Students will identify author's purpose (USOE Standard 7 Objective 1b).

                                          Students will identify characters and theme (USOE Standard 7 Objective 3a).

Procedures:
1. In preparation to reading the book *Teammates* by Peter Golenbock aloud to students have them complete an anticipation guide (Yopp & Yopp, 2010). An anticipation guide is a list of statements related to the themes, issues, or concepts in the book with which students are asked to agree or disagree. Underneath each statement students give a brief explanation as to why they agree or disagree.

   Allow students to share their agreement or disagreement with each statement by moving to a designated side of the room. Student responses are pooled and the data is written on the board. After responses to each question have been pooled, students return to their seats. Invite students to discuss and explain their opinions with the class.

2. Explain to students that Jackie Robinson broke the "color barrier." Meaning he was the first athlete of another race to play in a professional sport with white athletes. Explain that at this time many people held prejudices against people of other races and thought that people of differing races should be segregated. Show pictures of some of the threatening letter Jackie received from fans, other players, and even some of his teammates (Found in *Promises to Keep* by Sharon Robinson, p. 34). Show pictures of Jackie getting hit by a pitch intentionally thrown at his head (Found in *Promises to Keep* by Sharon Robinson, p. 42).

   Read the book *Teammates* aloud to students. Ask students to identify the characters of the story. Discuss the questions on the anticipation guide again considering these ideas from the book: (a) What may have happened if Jackie chose to avoid the people who were cruel to him? (b) Jackie was very good at baseball did people like him? (c) Did Jackie Robinson make a difference in the world? How? Did Branch Ricky Make a difference in the world? How? Did Pee Wee Reese make a difference in the world? How? (d) Did people have a good reason for being cruel to Jackie?

On the back of their anticipation guide ask students to write down the theme or themes of the book, the author's purpose, and an explanation for each. Remind students that the theme of a book is its main subject or topic and may include a message about the topic the author is trying to communicate. Remind students that the author's purpose refers to the reason why the author wrote the book. Generally there are three main purposes an author will compose a piece of literature: to inform or teach, to persuade or convince, and to entertain.

3. Following the discussion of the anticipation guide students will fill out a personal reflection guide. The personal reflection guide is similar to an anticipation guide, but students are asked to agree or disagree with statement about themselves.

4. Show the "Bus" commercial about respect (Found at http://www.values.com/inspirational-stories-tv-spots). Ask students to summarize in their own words what happened in the commercial. Then ask students to discuss how this person showed respect.

   Have a brief discussion, reminding students of the definition of respect. Ask students to identify some of the different people and things we can give respect (others, self, country, environment, etc.).

   Distribute pictures of billboards and the stories that accompany the billboards (Found at http://www.values.com/inspirational-sayings-billboards) to pairs of students. Students work with their partner to read about the story that goes along with their billboard and report about the billboard to the class by answering the following questions: (a) Who is the person or people on the billboard? (b) In your own words explain what is happening in the picture or what happened in the story about the picture. (c) How does or did this person show respect?

   Show the news clip that goes along with the softball billboard (Found at nbcsports.msnbc.com/id/24392612). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEDBnKahuNs http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hp2sQYsNpPs&feature=related

5. Refer back to the literacy maps students created in lesson one. Discuss the situations in the book students identified as someone showing respect (Examples may include: King Christian on p.12, Ellen fixing shoes on p. 29, Henrik risking his life to help people he doesn't even know on p. 94 and p. 101-102).

6. Distribute a copy of the poem *Builders and Wreckers* to each student. Read the poem aloud to students while they follow along. Discuss the theme and author's purpose for writing the poem.

   Students ponder if they are a builder or a wrecker by completing the respect survey. Remind students that everyone can be a builder. Students identify situations in which they can be builders by journaling responses to the sentence starters found on the

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sentence starters worksheet (Available at
http://college.usc.edu/vhi/creatingcharacter/lesson/respect/index.html)

Assessment:
1. Student accurately share situations form *Number the Stars* in which people were treated respectfully.
2. Students report on a person from a billboard giving a logical description of how the person does/did show respect.
3. Students relate what they have learned about respect from the various texts to themselves by journaling practical ways they can show respect.
4. Students gave reasonable explanations from the book *Teammates* to identify the theme and author's purpose.
5. Students accurately identify the characters of the story *Teammates*.

Anticipation Guide

Agree   Disagree

_____   _____   1. Staying away from people who are cruel to you is a good idea.

_____   _____   2. When you are very good at something, people like you.

_____   _____   3. Sometimes one person can make a difference in the world.

_____   _____   4. If everyone is being cruel to someone, there is probably a good reason.

Personal Reflection Guide

Agree   Disagree

_____   _____   1. I can make a difference in the world by being respectful.

_____   _____   2. If everyone is being cruel to someone I should be respectful to that person anyway.

_____   _____   3. I should only respect people who are good at something.

_____   _____   4. I should show respect to others even when they are cruel to me.

BUILDERS AND WRECKERS

I watched them tearing a building down,
A gang of men in a busy town.
With a ho, heave, ho and a lusty yell
They swung a beam and a wall feel.
I asked the foreman, "Are these men skilled?
Like the men you'd hire if you had to build?"
He laughed as a replied, "No, indeed
Just common labor is all I need.
I can easily wreck in a day or two
What builders have taken years to do."
I asked myself as I went away
Which of these roles have I tried to play?
Am I a builder who works with care,
Measuring life by rule and square?
Or am I a wrecker who walks the town
Content with the labor of tearing down?

Which are you? A Builder or a Wrecker?

Respect Survey

Are You a Respectful Person? Do you build people up or do you tear them down?
(Take this self-evaluation and decide for yourself.)

True   False   I treat people the way I want to be treated.

True   False   I treat people with civility, courtesy, and dignity.

True   False   I am sensitive to other people's feelings.

True   False   I never insult people or make fun of them.

True   False   I never ridicule or embarrass people.

True   False   I never go along with prejudices or racist attitudes.

I think I am/am not a respectful person because:

Sentence Starters: Respect

Name _____

Complete the sentences below by filling in the blanks and finishing the sentences.

1. The person I respect most is _____ because …

2. My parents taught me to respect _____

   I show respect to this person/place/thing/idea by doing …

   Respecting this person/place/thing/idea is important because …

3. I demonstrate respect for my parents when I …

4. I demonstrate respect for myself when I …

5. I demonstrate respect for my heritage when I…

6. I demonstrate respect for my country when I …

7. I demonstrate respect for my religion when I …

8. I will teach my children to respect _____

   I will teach them to show their respect by …

   It is important for children to show their respect because…

9. I wish people were more respectful of _____ because …

10. When people do not respect _____ I feel _____ because …

11. The character trait I respect most in a person is _____ because …

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Lesson 4

Learning Objective: Student will evaluate situations in which people have not been responsible.

Literacy Objective: Students will form an opinion with supporting evidence (USOE Standard 1 Objective 1b).

Students will use dictionaries and thesaurus' to determine the meaning of unknown words (USOE Standard 6 Objective 2a).

Procedures:
1. Divide students three groups. In groups students will read one of the following three news stories: *The Black Socks* (Available at http://www.chicagohs.org/history/blacksox.html), *Boys Trick Riding Blamed in Crash* (Available at http://www.deseretnews.com/article/700230586/Boyaposs-trick-riding-blamed-in-crash.html), or *Conductor in Train Crash was Texting on Duty* (Available at http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=210602535)

    Each student will have the opportunity to read the news story independently before discussing it with the group. In groups students will use the responsibility graphic organizer to determine the irresponsible action mentioned in the article, the consequence of the action, and the different people affected by the action.

    After discussing the news article as a group and filling out the graphic organizer students are placed into a new group with one student from each of the other two article groups, forming a group of three students.

    In their groups of three a students present to the other two students the information they learned from their article. Each student fills out the information presented to them on their responsibility graphic organizer.

    After discussing the article in small groups briefly discuss the articles. Then invite the students to identify other situations in which people have acted irresponsibly, the consequences of those actions and the different people affected by those actions. Show a news clip of irresponsible and disrespectful behavior during a collegiate level soccer game (Found at http://espn.go.com/video/clip?id=4630382). Discuss the consequences of those actions and the different people affected by those actions.

2. Use dictionaries to locate the definitions of "leader." Use thesauruses to locate synonyms for "leader." Ask students to define a leader in their own words.

Ask students to name different people they consider to be leaders and make a list of student responses on the board. Then ask students to identify some of the different responsibilities of a leader. List these responsibilities on the board.
Use dictionaries to locate the definitions of "role model." Use thesauruses to locate synonyms for "role model." Ask students to define a role model in their own words. Ask students to name different people they consider to be role models and make a list of student responses on the board. Then ask students if role models have any responsibilities. If students identify any responsibilities of a role model list them on the board next to the names of role models.

Compare and contrast the definitions and responsibilities of a leader to the definitions and responsibilities of a role model using a Venn Diagram (Both leaders and role models have people that follow them. Leaders often seek to be in a leadership position where people will follow them; role models may or may not seek to be in a position where people follow them).

Referring to *Number the Stars* and the Holocaust discuss the kind of leader Hitler was compared to the kind of leader King Christian X was (p. 12-14). Who was a better leader? Which leader lived up to his responsibilities? Students support their responses with evidence from what they know about these leaders.

Discuss the various groups of people affected by the Holocaust. Refer to *Tell Them We Remember: The Story of the Holocaust* to help students recognize that in addition to Jews, Hitler targeted many different groups.

3. Unfortunately racism and even genocide still exists today. Help students better understand genocide and ways to prevent genocide by reading aloud to them the adolescent novel *I Learned a New Word Today…Genocide* by Elizabeth Hankins throughout the remainder of the unit. As appropriate, briefly discuss the genocides of Rwanda, Bosnia, Cambodia, Sudan, and Armenia. Help students to recognize that anytime we start placing ourselves above other people or think that we are better than a certain group of people we place ourselves in a scary and dangerous position.

4. If athletes were not mentioned in the class-generated list of role models include them in the list.

Review the story of Shoeless Joe Jackson and the Black Socks by watching a segment of the Ken Burns *Baseball* series, Inning 3-The Faith of Fifty Million People (Available from UEN at http://dms.uen.org/cgi-bin/WebObjects/tsweb.woa/3/wo/CtSmWe1jnxBC92l6lQA3kM/0.11.3?1257870334600) The segment starts at 1hr 21 min.

Discuss the part of the video where a kid calls out, "Say it ain't so Joe!" Why did the kid yell this? Was Joe Jackson a role model to this kid?

Prepare students for the reader's theater *Sport Court* from Sports Illustrated for Kids by asking them to silently reflect on the following questions: Should kids look up to athletes as role models? Do athletes have the responsibility to be good role models?

Before reading *Sport Court* explain that Bob is a lawyer who thinks athletes should be role models and Jose is a lawyer who thinks they shouldn't. Assign student volunteers to read the different parts: Play-by-Play announcer, Judge Even Sam, Roberta (Bob), No Way Jose, Malone, and Narrator. The rest of the class is the jury.

After reading *Sport Court* student pairs discuss the questions: (a) Should athletes be role models? Why or why not? (b) Do athletes have the responsibility to be good role models? Why or why not?

Student pairs are then joined together with another pair of students to form a group of four (Preferably each group has students with differing opinions). Students discuss the questions again.

Following the small group discussion, students journal their individual opinions to the questions: (a) Should athletes be role models? Why or why not? (b) Do athletes have the responsibility to be good role models? Why or why not?

Students also reflect on themselves as role models by journaling responses to these questions: (a) As a sixth grader who might be watching and imitating you? (b) As a brother or a sister who might be watching or imitating you? (c) What other situations might you find yourself in where others might be watching you and looking up to you as an example? (d) Do you have the responsibility to be a good role model? Why or why not?

Assessment:
1. Students verbalize reasonable definitions for the words leader and role model.
2. On the graphic organizer students give realistic evaluations of the effects of irresponsible behaviors.
3. Student journals contain sensible opinions supported with explanations and evidence.

Responsibility Graphic Organizer

What was the irresponsible action?	*What was the consequence of the action?*	*Who was affected by the action?*
Article #1		
Article #2		
Article #3		

Lesson 5

Learning Objective: Student will identify situations in which people have and are showing responsibility.

Students will classify strategies for applying responsible behavior

Literacy Objective: Students will make connections to text (USOE Standard 7 Objective 2a).

Students will locate facts from the internet (USOE Standard 7 Objective 3e).

Students will summarize important ideas and events (USOE Standard 7 objective 2g).

Procedures:
1. Watch the downloaded movie Responsibility (Available from http://college.usc.edu/vhi/creatingcharacter/lesson/responsibility/index.html). As students listen to the stories told in the movie ask them to think about who in the story is showing responsibility, what action demonstrates responsibility, and who is being cared for by the responsible action.

   Pause the movie after each person telling a story and allow students time to fill in the viewing guide (Available from http://college.usc.edu/vhi/creatingcharacter/lesson/responsibility/index.html). Following the movie discuss the stories told in the movie and how they relate to responsibility.

   Refer back to the literacy maps students created in lesson one. Discuss the situations in *Number the Stars* students identified as someone showing responsibility (Examples may include: Mama talking about friends on p. 24, p.128, Bodyguards for Jews on p. 26, Helping even though it is dangerous on p. 36, Thinking only about what you must do on p. 122-123, p.75).

   Discuss connections between the stories of responsibility told in the movie to the situations demonstrating responsibility in *Number the Stars*. What are the similarities in the way people think when they are acting responsible? (They think about others and not just themselves.)

2. In the computer lab allow students to explore all of the billboards found on values.com (http://www.values.com/inspirational-sayings-billboards). As students look through the pictures and read the stories associated with the pictures they should search for stories related to responsibility. When students locate a billboard story demonstrating responsibility they will summarize the story by filling in the blanks on the billboards &

responsibility worksheet. If students choose to, they may complete this assignment while working with a partner.

Allow students to share the stories they discovered relating to responsibility with the class.

3. In preparation for watching *Excuses, Excuses, Give it Up!* students evaluate themselves and how responsible they are by completing the responsibility survey.

   Watch the movie *Excuses, Excuses, Give it Up!* (Available from UEN at http://www.uen.org/dms/?1257870334600)

   Students connect what they learned from the video to themselves and categorize ways in which they can be responsible by completing the circles of responsibility worksheet (Downloadable from http://college.usc.edu/vhi/creatingcharacter/lesson/responsibility/index.html).

   Provide time for students to share their circles with another student in the class. Students may add any ideas they get from their partner to their own circle.

   As a class discuss other ways to be responsible by reviewing some of the suggestions found at http://goodcharacter.com/YCC/BeingResponsible.html Students may add to their circles throughout the discussion.

Assessment:
   1. Students identify people showing responsibility and accurately report factual information about them on the billboards and responsibility worksheet.
   2. Students summarize the information on the billboards and responsibility worksheet in their own words.
   3. Students make connections and recognize similarities between the people the responsibility video and the people showing responsibility in Number the Stars during discussion.
   4. Students make personal connections to the various texts discussing responsibility by categorizing realistic ways in which they can show responsibility towards various groups on the circles of responsibility worksheet.

Viewing Guide: Responsibility

Name _____

As the testimony clips for *Responsibility* are viewed, complete the three columns below:

Interviewee	Person demonstrating responsibility	Action demonstrating responsibility	Person, group or ideal being cared for
Bent Lerno			
Marianne Cooper			
Hedy Epstein			

Billboards & Responsibility

1. _____ demonstrated responsibility for _____ when he/she:

2. _____ demonstrated responsibility for _____ when he/she:

3. _____ demonstrated responsibility for _____ when he/she:

4. _____ demonstrated responsibility for _____ when he/she:

5. _____ demonstrated responsibility for _____ when he/she:

Responsibility Survey

Are You a Responsible Person?
(Take this self-evaluation and decide for yourself.)

True   False   I do what needs to be done.

True   False   I am reliable and dependable.

True   False   I am accountable for my actions; I don't make excuses
or blame others.

True   False   I do what I tell other people I will do.

True   False   I use good judgment and think through the
consequences of my actions.

True   False   I exercise self-control.

True   False   I do my part to help others.
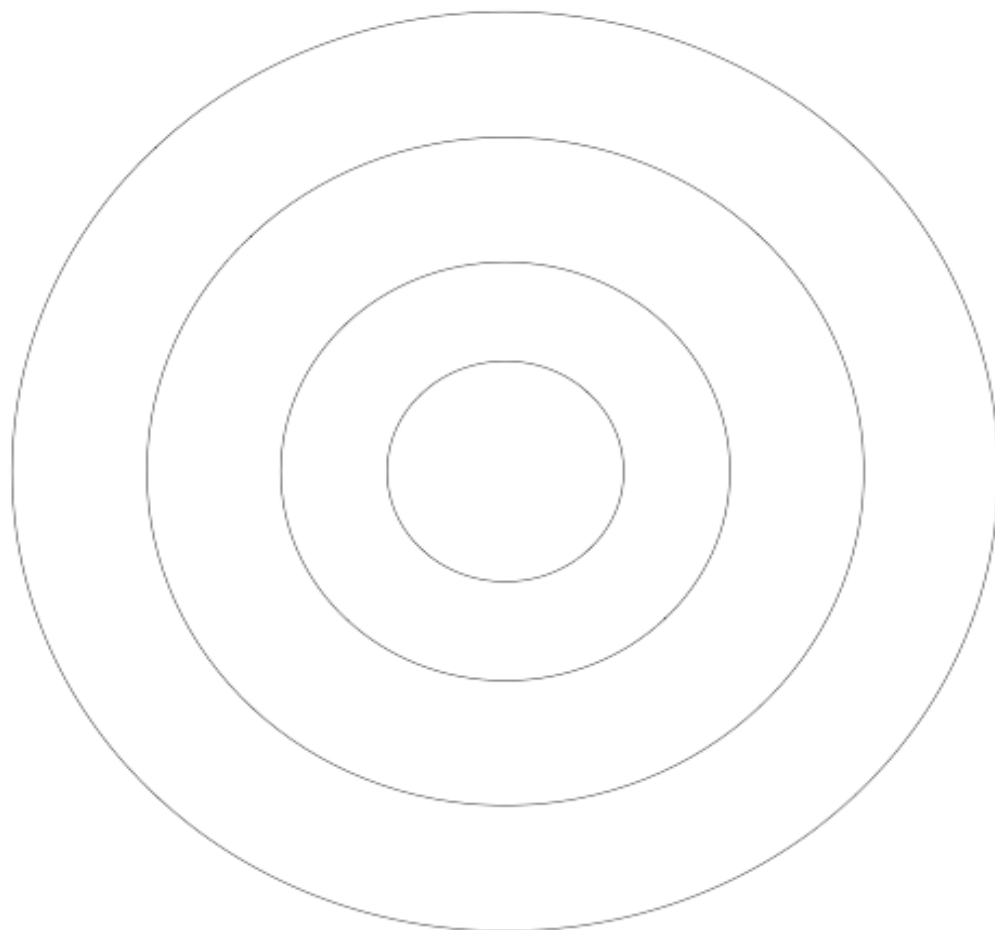
I think I am/am not a responsible person because:

Circles of Responsibility

Name _____

In the center circle, write the category for which you feel the most responsibility. In the remaining three circles, write the additional categories you previously selected during class. As the circles move outward, the responsibility you feel for the categories should decrease.

HOW TO BE
A RESPONSIBLE PERSON
(AND FEEL GREAT!)

When you agree to do something, do it. If you let people down, they'll stop believing you. When you follow through on your commitments, people take you seriously.

Answer for your own actions. Don't make excuses or blame others for what you do. When you take responsibility for your actions you are saying "I am the one who's in charge of my life."

Take care of your own matters. Don't rely on adults to remind you when you're supposed to be somewhere or what you're supposed to bring. You take the responsibility.

Be trustworthy. If somebody trusts you to borrow or take care of something, take care of it. If somebody tells you something in confidence, keep it to yourself. It's important for people to know they can count on you.

Always use your head. Think things through and use good judgment. When you use your head you make better choices. That shows your parents they can trust you.

Don't put things off. When you have a job to do, do it. Doing things on time helps you take control of your life and shows that you can manage your own affairs.

Lesson 6

Learning Objective: Student will identify people who have shown respect even when others haven't been respectful towards them.

                       Students will demonstrate strategies for applying this kind of respectful behavior

Literacy Objective: Students will identify characters, problem/solution and theme (USOE Standard 7 Objective 3a).

                       Students will identify author's purpose (USOE Standard 7 Objective 1b).

                       Students will identify specific purposes for viewing media (USOE Standard 1 Objective 2a).

Procedures:
1. Before reading the chapter *The Noble Experiment* from Jackie Robinson's autobiography, *I Never Had it Made*, have students participate in the character quotes activity (Yopp & Yopp, 2010) by reading several of Jackie Robinson's or Branch Rickey's quotes from the chapter.

   Review with students the elements of a story (setting, characters, sequence of events, problem/solution, and theme). Explain to students that an author's theme and an author's purpose can often be found in what a character says or does and in what others do or say about the character.

   Write each of the quotes from the character quotes sheet on a separate piece of paper. Organize students into cooperative groups of three or four. Give each group a different quote to consider to generate as many words as possible that describe either Jackie Robinson or Branch Rickey based on the quote. Have groups write their descriptive words on a sticky note.

   After each group has generated a list of descriptions a member from each group reads the group's quote to the entire class and then shares the list of character qualities and traits that the group associated with that character based on the quote.

   Compile all of the qualities and traits for Jackie Robinson together and those for Branch Rickey together. Use these lists to make generalizations about each individual.
   Use the quotes to have a discussion about the theme of the chapter.

   Read the chapter *The Noble Experiment* from *I Never Had it Made* by Jackie Robinson. Students may choose to read the chapter on their own or follow along as I read it aloud to them.

After reading the chapter, have a class discussion on the theme of the chapter and the problem/solution mentioned in the chapter (Problem: many people don't want Jackie to play in a white baseball league so they will do cruel things to him. Solution: not fight back). Also discuss the author's (Jackie Robinson) purpose in writing the chapter. *Why did Jackie Robinson write about the conversation he had with Branch Rickey?*

2. Explain to students that just as authors write books for a specific purpose, readers usually read books for a specific purpose (to gain information and learn about a topic, to be entertained, to formulate an opinion, etc.). Inform students that we also view media for a specific purpose (to identify main idea and supporting details, to gain information, distinguish between fiction/nonfiction, distinguish between fact/opinion, form an opinion, determine presentation's accuracy/bias, analyze and critique persuasive techniques).

   Show students the cover of the movie *The Jackie Robinson Story*. Inform them that Jackie Robinson appears as himself in the movie. Ask students to identify some of the specific purposes someone would want to watch the movie.

   Watch the movie *The Jackie Robinson Story* (Briskin, 1950). As students watch the movie have them keep tally marks of how many times Jackie could have gotten angry and fought back but didn't.

   Ask students to identify the characters in the story other than Jackie Robinson and Branch Rickey.

   After watching the movie students will write a "what if" response by answering the question: What if Jackie Robinson would have been mean or disrespectful back to those who had been disrespectful to him? How could that have changed the world of sports and the world in general? How would that have made things different in your life today?

3. Remind students that an author's theme and an author's purpose can often be found in what a character says or does and in what others do or say about the character. Therefore they should pay attention to the role of the character in the stories problem (conflict) and if character changes in any way.

   Before watching the movie *Ruby Bridges* by Disney model for students how to use a character analysis grid (Buehl, p. 153) using a familiar story or a selection students have read previously. Inform students that after the movie they will be filling out their own grid about the story of Ruby Bridges.

   Watch the movie *Ruby Bridges* reminding students to pay attention to what Ruby does, What Ruby says or thinks, how others feel about Ruby, and how Ruby changes. After watching the movie, students work in pairs to complete the first three parts of the analysis grid: 1. What does the character do? 2. What does the character say or think? 3. How do others feel about the character?

Team each pair of students with a second set of partners forming cooperative groups of four. In groups students work on the fourth quadrant: How does the character change? Student groups also work together to identify the theme, author's purpose, problem/solution, and a purpose for viewing this type of media. Students record their answers on the back of the character analysis grid.

4. Discuss how both Ruby and Jackie were respectful to others even when others hadn't been respectful towards them. *What can we learn from them? How can you react when others are disrespectful towards you?*

   As a class brainstorm a list of others who have or are showing respect even when others haven't been respectful towards them (Students can identify some of their classmates or someone they have seen out on the playground as examples).

   Refer back to the literacy maps students created in lesson one. Discuss situations in the book *Number the Stars* in which someone has shown respect even when others haven't been respectful towards them (Examples may include: Soldiers p. 2-5, Soldiers p. 43-49).

5. Display several lists suggesting ways to be respectful (Graham & Isabelle, p. 24; Lewis, p. 99, Goodcharacter.com, http://goodcharacter.com/BCBC/RespectingOthers.html)

   Discuss the list of 7 ways to speak up when you feel disrespected (Graham & McCoy, p. 100) and the list of guidelines for deciding what to do (Graham & McCoy, p. 20). Remind students that when we find ourselves in a problem situation there are ways to handle it respectfully—even when you feel disrespected.
   Allow the students to work in groups to decide on a strategy and role-play possible solutions to the following situations:
   a. A friend is gossiping about you and saying things that aren't true behind your back.
   b. You and your little brother want to listen to different kinds of music so he sticks his tongue out at you and calls you a jerk (Graham & McCoy, 2004).
   c. You come into class and notice that someone has been getting into your things. You soon discover that someone has taken your brand new box of colored pencils. You can't prove it, but you're pretty sure you know which one of your classmates has gotten into your desk and taken your things.
   d. Your father is talking on the phone and you want to ask him a question (Graham & McCoy, 2004).
   e. A friend at school tells you they don't want to be friends with you anymore.
   f. You see a student in a wheelchair trying to open the door to the movie theater (Graham & McCoy, 2004).
   g. You have piano lessons in 5 minutes but your mom's not home to take you so you know you're going to be late.
   h. The person sitting next to you keeps talking and ignores you when you remind them to listen.

<blockquote>

<ol type="i" start="9">
You're walking by the bus stop and your friend pulls out a bright red marker and starts drawing on the bench. She hands you another marker and tells you to join in (Lewis, 2000).
Your babysitter is rude to you and tells you to shut your mouth and stay in your room all day (Lewis, 2000).

</blockquote>

Assessment:

1. Students name valid situations in which people have shown respect even when others haven't been respectful towards them during discussion.
2. Students demonstrated appropriate strategies for showing respect during role-plays.
3. Students correctly identify characters, problem/solution, theme, author's purpose, and purposes for viewing media during discussion and on the back of the character analysis grid.

Character Quotes

"This player had to be one who could take abuse, name-calling, rejection by fans and sportswriters and by fellow players not only on opposing teams but on his own."
- --Jackie Robinson p. 28

"Mr. Rickey," I asked, "are you looking for a Negro who is afraid to fight back?"
- --Jackie Robinson p. 34

"My reactions seemed like some kind of weird mixture churning in a blender. I was thrilled, scared, and excited. I was incredulous. Most of all, I was speechless."
- --Jackie Robinson p. 31

"I knew is was all too good to be true. Here was a guy questioning my courage. That virtually amounted to him asking me if I was a coward. Mr. Rickey or no Mr. Rickey, that was an insinuation hard to take. I felt the heat coming up into my cheeks."
- --Jackie Robinson p. 32

"The truth is you are not a candidate for the Brooklyn Brown Dodgers. I've sent for you because I'm interested in you as a candidate for the Brooklyn National League Club. I think you can play in the major leagues. How do you feel about it?"
- --Branch Rickey p. 31

"I know you're a good ballplayer," he barked. "What I don't know is whether you have the guts."
- --Branch Rickey p. 31

"We can't fight our way through this, Robinson. We've got no army. There's virtually nobody on our side. No owners, no umpires, very few newspapermen. And I'm afraid that many fans will be hostile. We will be in a tough position. We can win only if we convince the world I'm doing this because you're a great ballplayer and a fine gentleman."
- --Branch Rickey p. 32

"Robinson," he said, "I'm looking for a ballplayer with guts enough not to fight back."
- --Branch Rickey p. 34

HOW TO
TREAT OTHERS WITH RESPECT

Treating people with respect makes your world a nicer place to live in, whether it's at home, at school, or out in your community. And it's easy - all you have to do is treat people the way you like to have them treat you. Here are a few ideas.

- Don't insult people or make fun of them.
- Listen to others when they speak.
- Value other people's opinions.
- Be considerate of people's likes and dislikes.
- Don't mock or tease people.
- Don't talk about people behind their backs.
- Be sensitive to other people's feelings.
- Don't pressure someone to do something he or she doesn't want to do.

We live in a diverse nation made up of many different cultures, languages, races, and backgrounds. That kind of variety can make all our lives a lot more fun and interesting, but only if we get along with each other. And to do that we have to respect each other. In addition to the list above, here are some ways we can respect people who are different from us.

- Try to learn something from the other person.
- Never stereotype people.
- Show interest and appreciation for other people's cultures and backgrounds.
- Don't go along with prejudices and racist attitudes.

Lesson 7

Learning Objective: Students will identify rights considered essential for all humans (USOE Social Studies Standard 4 Objective 3a).

Students will relate universal human rights to respect.

Students will investigate pressing issues facing the world today (USOE Social Studies Standard 4 Objective 2c).

Literacy Objective: Students will make connections to text (USOE Standard 7 Objective 2a).

Students will use dictionaries and thesaurus' to determine the meaning of unknown words (USOE Standard 6 Objective 2a).

Produce personal writing (USOE Standard 8 Objective 6a).

Procedures:
1. Have students use a dictionary and a thesaurus to come up with their own definition of human rights by looking up the word "rights" (Everyone's right to fair treatment, justice).

   Ask students to brainstorm a list of rights they think are essential for all humans
   Divide students into pairs and assign each pair an issue related to human rights to learn about (http://www.uen.org/Lessonplan/preview?LPid=23824). Students will explore the issue through reading one of Eve Buntings books.
   a. A train somewhere (Orphans)
   b. Fly Away from Home (Homeless)
   c. The Wall (Political Turmoil)
   d. A Day's Work (Poverty, Hunger, Child Labor)
   e. Terrible Things (Genocide, Political Turmoil)
   f. Smokey Night (Poverty, Race)
   g. One Green Apple (Political Turmoil)

   After students have read the books allow them to add to the list of rights essential for all humans (health care, education, safety, freedom from fear, freedom of expression, etc.)

   Read *Every Human Has Rights* by National Geographic.

   Read part of the Declaration of Independence with students. Continue adding to the list of human rights

2. Explain to students that after World War II Eleanor Roosevelt helped the United Nations write a Universal Declaration of Human Rights (http://www.udhr.org/history/Biographies/bioer.htm)

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Ask students to examine the Simplified Universal Declaration of Human Rights and think about how each of the rights promotes respect (http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit490/lesson3.html)

Have a class discussion on the articles in the Declaration that the students think are most important, that they are surprised to see included, or that they have questions about. Infuse the concept of respect in the discussion

3. Read the following quote about human rights from Eleanor Roosevelt :
   "Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world" (http://www.udhr.org/history/Biographies/bioer.htm).

Discuss the meaning of the quote and our responsibility to protect the human rights and human dignity of others in addition to our own.

Use some of the human rights from the list generated by the students in lesson seven to complete the our responsibility worksheet, proposing ways people can take responsibility to protect human rights.

4. Have students use a dictionary and a thesaurus to come up with their own definition of human dignity by looking up the word "dignity" (the importance and worth of all humans).

Discuss how human rights, human dignity, and respect are all related.

Read the *Afterward* in *Number the Stars* together as a class.

Give students a bookmark containing a photograph of Kim Malthe-Bruun, a copy of the paragraph from his letter mentioned in the afterward, and Lois Lowry's last paragraph from the afterward. Assign students to re-read the paragraphs on the bookmark silently to themselves, reflecting on the meaning of each paragraph and what they can do to help make a world of human decency possible.

Discuss Lois Lowry's purpose in writing *Number the Stars* (Stated in the last paragraph of the afterward).

Assign students to respond to Kim Malthe-Bruun and Lois Lowry's plea for a world full of human decency by writing a letter to one of them. In the letter students will explain what they have learned about respect towards others and what they as an individual are going to start doing and/or continue doing to promote a world of human decency. Mail copies of student letters to Lois Lowry.

Assessment:
1. Students create a rational list of rights considered essential for all humans.
2. Students give logical explanations relating universal human rights to respect.
3. Students reading a book by Eve Bunting in its entirety and use knowledge of the issue to add to the list of human rights.
4. Students use dictionaries and thesauruses to explain the meaning of human rights, human dignity, and human decency in their own words.
5. Students connect their understanding respect, responsibility, human rights, human dignity, and human decency gained from various texts throughout the unit to themselves by completing a personal letter to Kim Malthe-Bruun or Lois Lowry.

Simplified Universal Declaration of Human Rights

http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit490/lesson3.html

Article 1   Right to Equality

Article 2   Freedom from Discrimination

Article 3   Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security

Article 4   Freedom from Slavery

Article 5   Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment

Article 6   Right to Recognition as a Person before the Law

Article 7   Right to Equality before the Law

Article 8   Right to Remedy by Competent Tribunal

Article 9   Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Exile

Article 10   Right to Fair Public Hearing

Article 11   Right to be Considered Innocent until Proven Guilty

Article 12   Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence

Article 13   Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country

Article 14   Right to Asylum in other Countries from Persecution

Article 15   Right to a Nationality and the Freedom to Change It

Article 16   Right to Marriage and Family

Article 17   Right to Own Property

Article 18   Freedom of Belief and Religion

Article 19   Freedom of Opinion and Information

Article 20   Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association

Article 21   Right to Participate in Government and in Free Elections

Article 22   Right to Social Security

Article 23   Right to Desirable Work and to Join Trade Unions

Article 24   Right to Rest and Leisure

Article 25   Right to Adequate Living Standard

Article 26   Right to Education

Article 27   Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community

Article 28   Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document

Article 29   Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development

Article 30   Freedom from State or Personal Interference in the above Rights

Name_____   Date_____

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Directions: Read the Simplified Universal Declaration of Human Rights then think about and answer the following questions.

    1.) Which articles in the declaration do you think are most important? Why?

    2.) Are there any articles in the declaration you are surprised to see? Explain.

    3.) Are there any articles you have questions about? Which ones?

    4.) How are the universal human rights related to respect?

    5.) Which human rights are related to how we treat each other in this classroom?

    6.) How are the universal human rights related to responsibility?

Our Responsibility

Rights	Responsibilities

Lesson 8

Learning Objective: Students will identify and report on an individual or group making a positive change in the world and support their choice with evidence (USOE Social Studies Standard 4 Objective 2a).

Students will propose steps they can take to protect rights considered essential for all humans (USOE Social Studies Standard 4 Objective 3b).

Students will plan and carry out a service project.

Literacy Objective: Students will make connections to text (USOE Standard 7 Objective 2a).

Students will locate facts from the internet (USOE Standard 7 Objective 3e).

Students will summarize important ideas and events (USOE Standard 7 objective 2g).

Students will speak clearly and audibly with expression in communicating ideas (USOE Standard 1 Objective 1c).

Students will use a variety of formats in presenting with various forms of media (USOE Standard 1 Objective 2b).

Students will produce informational text (USOE Standard 8 Objective 6c).

Procedures:
1. In the computer lab students will explore one or more of the following websites reading about individuals and groups making a positive change in the world. Students will choose one individual or group to report on. Students may choose to do the report alone or with a partner.
    a. http://www.idealist.org/kt/youthorgs.html (Organizations started by kids)
    b. http://foundationcenter.org/yip/youth_stories.html (Youth service projects)
    c. http://www.myhero.com/myhero/go/directory/directory.asp?dir=child (Child heroes)

Students will report on an individual or group making a positive change in the world by creating a poster that includes: a picture of the individual or group (printed from the internet or drawn by the students), an explanation of who the individual or group is, what the individual or group is doing to make a positive change in the world, why the individual or group decided to take this action, and the age of the individual or person who started the group (If available).

2. Students will take on the responsibility to help others by planning and carrying out a service project. They will following the 10 steps to planning a service project (Lewis, p.23) and create a service plan by completing the my service plan worksheet (Lewis, p. 22).

   Students share stories, frustrations, and successes about their projects as they are planning them and when they are completed.

Assessment:
1. Students propose several realistic ways in which they can protect human rights.
2. Students select one individual or group they learned about from the internet and create an informational poster about the person.
3. Students summarize what an individual or group has done or is doing to make a positive change in the world and present on the individual to the class using effective rate, phrasing and volume.
4. Students connect what they have learned about respect and responsibility throughout the unit to themselves and create a service project.
5. As students plan and carryout their projects they share stories about their progress and the results of their service with the class. Students turn in their my service plan worksheet once they have completed their project.

Making a Positive Change in the World

Who:

What:

Why:

Age:

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Appendix B

Consent and Assent to be a Research Subject

Introduction

This research study is being conducted by Marianne Gill as part of her master's thesis to examine how teaching respect and responsibility through literary means during the language arts block of the elementary school day leads students to transfer and apply the teachings to their own lives. Particularly, the researcher is interested in the nature of student discourse when concepts of respect and responsibility are integrated into the language arts curriculum. Your child was selected to participate because he/she is enrolled in Marianne Gill's 6th grade core class. The research will be supervised by [name of advisor intentionally left blank], Associate Professor in Teacher Education in the David O. McKay School of Education at Brigham Young University.

Procedures

Your child will participate in this research study while he/she participates in a language arts unit during the 2009-2010 school year. He/she will discuss issues related to respect and responsibility as related to the novels he/she will read. Your child will complete weekly language arts assignments and keep a reflective journal. He/she will also participate in classroom community building activities and class meeting discussions once a week. Class meeting discussions will be observed and audio-taped and the tapes will be transcribed. Direct quotes from those transcriptions and journal entries may appear in research publications and presentations. Artifacts created for and during the language arts unit (e.g., language arts assignments, journal writing) will be collected, photocopied, and returned to your child.

Risks/Discomforts

There are minimal risks for participating in this study. However, your child may feel slightly uncomfortable sharing ideas and opinions while being observed and audio-taped.

Benefits

It is not anticipated that your child will receive any direct benefits from participating in the study. It is possible that he/she will experience indirect benefits from participating in a collaborative learning environment.

Confidentiality

All information collected during the study will remain confidential and will not include any personally identifiable information about your child. All data, including language arts assignments, journal responses, observational notes, tapes, and transcriptions will be kept in a secure location and destroyed once the study is published. Only those directly involved in the research will have access to them.

Compensation

Your child will not be compensated for his/her participation in this study.

Participation
Students who choose not to participate in the study will still take part in the language arts unit and all the activities as a regular part of instruction. However, their work will not be photocopied, audio tapes of their discussions will be erased and not used for the study, and observational notes of the child will be excluded from the study. The student will not be revealed as a non-participant to anyone and the student will not be penalized for not participating in the study. You have the right to excuse or withdraw your child from participating in the study at anytime.

Questions about the Research
If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Marianne Gill at [phone number intentionally left blank], [email address intentionally left blank] or [name of advisor intentionally left blank] at [phone number intentionally left blank], [email address intentionally left blank].

Questions about your Child's Rights as a Research Participant
If you have questions you do not feel comfortable asking the researcher, you may contact Brigham Young University IRBAdministrator; A-285 ASB; Provo, UT 84602; 801-422-1461; irb@byu.edu

I have read, understood, and received a copy of the above consent and desire of my own free will that my child participate in this study.

Printed Name of Parent: _____
Signature of Parent: _____
Date: _____

I agree to participate in this study.
Printed Name of Student: _____
Signature of Student: _____
Date: _____

Comment Slips: Problems & Concerns

Friday, December 4, 2009
- [This person] doesn't deserve [their part in the play], [this person] does
- Somebody's saying very bad things about me. Yes, I know who he is.
- What if you got a part in the play and you really don't wan that part?

Friday, December 11, 2009
- [A teacher] was making fun of the 6th graders and I was upset.
- What if someone you sit by is making faces and sticking out their tongue and being mean to other kids in the class?
- My friend is writing notes to me and saying really mean things and I really hate it!
- Somebody has created a rumor about me, and I'm scared. Tell me what to do.

Friday, December 18, 2009
- [This person] is real mean. Will you do something?
- [This person] is a jerk and he is mean.
- My friend is writing notes that aren't nice.
- What if someone is spreading a rumor about you and you want it to stop?
- Some people are so rude! I will not name names, but people in this class.
- Someone keeps knocking my coat and backpack off my hook and puts theirs on the hook. Then people won't notice your stuff on the floor and they get stepped on, some of my stuff has gotten squished.
- How do I tell my friend I don't want to be her friend because she's mean to me and I really, really don't like it. How do I tell her?
- I'm sad. How can you help me?

Friday, January 8, 2010
- I have a friend that has been mean to me in the past. My other friends suggest that I should stay away from her but I don't know what to do!
- What if someone is making faces, like sticking out their tongue at another kid in the class? Even though it's not me, it still makes me feel sad.
- My friend is having friend problems. Whenever I make a suggestion she doesn't like them even though the rest of our friends and me think it will help the most! I don't know what to do, I really need help. Please help!
- What if someone is in your business and you ask them to stop but they say they aren't in your business, but you know they are?
- I've been having friend problems. I thought they were getting better, but they got worse. Please help!
- What if someone has been so mean to you, you are scared to come to school and they won't admit they are mean to you?
- No offense anybody, but I don't enjoy school at all.

Friday, January 15, 2010
- I wish that my last year of elementary school would be a happy, good time, not filled with drama like it is!
- People keep giving me notes and some of them aren't very nice. What do I do? I don't want to write back and get caught
- Today tons of people were being really mean to me. First, two people were calling me geek. Second, someone kept ignoring me.
- We should be able to chew gum in class.
- People keep looking at my missing assignments and telling their friends. It is really bugging me.
- I said something to a girl and it wasn't very nice. How could I apologize?
- What if someone cheats and you don't like to tell on people?
- On quizzes and tests I see people looking over other people's shoulders.
- Kathy, Justice, and Ashley are texting during class.
- I hate when people pass be notes.
- I'm scared to come to school because of a group of girls.
- What if my friend just hangs out with me to get my secrets, then tells a girl I don't like?
- My friend doesn't want to be friends with me and I don't know why.
- I think someone is going to start a rumor about me.
- Someone else told me they didn't wan to be my friend. Why?
- I have a friend who won't be friends with me because I am hanging out with someone she does not like.

Friday, January 22, 2010
- Kathy and John are always being mean to people. How can you help?
- Wow, I can't believe how loud some people are during class.
- What if my BFF keeps ditching me and then hangs out with the person I don't like, and is always so happy with her and never that happy around me.
- What should I do if my friend heard someone else say, "I am not going to be her friend any more," and they were talking about me?
- People keep hurting my feelings because they say secrets and they talk about me behind my back.
- Someone in this class won't stop following me, but if I tell them to stop they over exaggerate.
- Whenever I make a comment during class meeting, someone keeps staring and glaring at me.
- We should be able to chew gum in class.

Friday, January 29, 2010
- I was in a fight with someone and they want to be friends again, but they hurt me, so I don't know if I want to be friends again.
- Tyler cheats all of the time. What should I do?
- Two of my best friends are mad at each other. It makes me really sad to see them fighting. Please help me.

- Me and one of my closest friends ever are in a huge fight and I don't think she's willing to work it out. I hate it!
- Some people just keep stealing and touching my stuff!

Friday, February 12, 2010
- People are making fun of another person because they believe in different things. It's just imagination.
- What if someone is mean to you?
- I tell my friend a secret because I trust that person. That person goes and tells someone else.
- I have noticed Mary and Abby passing notes during class.
- On the acrostic poem that says Speak Up, on A it says, Ask for the other side of the story. Get the facts straight. People don't always tell the truth so that would be a problem!
- Tyler keeps on pushing people out of the way when we ling up and get our tote tray.

Friday, February 26, 2010
- What if someone is being mean to you but follows you and hangs out with you? What should you do?
- What if someone is being mean to you, like laughing and calling you names? What can you do?
- My BFF ditched me for another girl, now it seems like she is embarrassed to be around me.
- Henry should have more punishment than detention. He is always chucking balls at Brandon's face. That is bad bullying and that's against the school rules.
- What if someone is following you at recess but is mean, what should you do?
- What if someone has or is being mean to you but wants to hang out with you?
- A teacher gave me detention. The teacher didn't even know what happened. The teacher never believes me!
- When Cami was walking into the other room to get help with math Riley laughed at her. Then Riley went into the other room to get help to. That made me really upset!
- The sub was really mean and I did not like him (17 other comment slips said something very similar)

Thursday, March 4, 2010
- How is copying someone (repeating what someone says) being rude?
- Someone called me a swear word, what should I do?
- Someone was accusing me of something I didn't do.
- At recess when the whistle blows the boys take forever to line up because they stay and play football.
- It's not fair that when we want to earn a longer recess the boys try not to come.
- What do you do if someone is following you and you don't want them to?
- Melissa is being disrespectful to me by wanting Eagar to sit in my spot. It makes me feel like I don't belong.

Friday, March 12, 2010
- What do you do if someone is really annoying and want to hang out with you?
- Someone in this class keeps throwing things at me and my neighbor. We ask that person to stop but they say no and keep doing it.