

Virtues



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Topic

Virtues and My Life (I am in the process of growing and becoming. What kind of person do I want to become?)

Description

Students in this project will communicate what they have learned about virtues and values in life, and articulate the virtues that they want to model in their own lives. They will also share what they personally believe about virtues and values in life with other students around the world on the online Virtues forum. At the end of the project, each student will present all his or her work to their teacher in the form of a booklet.

Participants Students in grades 7-12.

Objectives:

In this project, students will:

Communicate what they have learned about virtues and values in life.

Ask themselves: "What kind of person do I want to become?"

Identify and articulate the values that, if they incorporate into their lives, will help them to be the type of person that they want to be.

Share what they personally believe about virtues and values in life with other students around the world.

Produce a booklet that contains the activities that they have completed in this project.

Desired Outcomes

The goals of this project are to:

Help the students grow in self-knowledge.

Help the students learn about the values, which are held by other people around the world.

Foster understanding and appreciation of the values of other cultures.

Provide opportunities for the students to communicate with students from other countries who are involved in the Virtues project.

Timeline

Students will work on this project from January to May. (Specific dates by which each section of the project should be completed were provided for the students.—example of my schedule can be found at the

end of this section)

Procedures

Introduce the project to the students and invite them to participate in it.

Share with the students the objectives, desired outcomes, and timeline for the project.

Provide students with the requirements of the project.

Respond to their questions and concerns.

Ask for their input.

Provide students with access code so that they can view what has been posted on the Virtues project interactive forum.

Support and encourage them in their endeavors.

Work with students as they post their replies on the interactive forum and complete their booklet.

Project Plan and Activities

Students may use any format (listed below) to complete the following assignments and put them in the order listed in their booklet:

- Poem
- Essay
- Drawing or cartoon
- Story
- Poster or collage
- Pictures with captions

(Directions and requirements for students who as they participate in this project.)

- 1) Think about what values are most valued and promoted in our culture. Review/look at what kind of people television shows, music, movies, magazines, advertisements, books, plays, our peers, etc. say that we should be?) how what AT LEAST 10 of these values are.
- 2) Show at least three of the most important virtues/values your parents have taught you.
- 3) Think about virtues and values that are held as important by your religion. Show what these values are.
- 4) Ask your parents, friends (at least 3), and one teacher to tell you what they think are the virtues by which you live.
 - a. Ask them to fill out the questionnaire (copy attached after rubric) and return it to you.
 - b. You will also complete a “gift” sheet in class (copy attached after rubric).
 - c. Look over the questionnaire and “gift” sheet.
 - d. Write down your thoughts in a journal type entry—answer the following questions:
 - What did people say about you?
 - What did you learn about yourself?
 - How do you feel about what you read?
 - How can this help you to become the person you want to be?
- 5) Complete one of the following:
 - a. Make a list of the things you would want people to remember about you when they think or talk about you.
 - b. Write a poem that shows what you would want people to remember about you when they think or talk about you.
 - c. Design a collage that shows what you would want people to remember about you when they think or talk about you.
 - d. Write your own epitaph or eulogy.
Design your own tombstone.
- 6) **Post** at least one of the above activities (# 1,2,3, or 5) on the interactive forum Virtues discussion site.

- 7) Read what students have posted on the interactive forum Virtues site and respond to at least 3 postings from students in another country.
- 8) What 5 virtues do you think are most needed in our world today? Give your reasons why you think these virtues are important.
- 9) **Post** your answer to #8 on the Virtues forum, read what others have written, and respond to at least 3 postings.
- 10) **Articulate** AT LEAST 5 of the virtues that people of your age who participated in this Virtues project consider to be most important.
- 11) **Post** your response to the question above on the interactive forum Virtues site.
- 12) **Review** what you have learned about virtues and values in your class.
- 13) **Think** of what kind of person you would like to become and what virtues you would live by to become this kind of person.
- 14) **Articulate** the kind of person (be specific) and the virtues and values by which you need to live in order to become this kind of person.
- 15) **Post** your response to the question above on the interactive forum Virtues site and respond to at least two postings by other students.
- 16) **Discuss** your ideas about participating in this project: Did you like participating in it? Why?/Why not? Would you recommend doing such a project again? What would you do differently? What was your favorite part of the project? What was your least favorite part of the project? Do you have any suggestions or advice about doing such a project?
- 17) Pass in your completed booklet to your teacher.

Introduction of School

Notre Dame Academy, Worcester, MA (USA)

Excerpts from website: www.nda.mec.edu

As the only all-girls independent college preparatory school in Central Massachusetts, Notre Dame offers its students unique opportunities for academic and personal growth. Approximately 320 students attend the Academy. We take pride in our strong commitment to excellence, community, and tradition.

Notre Dame Academy is located on a 13-acre campus that was formerly the Knollwood estate in the northwestern part of Worcester. Notre Dame's student body numbers approximately 300. One fourth of the students are from Worcester and the remainder are from 45 area cities and towns.

The School was established in 1951 by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. The Notre Dame Corporation owns the school. The Board of Trustees is made up of Sisters, parents, graduates and civic leaders. The Board sets basic policies and goals.

Rubric

Name _____

Date _____

Virtues Project Rubric

	2 = not acceptable	4 = below expectations	6 = meets expectations	8 = exceeded expectations	10= exceeded expectations
Booklet passed in on date due.					
<i>MECHANICS:</i>					
Organization (are all elements of the booklet complete and in order?)	Booklet not arranged as directed.	Some elements of booklet correctly placed.	Basic directions followed for organizing the booklet.	Very good organization that enhances the report.	Excellent organization that enhances the report.
Aesthetics (is your booklet, creative, visually pleasing, neat, readable?)	Unacceptable appearance, not visually pleasing, difficult to read and understand.	Some portions are sloppy and difficult to read.	Booklet is neat, understandable, and its style is acceptable.	Booklet is neat, understandable, visually pleasing, its style enhances the presentation.	Booklet is neat, understandable, visually pleasing, its style enhances the presentation.
Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation	Many spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.	Some spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.	Few spelling errors, minor grammar or punctuation errors.	No spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors—very good presentation.	No spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors—excellent presentation.
<i>CONTENT:</i>					
Cover sheet					
#1. Values (at least 10) that are promoted in our culture (movies, ads, music, magazines, television, peers, etc.)	Poor presentation of information/information superficial, incomplete.	Fair presentation of information/information limited.	Requirements met, good presentation of information.	Goes beyond most requirements, very good presentation of information.	Exceeds requirements, very good presentation of information.
#2. Three of the most important virtues that your parents have taught you.	Unclear, generalized, non-specific information.	Fair presentation of information.	Requirements met, virtues clearly presented.	Goes beyond requirements, very good presentation of information.	Exceeds requirements, very good presentation of information.
#3. Virtues and values held by your religion.	Poor presentation of information/information superficial, incomplete.	Fair presentation of information/information limited.	Requirements met, good presentation, virtues/values are clearly identified.	Goes beyond requirements, very good presentation of information.	Exceeds requirements, very good presentation of information.
#4 Questionnaires and Gift Sheet completed					

# 4. Journal entry.	Unclear, or generalized, non-specific, superficial response to questions.	Fair, limited, all questions basically answered.	Requirements met—all questions answered, reflection and thought are evident.	Goes beyond requirements—very good answers to most questions-- thoughtfully answered, analysis, and reflection are evident.	Exce requ ques thou answ and r evid
#5. One of options was completed.	Unclear, or generalized, non-specific, superficial work.	Fair, limited, basic work, little thought and reflection evident.	Requirements met—work shows careful reflection and consideration of the issue.	Goes beyond requirements—most work shows a great deal of thought, analysis, and reflection.	Exce requ work deal analy refle
#6. Student posted the results of one of the activities (#1,2,3, or 5) on the Virtues forum(Internet).					
#7. Student read and responded to at least 3 students on the forum (Internet).	Unclear, generalized, non-specific, superficial response to the students.	Fair, limited, basic communication with the students.	Requirements met—good, thoughtful, “quality” communication with all three students.	Goes beyond requirements—very good “quality” communication, shows analysis and reflection.	Exce requ exce comm show unde analy refle
#8. What 5 virtues do you think are needed in our world today? Give your reasons.	Unclear, or generalized, non-specific, superficial work.	Fair, limited, basic work, little thought and reflection evident.	Requirements met—work shows careful reflection and consideration of the issue.	Goes beyond requirements—most work shows a great deal of thought, analysis, and reflection.	Exce requ work deal analy refle
# 9. Student posted his or her answer to #8 on the forum (Internet).					
# 10. Articulate the virtues (at least 5) that people who participated in the project consider to be most important.	Poor presentation of information/ information superficial, incomplete.	Fair presentation of information/ information limited.	Requirements met, good presentation, virtues/values are clearly identified.	Goes beyond requirements, very good presentation of information.	Exce requ comp pres infor
#11. Student posted his or her answer to #10 on the forum (Internet).					

#14. Articulate the kind of person you want to become.	Poor presentation of information/information superficial, incomplete.	Fair presentation of information/information limited.	Requirements met, good presentation, virtues/values are clearly identified.	Goes beyond requirements, very thoughtful and good presentation of information.	Exce requ comp prese infor
# 15. Student posted his or her answer to #14 on the forum (Internet).					
#16. Discussion questions	Unclear, or generalized, non-specific, superficial response to questions.	Fair, limited, all questions basically answered.	Requirements met—all questions answered, reflection and thought are evident.	Goes beyond requirements—very good responses-- questions thoughtfully answered, reflection and analysis are evident.	Exce requ exce thou to al analy refle evid

Points for Mechanics

Points for Content _____
Total Points _____

Total Points _____ **divided by Possible Points** 158 = **FINAL GRADE**

Comments to student by the teacher:

Questionnaire

Distribute a copy of this questionnaire to your parents, 3 friends, and 1 teacher.

Dear _____

This questionnaire is part of a project that I am doing. The questionnaire asks what people think about me. You do not have to participate (it's voluntary) or put your name on it. I would appreciate your feedback.

Thanks for your help.

 (Sign your own name here)

Please circle one: I am your friend classmate teacher parent

1. When you think of me, what three words come to your mind?

2. List at least 3 of my strengths and 1 weakness.

3. If you could change anything about me, what would you change?

4. What do you think are the three virtues/that I try to live by?

Are there any other comments that you would like to make?

GIFT SHEET EXERCISE

Each of us has gifts that he/she gives to those with whom they live and interact.

In this exercise, each student in the class is given a blank piece of paper and colored marker.

1. Each student is asked to write/print his or her name in the center of the paper.
2. These papers are exchanged with every student in the class.
3. When a student receives a paper with another student's name on it, he or she will write a note to the student telling them what gifts they have brought to them/the class.
4. When every student has written their messages on the papers, they are returned to the student whose name is on the paper.

EXAMPLE**

Schedule of dates by which each of the sections of the project MUST be completed by students.

Week #1 _____

1. Think about what values are most valued and promoted in our culture. Review/look at what kind of people television shows, music, movies, magazines, advertisements, books, plays, our peers, etc. say that we should be?)

Show these values.

Week #2 _____

2. Show at least three of the most important virtues/values your parents have taught you.

3. Think about virtues and values are held as important by your religion and illustrate them.

Week #3 _____

4. Ask your parents, friends (at least 3), and one teacher to tell you what they think are the virtues by which you live.

a. Ask them to fill out the questionnaire and return it to you.

b. You will also complete a "gift" sheet in class.

c. Look over the questionnaire and "gift" sheet.

d. Write down your thoughts in a journal type entry—answer the following questions:

What did people say about you?

What did you learn about yourself?

How do you feel about what you read?

How can this help you to become the person you want to be?

Week #4 _____

5. Complete one of the following:

a. Make a list of the things you would want people to remember about you when they think or talk about you.

b. Write a poem that shows what you would want people to remember about you when they think or talk about you.

- c. Design a collage that shows what you would want people to remember about you when they think or talk about you.
- d. Write your own epitaph or eulogy.
- e. Design your own tombstone or memorial.

Complete week during weeks #5, 6, & 7 _____

6. Post at least one of the activities (# 1,2,3, or 5) on the interactive forum Virtues site.
7. Read what students have posted on the interactive forum Virtues site and respond to at least 3 postings.
8. What 5 virtues do you think are most needed in our world today? Give your reasons why you think these virtues are important.
9. Post your answer to #8 on the Virtues forum, read what others have written, and respond to at least 3 postings.

Week #8 _____

10. Articulate the virtues that people of your age who participated in this Virtues project consider to be most important.
11. Post your response to the question above on the interactive forum Virtues site.

Complete during weeks # 9 & 10 _____

12. Review what you have learned about virtues and values in your class.
13. Think of what kind of person you would like to become.
14. Articulate the kind of person you would like to become.
15. Post your response to the question above on the interactive forum Virtues site.
16. Discuss your ideas about participating in this project:
17. Pass in your completed booklet to your teacher.

The Virtues project addressed the following MA state standards and frameworks

Examine the causes and consequences of the ethnic and religious conflict in many parts of the world.
Learn about recent events and trends that have shaped modern day America and the world.

Addresses the following themes:

The evolution of the concepts of personal freedom, individual responsibility, and respect for human dignity.

The influence of economic, political, religious, and cultural ideas as human societies move beyond regional, national, or geographic boundaries.

The effects of geography on the history of civilizations and nations.

The development of scientific reasoning, technology, and formal education over time and their effects on people's health, standards of living, economic growth, government, religious beliefs, communal life, and the environment.

Outcomes

5. Fostered students' self knowledge (about values and priorities in one's life)
6. Helped students understand the influences on their value systems (e.g. parents, society, culture, religion, media, etc.)
7. Helped students to learn about what students in other countries think/feel/believe about what the values of their parents, society, culture, media, religion are and how they influence their own values and priorities.
8. Fostered dynamic and well informed exchange of ideas among students who participated in the Virtues interactive forum.
9. Helped students to understand that while there may be differences among them, they have very much more in common with each other when it comes to what they consider as important virtues and values in their own lives and that are needed in our world today
10. Provided opportunities for students to affirm and respond to the ideas of others who posted their opinions, essays, poems, etc. on the forum.
11. Fostered greater global understanding among students.
12. Generated and provided a forum in which students could genuinely and honestly express their deepest feelings and thoughts.

13. Caused students to think about how they can integrate, personalize, and apply virtues in their own lives.
14. Fostered higher order thinking skills: application, evaluation, analysis, synthesis.
15. Enabled students to strengthen their computer and language skills.
16. Fostered the creative aspects of students.
17. Fostered the use of technology in teaching and learning.
18. Addressed the various learning styles of students.
19. Engaged the cognitive, emotional, reflective, affective, kinesthetic, and social aspects of student learning.
20. Provided a safe environment for students to exchange ideas in a respectful manner.
21. Helped students to apply what they learned to other disciplines (e.g. writing, history, psychology, geography, religious studies, etc.)
22. Generated enthusiasm for continued contact with participants on the forum.

THE RESULTS WERE TANGIBLE....

IN THE PRODUCTION OF EACH STUDENT'S PERSONAL BOOKLET

IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE iEARN VIRTUES BOOKLET

Student response to participation

- The online portion of the project was one that ALL students looked forward to completing.
- They were excited and gratified when they received responses to their postings.
- They shared their excitement and knowledge with others (parents, fellow students, teachers, etc.).
- They felt it was an enjoyable way of gaining first-hand knowledge of topics that they were studying in school.
- They felt that it helped them see where others were “coming from” and helped them to understand students from other parts of the world in a better way.
- They all commented on the things they have in common as teens regardless of the geographical part of the world from which they come.
- They all expressed a hope for a better world and a determination to personally work toward its achievement.

How is teaching through iEARN projects different from teaching in a traditional way?

- e. It provides first hand contact.
- f. It is interactive.
- g. It is dynamic.
- h. It links students who would otherwise not be linked.
- i. It provides opportunities for the development of health, respectful, conversations and sharing of ideas.
- j. It reinforces what is learned in the classroom in a way that no other method can.
- k. It generates excitement and hooks student interest in learning and sharing their knowledge.
- l. It helps students to articulate their knowledge, opinions, etc. in a thoughtful and cogent way.
- m. It provides another resource for gaining knowledge (supplements, textbooks, films, readings, handouts, worksheets, etc. used in class).

Responses

Principal--gave assent to the project

Curriculum Director (me)—wholly in favor of using iEARN in learning because I “see” the results.

Parents—no formal study was done but many parents voiced their support of the project and said that it fostered a comfortable, worthwhile, sharing of ideas and communication between themselves and their children.

Challenges

Finding ways to engage other faculty in iEARN...convincing them of the “user friendly” formats, the worthwhileness of incorporating iEARN into their teaching...

Recommendations

- f. Talk to students and teachers that have participated—get their input.
- g. Ask teachers who have participated for help/guidance/tips, etc.
- h. Check out the website and links to projects, learning circles, professional development, etc.
- i. Have your students check out some of the forums and see what they think of them.
- j. Ask students if they would like to participate and what their interests and ideas are for participation.
- k. See what is offered...and what would be helpful to you and your students.
- l. Take an iEARN online course if you can..
- m. JUST GIVE IT A TRY....YOU MAY LIKE BEING PART OF THIS LEARNING ORGANIZATION...it doesn't have to be a “huge” project....can begin in small ways.

Read the Virtues Booklet or go to the forum and you can see how the project makes a meaningful contribution to helping students see how they can personally work to make a better place!