



Activity #1 – Living Out the Gettysburg Address

- Target grade level: elementary/secondary/college
 - Character quality emphasized: responsibility, leadership
1. Have the students listen to a recorded online version of the Gettysburg Address being recited (Jeff Daniels version is a good one). Listening sometimes allows a renewed appreciation from simply reading it. Before listening have the students imagine if Lincoln were giving the speech today.
 2. Divide the class into small groups and distribute a half sheet of paper and a marker to each group. Have the students in groups write down what Lincoln is suggesting that citizens do (complete the great unfinished tasks before us, devotion to that cause which they gave their last measure of devotion).
 3. Then underneath that have students propose what specific things, if Lincoln were living today, he might believe that we should be doing to live that out. Have students tape the lists on the wall anywhere in the rooms, and take turns having them share.

Activity #2 – Take the lead and be a responsible citizen

- Target grade level: elementary/secondary/college
 - Character quality emphasized: responsibility, leadership
1. Have students identify a need in the school or community and develop a plan to help. This might take the form of or another project that displays care for others. For younger students, it might be volunteer programs within the school, tutoring other students, volunteering in the library, holding a book and magazine drive for a retirement home, crocheting of hats and blankets for newborns, providing support to students who are recovering from an injury or dealing with a medical condition, or gathering work for students who miss school.
 2. For advanced students have them propose a project which they could undertake to help the community. It could perhaps be something as simple as a community trash pick-up campaign or a civility campaign or a project to help their city. They might even approach the city government for assistance. The opportunity to work as a team encourages collaboration and promotes character building.
 3. Students could visit the next year's class so that new students could be inspired to continue that project or start something new.

Activity # 3 – Ideas for teaching responsibility (idea from CharacterCounts!)

- Target grade level: elementary/secondary

- Character quality emphasized: responsibility
- 1. Set up a peer-tutoring program. Tutoring may occur during, before, or after school and may feature students working with partners in the same grade or another.
- 2. Increase the number of jobs students may perform at school. Some ideas include making morning and afternoon announcements; helping the school nurse; assisting in the library, office, or other locations; turning in attendance forms and carrying out other daily tasks between classrooms and the office or cafeteria; and serving as safety patrols.
- 3. Offer training to youth leaders—such as class officers, student council members, and committees—and explain what is expected of them in those roles. Highlight the leaders' responsibilities to their fellow students as examples of good character.

Activity # 4– Ideas for responsible citizenship (idea from CharacterCounts!)

- Target grade level: secondary/college
- Character quality emphasized: responsibility
- 1. Involve students in beautification and/or environmental projects around the school and in the community. Local environmental organizations might invite students to join in water testing or ask for their assistance in constructing bat houses or bird nesting boxes, cleaning community parks, and more.
- 2. Help community members who are in need with clothing and/or food drives. Some children's clothing may be reserved for students within the school who may need it.