

# The Newspaper Link to Character Education and Citizenship

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# Table of Contents

## I. INTRODUCTION

*This section offers an explanation of the curriculum, information and tips on using newspapers in the classroom, and a detailed list of goals, skills and strands drawn from the NC Standard Course of Study that apply to the activities in the curriculum.*

**NOTE:** As part of the Table of Contents below, the title of each activity is listed first and the terms below the title refer to the skills, goals, and strands emphasized in each activity. "Meeting NC State Standards" more fully explains this curriculum's connections with the NC Standard Course of Study. Below "SS" stands for Social Studies. "LA" stands for Language Arts/English. "IS" stands for Information Skills. "H" stands for Health. "S", for Science. "WD" for Workforce Development and "AE" for Arts Education.

### **Introduction to *The Newspaper Link to Character Education and Citizenship***

#### **Using Newspapers in Classrooms**

#### **Meeting NC State Standards**

## II. GETTING STARTED

*Icebreakers, such as "The Best in Me," "Coat of Arms," "Relate to the Newspaper," "Knowledge for Character Building," and "Alike and Different" ask students to tell about themselves. They find things in the newspaper that represent their likes and dislikes and think about what they mean. The remaining activities in Getting Started help students define character and become familiar with the newspaper.*

### **Knowledge for Character Building**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Relate to the Newspaper**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **GLURP**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Coat of Arms**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **The Best in Me**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Things I'm Thankful For**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Alike and Different**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Relationships (H)

### **Say It Simply**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA)

### **Explore a Section**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS)

### **Exploring the Newspaper**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS)

### **Fame and Character**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Critical (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (H)

### **Applying National Civics Standards**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Critical (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS)

### **Who We Are Bingo**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (H)



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### **Personality or Character?**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Critical (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (H)

### **Just Celebrities or Positive Role Models?**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (H)

### **Too Much Publicity?**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (H)

## **III. EXPLORING CHARACTER TRAITS**

*Activities in this section ask students to analyze behaviors and assign traits to people in the newspaper. The activities carry students to all parts of the newspaper.*

### **Courage of All Kinds**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (H)

### **Heroes in the News**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (H)

### **A Hero's Report**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (H) Assuming Roles (AE) Performing (AE)

### **Building Respect**

Citizenship (SS), Diversity (SS and H), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (H), Relationships (H)

### **Respect for Differences**

Citizenship (SS), Diversity (SS and H), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Stereotyping**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Diversity (SS and H), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Responsibility**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Argumentative (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Self-Discipline and Perseverance**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Selfishness vs. Self-Respect**

Informational (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Friendship**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H), Protecting Self/Others (H)

### **Defining Character Traits**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Literary (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Trading Cards**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Keeping Track**

Informational (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS)

### **Assigning Traits**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS)

### **Classifying Character**

Informational (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS)



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### **Character Traits**

Informational (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Rating Behavior**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Strength of Character Report Card**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Analyzing Quotes**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **A Person in Detail**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Exploring a Character**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Compare and Contrast Comics**

Informational (LA), Vocabulary (LA and SS), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Compare and Contrast**

Diversity (SS and H), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Holding the Keys**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Deserving Tribute**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

## **IV. MAKING SOUND CHOICES**

*This is a section that requires students to make and examine choices and consider their consequences. The first activities are concrete. Students look at the way they dress and spend their time and money and respond to health-related questions. Other activities have them looking for ways to improve communication and resolve differences and examine issues that deal with justice and fairness.*

### **Dressing Right**

Economics (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **The Right Movie**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Thoughtful Choices**

Economics (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Shopping Wisely**

Economics (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Eat Right! Get Exercise!**

Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Nutrition (H), Personal Fitness (H)

### **Body Image**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Healthful Lifestyles (H)

### **Health Problems**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Healthful Lifestyles (H), Protecting Self/Others (H)



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### **Substance Abuse**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Healthful Lifestyles (H), Substance Abuse (H)

### **Playing by the Rules**

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### **Sportsmanship**

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Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Business Management (WD)

### **Journalistic Ethics**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Business Management (WD)

### **Applied Science**

Government (SS), Informational (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Nature of Science and Social Perspectives of Science (S)

### **Respect for the Law**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Court Procedure**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Working Out Conflicts**

Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H), Protecting Self/Others (H)

### **Improving Communications**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Predicting a Response**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Making Predictions**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Getting Along**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H), Protecting Self/Others (H)

### **Facing a Tough Choice**

Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Telling a Story from Different Perspectives**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Literary (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H) Assuming Roles (AE), Performing (AE)

### **Judging Consequences**

Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Intervention that Makes a Difference**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Substance Abuse (H), Relationships (H), Protecting Self/Others (H)



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### **V. ADDRESSING COMMUNITY PROBLEMS AND GLOBAL CONCERNS**

*These activities look at ways people contribute to community life and analyze public debate over subjects of concern in the local community, state, nation and world.*

#### **Exploring a Topic**

Citizenship (SS), Informational, (LA) Life Experiences (IS)

#### **Government at Work**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

#### **Your Tax Dollars**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

#### **Understanding Quotes**

Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (H)

#### **Examining What Public Officials Say**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

#### **Acting Responsibly**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

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Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

#### **A Community at Work**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

#### **Speaking Out About Local Concerns**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

#### **Addressing Local Needs**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

#### **A Speech to Win Support**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

#### **A Planned Neighborhood**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

#### **A Community Service Web**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

#### **What is a Leader?**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

#### **Marks of Leadership**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Critical (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

#### **The Ideal Public Servant**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

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Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA), Critical (LA), Life Experiences (IS)



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### **Addressing Important Issues**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Giving Some Advice**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Appealing to Citizens**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Responsibility for Our Environment**

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### **A Basic Need**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Consequences of Hate**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS), Relationships (H)

### **Developing a Position**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA)

### **Different Viewpoints**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Critical (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Varying Points of View**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Critical (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Power to Persuade**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Achieving Goals**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Weight of Evidence**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Opposing Forces**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (LA), Relationships (H)

### **Driving Forces**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Challenging Questions**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Informational (LA), Argumentative (LA), Life Experiences (IS)

### **Acts of Compassion**

Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA), Expressive (LA), Relationships (H), Life Experiences (IS)

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Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA), Life Experiences (IS)



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Government and Citizenship (SS), Global Connections (SS), Informational (LA)

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## **VI. APPENDIX**

### **How I See Myself**

#### **Student Self-Evaluation: A Checklist**

#### **Rubrics**

#### **Student Assessment**

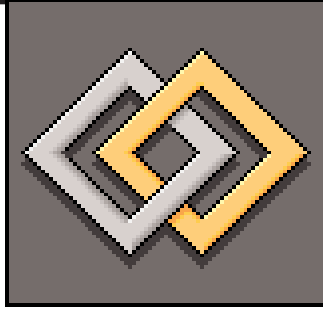
#### **Teacher Evaluation**

#### **Glossary of Character Education Terms**

#### **Glossary of Traits or Dispositions Important in America’s Constitutional Democracy**

#### **Bibliography**





# Introduction



## Introduction to *The Newspaper Link to Character Education and Citizenship*

*A free society cannot survive unless the values upon which it is grounded are fully comprehended and practiced by each succeeding generation.*

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

### WHAT IS CHARACTER EDUCATION?

Character involves thought, feelings and actions. Good character is knowing right from wrong and choosing the right. Character education programs outline character traits, such as courage and kindness, that, when defined, analyzed and applied to literature and real life situations serve as guides. In defining character, students must discriminate between character and personality and between celebrities and role models. They must define and applaud heroism and those who have demonstrated strength of character. Character education also provides students with opportunities to raise questions that clarify their thinking, to weigh choices, and, in the process, to learn how to make good decisions. Questions raised in character education serve as reminders when making choices that reflect on an individual's personal character.

Personal character or the choices individuals make in their day-to-day lives are linked to civic character. School systems often identify citizenship as a desired character trait or refer to respect for country or a commitment to active involvement in the community as demonstrating respect and responsibility. Stated explicitly in the NC DPI handbook for character education, the mission of character education is "to contribute to the development of knowledge, skills and predispositions required for citizenship in a free and open society." The collective good deeds committed in public and private by its citizens will strengthen the nation.

### HOW IS CHARACTER EDUCATION IMPLEMENTED IN NORTH CAROLINA?

A recent publication of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction titled *Character Education: An Informational Handbook and Guide* explains the legislation that requires character education in the public schools of North Carolina. The following is drawn from the handbook: In the fall of 2001, North Carolina State Legislature passed the Student Citizen Act of 2001. "The Act requires every local board of education to develop and implement character education instruction with input from the local community. In addition, the legislation directs the State Board of Education to modify the middle and high school social studies curriculum to include instruction in civic and citizenship education. The Act also calls for local boards of education to adopt reasonable dress codes for students." It lists specific activities for middle and high school students and recommends courage, good judgment, integrity, kindness, perseverance, respect, responsibility, and self-discipline as eight traits to include in a character education program. For the full text of the Act, go to [www.ncga.state.nc.us](http://www.ncga.state.nc.us) and look up House Bill 195 (HB195). General Assembly of North Carolina Session 2001.ratified bills.

The *Informational Handbook and Guide* offers numerous ways for schools and communities to develop and implement character and civic education initiatives. To access the complete handbook and guide, visit the NC Department of Public Instruction web site at [www.ncpublicschools.org/charactereducation](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/charactereducation).



## Introduction to *The Newspaper Link to Character Education and Citizenship* (continued)

*Stories from real life as well as stories from the movies and from literature can stir and provoke moral imagination. Didactic or theoretical arguments don't work well, narratives, images, observed behavior all do.*

ROBERT COLES, *THE MORAL INTELLIGENCE OF CHILDREN*

### WHAT IS THE NEWSPAPER'S LINK TO CHARACTER EDUCATION?

The newspaper link to character education is strong and relevant because newspaper stories deal with real people and events and reflect varying views of contemporary society, the world for which students are responsible.

Newspapers provide a broad and enriching variety of non-fiction topics. The supply is replenished with each issue of the newspaper.

Newspapers provide daily material via photos, comics, news and opinions for discussion about personal and civic character.

Newspapers cover the local community more thoroughly than any other source. The local community is where grassroots social action takes shape; it is close to home and visible. A newspaper is social studies in action, providing fodder for discussion about character and individual's choices regarding citizenship and civic responsibility.

Newspapers are readily available. They can be purchased at a reduced rate for classroom use through Newspaper in Education programs. They can be carried from home to school. They provide an avenue for parents and children, teachers and students to identify topics in which they share interests and concerns.

Newspapers beg to be analyzed; they publish interviews, letters to the editor and other commentary that tell how people think, and they invite readers' responses. Conversations about newspapers occur naturally over meals, in living rooms, on porches, and anywhere else that people sit together and read, and those conversations can just as easily occur in classrooms.

### HOW CAN THE *NEWSPAPER LINK TO CHARACTER EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP* CURRICULUM BE USED IN CLASSROOMS?

*The Newspaper Link to Character Education and Citizenship* was written to enhance the character and civic education curriculum, but open, civil discussions about topics in the news will also improve classroom climate and stimulate interest in community involvement as students, through the newspaper, confront problems that they themselves may be in a position to address and as they meet and emulate people who are attacking problems in their communities.

The Appendix includes tools to aid in evaluating your study of character and citizenship. "How I See Myself" and "Student Self-Evaluation" offer opportunities for students to think more about their attitudes and commitments. Students should review the "Rubrics" to learn about expectations for their learning in advance of the study. "Student Assessment" can be used by



## Introduction to *The Newspaper Link to Character Education and Citizenship* (continued)

teachers and students to determine how well students define key character traits and whether they are able to identify people in the news who exhibit them. The rubrics should be marked at the end of the study and discussed with the students. Likewise, the other three evaluation tools should be used with students before and after the study of character education and citizenship.

The glossary located in the Appendix of this curriculum is a compilation of traits adopted by several school systems and should be referred to as students define and apply the traits. Local school systems with character education programs will provide a similar list of traits and definitions that can be used alongside or instead of the traits in the glossary.

This curriculum's introductory section moves from activities asking students to tell about themselves to activities that help students define character and become familiar and comfortable using the newspaper. A separate page is devoted to additional tips for successful use of newspapers. The activities in the second section ask students to explore character traits. In section three, students analyze choices that they and others make, and the last section deals with citizenship and civic involvement.

In working with newspapers, students also gain valuable language arts lessons. The charts and graphic organizers used as frames in this curriculum are intended to strengthen the language arts. The charts and organizers help students make connections between character traits and concepts and real world situations as well as provide outlines for writing. If the organizers do not provide adequate space for writing, they should be enlarged or students should use separate paper.

From the activities in the curriculum, teachers must choose ones that they think will be most beneficial to their students. Some may be assigned to individual students while others may be assigned to small groups of students or the whole class. In choosing activities, teachers should select ideas that work well with the content of the newspaper they are using in their study. Teachers can make copies of selected activities and/or transfer activities to transparencies, using them to explain assignments or conduct discussions involving the whole class. Teachers who have evaluated the curriculum agree that the activities can be adapted readily for use in upper elementary through high school. The Table of Contents includes a list of skills, goals and strands that show how the activities relate to the NC Standard Course of Study and serves as another aid in determining which activities to require of students.

Thanks to teachers Becky Marsten and Beth Harward for reviewing the curriculum. Thanks to Dr. Sherrye Dee Garrett, Use the News Foundation, and Melanie Mitchell, Duke Ethics Center, for contributing assessment tools to supplement this curriculum. Thanks to The Charlotte Observer for financial support.

*The Newspaper Link to Character Education and Citizenship* was written and designed by Sandra Cook, NC Press Foundation, Newspapers in Education, and Ginny Swinson, former Educational Services Manager, The Charlotte Observer. To purchase the curriculum, write the NC Press Foundation, NIE, UNC-CH, JOMC, CB #3365, Carroll Hall, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27599-3365. Or contact Sandra Cook by calling 919.843.5648 or emailing sandynie@unc.edu.



# Using Newspaper in Classrooms

## Tips for Teachers

### ORDERING NEWSPAPERS

Through Newspaper in Education programs, teachers may order newspapers in bulk at a reduced rate. They should call the circulation manager or publisher of any newspaper that does not have a Newspaper in Education effort and ask if teachers can receive newspapers on scheduled days. Teachers should order at least two weeks in advance, if possible.

Minimum orders will vary newspaper to newspaper. Teachers may order for one or more days a week. Most often, they will order classroom sets of 25 or more per delivery, but fewer may be ordered if teachers have smaller classes or if they wish students to share their newspapers. Teachers are also encouraged to order for their grade level and/or department. For example, one teacher may coordinate orders for the 4th grade and another might order for his or her social studies department. Teachers should also send newspapers home with interested students after they have been used in classrooms.

### GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH NEWSPAPERS

Before beginning with newspapers, teachers should survey students to find out if they've used newspapers before in their classrooms. If any students have not, then they should spend time becoming familiar with the organization of the newspaper. For example, teachers should point out that newspapers are divided by sections and labeled (A, B, C, etc.), and page numbers refer to the sections (A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, etc.). Sections also carry content labels, such as Sports, Local, and Editorials. Items such as comics, weather and editorials run in the same location each day so that readers can easily find them. The front page index also assists readers in finding specific content.

A scavenger hunt, similar to "Fame and Character" in this curriculum guide, is often used to assess how well students handle the newspaper. Teachers observe how students work with the newspaper and afterwards offer advice that will help them with future activities. Teachers may also write their own scavenger hunt with specific questions that are answered in the newspaper. Questions should be listed in the order that they appear in the newspaper, so that the activity becomes a walk through the newspaper, requiring students to turn every page and gain some understanding of what appears where.

Ice breakers, similar to "Relate to the Newspaper," "Coat of Arms," or "The Best in Me" in this curriculum guide, help students become more aware of their own thoughts and feelings but also help them get to know one another when they share what they've selected from the newspaper. Students should always be reminded to share only as much as they feel comfortable and not feel compelled to confide.

Students should also become familiar with terms that their teachers are likely to use. Teachers should point out examples of headlines, bylines (the reporters' names), datelines (the places where stories originate), and other terms.



## Using Newspaper in Classrooms Tips for Teachers (continued)

### MORE TIPS FOR TEACHERS

- Deal with current events first. Get the news value from the newspaper on the day it arrives. Features and other stories can be saved for later use.
- Be flexible. Look for the teachable moment. Work with the strongest content in any day's newspaper. Choose the activity that best uses the selected stories.
- Allow students some reading time with the newspaper once they arrive.
- Have students pull out sections that they will use, thereby reducing the number of pages to deal with.
- Show younger students who have difficulty in managing the newspaper how to staple the corners of sections or of the entire paper to hold the sections together that they will be using.
- Create files for students to collect stories related to specific topics or traits. Save the full page, or tear sheet, where a story is found. By having students tear out the page along the seam, it is easier to save than stories cut from the paper. A full page retains bibliographic information, i.e. name of the newspaper, date and page number.
- Send newspapers and activities home with students to show their families what they are learning.
- Share newspapers with fellow teachers. Swap newspapers to make the best use of them
- Help students develop a strategy for reading the newspaper every day. Encourage them to become regular readers, developing a habit that will improve their reading and writing skills, lead to a better understanding of their community and improve the chances of their being active and involved citizens in the future.



## Meeting North Carolina State Standards

The *Character Education Informational Handbook & Guide* published by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction in the fall of 2002 outlines ways that character education can be integrated into all of the subject areas outlined in the state-adopted curriculum, commonly referred to as state standards and the N.C. Standard Course of Study. You will find the connection between character education and various subject areas explained on pages 54-55 of the handbook, accessible online at [www.ncpublicschools.org/charactereducation](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/charactereducation). You will find the N.C. Standard Course of Study online at [www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum). Of the subjects outlined in the Standard Course of Study, *The Newspaper Link to Character Education and Citizenship* focuses on Social Studies, Information Skills, Healthful Living, Science, Workforce Development, Arts Education, and English/Language Arts.

The Table of Contents for this newspaper and character education curriculum serves as an index by listing for each activity the appropriate goals, skills, and strands from the state-adopted curriculum. The words and phrases printed in **bold** below are the ones used in the Table of Contents to show the connection that activities have to skills, goals, and strands in the various subjects taught in the schools and to demonstrate that the study of character and citizenship is cross-disciplinary. Each activity is aligned with more than one skill, goal, and strand but not all skills, goals, and strands apply to a single activity. The listing assumes that all activities meet Skill 4 in social studies from the N.C. Standard Course of Study, "The learner will acquire strategies needed for applying decision-making and problem-solving techniques both orally and in writing to historic, contemporary and controversial world issues."

The character education activities align with the following strands from the Social Studies section of the state curriculum:

- Cultures and **Diversity**
- **Economics** and Development
- **Global Connections**
- **Government** and Active **Citizenship**

From Information Skills, the applicable goal is relating ideas and information to **Life Experiences**.

From Healthful Living, the following strands apply:

**Relationships**

**Nutrition/Weight Management**

**Substance Abuse**

Appreciation for **Diversity**

**Protecting Self/Others**

**Healthful Lifestyles**

**Sports Behaviors**

From Science, the primary connection is through an exploration of the **Nature of Science and Social Perspectives**.

From Workforce Development, **Business Management** is addressed.





## Meeting North Carolina State Standards (continued)

In Arts Education, the emphasis is on **Performing** and **Assuming Roles**, which are part of Theatre Arts.

All English/Language Arts goals adopted by the state can be met while using the newspaper and character education curriculum. The six goals are as follows:

**Expressive**

**Informational**

**Persuasive**

**Critical**

**Literary**

Grammar & Language Usage (**Vocabulary**)

### **MORE EXPLANATION, GREATER DETAIL**

As would be expected, the skills and goals in Social Studies support a study of character and citizenship. Many social studies courses include goals related to citizenship. For example, goals for grades K-3 speak of “responsible citizenship.” Goals in grades 8 and 10 call for “active citizenship.”

The most direct support for character education appears in the third grade social studies course titled “Citizenship: People Making a Difference.” It focuses on “local, state, national, and global leaders... Students make connections between deeds leaders perform and the character traits each hero possesses such as courage, self-discipline, perseverance, integrity, respect, responsibility, kindness, and good judgment.”

The real world or “contemporary” connection that a newspaper brings to classrooms is supported by goals in other subjects outlined in the N.C. Standard Course of Study. For example, goal 3 in Information Skills asks that students relate ideas and information to life experiences. Science calls for an investigation of the work of present day scientists whose findings are reported in newspapers. It also calls for the examination of social perspectives or the proper impact of science on public policy. Scientists, public officials, and citizens debate the role of science regularly in the newspaper. Often the debate centers on ethical issues.

Character education deals with people getting along with one another and negotiating differences of opinion. According to state standards for Healthful Living, students are to “apply relationship skills to the promotion of health and prevention of risks” (Goal 4) and “demonstrate an understanding and respect for differences among people in physical activity settings (Goal 9) and responsible personal and social behavior in physical activity settings” (Goal 10).

Theatre arts can be emphasized while using newspapers to emphasize character and citizenship by having students assume the roles of newspaper reporter, editorialist or columnist. They can debate placement of stories in the newspaper as real editors do and debate issues presented in the newspapers. They can also turn character-related stories from the newspapers into plays and analyze their performances.





## Meeting North Carolina State Standards (continued)

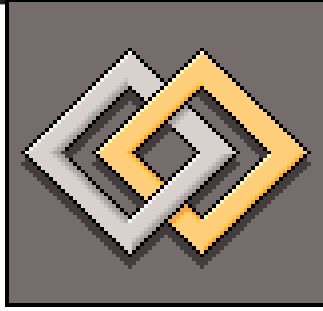
Newspapers also offer numerous opportunities for examination of business and workplace ethics that are critical to workforce development and encourage discussion of the journalistic standards that affect decisions made by newspapers. When questions focus on the workplace, Business Management is the instructional goal assigned to the activities.

With newspapers as texts, teachers can address character education and citizenship while practicing reading and writing skills. All six of the English/Language Arts goals outlined in the state standards are addressed directly in this character education curriculum. The sixth goal dealing with grammar and language usage can be strengthened as teachers edit and/or have students edit their writing, correct errors in grammar, and check for accuracy and clarity. Vocabulary study is a primary focus of this character education curriculum. Vocabulary is a sub-goal of grammar and language usage in language arts/English and the focus of Skill 1 in the state social studies curriculum.

In addition to traditional school subjects, North Carolina's *Character Education Informational Guide & Handbook* encourages "media literacy" as a goal for character education. Media literacy is the overarching goal of Information Skills. Efforts to help students learn how the media work will support reading instruction. Reading newspapers gives students direct experience with one medium. Working with other media will help students understand ways in which each is unique in format and content. Also, they will learn how to discriminate between news and entertainment and determine the impact of each on their lives. If students use their own experiences with newspapers and other media, they will be able to explain and support their opinions about the stories and the ways they are told.

### ASSESSMENT

How do you assess the impact of this curriculum, *The Newspaper Link to Character Education and Citizenship*? Ultimately, as with any character education curriculum, the test rests with the students, the decisions they make about whom they follow, how they spend their time and money, how they treat others and whether they become leaders. In the short term, assessment may involve asking students to define different character traits, describe people in today's world who demonstrate the traits and explain their choices. You might also ask whom they most admire and respect and which traits they'd take from that person. A "Student Assessment" is included in the Appendix to the *Newspaper Link to Character Education and Citizenship*. The assessment can extend to include people from literature and history and the people with whom the students have daily contact. The broader their awareness, the better chance there is that they will think about "right and wrong" when faced with tough choices.



# Getting Started



# Knowledge for Character Building

**DIRECTIONS:** Knowledge can help strengthen character. Choose pictures or phrases from today's newspaper to fill in each of the top two blanks with things you know that help you build character and things you want to know more about. In the bottom blank, explain how the things you chose help strengthen your character.

Things I know . . .

Things I want to know . . .

How will this knowledge strengthen my character?



## Relate to the Newspaper

**DIRECTIONS:** After filling in the spaces, in the newspaper, find people who share your attributes or find objects or events that illustrate your choices. Or, after completing the chart, create a poster to present to the class. Illustrate it with items cut from the newspaper. Discuss or write, answering: What do the choices say about my character? Does any show kindness or caring? Does any show hard work or perseverance?

Name

Things that are easy for me:

Things I like:

Things I'm good at:

Things that are hard for me:

Things I've accomplished:

In the future, I want to:



# Glurp

DIRECTIONS: Use photos, illustrations, words, and stories from the newspaper to complete a “Glurp.”

- G** Something I’m **GOOD** at
- L** Something I **LIKE**
- U** Something I could do “**UMPTEN**” times
- R** Something I do to **RELAX**
- P** Something I’m **PROUD OF**

Share with the class. Speak loudly and clearly and be respectful as each person shares his or her GLURP.

Or share your GLURP with someone you don’t know well and have that person introduce you to someone else or to the class.\*

\*Adapted from NCDPI’s Character Education Informational Handbook & Guide.

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# Coat of Arms

DIRECTIONS: Cutting from newspapers, design a coat of arms. Display your choices, and see what you have in common with your classmates. Discuss or write, answering: What do the choices say about my character? Does any show good judgment? Does any show respect?

My Goals and Dreams

Things I am Proud of

Things I Like to Do and See

People Whom I Admire

My Name



# The Best in Me

DIRECTIONS: Put a name, photo, or a drawing of yourself in the square. Complete the sentences with items found in newspapers. Hand your completed chart to a classmate and have him or her write the positive traits that these choices represent on the outside of the circle.

I am ...

I'd like to be more like ...

I'd buy ...

I believe in ...

I'd work for ...

I value in a friend ...



# Things I'm Thankful For

Identify up to 10 items/things that you are thankful for in each category. Select at least two for each category from the newspaper.

**Things (material items)**

**Things (non-material items)**

**People/loved ones/living things\***

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

**FOLLOW UP:** People express their thankfulness in many ways, with smiles, hugs, hand shakes, words, gifts, and prayers to name a few. Using the newspaper, find people expressing their thanks. Explain what they value and how they express their thanks. Create a collage or display on the theme.

How can you express your thankfulness for the things on your list? After thinking about the different ways, choose the best and try it. Who did you thank? How did you thank them? How did they respond? Write a short paper describing your experience.

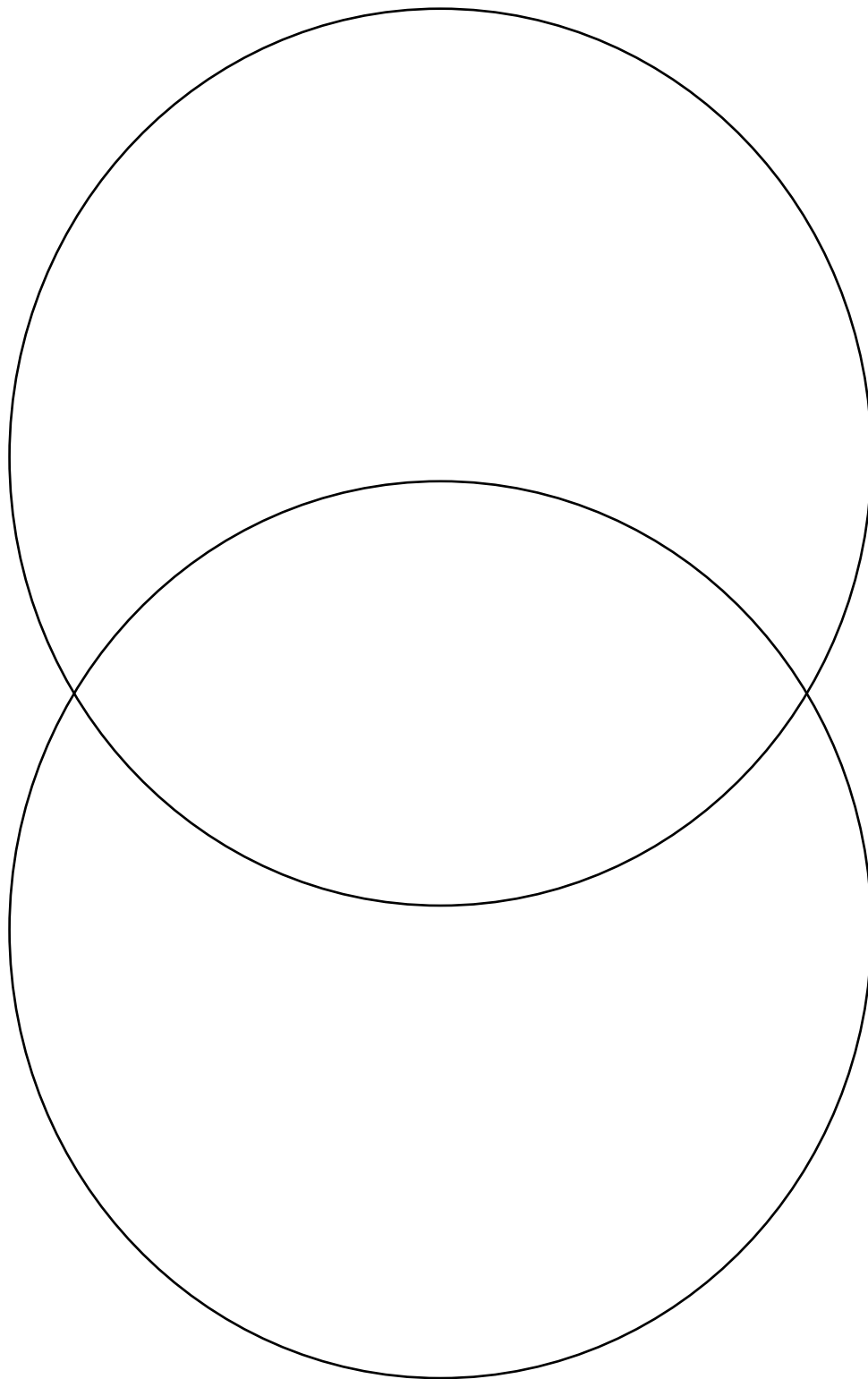




## Alike and Different

**DIRECTIONS:** Choose someone from the newspaper who is like you in some way. Then ask yourself: Did I choose the person on the basis of his or her looks, personality, character, or other attribute? Using the Venn diagram, identify ways that you are alike and different from the person whom you chose.

**DISCUSS:** Do you think that you could get along well with this person? Why or why not? Would you want this person as your friend? As a friend, would this person encourage you to make good, healthy choices? Explain.





## Say It Simply

**DIRECTIONS:** Select a story in the newspaper that deals with deciding whether a course of action is right or wrong and write a 25 to 50-word summary.

The story deals with \_\_\_\_\_.

It appeared in \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(newspaper) (date)

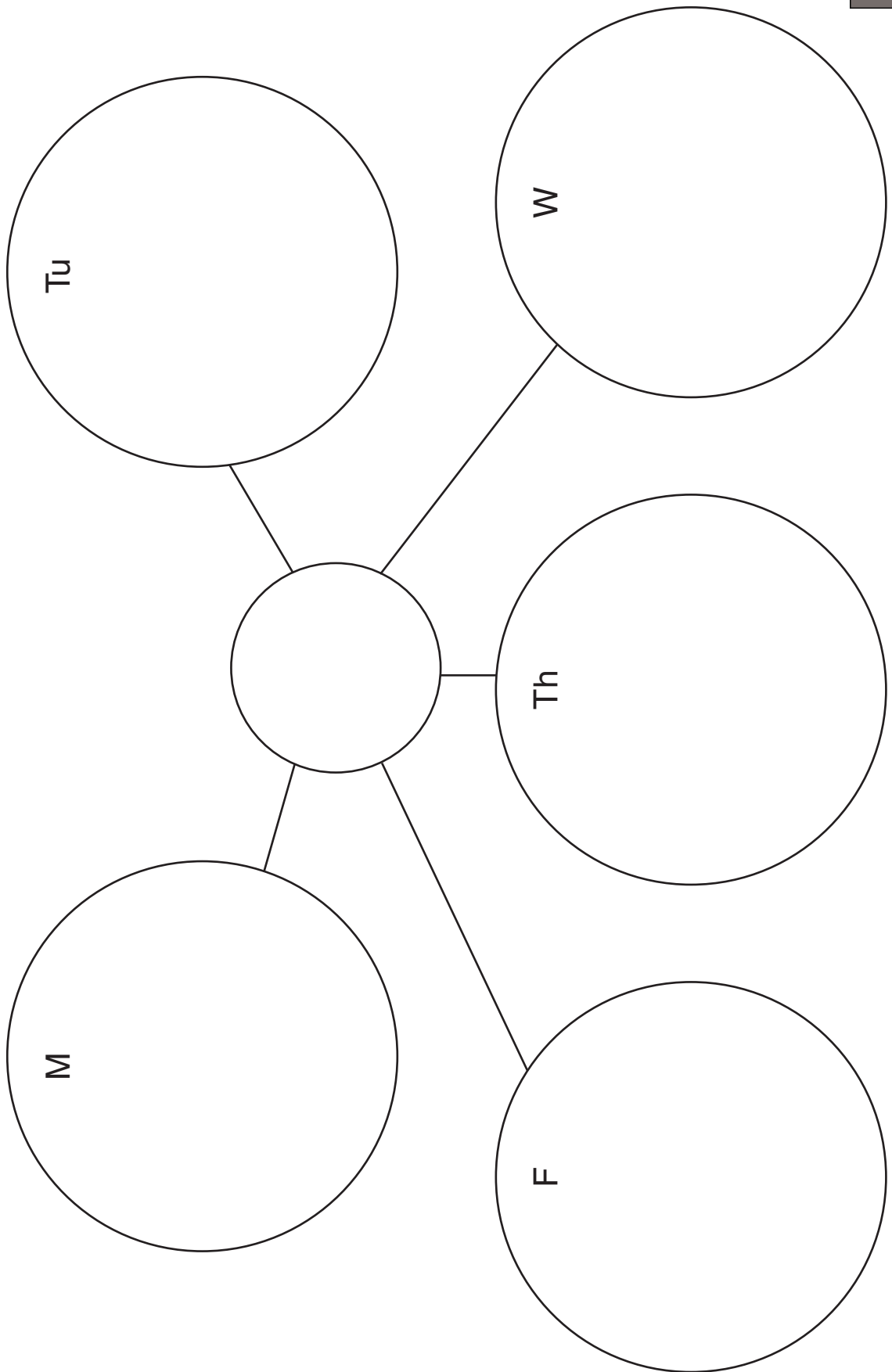
Summary:

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## Exploring a Section

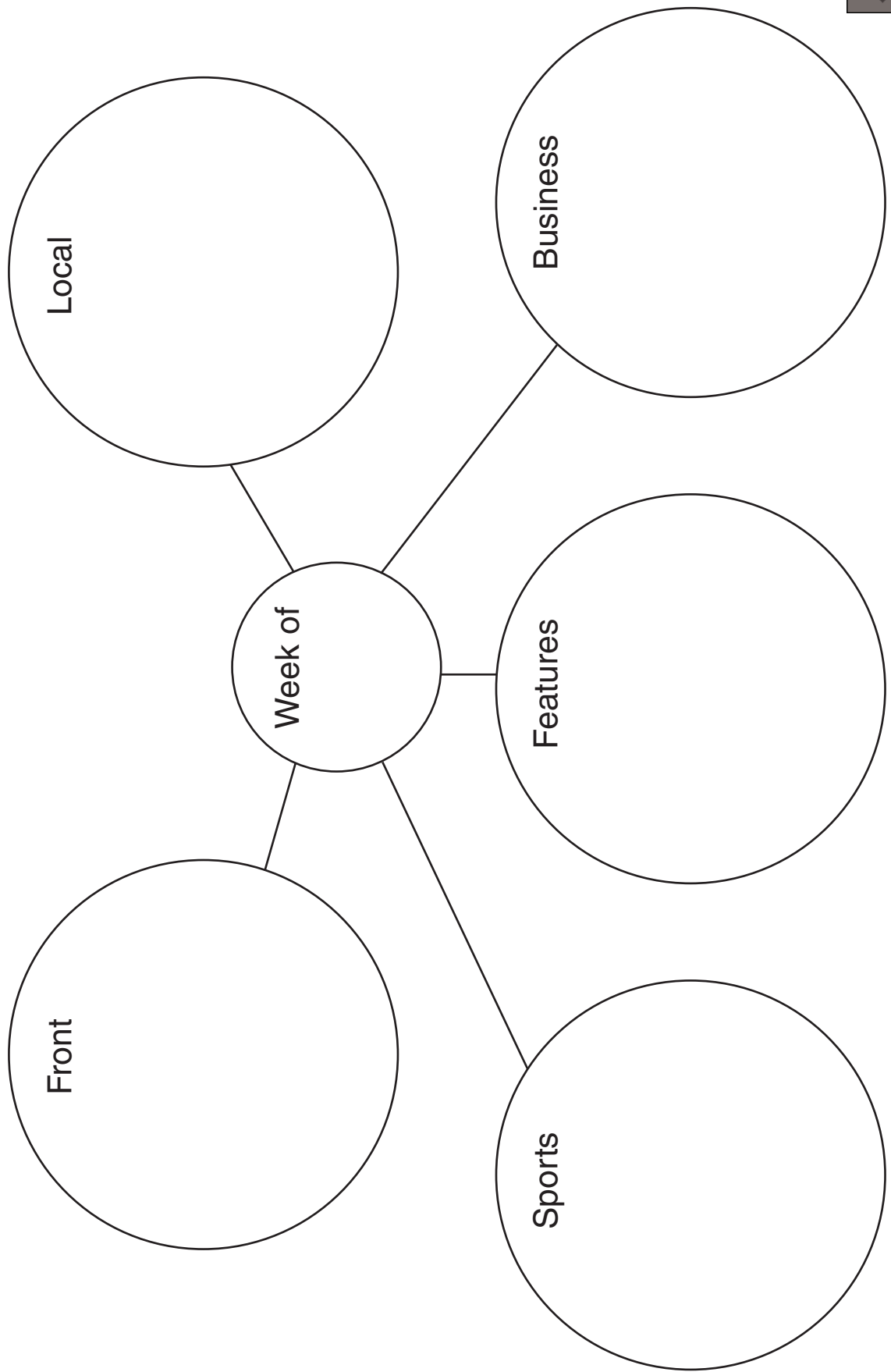
**DIRECTIONS:** Choose a section of the newspaper and write it in the small circle. Each day of the week, summarize one story from that section. Write the newspaper section in the inner circle. Write your summary under the appropriate day. Place a star beside any stories in which a character trait was reflected and write the trait outside the circles.





## Exploring the Newspaper

**DIRECTIONS:** For each day of the week, select a different section of the newspaper to explore. Record the dates in the small circle. Write your summary each day under the appropriate section name. Place a star beside any stories in which a character trait was reflected and name the trait.





# Fame and Character

DIRECTIONS: Locate people in the newspaper who fit the following descriptions:

★ DESCRIPTION ★	★ NAME ★	★ PAGE # ★
1. A famous sports figure	_____	_____
2. A famous movie star	_____	_____
3. A famous local politician	_____	_____
4. A famous comic character	_____	_____
5. A famous musician or pop star	_____	_____
6. A famous writer	_____	_____
7. A famous businessman	_____	_____



- A. Are all of them celebrities? What is meant by a celebrity?
  
- B. What are the qualities of a person with good character, someone who is a good role model?
  
- C. What is the difference between a good role model and a celebrity?
  
- D. Are the celebrities demonstrating good character?
  
- E. Choose one of the celebrities whom you consider to be a good role model and explain why.



## Demonstrating Traits Important in a Democracy

**DIRECTIONS:** Read several days' newspapers and select events or persons who demonstrate traits important in a democracy. Check the Appendix for the glossary of terms that define the traits. Find examples for each trait or work in a group to complete the task. Create a scrapbook.

Civic Standard	Newspaper and Date	Description of Event/Person
1. Civility		
2. Respect for the rights of other individuals		
3. Respect for law		
4. Honesty		
5. Open-mindedness		
6. Critical-mindedness		
7. Negotiation and compromise		
8. Persistence		
9. Civic-mindedness		
10. Compassion		
11. Patriotism		
12. Courage		
13. Tolerance of ambiguity		

**FOLLOW-UP:** Write a paper in which you use the examples to explain the importance of some or all of the traits to America's democratic system.



## Who We Are Bingo

**DIRECTIONS:** To complete the bingo game, from today's newspaper or other classroom newspapers, choose persons who demonstrate a personal or civic character trait (or lack of one). Try to be the first person to fill in a line with the names of people in the news.

Or use another approach. Circulate in the classroom and write in the space the name of the student who gives you an answer for each item taken from the newspaper. Do not get more than one answer per person. The first student to fill in a line wins. Discuss what you learned from each other about the ways people demonstrate character.

**B****I****N****G****O**

A victim of violence	A positive role model	Celebrity	Writer who expresses his or her views	Someone different from you
Someone who has earned respect	Someone involved in a trial or negotiation (due process)	Someone concerned with fairness in business	A public official	A responsible citizen
Someone in trouble	Someone expressing religious views	FREE	Comic characters who are disagreeing	An athlete who shows good sportsmanship
A protester	Someone who has broken the law	Environmentalist	Someone who needs help	A star in a movie that is inappropriate for 8 year olds
A school or community volunteer	Someone providing services to people in need	Counselor or adviser to people with problems	Someone who displays patriotism	Someone targeted in ads



## Personality or Character?

**DIRECTIONS:** Explore the differences between personality and character. No one is blamed for being outgoing and friendly or being quiet and shy, happy-go-lucky or serious, or a casual or formal dresser. Those describe someone's personality, not his or her character. The following examples show how personality and character differ: A person may be funny and charming but still a thief. A person may be funny and charming and show kindness and truthfulness. A person may be serious and quiet and caring and honest. The thief is the person who lacks critical character traits. Choose someone from the newspaper and describe his or her personality and character. Discuss which is easier to describe, personality or character. Which are more destructive: negative comments about a person's personality or about his or her character?

Personality	Character

**FOLLOW-UP:** Use a Venn Diagram to show how personality and character overlap and how they are different. Discuss too the way that certain personality traits feed positive character. For example, a cheerful personality fosters kindness.





## Just Celebrities or Positive Role Models?

**DIRECTIONS:** Celebrities are famous, often popular people who gain attention through the media. When you read newspapers, listen to radio, watch TV or visit web sites, do you look for news about celebrities? Who are your favorites? How do they earn a living? What makes them interesting to you? Do they affect your choices? Have celebrities ever influenced you to behave or dress in a certain way? Have they convinced you to see movies or buy music?

Interview several students and draw a bar graph of your classmates' favorite celebrities. Then, look in the newspaper to see if any are featured in stories, news briefs, movie ads or movie reviews. What have they done to command attention from the press? How might their actions affect others who find them appealing? Role models are imitated by others. Are the celebrities positive or poor role models?

List celebrities who receive attention in newspapers and decide whether they are positive or negative role models. Record what you think on the chart below:

Celebrities' Actions	Positive	Negative	Neither Positive nor Negative

**DISCUSS:** Have any celebrities used their status to help worthy causes? Have any of the famous moved beyond being just celebrities? Are any celebrity's actions both positive and negative? Is it enough that they do their jobs well, or should movie and sports stars, musicians, models, etc. be judged on their personal choices? Can you admire them for their work without taking them as role models?

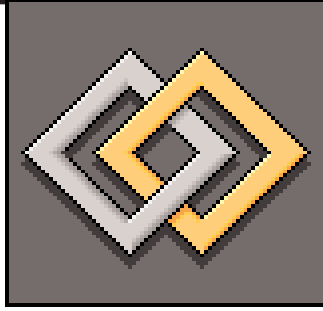


## Too Much Publicity?

**DIRECTIONS:** In recent years, the media have focused more on the private lives of public figures. Does greater scrutiny of our leaders represent progress and increased accountability or does it distract citizens from urgent public issues?

Classify information in the newspaper about public officials into "public" and "private." Name the official. After recording the information, write an opinion in which you tell whether you think any of the reporting about private matters should be withheld and whether it will hinder the leaders in the exercise of their duties. Do leaders talk too much about their private lives? Does the public's right to know outweigh other concerns?

Name of Official	Public	Private



# Exploring Character Traits



## Courage of All Kinds

**DIRECTIONS:** To act courageously, a person must overcome fear, fear of rejection or fear of bodily harm. In young people's lives, courage generally takes the form of moral or mental courage. They must decide when to speak up, even when some might disapprove. They must stand up to peer pressure. They must reject temptations offered by drugs and alcohol.

But there are times when young and old show a different kind of courage, risking physical harm and pain. Firemen risk their lives when they enter burning buildings as do life guards when they dive into rough water to make a rescue.

Drawing from the newspaper, illustrate the different kinds of courage.

Physical	Mental or Moral

**FOLLOW-UP:** Do you think any of the acts of courage qualify the person as a hero or heroine? What distinguishes the courageous from the heroic? In writing, explain your ideas about the extreme courage that leads to heroic deeds.



## Heroes in the News

DIRECTIONS: Heroes are made in a moment and over a lifetime. After discussing with other students what it takes to be a hero, look up the word in a dictionary and other resources. Then read newspapers for examples of heroic acts and lives devoted to service. Keep a list and cut out stories for a scrapbook or bulletin board.

People Who Committed  
Heroic Acts

People Who Committed  
Lives to Service



## A Hero's Report

**DIRECTIONS:** Select a story from the newspaper that you think describes a hero and his or her heroic act. Think first about what makes someone a hero. Does your hero overcome fear, take chances, show extraordinary commitment and courage and/or set out to make a significant contribution to others and to society?

Form a group of three or more, and choose one of the stories to stage as a live interview. Each person in your group should assume a role. One should act as the reporter. One should be the hero, and the other should be someone who was helped or benefited from the actions of the hero. Other roles may be added or substituted.

Make sure the audience gets the complete story from your interview. Your presentation should not require introductory remarks. Tell the story through the interview.

PERSON	ROLE
Reporter	Your job is to interview both the hero and the person who was helped by the hero. Analyze the story, coming up with questions that you think the actual reporter used in gathering the information.
Hero	Your job is to respond to the reporter's questions. Draw quotes from the story. Be sure to stay in character when adding to the story.
Person Who Benefited	You should use quotes or, if adding to the story, make what is said true to character.
Others	Roles can be added or substituted depending on the story.

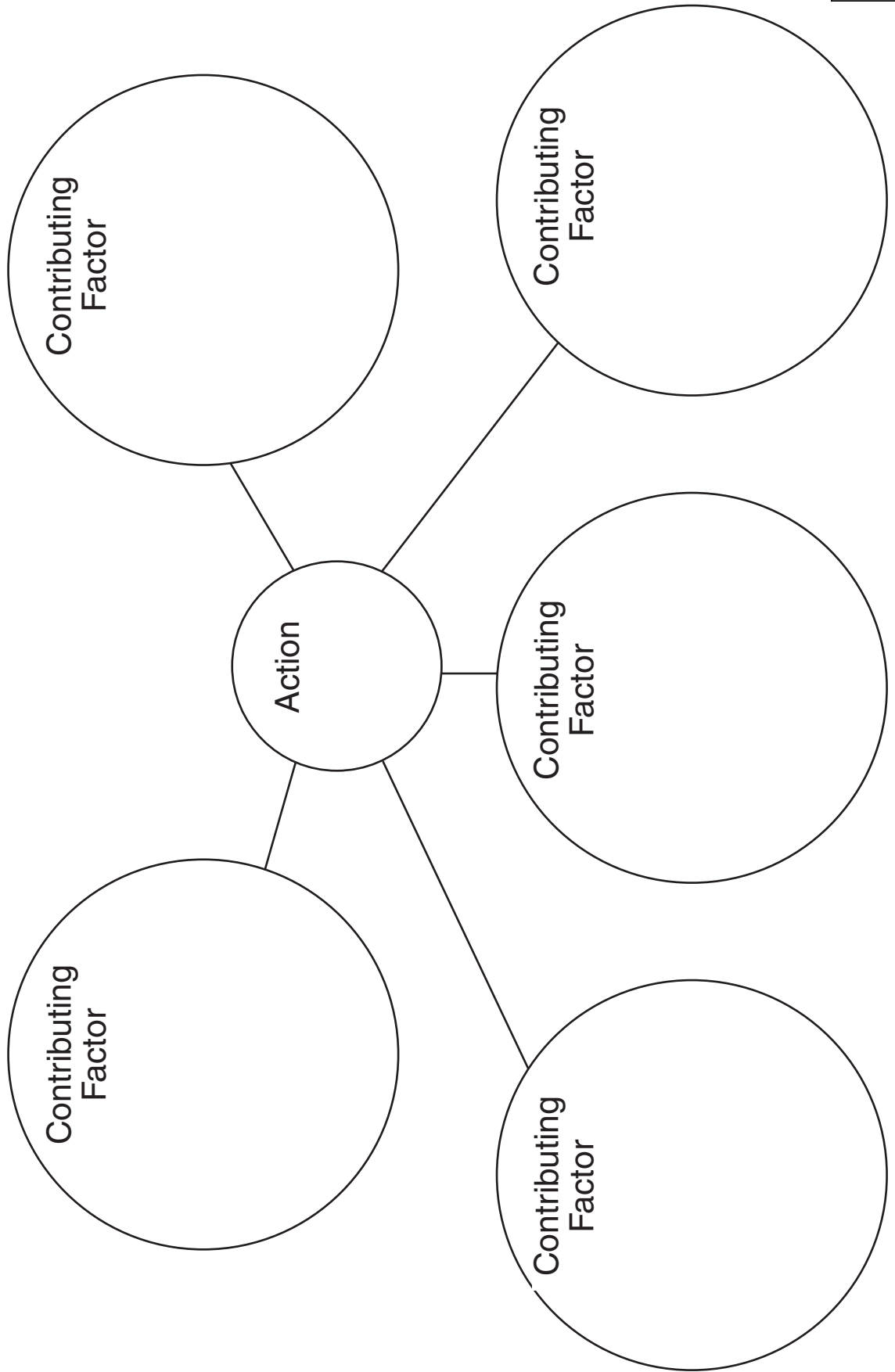
After writing and practicing the script, present the interview to another group of students and have them present theirs. Suggest ways to improve the presentations, and then present them to the whole class.

**VARIATION:** Create a TV telecast, adding a news anchor who introduces the story and a commentator who offers opinions about the events detailed in the story.



## Building Respect

**DIRECTIONS:** Choose actions committed by individuals and governments that result from intolerance or lack of respect for others. Do the actions result from an inability to accept differences in people? How do ethnic groups, religion, nationality, race, gender, region and other differences factor into the situation? Complete the chart below by listing the action that shows a lack of tolerance or respect in the center circle and in the outside circles list the contributing factors. Write an essay in which you explain what individuals can do to encourage respect among people whom they know and what participants can do in situations similar to the ones you read about in newspapers.





## Respect for Differences

**DIRECTIONS:** Using newspapers, clip photos, illustrations, cartoons and comics of young and old, men and women of all ages and from all walks of life. On the clippings, write something positive about each person. It may be drawn from the stories that accompany the photos or it may be an interpretation of the photo itself. You should try to find people in different settings, at work and play, at home, school and businesses and in places of worship. They may be dressed casually or formally. From your collection, create a collage that represents your community and presents a positive image. Display it in your classroom.

Then look back in the newspaper for photos, illustrations, cartoons, and comics that create a different, negative impression. Identify the negative attribute shown in the clippings. Are impressions left by the drawings likely to lead to stereotyping? Does your original collage present images that combat the potential stereotypes? How?

Outline what you find below:

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE

**FOLLOW-UP:** Discuss ways that positive and negative images feed stereotypes about individuals, groups of people and whole communities.





# Stereotyping

**DIRECTIONS:** In political cartoons, look for generalizations about politicians and government officials. Paste a political cartoon below:



What are the facts on which the cartoon is based? What graphic representations, symbols, exaggerations, etc. lead the viewer to generalize about the individual(s) in the cartoon? Is the generalization fair? Does it represent stereotypical behavior? If so, how did it develop? Is the stereotype deserved or undeserved? Does the stereotype affect people's trust in government? If so, how can individual public officials combat the stereotype?

Discuss and explain in writing how stereotypes arise, how they affect individuals, communities and nations and how affected individuals can combat them. You may choose one example drawn from the newspaper as the basis of your paper and/or include personal experiences.



# Responsibility

**DIRECTIONS:** To be responsible is to be trusted, reliable, accountable for your own actions; and committed to active involvement in your community.\*

**Select a story from the newspaper in which someone assumed or failed to assume responsibility.**

**What is the problem?**

**Who should be held responsible?**

**Find a newspaper story in which someone claims to have been unfairly treated.**

**What is the dispute?**

**What is the responsible course of action?**

After completing the charts above, write a paper in which you answer these key questions about the story: What was the most important way that the person in your story was responsible or irresponsible? Did this person's actions help or hurt other people? How? Do you think this person realized how his/her actions would affect others? What important lessons can be learned from the stories?

\* N.C. legislation enabling local school boards to teach character.  
Taken from the Social Studies Character/Citizenship Education Connection, NC DPI.



## Self-Discipline and Perseverance

**DIRECTIONS:** Working with another student or a small group of students, use newspapers over several days to identify six persons, each with a different career, job or area of responsibility. Look for people whose work require self-discipline and perseverance. Under the photo or name of the different people, write three ways that they show this trait.

Example: Football quarterback .1. Practices regularly 2. Risks pain 3. Learns and executes plays.\*  
Record information below or on index cards, exchange and compare your selections with classmates'.

Place photo or name of person and job, goal or responsibility here.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Place photo or name of person and job, goal or responsibility here.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Place photo or name of person and job, goal or responsibility here.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Place photo or name of person and job, goal or responsibility here.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Place photo or name of person and job, goal or responsibility here.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Place photo or name of person and job, goal or responsibility here.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



## Selfishness vs. Self-Respect

**DIRECTIONS:** Use comics to illustrate the difference between respecting oneself and being unduly concerned over personal profit or pleasure. Look in the comics for examples of each attitude. Clip all that you find over several days. Then circle three best examples of each and briefly describe them below.

<b>Self-Respect</b>	<b>Selfishness</b>

**FOLLOW-UP:** Use the best examples in a paper to explain how you can respect yourself without being selfish.



# Friendship

**DIRECTIONS:** A friend is someone to whom you are attached by affection and esteem, according to the dictionary. Friends often share hobbies and a network of acquaintances. Here is a definition that raises the standard for friendship: "Friends in the highest sense of the term are those who make conscientious efforts to take ethics and personal character seriously and inspire each other to be better -- in thought, in action, in life." (Russell Gough, Character is Destiny, September 1998)

## GOOD FRIENDS

1. Find a comic, column, or story in the newspaper that involves friends.
  - a. What do they share?
  
  - b. How do they influence each other?
  
  - c. Do they inspire each other to be better – in thought, in action, in life? Explain.

## A FRIEND WITH A PROBLEM

2. Find a newspaper story about someone with a problem.
  - a. Who has the problem and what is it?
  
  - b. How might a true friend step in to help this person?
  
  - c. How might a friend's response be different from Dear Abby's or a trained counselor's?

## A FRIEND IN TROUBLE

3. Find a newspaper story about someone in trouble.
  - a. What poor decision did this person make?
  
  - b. Who influenced him or her?
  
  - c. How might a friend help this person make better choices, to be better in thought, in action and in life?



# Defining Character Traits

**DIRECTIONS:** Use the chart below to define traits and other concepts related to the study of character. In a second rectangle below "What is it?", list the trait or other concept that you wish to define. In the rectangle above it, write a definition that comes from a dictionary or other source. You may develop definitions in classroom discussions. To complete the three rectangles, look in the newspaper for examples of people showing the trait. You may also draw one example from the newspaper, one from history or literature, and another from personal experience. Be creative when explaining what the trait is like. Use synonyms, similes, metaphors or other related ideas. You may also list classroom or school behaviors that illustrate the trait.

Long-term, complete a chart that defines character, each of the character traits, and other important terms that come out of your study. Build a classroom dictionary of terms.

## What is it?

Definition

Trait or concept

## What is it like?

Synonyms or related ideas

--	--	--

## What are some examples?

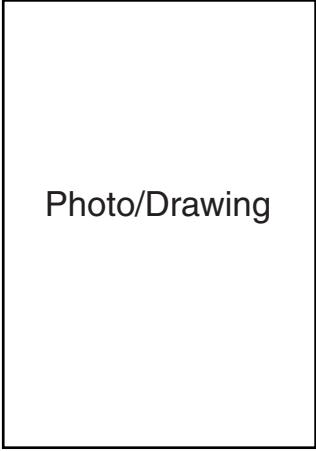
Examples from newspapers and other sources



## Trading Cards

**DIRECTIONS:** Using index cards, make a collection of trading cards that feature people in the news who exhibit specific character traits. On each card, include a photo of the person, his or her name and trait. Also, explain why you chose that person. Trade all of your cards, gathering cards with different traits from as many different classmates as you can.

### FRONT

Name

Trait

### BACK

Definition of chosen trait
Words or actions that explain why you think the chosen person has the specific trait







## Assigning Traits

VARIATION I: Write a character trait in the center and six people who demonstrate the trait on the outside lines. Then list their actions inside each petal. VARIATION II: List a problem in the center. Outside each petal, name events that relate to the problem and then list the people attempting to correct the problem inside each petal. VARIATION III: In the center circle, list a person. Outside each petal, identify actions presented in the news. Inside the petal, list traits indicated by these actions. VARIATION IV: Take and complete one of the petals. Use petals from six people to form a complete flower. As a group, agree to a name based on the character traits or people whom you chose to represent them, and write the name in the center of the flower.

A flower-shaped graphic organizer with a central circle and six petals. The top and bottom petals contain horizontal lines for writing. The left and right petals contain diagonal lines. The middle-left and middle-right petals contain vertical lines. There are also horizontal lines above and below the entire flower structure.



## Classifying Character

**DIRECTIONS:** Choose four character traits. List and define them in the space across the top. As you find people in the news who exhibit the traits, write their names below the most appropriate traits.

**TRAIT ONE**

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--

--

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**TRAIT TWO**

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**TRAIT THREE**

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**TRAIT FOUR**

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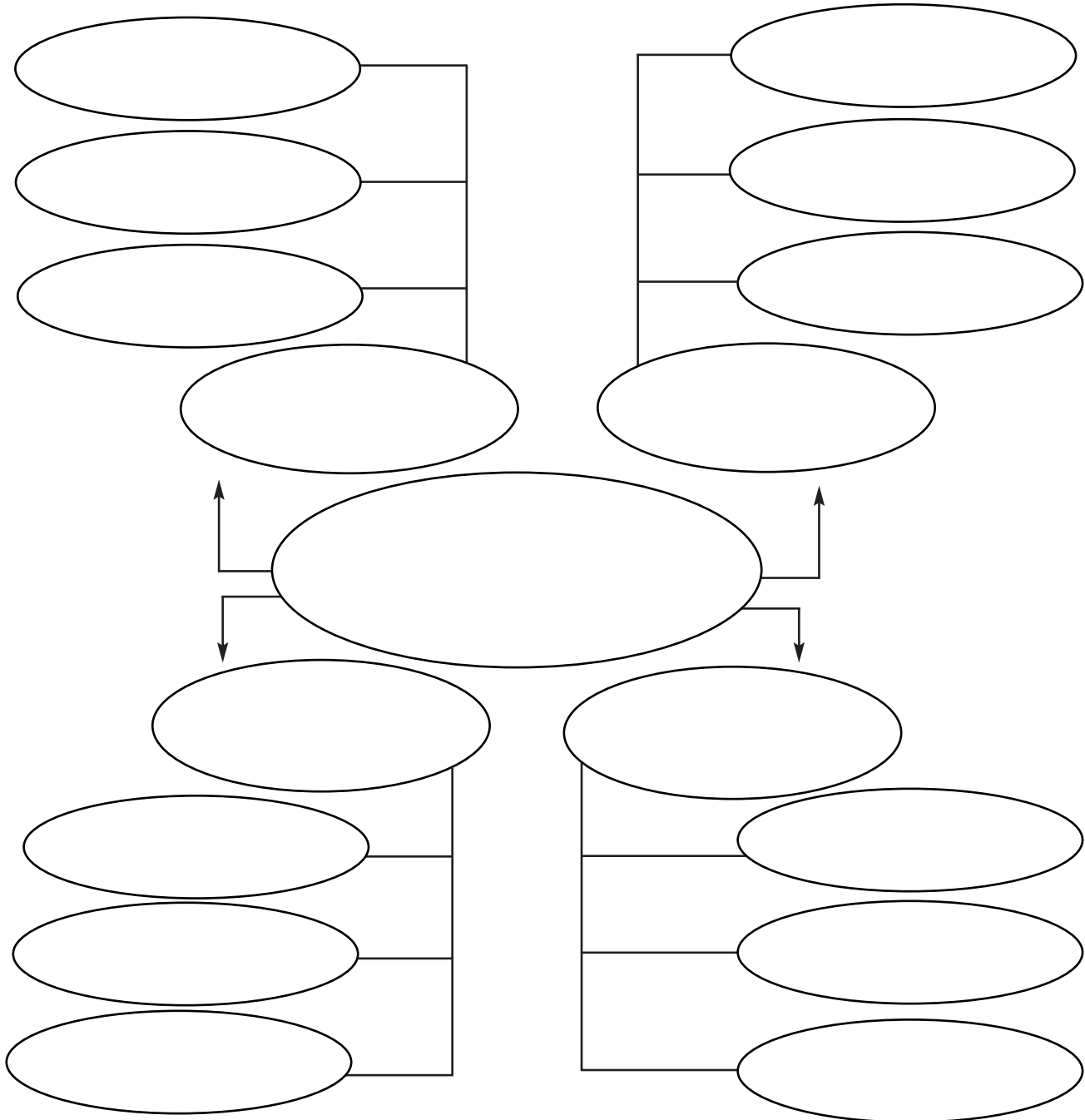
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# Character Traits

**VARIATION I:** Use the list of character traits that your school or school system has adopted for use in its character education program. If no list exists, brainstorm as a class to develop your own list. Using any section of the newspaper, select a person whose actions you have studied. You may consider a comic character or sports figure, someone featured in an in-depth profile, or a famous person who is always in the news. Read one or more stories about the person you've chosen. Write the person's name in the largest oval in the center of the graphic below. In the four ovals with bold arrows, list four character traits that the person exemplifies (or lacks). In each of the smallest ovals, cite a behavior or statement that supports your choice.

**VARIATION II:** Write a trait in the large oval and choose four people from the news for the four ovals. Actions that demonstrate the trait should be described in the outside spaces.



**FOLLOW-UP:** Write a paper about the person or trait in the center oval. Develop a paragraph for each of four ovals.

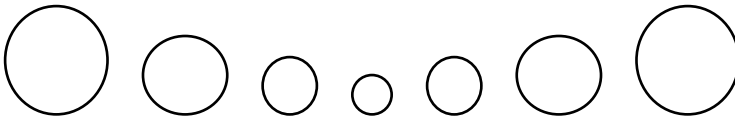


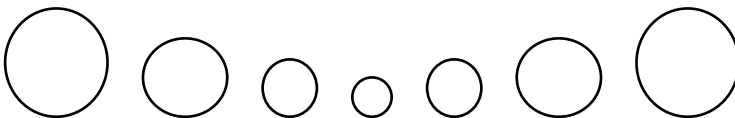
# Rating Behavior

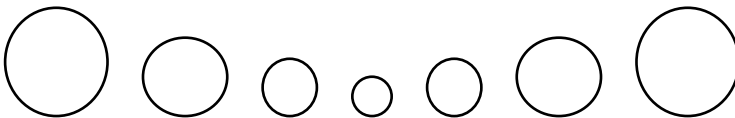
**DIRECTIONS:** Even people who aim to make the right choices don't always show the best judgment or work as hard as they might. Choose a real person from a news or sports story, feature or advice column. Rate the person's conduct by using a continuum based on the traits chosen by the school or those given below:

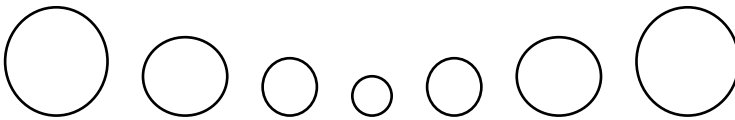
**FOLLOW-UP:** Write a paper describing the person and explaining why he/she and others find it difficult to be the best they can be in all of the traits. Consider your own experiences as you write.

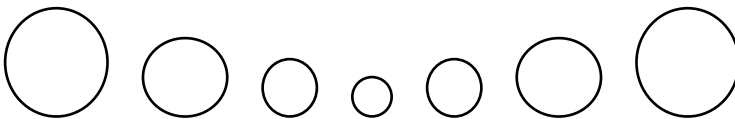
PERSON'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

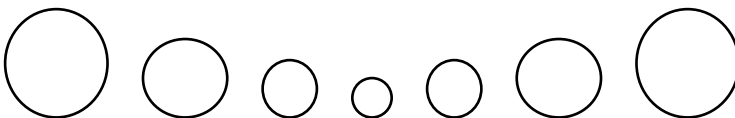
Courage  Cowardice

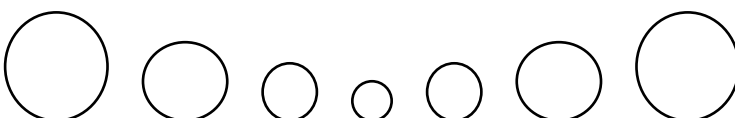
Good Judgment  Poor Judgment

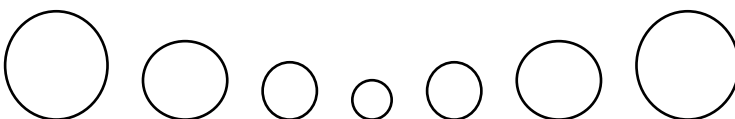
Honesty, Trustworthiness  Dishonesty

Kindness  Cruelty

Perseverance  Laziness, Impatience

Respect  Disrespect

Responsibility  Lack of Responsibility

Self-Discipline  Acting on Impulse



## Strength of Character Report Card

DIRECTIONS: Working in small groups, choose five individuals from today's newspaper to rate. List each person's name on the dotted line under a set of check marks. Next, choose one trait or characteristic to evaluate for each person. (You may choose a different trait for each person listed.) Use the following point system: 5=Strong in this trait, 3=Average in this trait; 1=Lacks this trait. Take a vote on each person. Do members of the group agree on their ratings? Explain reasons for the differences. Average the group's ratings and record the results by circling the appropriate check mark.

Character Trait Evaluated:

5      4      3      2      1

✓      ✓      ✓      ✓      ✓

✓      ✓      ✓      ✓      ✓

✓      ✓      ✓      ✓      ✓

✓      ✓      ✓      ✓      ✓

✓      ✓      ✓      ✓      ✓



## Analyzing Quotes

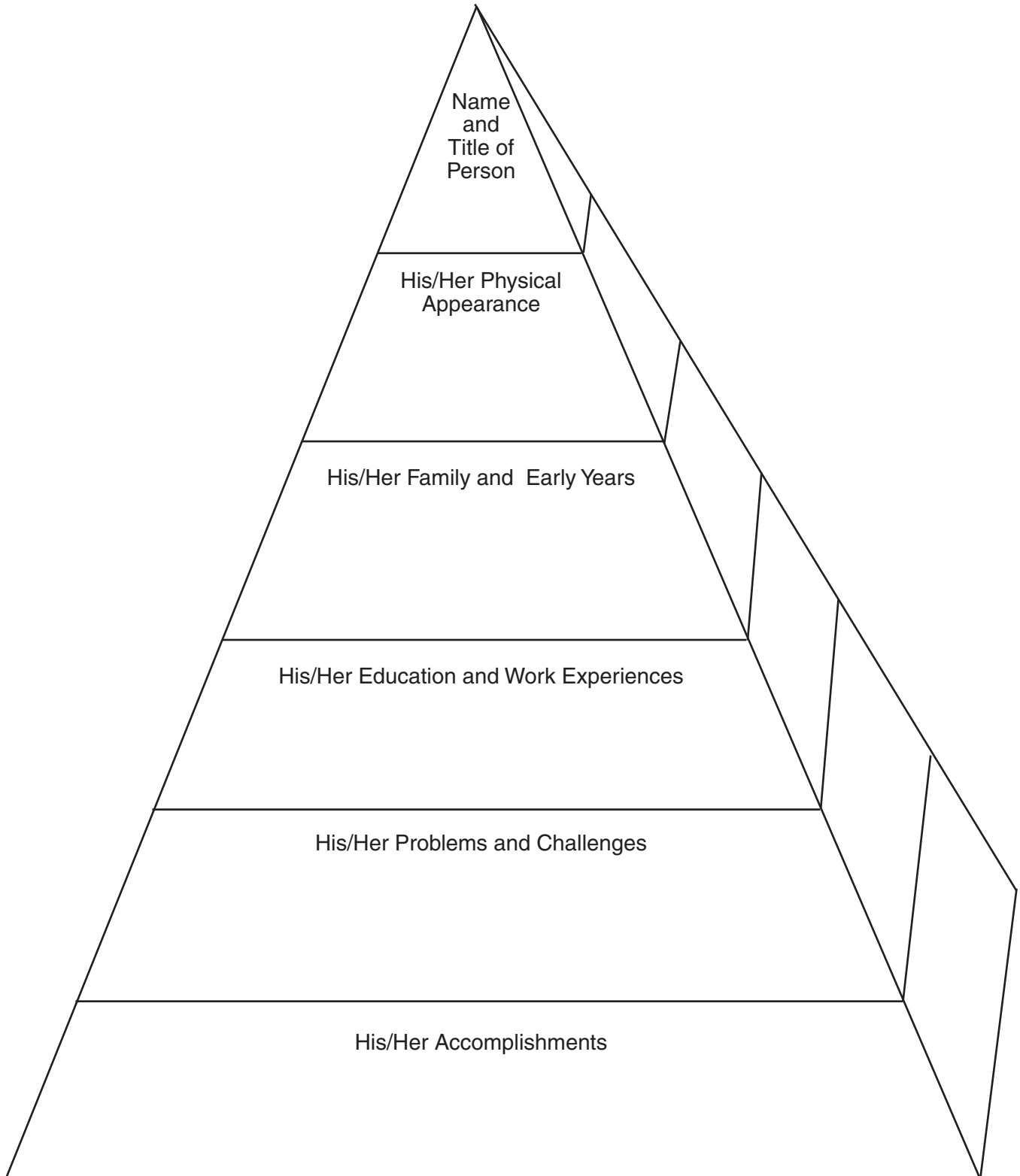
**DIRECTIONS:** Select quotes from news stories or statements from opinions expressed in letters to the editor, editorials or reviews. Explain the situation that led to the statement. Summarize the feelings and thoughts of the writer. Then write any thoughts you have about the quotes. Answer character-related questions in your response: Does the person demonstrate kindness? Does his/her response show good judgment? Is his/her stand courageous?

What is the quote? Whose quote is it?	What is the situation?	What are your feelings and thoughts?	How does this relate to character?



## A Person in Detail

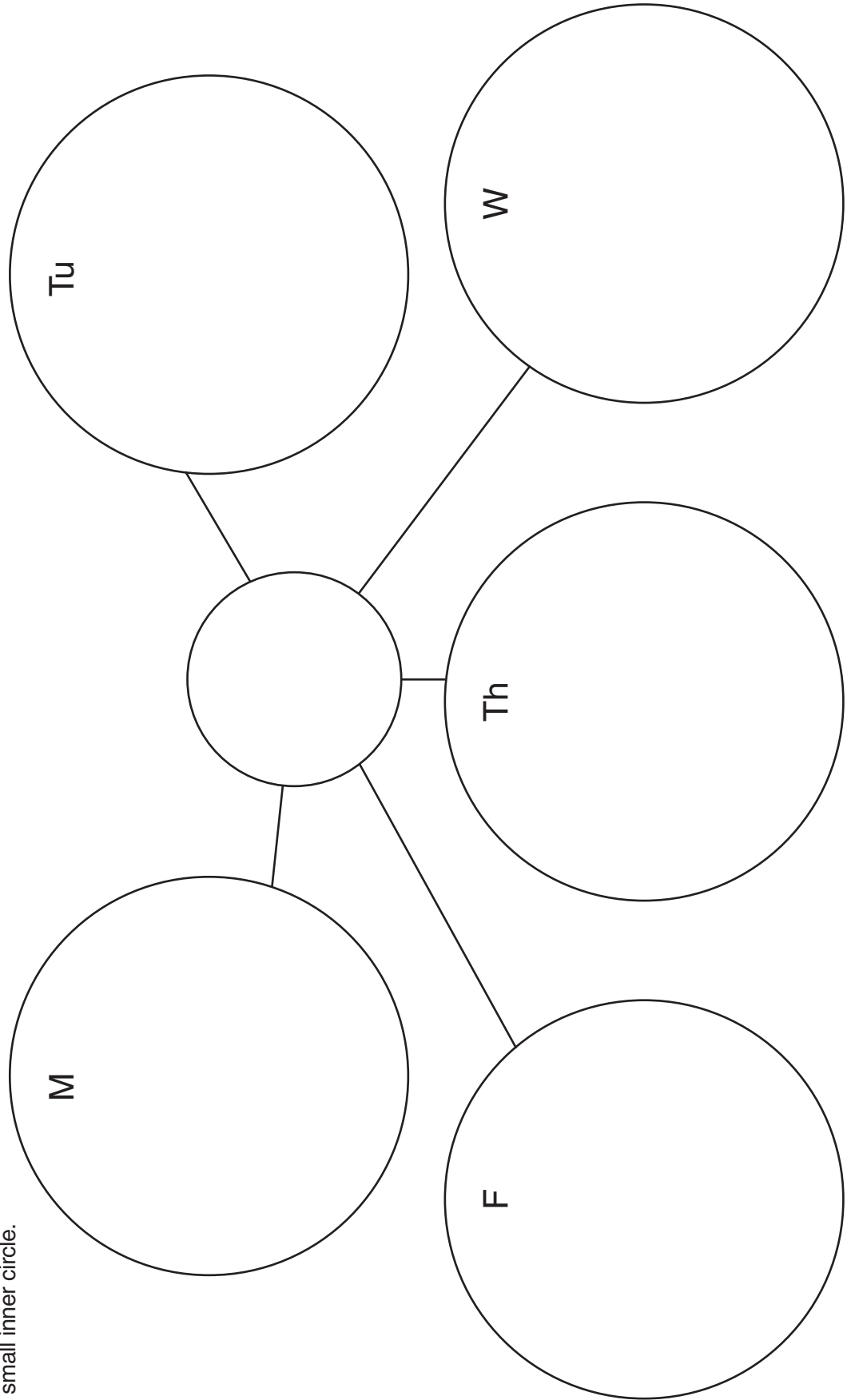
**DIRECTIONS:** Read a profile about someone in the news. Conduct additional research if necessary to fill in the pyramid. Which character traits enabled the person to overcome challenges and supported his/her accomplishments? List the traits on the outside of the pyramid. Write a brief biography, ending with a paragraph that identifies the traits that enabled the person to succeed. In election years, complete the information about political candidates.





## Exploring a Character

**DIRECTIONS:** To get to know comic characters, readers must read more than one day's newspaper. Choose a comic character whom you would like to know better and place the name in the inner circle. Each day, cut out an interesting frame that involves the character or write what happens to him or her. What conclusions can you draw about the character and personality of the comic character you chose? You may also list traits in the outer circles and cut out frames that show the comic character exhibiting the traits. **VARIATION:** Similarly, readers must follow candidates and public officials over time to get to know them. Using the graphic, record the actions of a chosen public official that shows a trait (or absence of a trait) in the person's public life. For example, his or her support for a specific issue could demonstrate courage, or his or her continued efforts to solve a problem could show perseverance. Note the action and write the date of the story in the largest circles and the public official's name in the small inner circle.







# Compare and Contrast Comics

**DIRECTIONS:** Working with a partner, choose one comic strip character each and list them both on the chart. Discuss and record your responses as to how the two are alike in character traits and how they are different. Using information recorded on the graph, write a comparison paper. Distinguish between differences in personality and character.

**CHARACTER #1**

**CHARACTER #2**

**HOW ARE THEY ALIKE?**

**HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT?**



# Compare and Contrast

**DIRECTIONS:** Find two people in the newspaper who share a character trait such as kindness, courage, perseverance or honesty. Cut out their photos and read as much as you can about them. Note that people who share traits may be different in age, race, gender and other physical attributes. Write a comparison paper in which you explain how they are alike and different. How do you think the two people would get along with each other?

**FIRST PERSON**

**SECOND PERSON**

**HOW ARE THEY  
ALIKE?**

**HOW ARE THEY  
DIFFERENT?**

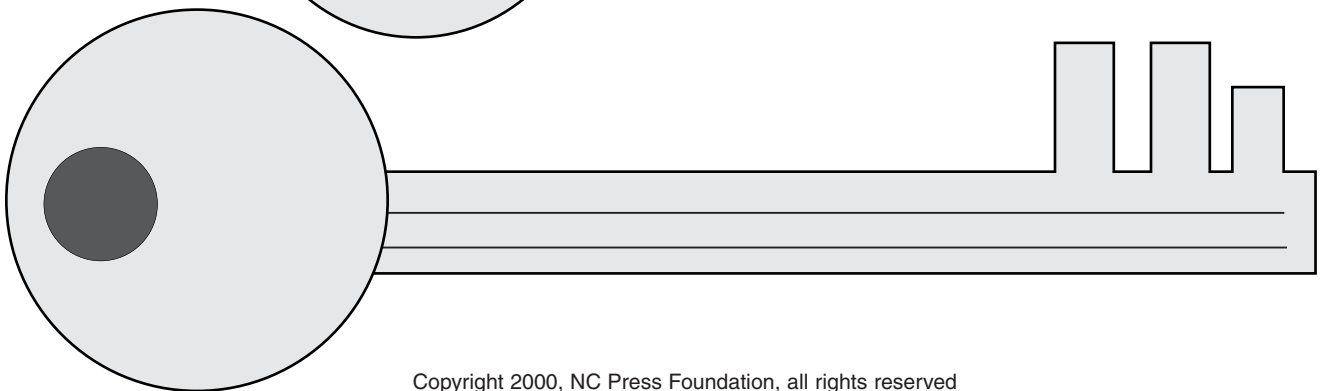
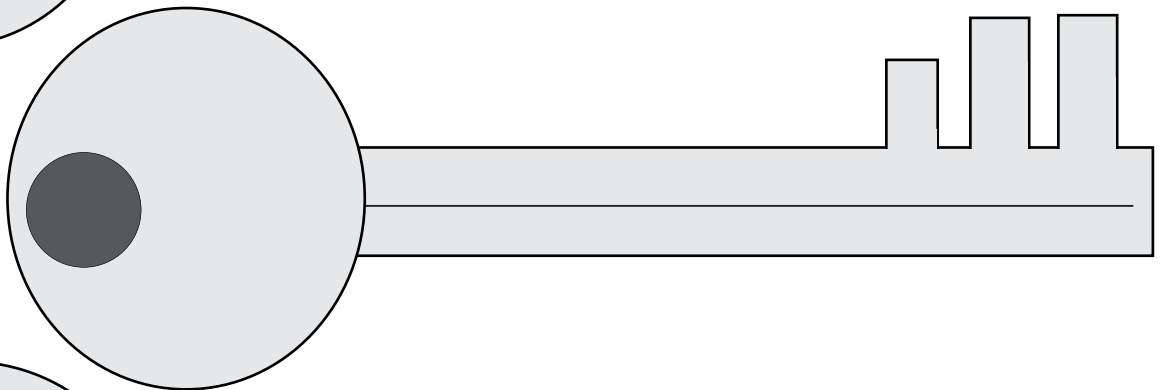
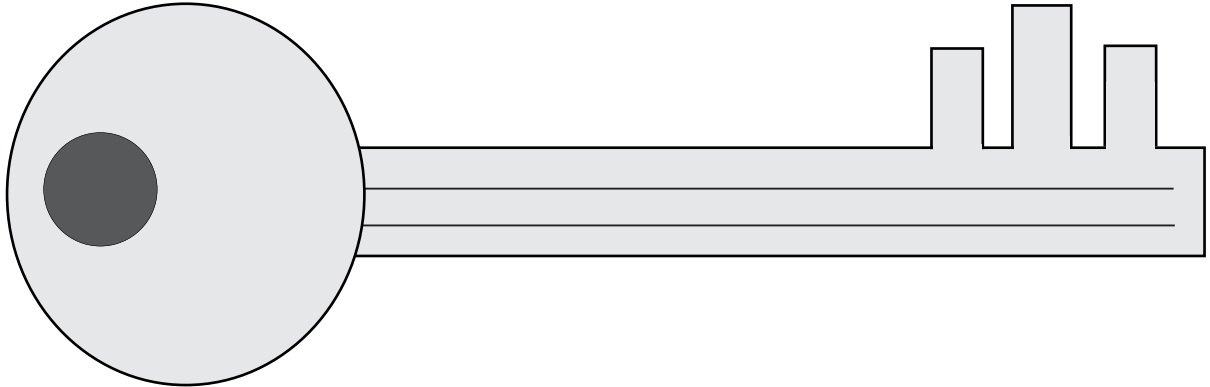


# Holding the Keys

VARIATION I: Read newspaper articles about successful people. Chose four things that represent keys to their success.

VARIATION II: Identify a problem that has been solved or a conflict that has been resolved. Reading through the newspaper, select what you think were the keys to the solution.

VARIATION III: Identify an unresolved conflict. Read the news to understand the obstacles to a solution. Using what you learned, write what you consider to be the keys to a solution.





## Deserving Tribute (Part One)

**DIRECTIONS:** Several ways exist for honoring people for extraordinary achievements. When businesses promote employees, announcements often run in the newspaper. When people rescue others in distress, volunteer their time, give money to worthy causes, or in other ways dedicate themselves to a cause, they receive attention through ads and stories in the paper. The same is true for organizations that step forward to assist others in need.

Similarly when people die, obituaries tell of their friends and family and of their contributions to the community. Newspaper editorials and letters to the editor will often pay tribute to someone who served their community.

From your newspaper, list several people who are being honored and record their accomplishments below:

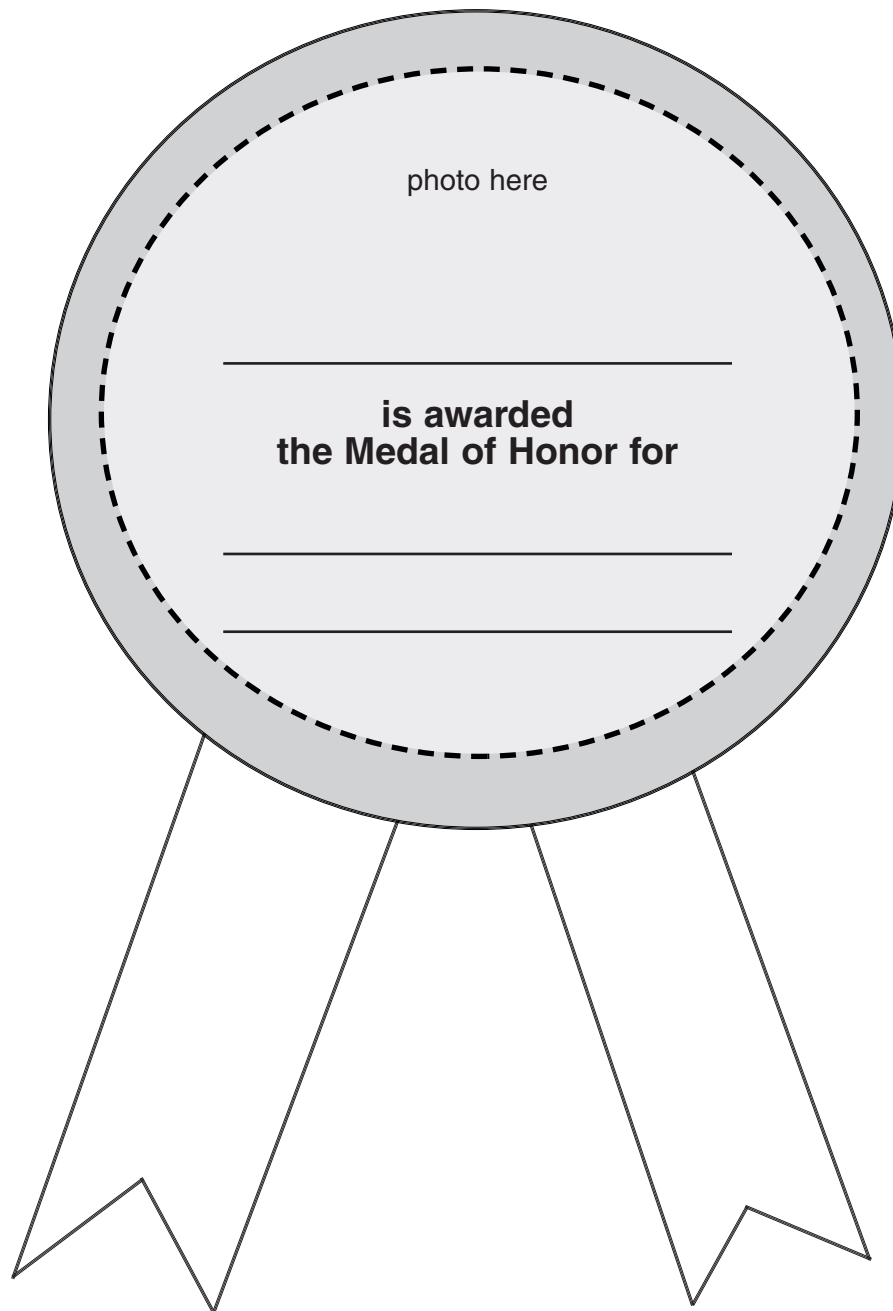
<b>Person</b>	<b>Accomplishment(s)</b>

**FOLLOW-UP:** Identify institutions that deserve praise for their work. List their accomplishments.



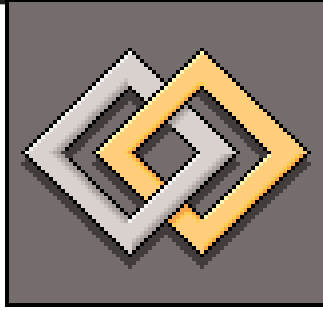
## Deserving Tribute (Part Two)

**DIRECTIONS:** Select one person to receive a medal of honor. Cut out the person's photo if it is available and place it in the square portion of the medal. Fill in the information that explains your choice.



**FOLLOW-UP:** Post the medal on a bulletin board or wall with those chosen by other students. Read through the choices and match each contribution with a character trait. Decide if any one trait received more medals.

**EXTEND THE ACTIVITY:** Set aside another board for displaying medals earned by classmates or others in your school.

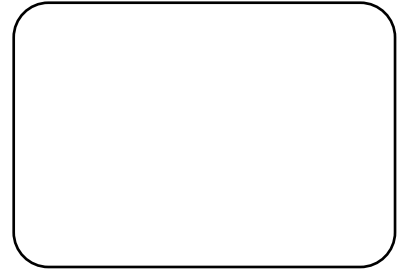
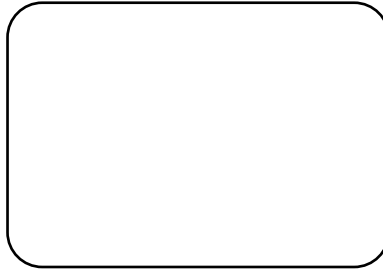
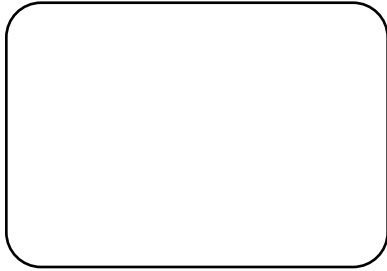


# Making Sound Choices



## Dressing Right

**DIRECTIONS:** Apply good judgment in your selection of clothes. Cut out three appealing items of clothing found in ads. Place these in the rectangles. Then consider what you need, what you enjoy wearing, the cost and other factors. Which would you choose? Explain your choice in the large square.





## The Right Movie

VARIATION I: List three movies advertised in the newspaper. Evaluate the movies, using the ratings, summaries and reviews found in the newspaper and the illustrations in the ads. Are any movies inappropriate? Why? Do any involve offensive language, sex, or violence? Do the ratings (R, PG13, etc.) affect your choices? Interview students who know more about the movies. Then, in the square, identify the movie you would choose to see this weekend and explain why.

VARIATION II: Do the same with TV programs listed in the published schedule.







# Thoughtful Choices

**DIRECTIONS:** Rather than buy on impulse, ask important questions that will help you make sound decisions. Select an ad for something that appeals to you. It may be something big like a car, home, or computer or something smaller like a CD player or special item of clothing. In the rectangles, write three facts that are important information about the item. Draw more rectangles if they are needed. In the square, write the questions that you'd need to answer before making the purchases.

ITEM CHOSEN: \_\_\_\_\_





# Shopping Wisely

**DIRECTIONS:** Write your name in the center and then, from the newspaper, choose things that you like under each category given in the diagram. List them or cut out and paste them on large paper under the appropriate category. Looking over your list, circle things that represent needs and put an "X" on things that represent wants. Discuss which things should be purchased first. Also discuss the traits such as good judgment and self-discipline as they affect spending habits.

Answer the questions: Who or what influences your purchases? Parents? Friends? Peer group? Current trends? Popular choices? Advertising? Personal tastes? Cost? Availability? What should influence you?

<b>MOVIES</b>	<b>MUSIC</b>	
<b>FOOD</b>		<b>DRINK</b>



## Eat Right! Get Exercise!

**DIRECTIONS:** What can you do to form habits that contribute to your physical well being? What traits does it require to maintain good health?

1. Use good judgment in making food choices. Find foods and recipes in the newspaper that you enjoy and also have nutritional value.

Find foods that you like but do not benefit your health. Do you limit yourself with those foods?

2. Be self-disciplined. Set aside time for regular exercise. Look for people in the newspaper who are involved in physical activities that contribute to good health.

3. Find stories about other choices you can make that contribute to good health.

**FOLLOW-UP:** Use items cut from the newspaper to illustrate a food pyramid. Plan nutritious meals using the food pyramid and food ads to figure out the cost.



# Body Image

**DIRECTIONS:** Do different media influence your perception of a desirable body size and shape? Look for images and messages in advertising that might pressure people to try fad diets or excessive exercise to maintain an “ideal” shape and size. Create a scrapbook or collage showing what you find. Explain below how the images affect you:

**TV**

**Magazines**

**Newspapers**

**Other (Internet, Billboards, etc.)**

Similarly, look for images and messages that might encourage habits that contribute to obesity such as overeating or eating a poor diet. Use the images and messages to create a scrapbook or collage and explain below how the messages affect you:

**TV**

**Magazines**

**Newspapers**

**Other (Internet, Billboards, etc.)**

**FOLLOW-UP:** Look for images and messages in entertainment media such as movies and TV and talk about which medium sends the most powerful messages about the “ideal” body size and shape. Discuss and write about whether the messages are damaging.

Look for newspaper stories that deal with issues related to the pursuit of a better, healthier body and self-respect or self-esteem. What risks are involved for those who try to change themselves? What are acceptable and unacceptable changes to make? Circle any advice that you think is helpful and useful to you. Place an “X” on advice and behaviors that you think represent poor judgment. Think about the choices you make each day and write down ways you can improve your overall health and build self-respect.



# Health Problems

**DIRECTIONS:** Find a story in the newspaper about someone with a health problem and use information from the story to complete the following questions:

1. What is the problem?
  
2. What caused the problem?
  
3. What effects has the problem had?
  
4. What solutions are there to the problem?
  
5. What obstacles are there to solving the problem?
  
6. Was there anything the person could have done to prevent the problem or reduce the damaging effects of the accident or illness?
  
7. What character traits does the sick or injured person use in dealing with the problem?
  
8. What traits do the people show who are trying to help him or her?
  
9. What did you learn from the story about maintaining good health?



# Substance Abuse

Examine newspaper stories involving substance abuse. Select stories in which drugs and alcohol contribute to accidents, illnesses or crime or damage relationships at work or with family and friends.

## STORY 1

**Headline**

**Date**

**Who is the person using drugs or alcohol?**

**What problems resulted?**

## STORY 2

**Headline**

**Date**

**Who is the person using drugs or alcohol?**

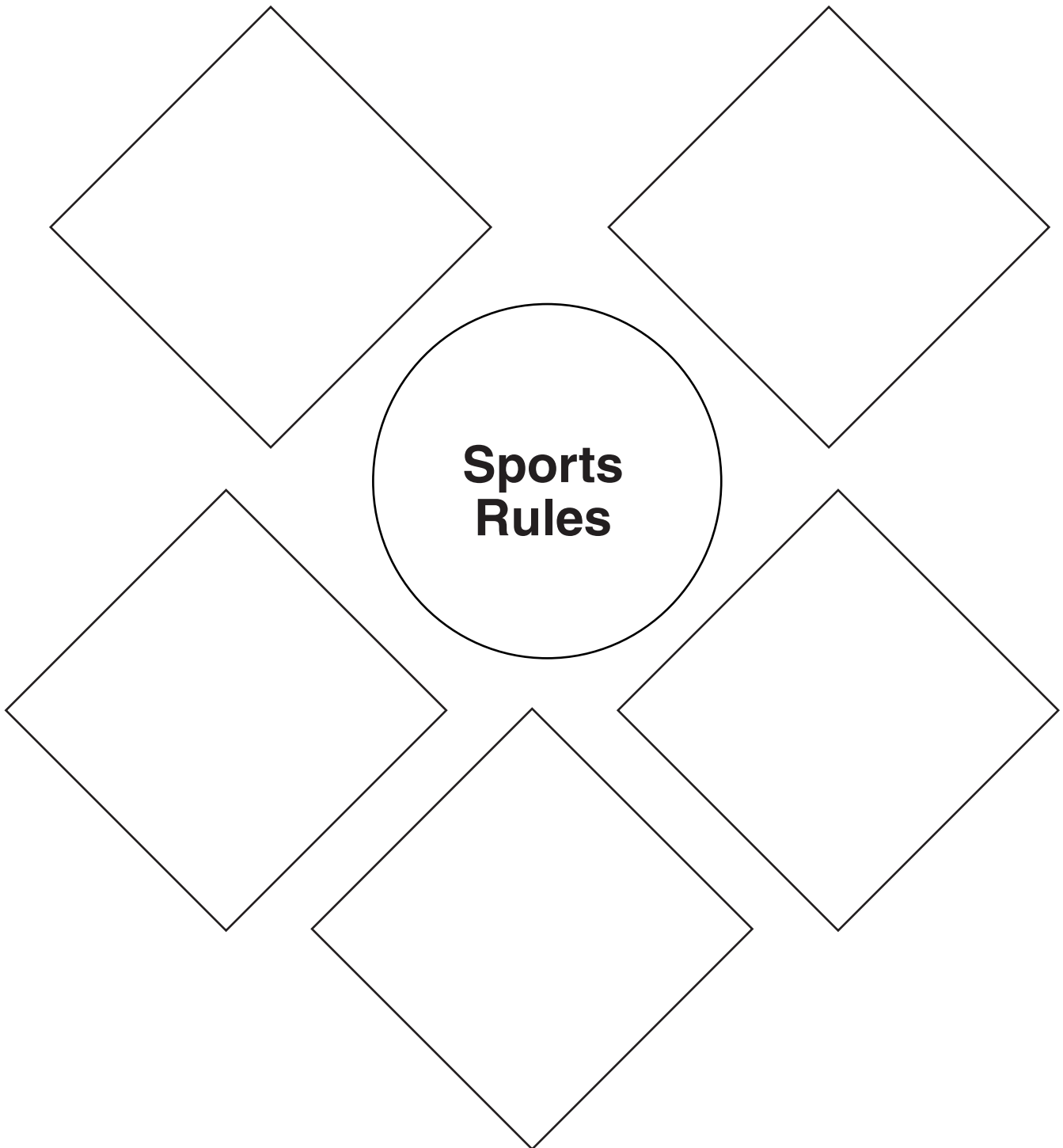
**What problems resulted?**

**FOLLOW-UP:** Over a period of time, keep track of the stories that involve drug and alcohol abuse. What lessons can be learned from the stories? What advice would you offer based on your reading?



## Playing by the Rules

**DIRECTIONS:** Games require rules. On the outside diamonds, list all of the rules mentioned in stories that appear in the Sports section. At the bottom, explain what would happen without the rules.



Without rules ... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Sportsmanship

VARIATION I: Read the sports page for examples of good and bad sportsmanship. Write "Good Sportsmanship" in the center square and write the examples in the four large squares. Be sure to name the person and what he or she said or did. Do the same for "Lack of Sportsmanship." Read to find out if the good and bad sportsmanship grew out of situations where a person won or lost. Discuss: When athletes exhibit poor sportsmanship, does the behavior affect your view of that person? How? Do you think that professional athletes influence school athletes? If pro athletes act badly, does their behavior cause young athletes to do the same?

VARIATION II: Write "Sports" in the middle square. On the outside, write the names of four sports that are likely to be covered in the newspaper., Then find an example of good and bad sportsmanship in each sport and write both in the appropriate square.

VARIATION III: Select a story where good sportsmanship is shown and rewrite it to show what would happen if players displayed poor sportsmanship. Would the game continue?



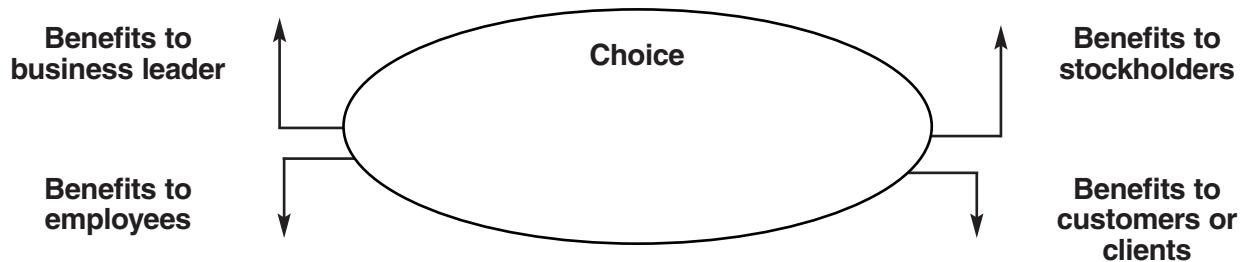



# Business Ethics, Part One

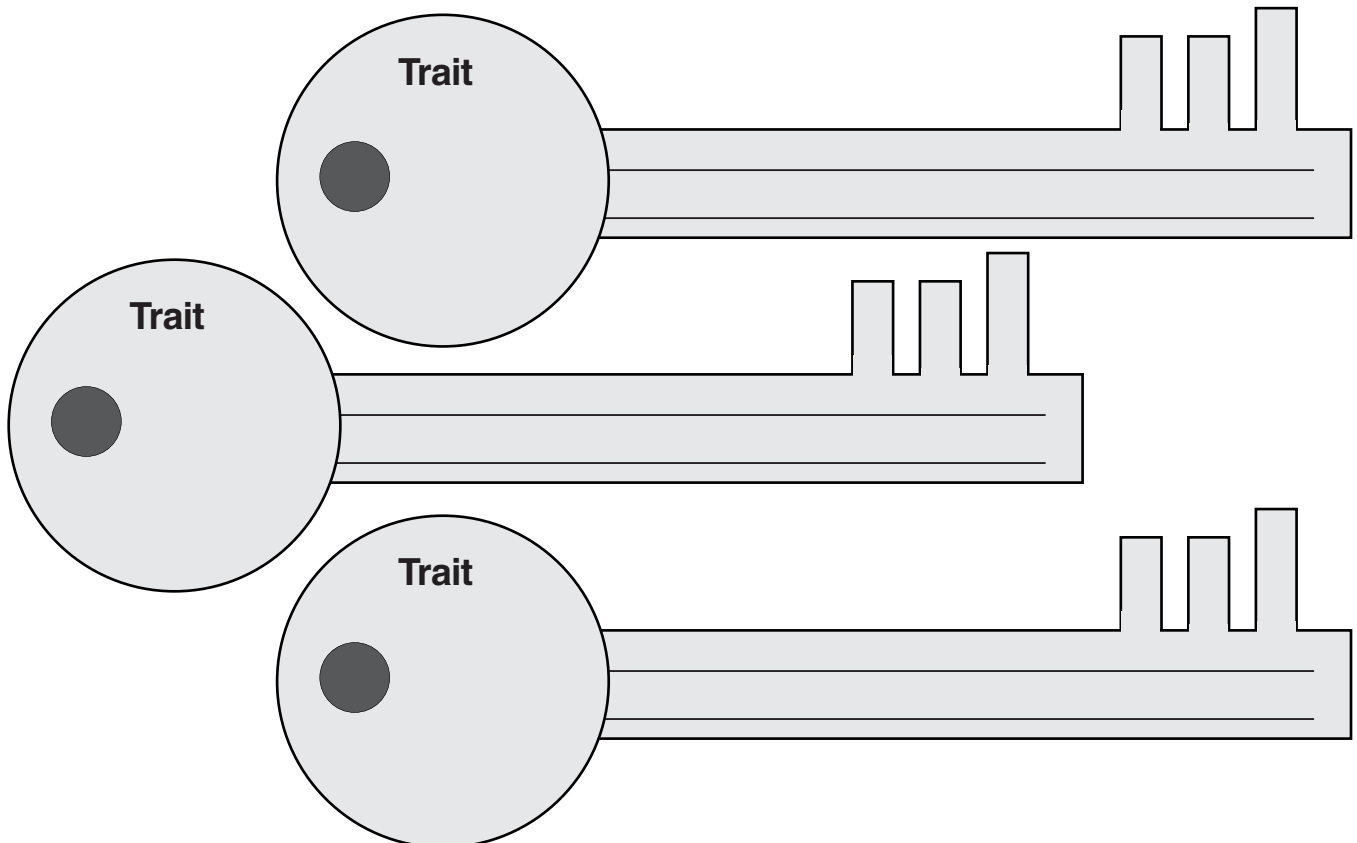
Use news reports as starting points for class discussions about business ethics.

Read the newspaper for examples of positive leadership in business. Identify choices the leaders made that enabled them and their companies to prosper. Write each choice in the center of a sheet of paper and around each choice write the way that the business leader, stockholders, employees, and customers or clients benefited from the decisions made by the leader. Use the following model:

LEADER'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_



Also, determine which character traits proved to be the key to the success of the business leader. Write the traits in the keys below and explain what the leader did that made you choose the trait.





## Business Ethics, Part Two

Look for clear examples of business leaders who have broken laws and hurt employees investors, and customers. Read stories over a period of time, and on separate paper answer the following questions:

1. Who are the leaders?
2. What are their companies? What goods and/or services do they offer?
3. What did the leaders do that broke laws?
4. What motivated them?
5. Why did others working for the company go along with the deceptive practices?
6. Who should have intervened?
7. How were employees, investors and customers harmed?
8. What are the consequences for all those affected? For the business leader? For employees and investors and customers?
9. Are public policies likely to change as a result?

**FOLLOW-UP:** Use the information you gained from your newspaper reading to write about business and business ethics. Consider the following topics:

- Compare the positive business leaders with those who made poor decisions.
  - Describe “success in business.” What else is involved besides making money for oneself?
- Write an editorial.



# Journalistic Ethics

**DIRECTIONS:** Professionals in many, varied fields develop codes of ethics or standards by which the actions of those in the profession can be judged. Journalists are among the professional groups with guidelines. Here are some web sites that present codes of conduct, essays on ethics, and/or discussions about the coverage of current events:

- Ethics Cases Online, [www.journalism.indiana.edu/Ethics/](http://www.journalism.indiana.edu/Ethics/)
- Freedom Forum, [www.freedomforum.org](http://www.freedomforum.org)
- Poynter Institute, [www.poynter.org](http://www.poynter.org)
- Project for Excellence in journalism, [www.journalism.org](http://www.journalism.org)
- Radio-Television News Directors Association, [www.rtna.org](http://www.rtna.org)
- Society of Professional Journalists, [www.spj.com](http://www.spj.com)

Before visiting the sites, complete the top two boxes and after visiting the sites, complete the bottom:

**What I know  
about journalistic ethics**

**What I'd like to know  
about journalistic ethics**

**What I learned about journalistic ethics**

**What I found most interesting about journalistic ethics**

**FOLLOW-UP:** Discuss and write about the role of a free press in a democratic society. Compare the coverage given to a story by newspapers, radio, TV and the Internet. Discuss or write about what you discover from your own experiences with media. Don't hesitate to contact your local media with questions about their work.



# Applied Science

**DIRECTIONS:** Science is a growing body of knowledge. Scientists examine existing theories and propose new theories for study. Discussions about the implications of their research take place in science publications. Many newspaper stories deal with scientific research and the impact the research is likely to have.

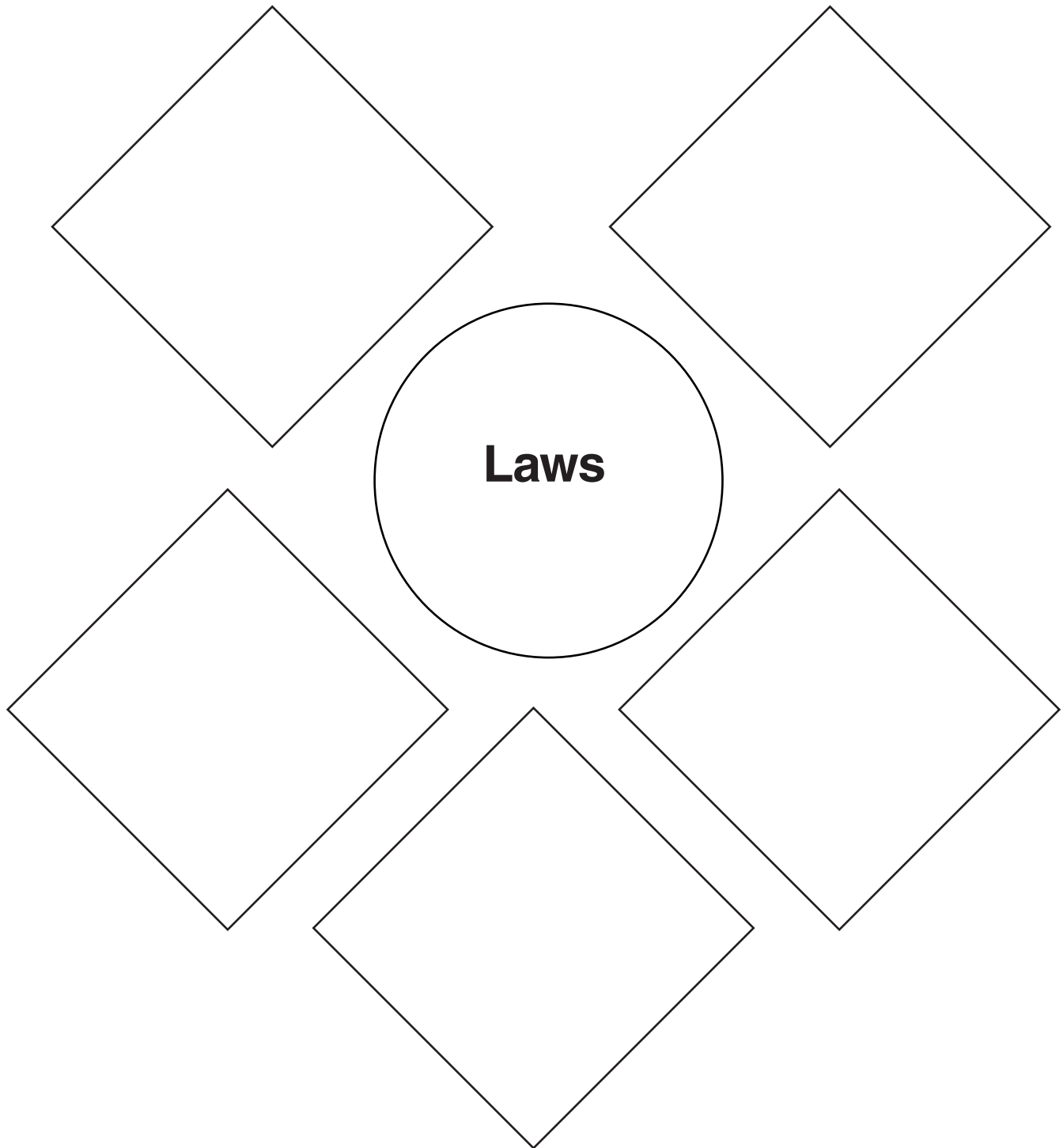
**Find a story that reports the results of scientific research.**

1. What are the findings?
2. Do the findings question or refute commonly-held theories or medical practices? Explain.
3. Are any scientists cited as questioning the findings? If so, what do they say?
4. Topics such as genetic engineering, the use of human subjects and animals in experiments create controversy when reported as news. Are the findings reported in your newspaper story likely to generate discussion and debate over their applications? Are there ethical questions about the “right and wrong” way to conduct and use the research? Explain.
5. Are public policies likely to be affected by the findings? Explain.
6. How does the research affect you now or in the future? What do you think about the research? Is it harmful and/or beneficial?
7. If you feel strongly about the issues raised by the story, write a letter to the editor and send it to your newspaper.



# Respect for the Law

DIRECTIONS: Locate stories about people breaking laws. On the outside diamonds, write the actions that violated the laws. At the bottom, explain what happened when the laws were not followed.



Without laws ... \_\_\_\_\_

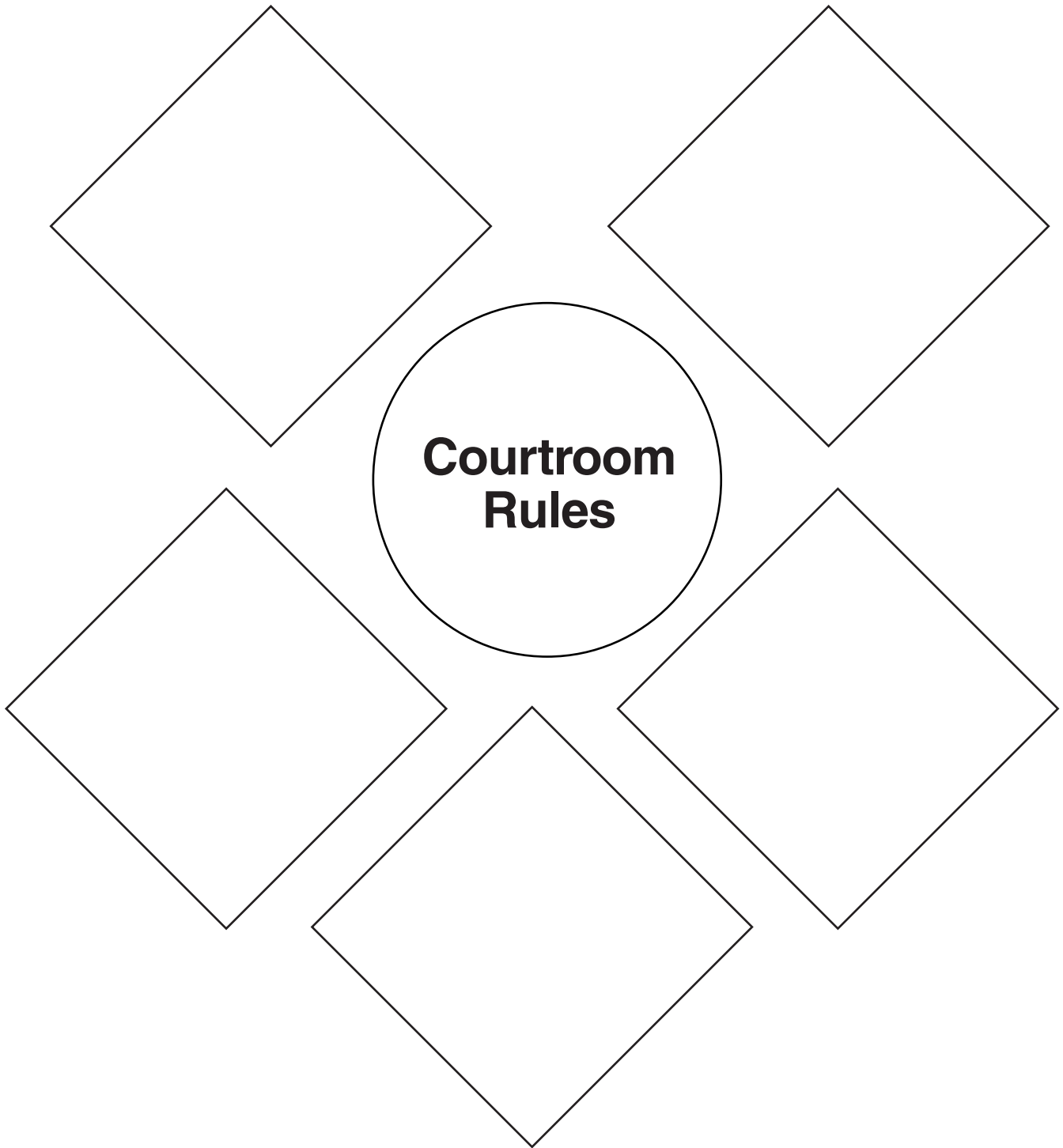
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Court Procedure

**DIRECTIONS:** Select a story about a trial and gather background about the rules governing the courtroom. In the diamonds, list the rules pertaining to your news story or stories. In the space provided at the bottom, explain how court procedures ensure fairness.



How court procedures ensure fairness: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Working Out Conflicts

**DIRECTIONS:** Conflicts end in one of three ways. Both sides win; one loses and the other wins; and both lose. Identify a conflict in the newspaper and describe how it might be resolved, with one explanation for each category. The chosen conflict may involve individuals, groups of people, institutions, states or nations.

## WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT?

## WHAT IS AT STAKE?

## HOW MIGHT IT BE RESOLVED?

**Win-Win**

**Win-Lose**

**Lose-Lose**

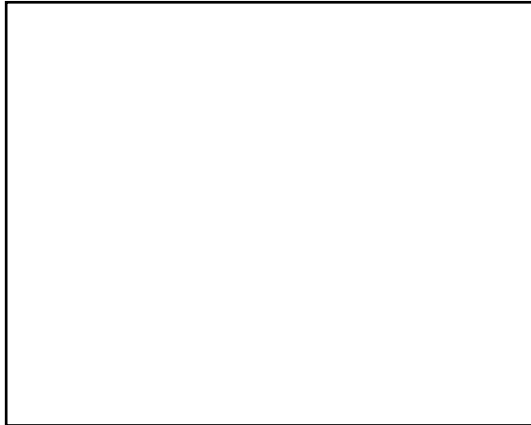
**FOLLOW-UP:** Describe the most desirable result. Then write a letter to each side advocating the best outcome and the means to achieve it.



# Improving Communications

DIRECTIONS: Choose four comic strips and read them thoroughly. Look carefully, also, at the body language and facial expressions of the characters. If you find the following situations, clip the particular panel (box) and tape in the space provided. Then write a brief sentence below each box explaining how the characters involved could communicate better.\*

## 1. Arguing or Fighting



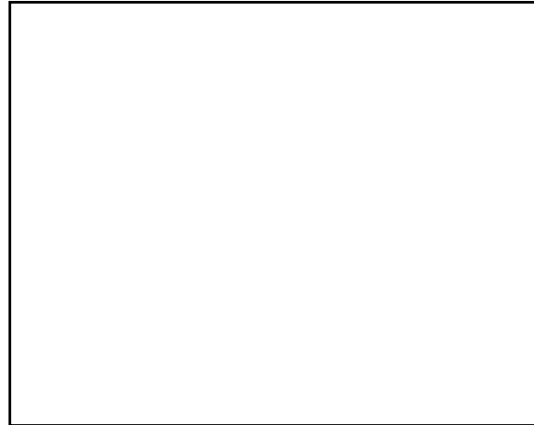
Better way to communicate

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## 2. Making fun of Someone



Better way to communicate

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---

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## 3. Complaining



Better way to communicate

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---

---

## 4. Embarrassing Someone



Better way to communicate

---

---

---





# Predicting a Response

**DIRECTIONS:** Identify someone in the news who faces a problem or choose an institution with a problem. Write the person's or institution's name in the bottom square. Identify three possible responses the person may have. On the lines, identify the traits or principles that the different responses demonstrate. Explain in writing whether you consider any responses or principles better than the others.

---

TRAIT

TRAIT

RESPONSE

TRAIT

TRAIT

TRAIT

TRAIT

RESPONSE

RESPONSE

PERSON'S OR INSTITUTION'S NAME



# Making Predictions

**DIRECTIONS:** Select a problem presented in newspapers. The problem may be local, state, national or world. Write three predictions of what will happen next and give the reasons why. Write a paper that explains the problem and includes a paragraph for each prediction. Argue for the best outcome. Also, continue to read the newspaper to find out which prediction holds true.

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

---

**REASON** **REASON**

**PREDICTION**

---

**REASON** **REASON** **REASON** **REASON**

**PREDICTION** **PREDICTION**

**PREDICTION**



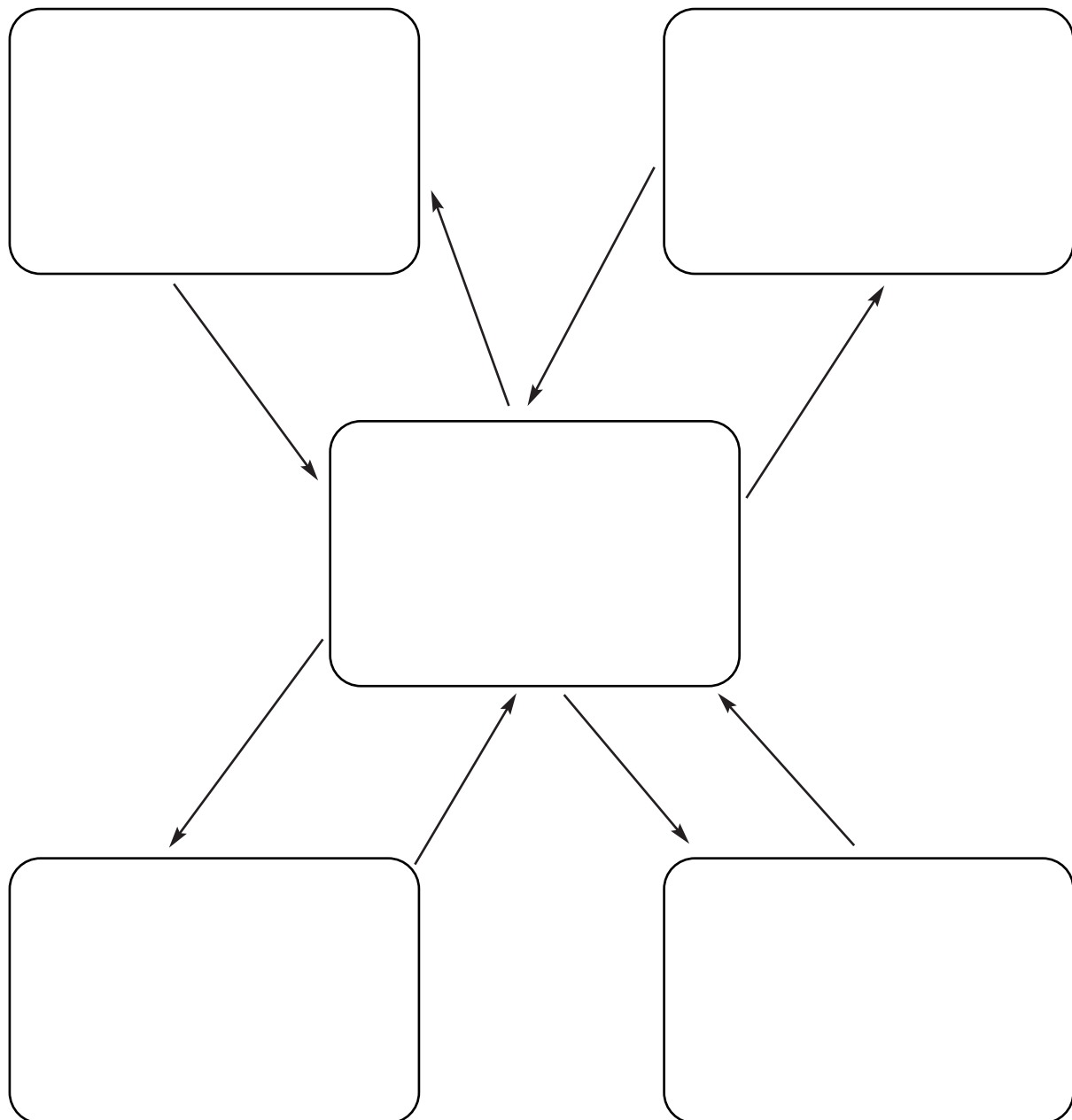
# Getting Along

VARIATION I: Study the relationships in comics. Identify the main character in a comic strip and put his or her name in the center rectangle. Put the names of secondary characters in the outside rectangles. Write how the main character feels about each character and how the secondary characters feel about the main character on the appropriate lines. Support your ideas with specifics from the strips. Discuss the traits that help the characters get along despite conflicts and disagreements.

VARIATION II: Describe other relationships explored in newspapers. Read in-depth profiles, and complete the chart using information provided in the stories.

VARIATION III: Follow political officials over time as they work with individual city council members, county commissioners, legislators, and citizens. Discuss and write about different relationships and how they help and hinder decision-making.

VARIATION IV: Follow news about world leaders and explore their relationships with each other and, in particular, with the president of the United States.





## Facing a Tough Choice

**DIRECTIONS:** Identify someone in the newspaper who faces a tough choice. The person might be featured in an advice column such as Dear Abby, in a make-believe situation in the comics, or in a real life story told in a news or features story. After reading and thinking about the situation, complete the chart below as if you were that person. Ask yourself and write about why it is difficult to do what one ought to do in this and other situations.

**What I Ought To Do**

**What I Want To Do**



## Telling a Story from Different Perspectives

**DIRECTIONS:** Choose one compelling story from the newspaper. What gives the story its emotional appeal? Is it upsetting, surprising, heart warming, or does it appeal to you for other reasons? Complete the activity by filling in the blanks below and completing three retellings using the storyboard on the following page.

1. I chose \_\_\_\_\_(headline) as my compelling story because \_\_\_\_\_.
2. This story takes place in \_\_\_\_\_ (geographic site, location, time span/time frame).
3. The mentioned participants include: (list of names including those without proper names, i.e. spectator, officer, bystander).

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

4. The unmentioned participants might include (examples: the reporter covering the story, the apartment dweller who called 911, neighbors or bystanders who watched but left as the police pulled out, etc.)

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

5. Retell the story from different perspectives. Choose three people from your lists above who may view the events differently. One may be unconcerned, merely interrupted. Another may register deep fear or regret. Another may be hurt or suffering physical pain. Explain briefly how the events affect each person.

**Person**

**How the person is affected/involved**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



## Telling A Story from Different Perspectives, part 2

**DIRECTIONS:** Use a different storyboard to tell each person's version of the story. After telling the stories, read them aloud, act them out assigning roles and discuss their effectiveness in explaining the situations and conveying the levels of involvement: Which is most objective? Which contains the most opinion? Which is the most emotional? Which stirs the strongest emotional response in the reader or listener? Who generates the most sympathy? Is one more accurate than the others? Do all contain the essential facts? Does one retelling seem "truer" to you? Do the retellings enhance, diminish or not really change the story and its consequences? Compare your retellings with others in the class.

(TEXT)

(TEXT)

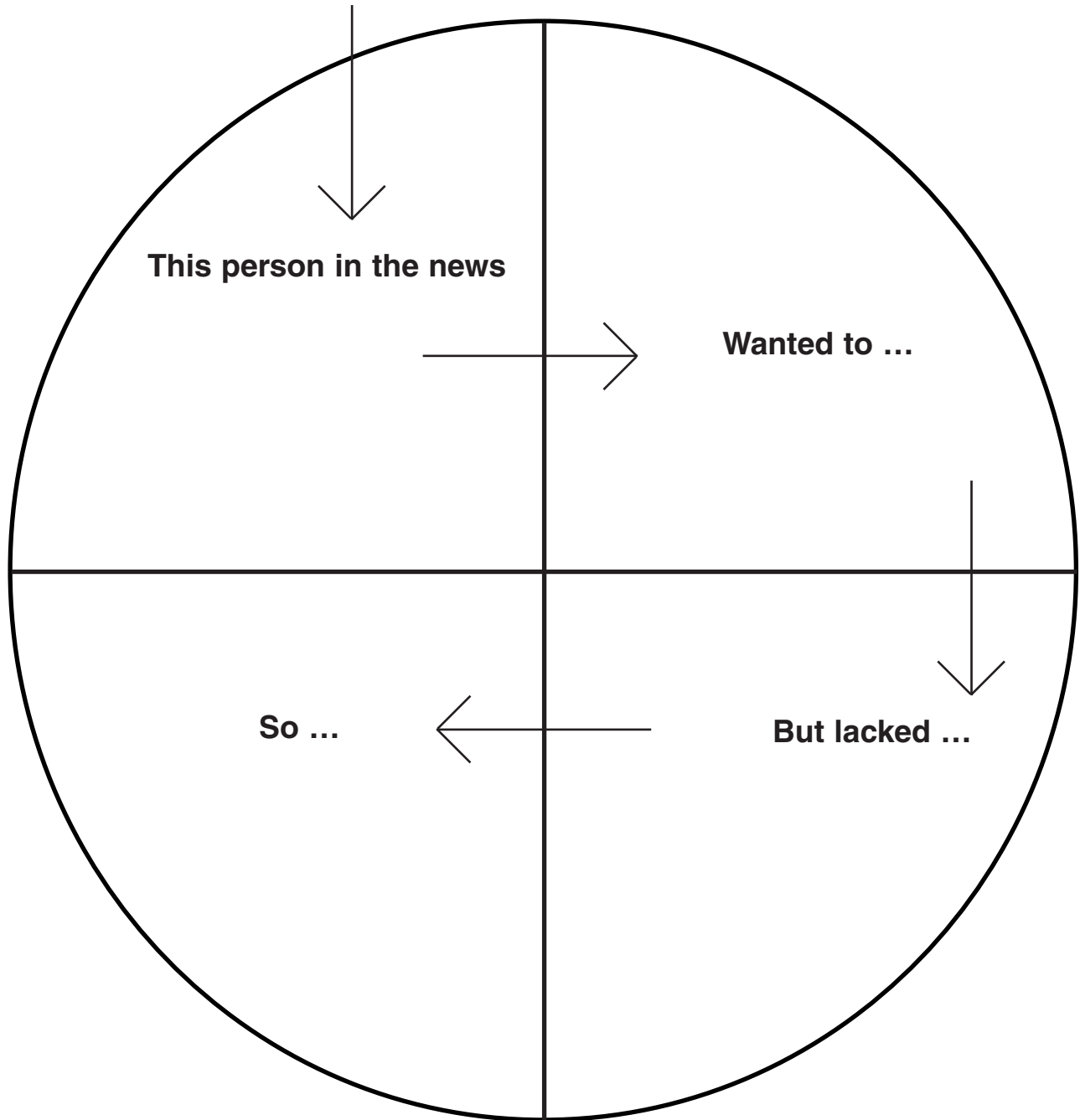
(TEXT)



## Judging Consequences

VARIATION I : Choose a person in the news who is suffering the consequences of poor judgment or other lack of character. Record what happened by filling in each quadrant. Be sure to state the character trait that was lacking in the circle labeled, "But lacked."

VARIATION II: Instead of choosing a person who lacks character, choose a person who is able to accomplish something great despite an obstacle or difficulty. Write a paragraph or paragraphs based on the completed outlines.





## Intervention That Makes a Difference

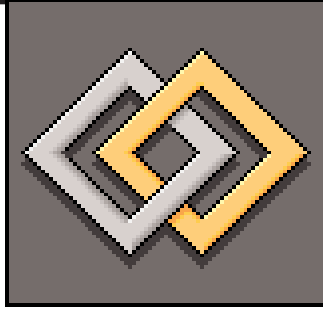
**DIRECTIONS:** In reading the newspaper, identify an event that shouldn't have happened or that you and others wish hadn't happened. List causes of the event in order of occurrence; at each step, think of ways that someone might have intervened to keep the event from taking place. Which character traits would be used by those who intervened?

**EVENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

HOW SOMEONE MAY HAVE INTERVENED		CHARACTER TRAIT OF PERSONAL INTERVENING:
	5	
	4	
	3	
	2	
	1	

**FOLLOW-UP:** Did drugs or alcohol contribute to the situation? What kinds of intervention are needed when substance abuse is involved? Did any situations involve violence at home or abroad? What kinds of intervention are needed?



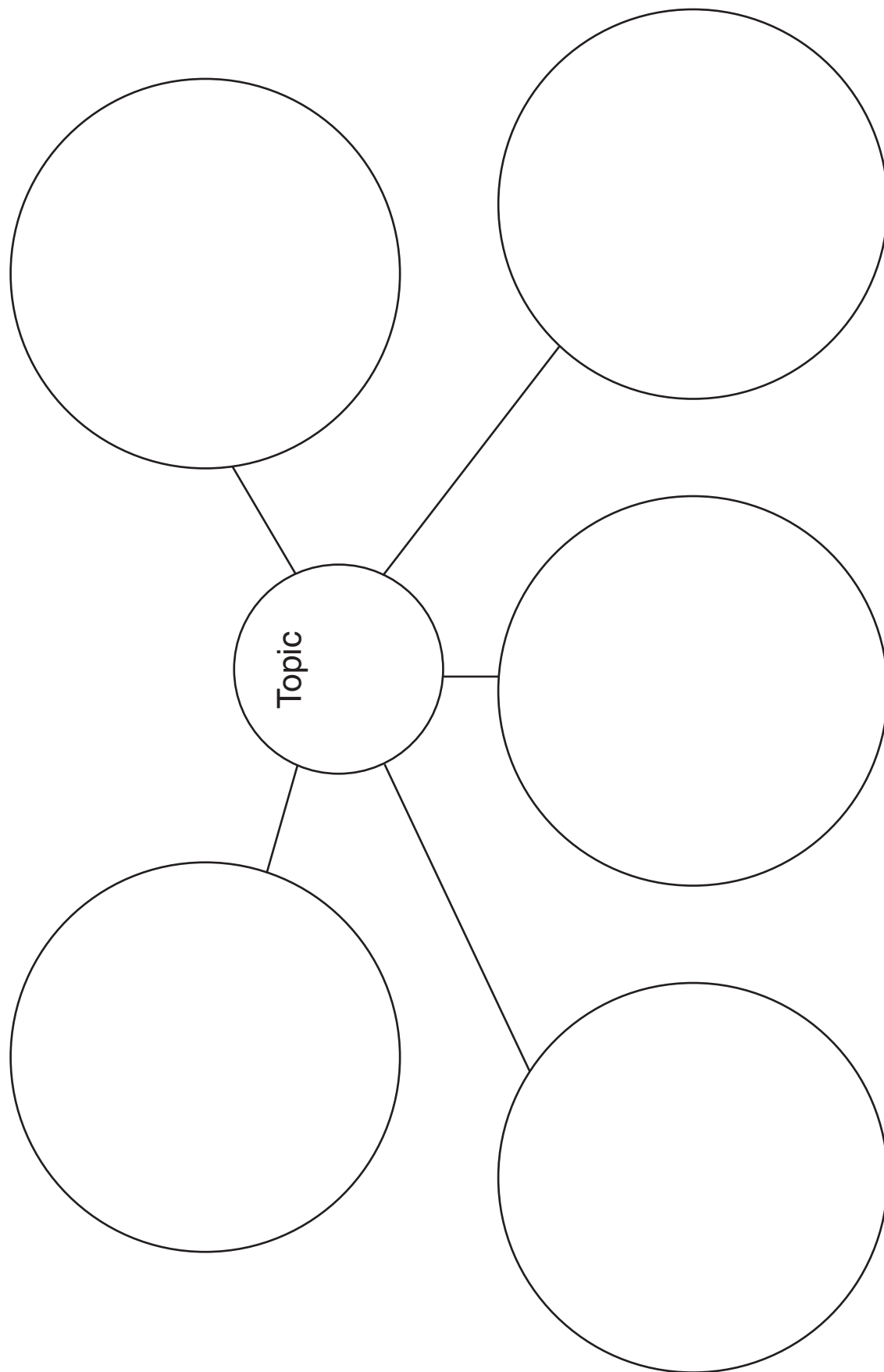


# Addressing Community Problems and Global Concerns



## Exploring a Topic

**DIRECTIONS:** Select a topic such as "Stories about Young People" or "Stories about the Elderly" and record your topic in the small circle. In the large outer circles, write the main idea for the stories that you find. Add large circles if you need to. What have the people you chose done to draw attention to themselves? Are their actions positive or negative? Put a plus (+) or minus (-) in the circles. What conclusions can be drawn from the stories regarding young people and the elderly? What are their challenges and choices?

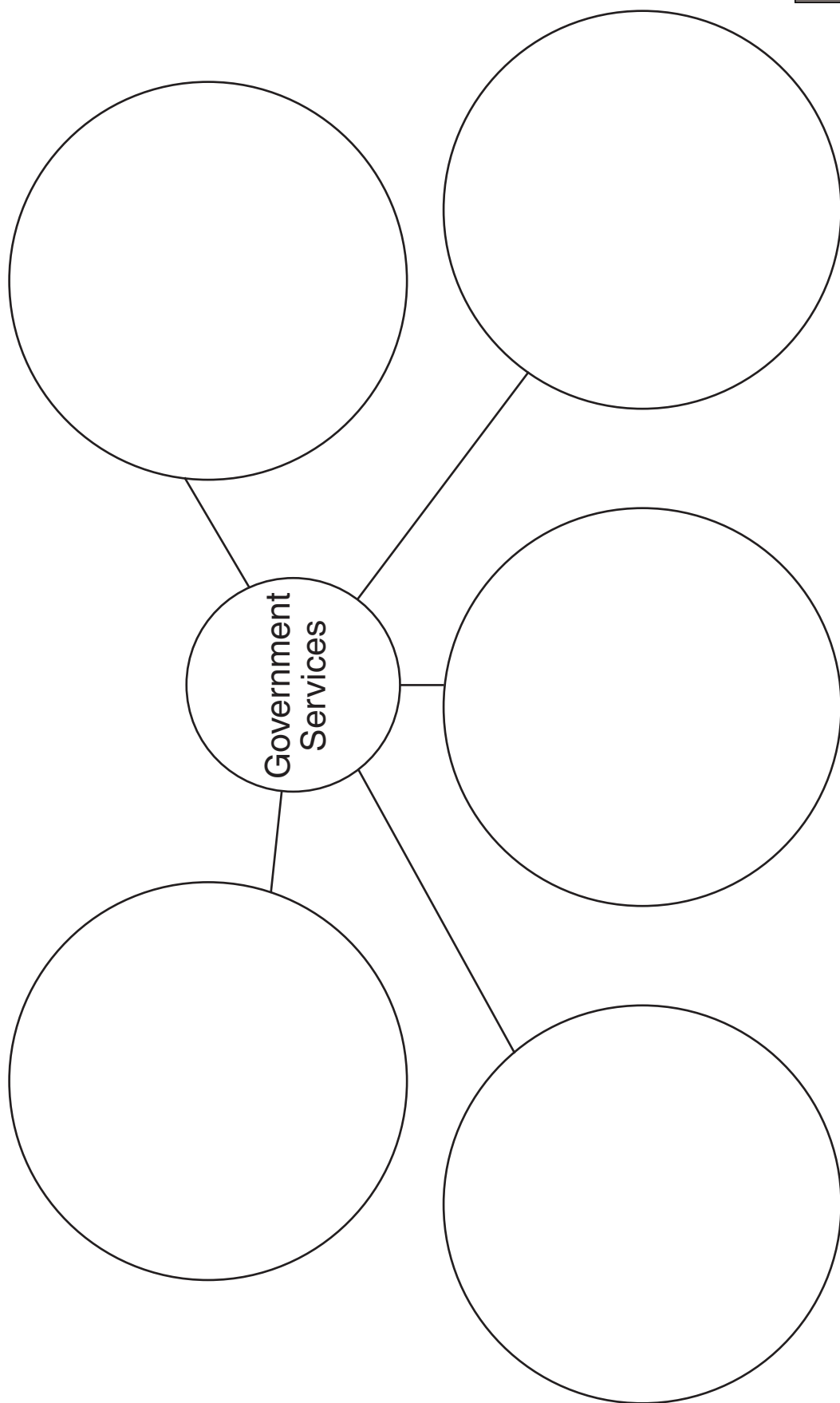




## Government at Work

**DIRECTIONS:** Local city and county governments provide a variety of services. They support animal shelters, public transportation, fire protection, jails, libraries, and parks. In the large circles, identify different government services that are shown in newspapers. Then, write a paper in which you describe your community without the five services recorded in the circles. Consider how people would treat each other if the services were not available.

**VARIATION:** Use the same graph to show services provided by state and national governments that are mentioned and described in newspapers. Also use the graph to record services provided by governments of other countries.



## Your Tax Dollars

**DIRECTIONS:** Conduct a survey among county taxpayers YOU know, such as teachers, your friends' parents, and members of your family. Learn what they think about the way their county tax dollars are spent. What areas do they believe deserve more money? What deserve less?

Names	Areas that deserve more money	Areas that deserve less money

Look through newspapers to find out if public officials address any of the needs mentioned by the people surveyed. What did you find out?





## Understanding Quotes

**DIRECTIONS:** Read each of the following quotes and reflect on their meaning in the "Feelings and Thoughts" portion of the chart. Then, over a period of days, connect each quote to an issue or article from the current week's newspaper.

Quote	Your feelings and thoughts	Connection to current issue
"Ability can take you to the top, but it's character that keeps you there."		
"Do whatever you can, with what you have where you are." (Theodore Roosevelt)		
"Greatness is not found in possessions, power, position or prestige. It is discovered in goodness, humility, service and character." (W.A. Ward)		
"Honesty is the best policy."		
"Let your conscience be your guide."		



## Examining What Public Officials Say

DIRECTIONS: In order to win support for their measures, officials including the president, governor and legislators appeal for support. Identify such appeals in news stories. Circle any quotes.\*

Choose two quotes and agree or disagree with the positions. Explain your answers.

Official quoted: \_\_\_\_\_

Quote:

\_\_\_\_\_ agree      \_\_\_\_\_ disagree

Official quoted: \_\_\_\_\_

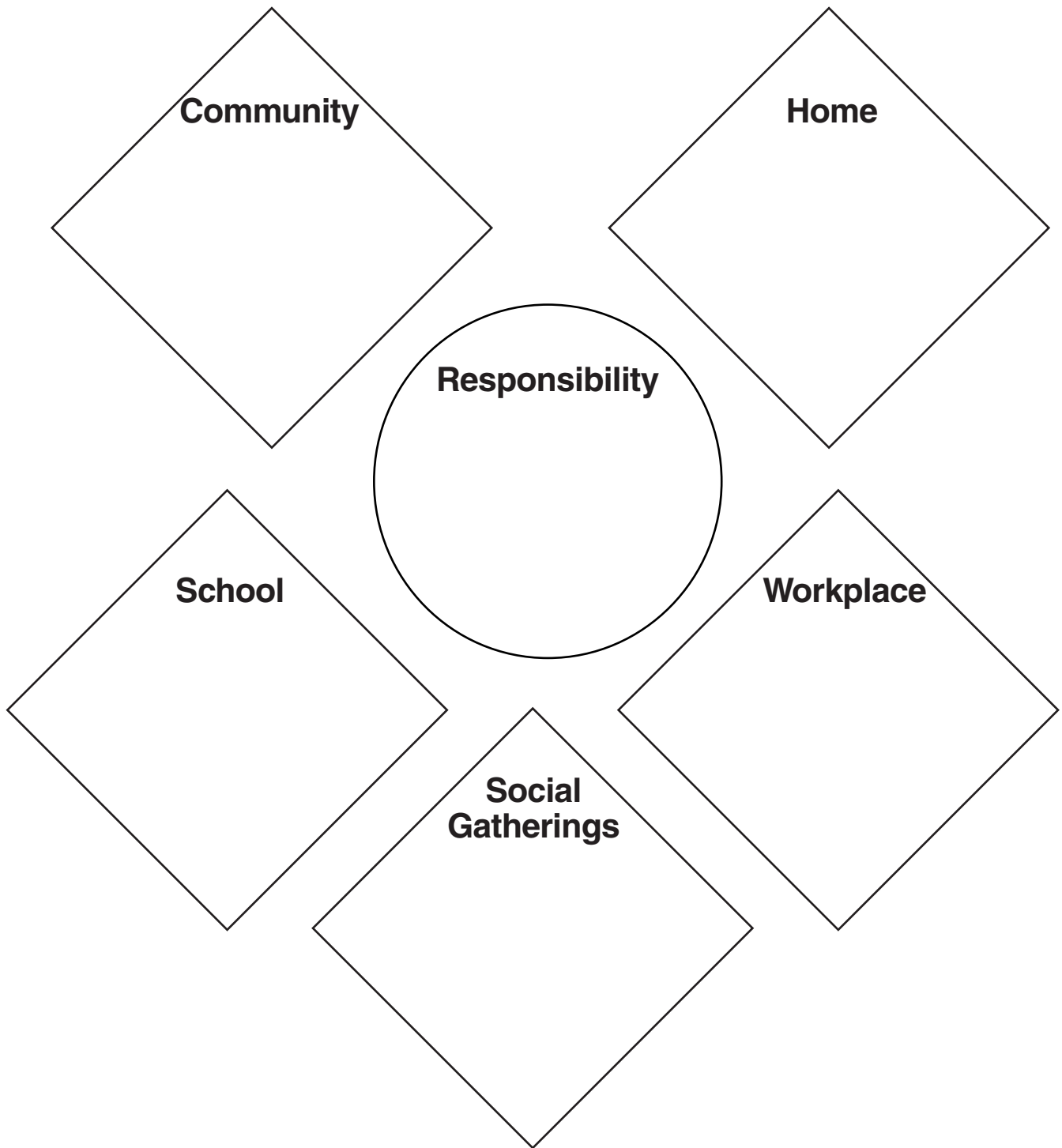
Quote:

\_\_\_\_\_ agree      \_\_\_\_\_ disagree



# Acting Responsibly

DIRECTIONS: Find examples in the newspaper of responsible behavior in each setting. Check all sections of the newspaper, including comics, personal advice columns, TV/movies, sports, various news sections and features. Write or cut out your example of responsible behavior in each setting.



Describe a possible outcome if there were irresponsible behaviors in one of the examples above:

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## People and Places in Your Community

**DIRECTIONS:** If a politician wanted to spend a day walking the streets of your community, where would you take him? Using the newspaper, identify places where people gather, including businesses. List your choices, or cut and tape the places to create a poster that could serve as a map. Mark the beginning and end and number each stop along the way.\*

On his trip around your town and county, who will the politician meet? With newspaper photos, create a collage that paints a true picture of your community.





## A Community at Work

**DIRECTIONS:** Place the community name in the center of the circle. Then list community problems on the outlined labels around the circle. Inside, identify people working to solve them or, if no work has yet been done, list ideas for solving each problem that you discover through reading newspapers.

**FOLLOW-UP:** Which problems affect you most? Are you in a position to help solve any of the problems?  
**EXTEND THE ACTIVITY:** Complete this activity with several newspapers. Graph the results showing which problems are most common. You may choose to classify the problems and create a graph using categories such as education, crime, the economy, etc. Use online newspapers to identify problems in different communities across the state and nation.



# Speaking Out about Local Concerns

**DIRECTIONS:** What do people in your community talk about? Read letters to the editor and stories that deal with issues in your community. Identify and write in the space below the problems that concern them.

Topic	Date

Classify the problems that you identified:

Economics	Ecology	Education	Other

**FOLLOW-UP:** Write a letter to the editor about a problem that concerns you and send it to your newspaper.

\*Adapted from VOTE 2000, copyright 2000, NC Press Foundation, all rights reserved

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## Addressing Local Needs

DIRECTIONS: Pretend that you are serving as an adviser to a statewide or national official who will be speaking in your community. After learning about issues from your newspaper reading, on a separate sheet of paper, write a business letter to him/her explaining which issues to address. Use the correct format (shown below).

Your name  
Your street  
Your state and zip code  
Date

Official's name  
Official's street  
Official's state and zip code

Dear (Official's Name):

BODY OF LETTER

Sincerely,  
(Your name)



## A Speech to Win Support

**DIRECTIONS:** If you were a public official and held a town meeting, you would deliver a speech. Using what you've learned from the newspaper about problems and concerns shared by citizens in your community, write a short speech that you think would win support from citizens in your community.

**FOLLOW-UP:** On what issue is there the most disagreement? Did you choose to address this issue in your speech? Do officials need to take positions on issues that divide the community?

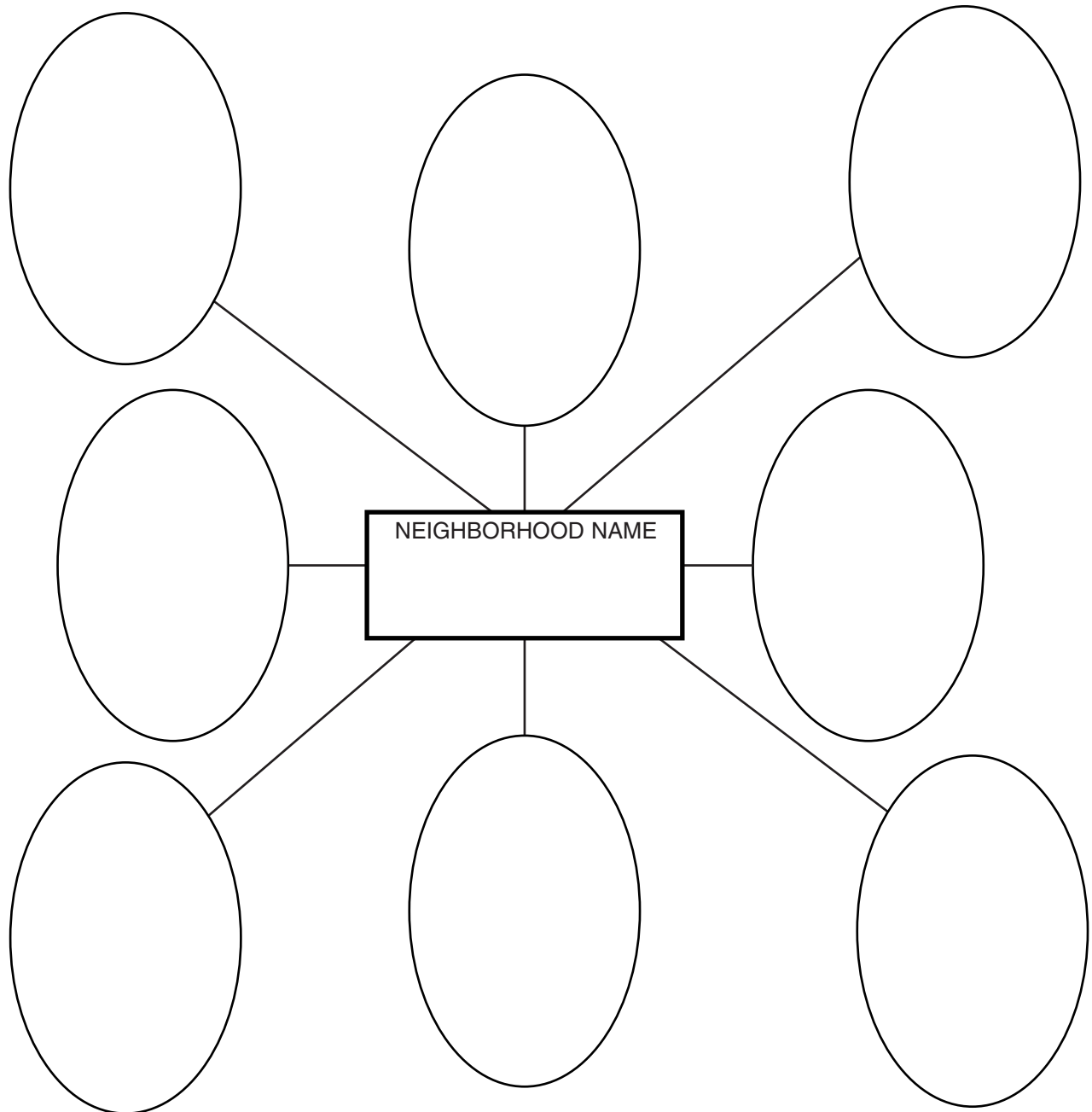


## A Planned Neighborhood

**VARIATION I:** Pretend that you are building a neighborhood. Think of a name for your neighborhood and write it in the center. Choose eight people from today's newspaper to join you. List their names, skills, and attributes in the ovals outside the rectangle. On separate paper, explain what each person brings to the neighborhood that led you to choose him or her. Answer the following: What skills does each have? What will each contribute to the "character" of the neighborhood?

**VARIATION II:** Draw the eight people from sections other than news. Consider the fictional or make-believe characters in comics, TV or movie sections found in the newspaper.

**VARIATION III:** Choose eight people from the newspaper that represent the different racial, ethnic and religious groups in your community. Take into account gender and age differences. When presenting your neighborhood to the class, be persuasive. Tout the strengths of the people you chose. Try to convince other students that yours is the best neighborhood.





## A Community Service Web

**DIRECTIONS:** As a class or individual, choose a community service project that can be completed during the school year. By regularly reading the newspaper, you may find ideas to help you in making a selection. When you have made your decision, you can begin your plan by filling in the blanks answering **WHAT** you are going to do, **WHO** will be doing it, **WHY** you are doing it, **WHERE**, **WHEN** and **HOW**. Larger spaces may be needed for **HOW** and **WHY**.

The diagram is a large spiderweb with six main sections. Each section is labeled with a question: **What?** (top-left), **Who?** (top-right), **Where?** (right), **Why?** (bottom-right), **How?** (bottom-left), and **When?** (left). The web is composed of six radial lines extending from a central point to the vertices of a hexagon. There are five concentric hexagonal rings drawn inside the outermost ring, creating a grid of 30 smaller hexagonal cells (5 rings x 6 sections).

**FOLLOW-UP:** Write a story about your project. Include photos. Use interviews with those who participated and benefited. Offer your story to your school or local newspaper.



## What is a Leader?

DIRECTIONS: From the newspaper select words and pictures that include the letters in the word "leader" and describe a leader.\*

L

E

A

D

E

R

FOLLOW-UP: Write a paper about a leader or leadership in which you incorporate your words and pictures. Share with your classmates.



# Marks of Leadership

**DIRECTIONS:** Leadership shapes our world. Evaluate a leader or leaders who are described in newspaper stories. When you see one of the following traits exhibited in a leader, write his or her name beside the description and the specific action that demonstrated the quality. **VARIATION:** Select a leader whom you admire. Over time, follow coverage of this person and record examples of his or her exhibiting the marks of leadership.

<b>QUALITY</b>	<b>LEADER'S NAME</b>	<b>SPECIFIC ACTION</b>
✓ They serve others.		
✓ They develop leadership in others.		
✓ They listen to others and communicate well.		
✓ They are good planners and decision makers.		
✓ They inspire others.		
✓ They learn and grow.		
✓ They have positive attitudes.		
✓ They have integrity.		
✓ They accept responsibility.		
✓ They take risks.		
✓ They take good care of themselves.		
✓ They are good followers.*		

Are there other ways to describe a leader? Add to this list.  
Do you consider some qualities more important than others? Which would you most like to develop in yourself?

(\*Source: "What Do You Stand For? A Kids' Guide to Building Character")  
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## The Ideal Public Servant

**DIRECTIONS:** Consider all of the attributes that make up a successful public official. Look in the newspaper for people who exhibit the necessary qualities and experience. Do not limit your choices to public officials. Draw people from your community, state, nation and world. Cut out or write down what you choose.\*

**My ideal public official would have the background of:**

**My public official would have the experiences of:**

**My public official's leadership qualities would resemble:**

**My official would look like:**

**My official would speak like:**

**My official would have the concerns of:**

**FOLLOW-UP:** Just for fun, decide whom you would choose if you restricted your search to the comics and sports sections.



## Inside and Out

**DIRECTIONS:** Choose a public official or world leader whom you would like to study. Working alone or with a friend, cover the outside of a brown grocery bag or smaller paper bag with words and photos from newspapers that tell about the official's or leader's image or the way he or she is seen. Fill the inside of the bag with words and photos that show his or her thoughts and feelings.\*

Share what you find with other groups. Discuss or write about what you discover.

**FOLLOW-UP:** Choose a political party and create a bag that tells about the political party. Place its officials and symbols on the outside and philosophies on the inside.



## Image

**DIRECTIONS:** The image of a public official affects his influence. Citizens look at intangibles such as the official's perceived trustworthiness, personal appearance, or even presumed devotion to their families. Evaluate an official's image.\*

**Public official** \_\_\_\_\_

	Poor			Excellent	
Physical appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Sincerity and integrity	1	2	3	4	5
Charisma	1	2	3	4	5
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5
Compassion	1	2	3	4	5
Honesty	1	2	3	4	5
Leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Caring	1	2	3	4	5
Sense of humor	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
Devotion to family	1	2	3	4	5
Devotion to country	1	2	3	4	5

In newspapers and other media, find examples that support your perceived image of the official.

**VARIATION:** Study leaders in other countries and apply the same standards.



# A Poem to Describe a Public Official

DIRECTIONS: Select and study an article and/or photograph about a public official or another person. Circle or list adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and other key words about the person. Identify typical behaviors.

Then use this formula for poetry writing as a model for a poem you write about a person.\*

### Formula:

Line 1 - Tell whom you are talking about.

Line 2 - Describe the person with two adjectives connected by "and" or "but."

Line 3 - Use a verb and an adverb to show this person in a typical action.

Line 4 - Think up a comparison to show this person in a typical action.

Line 5 - Use an "if only" phrase which expresses something you wish for regarding this person.

### Examples:

#### President

Courageous and bold

Leading wisely

Triumphant as a Caesar

If only he could lead to

A gentler and kinder world.

– Teacher, Kathryn Hicks

#### Commissioner

Thoughtful and decisive

Listening intently

As concerned as a parent

If only everyone agreed

On what was best.

– NCPF, Sandra Cook

Line 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Line 2 \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Line 3 \_\_\_\_\_

Line 4 \_\_\_\_\_ as a \_\_\_\_\_

Line 5 If only \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



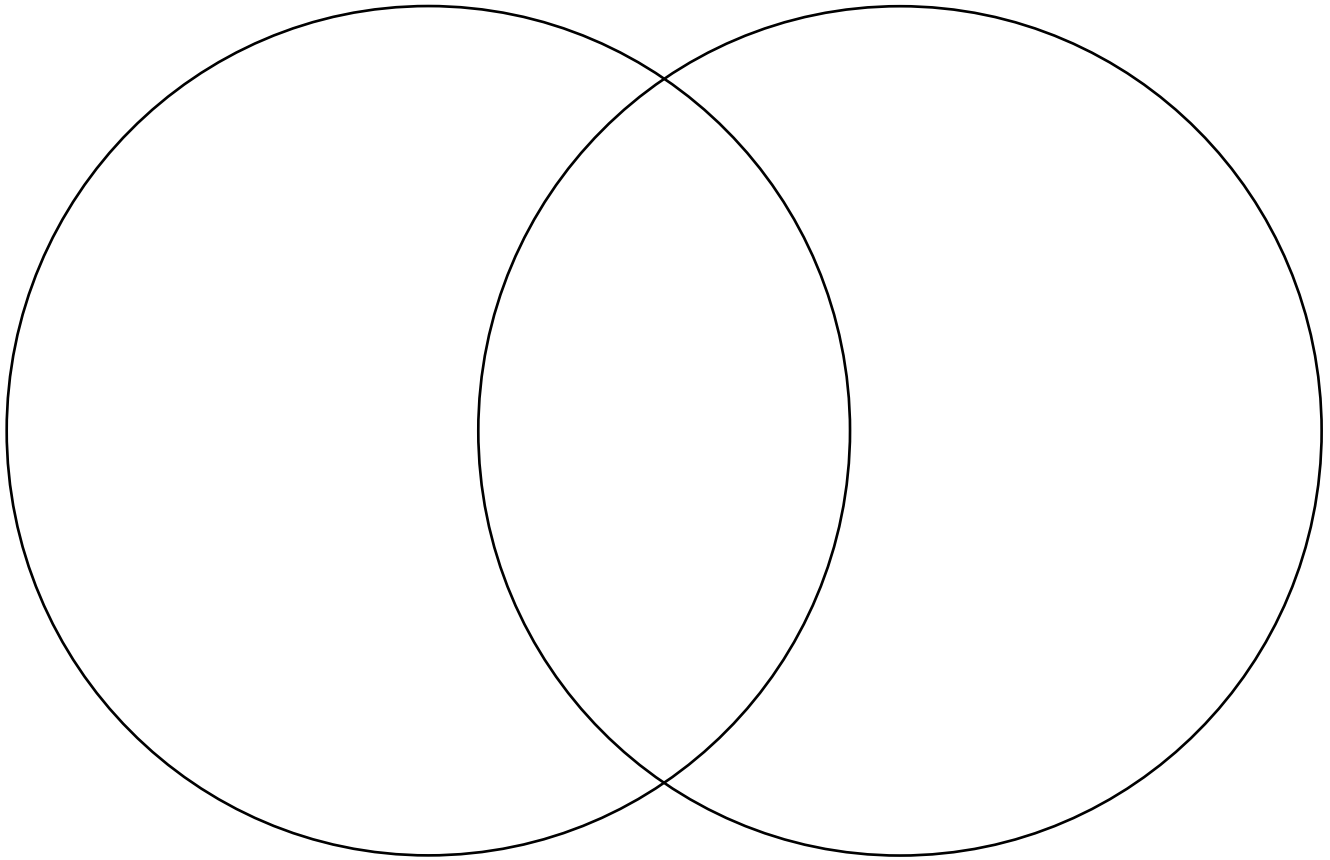
## Comparing Positions on Issues

**DIRECTIONS:** Use classroom sets of your newspaper to compare public officials' stands on issues. Then use the Venn diagram to help illustrate and define the differences and similarities.\* Write a paper explaining the similarities and differences.

**Differences**

**Similarities**

**Differences**





## Addressing Important Issues

**DIRECTIONS:** Choose a state or national official and gather information about his record. Read any of his comments or speeches reported in newspapers. Search newspapers and other media for summaries of his/her record in office. What has she/he voted for and against?\*

Official: \_\_\_\_\_ Office: \_\_\_\_\_

### Voted:

For	Against

**FOLLOW-UP:** Has the official shown concern for problems that affect your community? Which positions do you expect him/her to take in the future? Which affect you most?

**VARIATION:** Read about officials in other countries and record what they are for and against. Discuss the impact their decisions are likely to have in their country and in other countries.



## Giving Some Advice

**DIRECTIONS:** Newspapers have columns that give advice to people who have problems. These columns may answer questions about things such as health, friends, or work -- any problems readers might have. Imagine you are writing an advice column in the newspaper.\*

Find a public official who has a problem or choose someone else in the newspaper. Paste his or her photo below:

Now, write a letter to the official telling him or her how to solve the problem. Highlight traits that the person will need to use. Write your advice below:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ ,

Sincerely,

**VARIATION:** Pretend you are an official or other person with a problem. Write a letter to the columnist asking for advice. Exchange with another student and respond to each other's letter.



## Appealing to Citizens

**DIRECTIONS:** To win support in a community or region, officials target their audiences by talking about the issues that directly affect that area. Can you find an example of this in the newspaper? Briefly discuss it here.\*

**FOLLOW-UP:** When leaders of other countries visit the United States, they speak about the issues of greatest concern in our country. Find examples. Form your own opinions and read to determine if the positions taken are likely to win support in the U.S.

Read statements made by the president of the U.S. in other countries. What does he say? Is he likely to win support from citizens of the country?





# Responsibility for Our Environment

**DIRECTIONS:** Discuss efforts in your communities to recycle goods and the part that everyone can play. Identify ways that you, your family members, and your school are already reducing waste.

From different parts of the newspaper, clip and tape below pictures or words of three kinds of consumer products. Use the classified section to locate one of the three. On the lines beside each picture or word, write how you can do without the items, what you can use in place of buying new items, how you could make repeated use of the items and how the items can be recycled for additional use.\*

Place word or picture here

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Place word or picture here

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Place word or picture here

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## A Basic Need

**DIRECTIONS:** Select a newspaper story about someone in need and answer the questions below. Then, discuss: Who is in the best position to provide the help? Is there anything you can do? Develop an action plan.

**WHAT**  
do they need?

**WHO**  
needs help?

**WHERE**  
are the people  
who need help?

**WHEN**  
do they need it?

**WHY**  
do they need it?

**HOW**  
can they get help?



## Consequences of Hate

**DIRECTIONS:** Search newspapers for actions that result from hate or other powerful negative feelings. Write a report making sure to include answers to all of the questions below.

### Who? Why?

Who were the targets?  
Why were they targeted?

### When?

When did the actions  
take place?

### What?

What were the actions?  
Were they violent?  
Does the law punish  
these actions?

### Why?

Why was there hate or  
other negative feelings?

### Where?

Where did the actions  
take place?

### How?

How were the actions  
committed? Did they  
occur out in the open or  
in secret? If someone had  
been looking, would the  
actions have taken place?

**FOLLOW-UP:** Write your opinions. Do the actions amount to terrorism? How can hate-inspired actions be prevented or combated by families, schools, governments and other institutions? What can you do?



## Developing a Position

**STEP ONE:** Read newspapers to understand three solutions proposed to solve a problem or resolve a conflict. For each solution, outline the issues that directly affect the area. After considering each solution, circle the appropriate number under your first, second and third choice.

**STEP TWO:** Discuss the solutions with other students who've considered the same problem. Were you able to talk freely about differences in opinion? Did you show respect for each other's opinions? Did anyone change your mind?

**STEP THREE:** Express your opinion in an editorial. Exchange with other students and discuss which is most persuasive.

**STEP FOUR:** Extend the activity by conducting a debate. Each solution should have a student advocate.

**PROBLEM:**

**THREE SOLUTIONS:**

<b>PRO</b>	<b>CON</b>	<b>CON</b>
<b>PRO</b>	<b>CON</b>	<b>CON</b>
<b>PRO</b>	<b>CON</b>	<b>CON</b>

**CIRCLE CHOICE:** 1st, 2nd, 3rd

**CIRCLE CHOICE:** 1st, 2nd, 3rd

**CIRCLE CHOICE:** 1st, 2nd, 3rd



## Different Viewpoints

**DIRECTIONS:** Analyze a conflict that is presented in newspapers. Read all of the stories and commentary available in the papers. List the different parties involved in the conflict under Points of View. Then list their feelings and thoughts and the impact that these are having. In offering your thoughts or reflections, answer: Did you find the reporting thorough? Do you understand the conflict? What additional information would you like to have?

**Points of View**

**Feelings/Thoughts**

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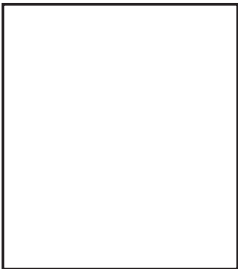
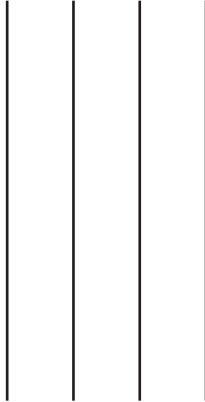
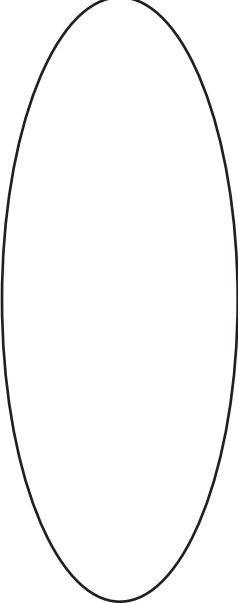

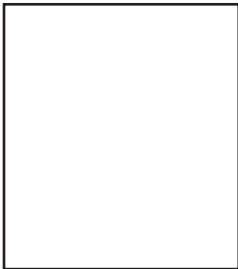
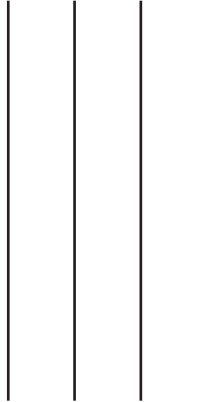
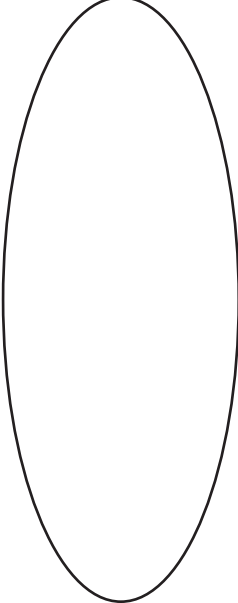
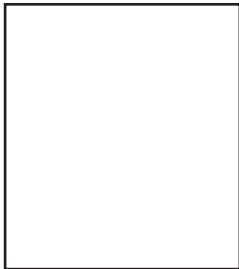
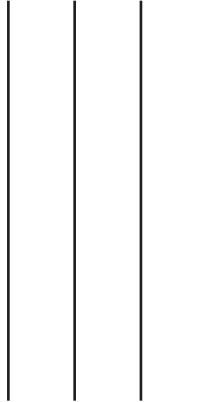
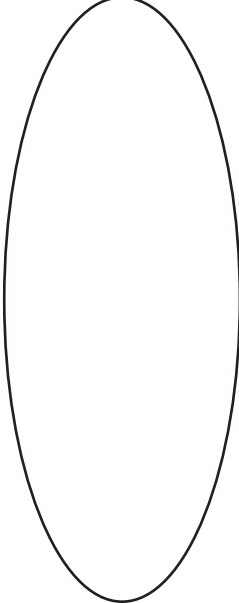

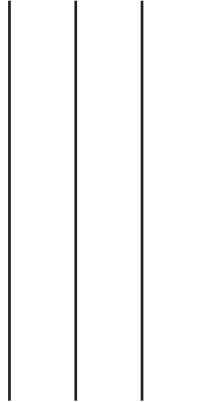
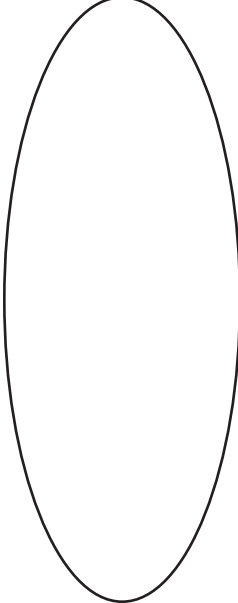
**Impact**

**Your Thoughts  
and Reflections**



# Varying Points of View

**DIRECTIONS:** Select a newspaper story about a current conflict where there are at least three different viewpoints. Using the chart, identify the conflict on the Topic line below, tell whose Point of View you're describing in each square space, the Feelings/Thoughts of each; the Impact on others involved, and the Newspaper/Media's Responsibility in covering this story. Using the outlines, write a paper or make an oral presentation on each point of view.

Topic	Points of View	Feelings/Thoughts	Impact	Media's Responsibility
				
				
				
				



## Power to Persuade

**DIRECTIONS:** In a democratic society, citizens may speak their minds. To be persuasive, a speaker or writer must be organized, thoughtful, and knowledgeable. Newspaper editorials offer models for writing persuasively. Read and think about an issue that concerns you. Then map out your arguments, using the outline below. Then write your editorial.

Introduction paragraph  
(position or purpose)

Supporting evidence

Supporting evidence

Supporting evidence

**BUT**  
Opposing evidence

Conclusion  
(restating position)

**FOLLOW-UP:** Have classmates read and respond to your editorial. Before they read it, ask how much they know or care about the issue. Write down what is said. Then after reading your editorial, ask what they know and how they feel about the issue. Ask if they are more interested or concerned after reading your editorial. When you express your opinions and discuss them with someone else, what character traits (personal) and civic values (public) are you practicing?

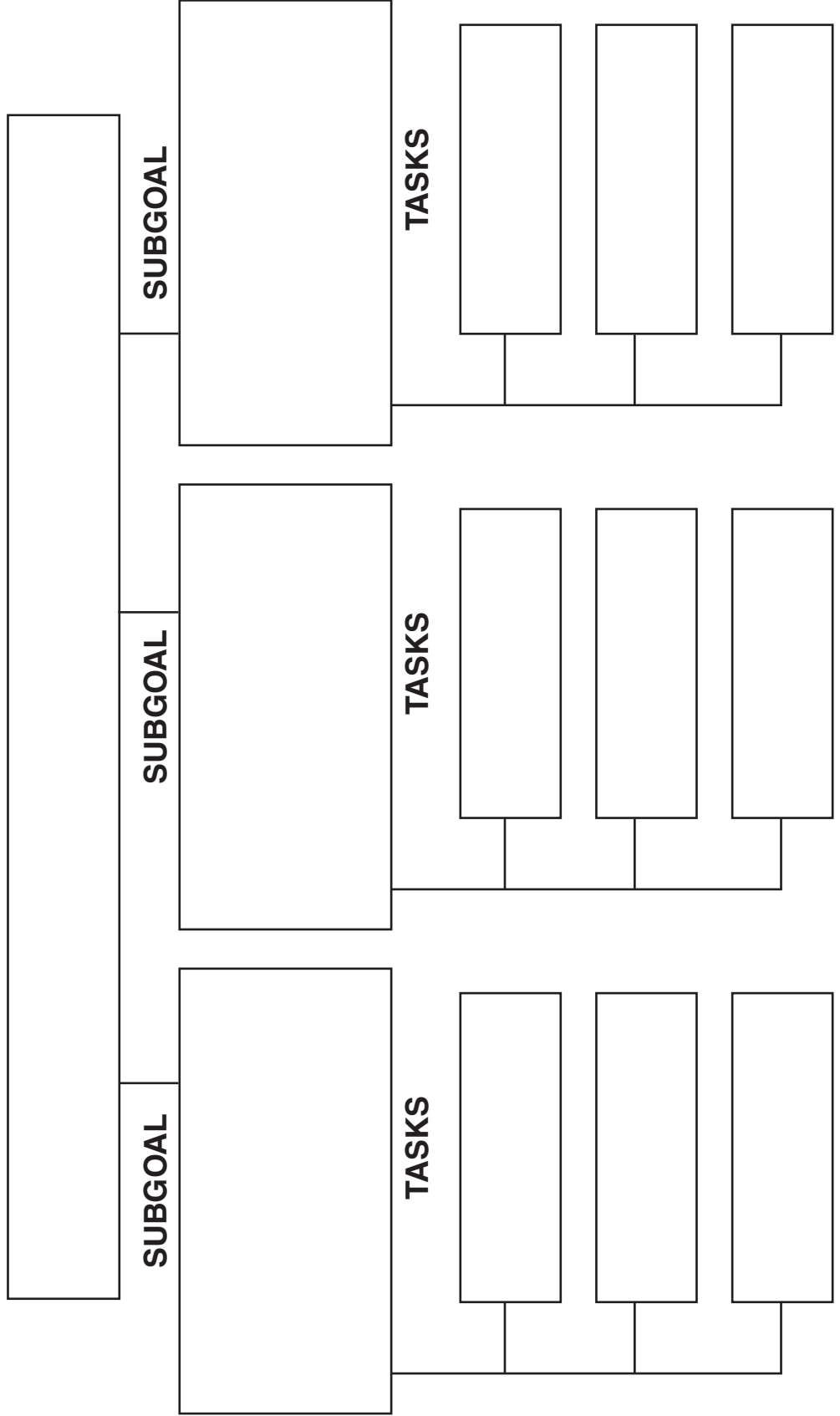


# Achieving Goals

**VARIATION I:** If you held a position of leadership (choose one), what major goal would you set for yourself? Read about the person who holds your chosen position for several days or weeks, and using what you learn, choose a major goal, three subgoals and the tasks necessary to achieve them. **VARIATION II:** Read about a goal chosen by a leader and through your reading of the newspaper, identify any subgoals and tasks undertaken to meet the goal. You may choose a local, state, national or world leader. Do you support the goal that the leader chose?

POSITION OF LEADERSHIP: \_\_\_\_\_

## MAJOR GOAL

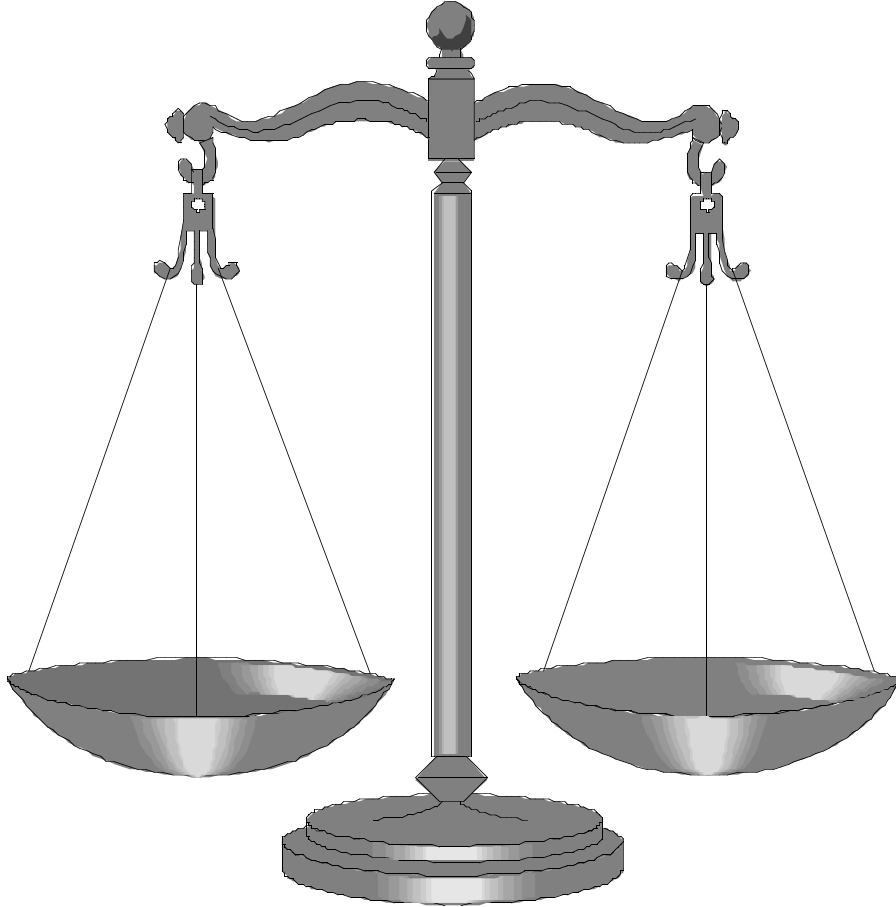






# Weight of Evidence

**DIRECTIONS:** In court cases, two sides argue their case. In other disputes, the differing sides support their positions with evidence and reasoning. Follow a court case or an issue in the newspaper. When you find an argument for one side, add it under one side of the scale; evidence for the other position should be placed under the other side of the scale. After all arguments are made, decide which position carries more weight. See if others agree and debate the situation.



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# Opposing Forces

DIRECTIONS: Choose a newspaper story where a community situation has two groups in opposition. State the problem at the top and, under "Driving Forces," list the character traits of the community trying to affect change. Under "Opposing Forces," list the traits of those working against the change.

## Situation or Problem in My Community:

A large inverted triangle with five horizontal lines inside, intended for writing a situation or problem.



Five sets of horizontal arrows pointing towards the 'Driving Forces' box on the left and away from the 'Opposing Forces' box on the right.



# Driving Forces

**DIRECTIONS:** Identify a goal that would address concerns presented in news, such as providing universal health care, making sure that every child will be able to read, write and have basic math skills, protecting children from abuse, or recovering from a natural disaster or armed conflict. Your choice may be local, state, national or world. Based on your newspaper reading, identify the "driving forces" that further the achievement of the goal and then list the "opposing forces" that work against achieving these goals. Write a paper in which you describe the goal and the forces working for it and against it and predict what is likely to happen or argue for what you hope will happen.

## Situation or Goal:

A large inverted triangle with five horizontal lines inside, intended for writing a situation or goal.

Driving Forces	Situation	Opposing Forces



## Challenging Questions

**DIRECTIONS:** Identify a controversy in the news. Write the question raised by the group calling for change. (One recent example: Should universities buy clothes from sweatshops for their student stores?) Complete the chart for that group. State the question at the top. "Yes" or "No" states the position of the group calling for the change, "Action" refers to the action taken, "Explanation" explains the action and "Response" records the involvement of another group or groups in the controversy.

**LONG-TERM STUDY:** To follow the flow of the debate, keep track of questions that the opposing group raises and continue with the chart. Several questions might be debated and acted on before the controversy is resolved. After becoming familiar with the different sides to the question, write an editorial or letter to the editor stating your position. Or draw an editorial cartoon.

QUESTION

Yes  
or  
No

ACTION

EXPLANATION

RESPONSE



# Acts of Compassion

**DIRECTIONS:** Using newspapers, identify local, regional, national, and international events that call for compassionate acts. Mark each news item. Discuss your choices with other students, and from those selected by your group, choose one for each category below:\*

**LOCAL SITUATION:** Location \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

newspaper edition, date, section, page

\_\_\_\_\_

headline of item (or identify who/what, if ad or photo, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

acts of compassion that can provide physical or material help

\_\_\_\_\_

acts of compassion that can be performed at no material cost

**REGIONAL SITUATION:** Location \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

newspaper edition, date, section, page

\_\_\_\_\_

headline of item (or identify who/what, if ad or photo, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

acts of compassion that can provide physical or material help

\_\_\_\_\_

acts of compassion that can be performed at no material cost

**NATIONAL SITUATION:** Location \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

newspaper edition, date, section, page

\_\_\_\_\_

headline of item (or identify who/what, if ad or photo, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

acts of compassion that can provide physical or material help

\_\_\_\_\_

acts of compassion that can be performed at no material cost

**INTERNATIONAL SITUATION:** Location \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

newspaper edition, date, section, page

\_\_\_\_\_

headline of item (or identify who/what, if ad or photo, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

acts of compassion that can provide physical or material help

\_\_\_\_\_

acts of compassion that can be performed at no material cost

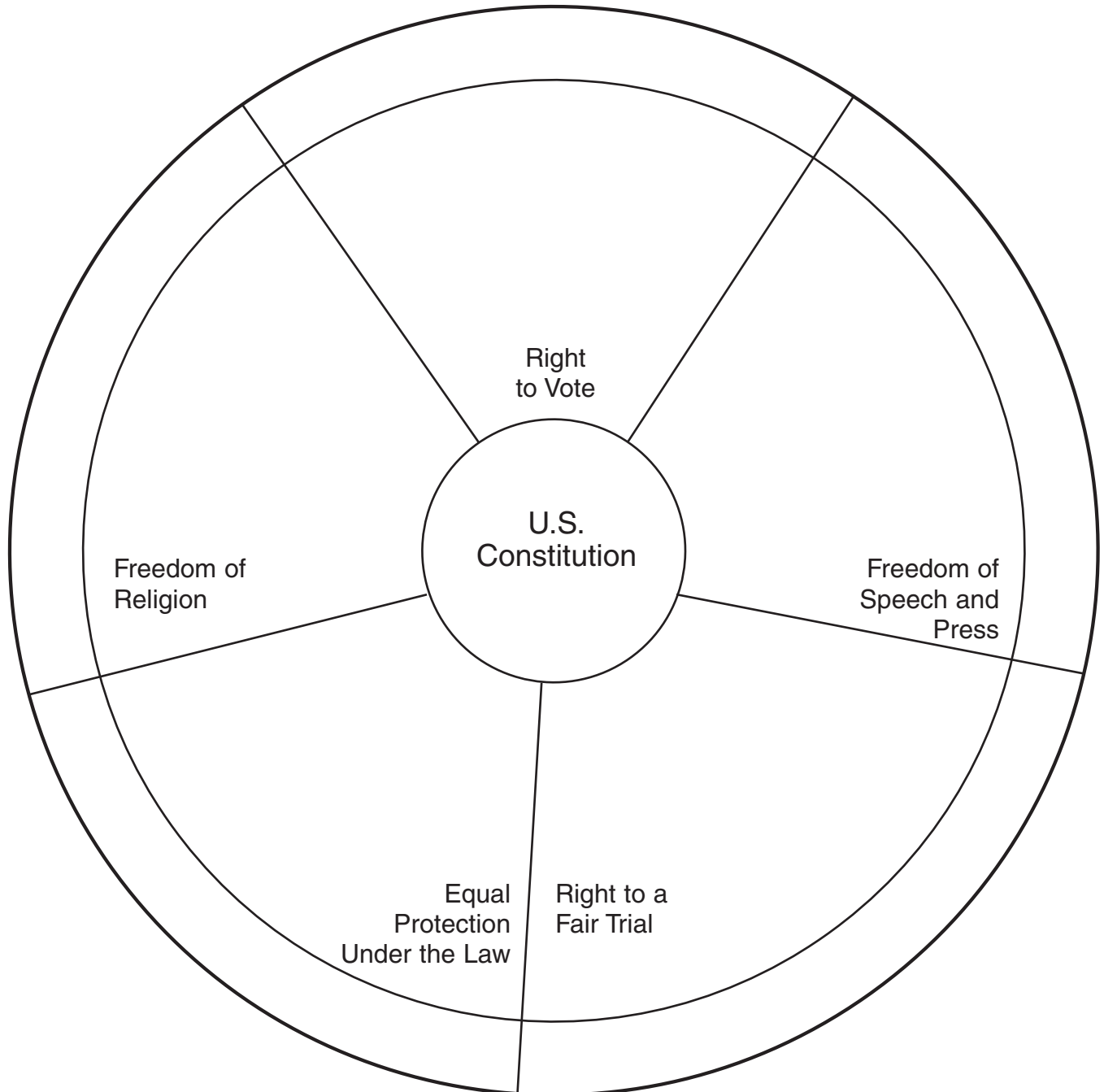
**FOLLOW-UP:** Is there a situation where you might be of help? How might you help? What limits your ability to help in some situations?





# National Values

**DIRECTIONS:** Discuss the values expressed in the US Constitution, paying particular attention to the First Amendment. Use newspaper articles to show people living the values guaranteed in the Constitution. Write the main idea from the article in the appropriate section. On the outer rim sections, write what you do or your parents do that is an expression of the rights guaranteed in the Constitution.



**FOLLOW-UP:** Follow stories about other countries. Use the stories to determine the degree to which the values are supported by other governments. Conduct further research.



## Institutional Values

**VARIATION I:** For the blocks across the top, choose among these social/institutional values held by Americans: due process, privacy, equality of opportunity, freedom of thought and expression, promotion of the common good, pluralism, rule of law, and consent of the governed. Identify stories where the values are illustrated or debated.

**VARIATION II:** List countries that are heavily covered in the news. Given the stories coming from these countries, explain in the spaces which values are or are not institutionalized in the countries. Is there fighting, discussion or debate over issues related to these values? Would the same debate likely take place in the United States. Why or why not?



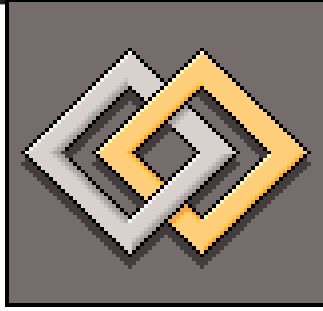



# Understanding "Human Rights"

VARIATION I: In the top triangle, list Human Rights. In the spaces below, select rights from the 22 articles in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, such as: Equal Protection of the Law, Freedom to Leave and Return to any Country, Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest, Freedom from Slavery or Servitude, Freedom from Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home or Correspondence, Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest, Detention or Exile, Freedom of Thought, Conscience, and Religion. Identify situations worldwide where any of these are concerns and, on the lines, list the countries where the events take place. Cut out and save each article, making sure that the newspaper's name, date of publication and page number are written on each article.

VARIATION II: List five countries and, on the lines, describe one news event in each that deals with the rights supported by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Or focus on events in the U.S.

The diagram consists of a central vertical line representing a tree trunk. From this trunk, several horizontal branches extend outwards. Each branch is a triangle. The top branch is inverted, pointing downwards. The other branches point outwards to the left and right. Below each triangle, there are three horizontal lines for writing. Dotted lines connect the triangles to the lines, indicating where to write.



# Appendix



## How I See Myself

Complete this self-evaluation before and after your study of character education and citizenship. Compare your answers and draw conclusions about changes in your thinking.

**Check five of the following words that you feel best describe you now. Circle the two most important ones:**

- |                    |                         |                          |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| ___ 1. active      | ___ 18. hard-working    | ___ 35. respectful       |
| ___ 2. aggressive  | ___ 19. honest          | ___ 36. responsible      |
| ___ 3. athletic    | ___ 20. impatient       | ___ 37. restless         |
| ___ 4. caring      | ___ 21. intelligent     | ___ 38. sad              |
| ___ 5. cautious    | ___ 22. kind            | ___ 39. self-disciplined |
| ___ 6. competent   | ___ 23. lazy            | ___ 40. shy              |
| ___ 7. cooperative | ___ 24. loyal           | ___ 41. silly            |
| ___ 8. courageous  | ___ 25. nervous         | ___ 42. smart            |
| ___ 9. creative    | ___ 26. outgoing        | ___ 43. sneaky           |
| ___ 10. determined | ___ 27. patient         | ___ 44. strong           |
| ___ 11. energetic  | ___ 28. playful         | ___ 45. stubborn         |
| ___ 12. fair       | ___ 29. powerful        | ___ 46. successful       |
| ___ 13. fearful    | ___ 30. pretty/handsome | ___ 47. thoughtful       |
| ___ 14. focused    | ___ 31. proud           | ___ 48. trustworthy      |
| ___ 15. friendly   | ___ 32. quiet           | ___ 49. unreliable       |
| ___ 16. funny      | ___ 33. reliable        | ___ 50. weak             |
| ___ 17. happy      | ___ 34. religious       |                          |

**Write the three words that you feel your parent/guardian would choose to describe you.**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Imagine you're attending your 20-year high school reunion. Write the five words from the list above that you hope will best describe you then.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Student Self-Evaluation: A Checklist

After your study of character and citizenship, check the items if they are true and place a minus if they are not. Put "NP" for "in progress" beside any goal that you are working on but have not achieved. Add items to the list that represent efforts you are making to build your own character and become a better citizen. Place a star beside the goals that you think are the most important in your life.

- I can explain how a role model and celebrity can be alike and different.
- I can name a positive role model.
- I can define courage, honesty, perseverance or hard work, good judgment, integrity, respect, responsibility, and caring or kindness.
- I can recognize the above character traits in people whom I know and in people who are written about in newspapers, history and literature.
- I can identify and describe heroic behavior.
- I listen with an open mind to people who disagree with me.
- I am willing to share my viewpoints.
- I can write a letter to the editor or an essay stating my position on an issue that concerns me.
- I am willing to write and send a letter expressing an opinion to a newspaper.
- I try to figure out who is affected in different situations and consider their points of view.
- I try to work out conflicts in peaceful ways.
- In choosing friends, I consider character and not just looks and popularity.
- I encourage my friends through words and actions to be better, "in thought, in action, in life."
- I do not allow myself to be swayed by peer pressure to do things that might be harmful to myself or others.
- I congratulate others for their accomplishments.
- I consider reviews and ratings before choosing movies.
- I think and consider many cost and benefit factors before making purchases.
- I try to eat right and exercise.
- I aim to be a good sport when I participate in recreational or organized sports.
- I try to reduce the amount of trash I create and recycle as much as possible.
- I strive to be positive in my interactions with others.
- I can identify leaders who are working to improve my community.
- I am willing to assume leadership or willing to support others to effect positive change.
- I regularly devote time to volunteer work in my community.
- I follow current events to be better informed.
- I plan to vote when I am 18 years old.
- I understand the need to confront hate and violence when they occur around me.
- I understand that the welfare of people around the world affects my life and the lives of others in the United States.
- I believe in and support the rights to all citizens guaranteed in the United States Constitution.



## **Student Self-Evaluation: A Checklist (continued)**

**The problem in my personal/private life that concerns me most...**

**I am attempting to take care and handle it by...**

**The public issue or problem that concerns me most is...**

**I can contribute to solving the problem by...**

**FOLLOW UP:** Later, come back to the list, and think about your choices. Complete the checklist again, and evaluate your own growth and development.



# Rubrics

## GETTING STARTED

The student is able to	Needs development	Has basic understanding	Understands fully	Not applicable
Identify the elements that constitute "character"				
Generalize the elements of good and bad character traits				
Identify character traits in her/himself				
Identify character traits in others				
State consequences of her/his own actions				
Analyze another's character based on that individual's behavior				
Identify the relationships between personal and civic character				

## EXPLORING CHARACTER TRAITS

The student is able to	Needs development	Has basic understanding	Understands fully	Not applicable
Classify and justify character traits as positive or negative				
Describe different character traits as they are reflected in an individual's choices				
Recognize the elements and limitations of stereotypical thinking				
Predict future behavior of an individual based on that person's character				
Evaluate value-driven decisions made by self and others				



## Rubrics (continued)

### MAKING SOUND CHOICES

The student is able to	Needs development	Has basic understanding	Understands fully	Not applicable
Evaluate decisions in terms of positive or negative character traits				
Analyze the role of personal character in decision-making				
Analyze the role of civic character in decision-making				
Rank options in a given situation in terms of positive character traits				
Analyze the external influences on the decision-making process which may counter internal character and values				
Analyze the influence of values and character in real life decision-making				

### ADDRESSING COMMUNITY PROBLEMS AND GLOBAL CONCERNS

The student is able to	Needs development	Has basic understanding	Understands fully	Not applicable
Analyze a situation from different points of view				
Explain consequences of value-driven decision-making				
Evaluate options based on values and character				
Analyze the relationship between personal character and public service				
Identify the role of civic character in influencing the behavior of individuals and groups				
Evaluate the way individual and group values affect laws and community				
Evaluate decision-making that affects other individuals, groups and communities				



## Student Assessment

Before and after your study of character education and citizenship using the newspaper, complete this assessment.

**1. What does courage mean?**

Describe an incident in current events in which someone displayed courage.

**2. What does good judgment mean?**

Describe an incident in current events in which someone displayed good judgment.

**3. What does integrity mean?**

Describe an incident in current events in which someone showed integrity.

**4. What does kindness mean?**

Describe an incident in current events in which someone showed kindness.





## Student Assessment (continued)

**5.** What does perseverance mean?

Describe an incident in current events in which someone showed perseverance.

**6.** What does respect mean?

Describe an incident in current events in which someone showed respect.

**7.** What does responsibility mean?

Describe an incident in current events in which someone proved to be responsible.

**8.** What does self-discipline mean?

Describe an incident in current events in which someone exhibited self-discipline.



## Student Assessment (continued)

9. What does cooperation mean?

Describe an incident in current events in which someone was cooperative.

### CONCLUSIONS

Were these people serving the public good? Were they serving others and helping build their communities? Explain.

Which of these people would you most like to be like? Whom do you admire most?

How do newspapers serve the public good? What do they do that is of benefit to their communities, the state, and nation?



# Teacher Evaluation

Please complete and return this evaluation with your name, grade, school and subject area to:

**Newspapers in Education**  
**UNC-CH, JOMC**  
**CB# 3365, Carroll Hall**  
**Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3365**

1. How did you use *The Newspaper Link to Character Education and Citizenship* curriculum?
  - a. Did you assign selected activities to the entire class?
  - b. Did you assign different activities to small groups or individuals?
  - c. Did you create a center dealing with character and citizenship?
2. How did you present the activities?
  - a. Did you copy and distribute the pages?
  - b. Did you put activities on the overhead?
  - c. Other
3. How many activities did you use?
4. Which were your favorite activities?
5. What changes would you recommend to improve future character education guides?
6. Did you have any difficulty matching up activities with newspaper stories, comics, and other features?
7. Had you used newspapers in your classroom before using this guide? Or was this your first experience?
8. How do you rate your experiences using newspapers?
9. How do you rate your students' interest in character issues raised in newspapers?
10. If you attended a workshop, did it prove helpful? Explain.



# Glossary of Character Education Terms

Three school systems, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Cumberland, and Wake, received federal grant monies provided to North Carolina for character education. Many other schools systems have developed character education programs and identified traits for instructional purposes. Most of the terms below come from the three participating school systems. Traits that are not on their lists but appear on other school systems' lists will be added as they are identified. Definitions are marked (CM) for Charlotte-Mecklenburg, (C) for Cumberland, and (W) for Wake counties. Other counties are named and similarly identified with their terms.

**Character** - moral and ethical strength (Cumberland).

**Character education** - the teaching of traditional civic and moral concepts of respect, responsibility, integrity, caring, self-discipline, trustworthiness, fairness and citizenship (C).

**Caring** - to demonstrate kindness, consideration and compassion (C); showing concern for the well being of others (Charlotte-Mecklenburg).

**Citizenship** - to honor and contribute to the laws, policies and human rights of the land (C); being an informed, responsible and caring participant in your community (CM).

**Cooperation** - respect for diversity, teamwork within the home, school and community (Onslow).

**Courage** - having the determination to do the right thing even when others don't; the strength to follow your conscience rather than the crowd. Attempting difficult things that are worthwhile (Wake).

**Fairness** - to be impartial and equitable (C).

**Good Judgment** - choosing worthy goals and setting proper priorities; thinking through the consequences of your actions; basing decisions on practical wisdom and good sense (W).

**Honesty** - being truthful in words and action (CM).

**Integrity** - having the inner strength to be truthful, trustworthy, and honest in all things; acting justly and honorably (W); to have the inner strength to adhere to high ethical standards (C).

**Justice and Fairness** - demonstrating impartial, unbiased and equitable treatment for all (CM).

**Kindness** - being considerate, courteous, helpful, and understanding of others; showing care, compassion, friendship and generosity. Treating others as you would like to be treated (W).

**Perseverance** - being persistent in pursuit of worthy objectives in spite of difficulty, opposition or discouragement. Exhibiting patience and having the fortitude to try again when confronted with delays, mistakes or failures (W); staying with a task and not giving up (C).

**Respect** - to act with courtesy, tolerance, and dignity (C); showing high regard for self, other people and property (CM); showing high regard for authority, for other people, for self, for property, and for country; understanding that all people have value as human beings (W).



## Glossary of Character Education Terms (continued)

**Responsibility** - to be dependable and accountable for one's actions (C); being accountable for your own behavior (CM); being dependable in carrying out obligations and duties; showing reliability and consistency in words and conduct; being accountable for your own actions; being committed to active involvement in your community (W).

**Self-discipline** - to exercise positive self-control (C); demonstrating hard work and commitment to purpose; regulating yourself for improvement and refraining from inappropriate behaviors; being in proper control of your words, actions, impulses, and desires; choosing abstinence from premarital sex, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and other harmful substances and behaviors; doing your best in all situations (W).

**Trustworthiness** - to be worthy of confidence (C); being honest and reliable in carrying out commitments, obligations and duties (CM).

**Work Ethic** - demonstrating commitment, pride and a positive attitude in completing tasks (CM).



## Glossary of Traits or Dispositions Important in America's Constitutional Democracy

**Civic-mindedness** — paying attention to and having concern for public affairs.

**Civility** — treating other persons respectfully, regardless of whether or not one agrees with their viewpoints; being willing to listen to other points of view; avoiding hostile, abusive, emotional, and illogical argument.

**Compassion** — having concern for the well-being of others, especially for the less fortunate.

**Courage** — the strength to stand up for one's convictions when conscience demands.

**Critical-mindedness** — having the inclination to question the validity of various positions, including one's own.

**Honesty** — willingness to seek and express the truth.

**Negotiation and compromise** — making an effort to come to agreement with those with whom one may differ, when it is reasonable and morally justifiable to do so.

**Open-mindedness** — considering others' points of view.

**Patriotism** — being loyal to the values and principles underlying American constitutional democracy, as distinguished from jingoism and chauvinism.

**Persistence** — being willing to attempt again and again to accomplish worthwhile goals.

**Respect for law** — willingness to abide by laws, even though one may not be in complete agreement with every law; willingness to work through peaceful, legal means to change laws which are thought to be unwise or unjust.

**Respect for the rights of other individuals** — having respect for others' rights to an equal voice in government, to be equal in the eyes of the law, to hold and advocate diverse ideas, and to join in associations to advance their views.

**Tolerance of ambiguity** — the ability to accept uncertainties that arise, e.g., from insufficient knowledge or understanding of complex issues or from tension among fundamental values and principles.



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