

A program created of combined sources from: Mansour Baalbaki and Stephanie Broy

Name of Program: Life, Character, Action

Target Audience: All Students

Strategy for Implementation: Program

Time of Year to Implement: Fall or Spring

Relevant Learning Goal: Intrapersonal Intelligence: A thriving individual needs the skills to advocate for themselves and collaborate with others in various situations. They should understand the impact of their actions on others. It involves effective verbal and nonverbal communication and the ability to entertain multiple perspectives.

Specific Lesson Outcomes:

1. Help foster students to become successful learners, contribute to their communities, and serve society as ethical citizens.
2. Help students develop successful relationships.
3. Help students recognize good character traits such as caring about and acting upon core ethical values such as respect, responsibility, honesty, fairness, and compassion.

Purpose: Transitioning to IMSA is a time of new choices, responsibility, and freedom. As a result, sometimes, students' intentions are not always the best for the individual or the situation. Throughout the IMSA experience, students are caught in the middle of the new community's values in which they live. Students internalize what they see their peers and role models doing and decide how to live their own lives. Every interaction that students have during their IMSA years affects how they see themselves and how they see others—helping students understand why character matters will allow them to value kindness, cooperation, sharing, and compassion for others. Also, helping students recognize choice and accountability—making decisions, accept consequences, and be responsible for their choices.

Planning and Preparation: We recommend watching the TEDx Talk Teaching Character-The Other Half of the Picture by Andrew Sokatch to understand why character building is imperative for students. Below is the link to the video and a summary of the Tedx Talk. You are more than welcome to use clips of the video to help introduce why character matters.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxHGSTV3LFo>

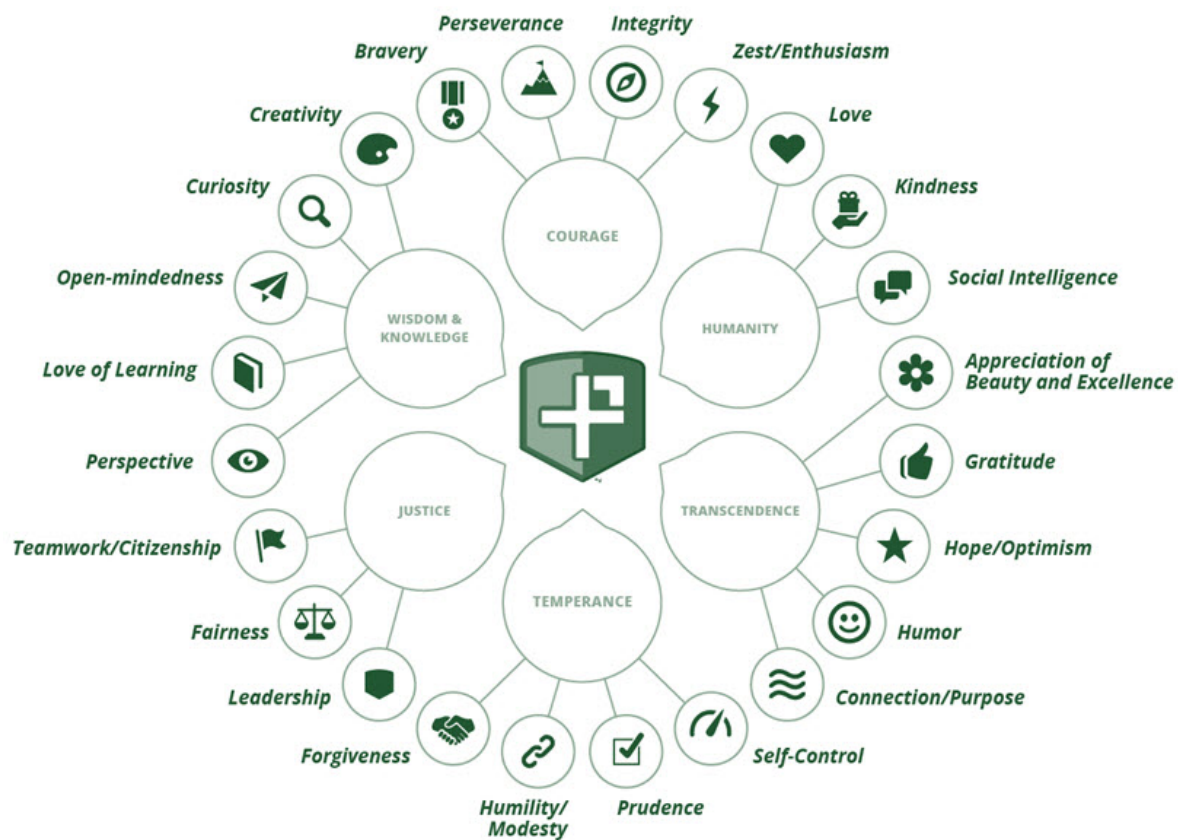
Background Story of Tedx Talk: This talk was given at a TEDx event in Manhattan Beach. Character Lab Research Director Andrew Sokatch has a sobering yet attainable message regarding the education of today's youth. While test scores and the reading, writing, math, science behind them are essential, we are not wholly and adequately educating our children if we aren't also teaching character. Andrew argues character can and should be taught in schools, noting grit, persistence, self-control, courage, and humor are all critical life skills for successful employment, marriages, and citizenship.

Resources: Below are resources to help understand the program's purpose and background information on character education.

Defining Character: Character is the sum of continuously developing moral and ethical qualities and demonstrating those qualities in people's emotional responses, thinking, reasoning, and behavior. To put it in simpler terms, many consider character to understand the difference between what is right and what is wrong. Character is knowledge of what constitutes good values, wanting to obtain those values, and then acting on them to perform good deeds (Lickona, 1993). Character is determining the connection between moral reasoning and moral actions. It establishes the link between what one values and the actions assumed as a result of those principles.

Character strengths are the positive qualities individuals have as reflected in their thoughts, feelings, and actions that promote the well-being of themselves and others. Though people may value different characteristics to different extents, character strengths are what we aspire to in ourselves and what we appreciate in others. Character is built over time. Character is developed through experiences and what we choose to learn and do for them.

Character Strength Examples



Trustworthiness

- Reliable
- Honesty
- Trust
- Integrity
- Loyalty

Respect

- Treating others the way you want to be treated
- Having consideration for others
- Treating people with civility, courtesy, and dignity
- Being accepting of differences
- Not ridiculing, embarrassing, threatening, or hurting others.

Citizenship

- Being socially responsible-having a sense of responsibility
- You are doing your part for the common good of your family, friends, school, community.

Responsibility

- Being reliable and dependable
- Being accountable for your actions
- Using good judgment and thinking through the consequences of your actions

Fairness

- Treat people equally and impartially
- Consider the feelings of all people who will be affected by your actions.
- Be open-minded

Caring

- Being responsive to the concerns and needs of others
- Compassionate
- Empathetic

Facilitator Guide- Facilitator Guide- This is a guide; if you feel that presenting and portraying the program differently will help your students or wing, feel free to do so. Also, feel free to run it as a hall program or to utilize the RSLs.

Introduction: Facilitators (RCs) explain the purpose of the program. Ask students who are some of their favorite characters from shows, movies, literature, or have students pick a notable politician, author, leader, celebrity, etc. Ask students to explain why they chose the character or person they did. Do all of these characters/people have character? **Disclaimer: We want students to recognize character strengths and help them build a definition of what it means to have a strong character.** Ask the group; what is character (It's ok for students to have different definitions of character because character is composed of many attributes.)? Facilitators (RCs) explain more in-depth about what character means. If needed, remember to use the resources we provided above to explain what we mean when we talk about character.

Body of the Program: Have students watch a video clip, paying particular attention to the main characters' behavior. Have students discuss the video clip. Several video clips have been provided to demonstrate positive and negative character traits. Facilitators (RCs), please feel free to use any video clip you think may benefit your students. The purpose of showing the clips is to help students foster essential values and reflect on their character. Facilitators (RCs), we recommend showing two or three video clips, but use what works best for you and your students (One can locate the video clips under references and additional tools.). Use the references above to touch on character strengths.

Another activity is to have people act out a scene. We recommend reaching out to students interested in participating a few days before the program to have students be more comfortable and prepared. In this activity, have the students role-play a situation and then discuss what transpired as a group. Provide students with examples present in life as an IMSA student and life outside of IMSA.

Example: Have one student feel negative about themselves because of academic dishonesty.

Wrap Up: Facilitators (RCs) explain to students that we do not expect everyone to demonstrate perfect character; we are all imperfect beings that make mistakes. Instead, it is about trying our best to model respect for others, being responsible and organized, being gracious in victory and defeat, showing patience and kindness, admitting and apologizing for our mistakes, and making amends. Character builds over time. Each choice and action we take adds or detracts from our character. Any given day, we should have more positive character choices and actions than negative ones.

Assessment:

1. Did you learn anything new about character? How can you look at character in a different way than before?
2. What is an aspect of your character you would like to improve?
3. What are some ways you hold yourself accountable for your actions?

References & Additional Tools: Feel free to use find and use your own examples

- <https://www.wingclips.com/> -Homepage, find any clips you would like to use.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=avBGwcUKdho> - Fresh Prince, Uncle Phil checking Will after moving to Bel Air
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NXhUW4IAHg> - One Day at a Time, Look out for your family.
- <https://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/the-fast-and-the-furious-tokyo-drift/dont-look-back> - Fast and Furious, Lifestyle
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxHGSTV3LFO> - TedTalk, Teaching Character
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zr5vqwVesLM> - Benefits of Character
- <https://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/shrek/friends-forgive> -Shrek, Friends Forgive
- <https://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/the-emperors-club/how-will-history-remember-you> -The Emeror's Club, How will History Remember You?
- <https://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/race/you-win-up-here> -Race, You Win with your Mind
- <https://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/coach-carter/thank-you-sir> -Coach Carter-Thank you Sir
- <https://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/i-am-ali/beating-foreman>-I am Ali, Beating Foreman as an Underdog
- <https://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/despicable-me/we-are-doomed>- Despicable Me, Helping coming Together
- <https://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/coach-carter/ill-do-push-ups> Coach Carter, I'll do Push Ups, Unity, Togetherness
- <http://cptctransfer.wpengine.com/building-resilience-in-teens/>
- <https://parentandteen.com/building-character-in-teens-one-of-the-7-cs-of-resilience/> 7 Cs of resilience
- <https://justsayyes.org/topics/character-development-leadership/>