

An Introduction to Your Planner Program

Welcome

Dear Educators,
Welcome to the CHARACTERCOUNTS® planner!

Based on the Model Standards for Academic, Social, Emotional and Character Development from the Josephson Institute of Ethics, the CHARACTERCOUNTS® planner helps students explore core ethical values and success skills that strengthen their character. Through regular use of the planner, students apply beliefs and traits that shape well-rounded individuals.

About the Planner

The planner will help your students:

- Track and prioritize assignments, homework, and tests
- Set and work toward goals
- Explore the Six Pillars of Character®
- Develop core character-building skills

The planner will help you:

- Keep students organized and accountable for their responsibilities
- Share students' learning with families and maintain home-to-school communication
- Reinforce values, skills, and attitudes that build character
- Identify teachable moments to build character

Each month, the student planner presents themes focused on The Six Pillars of Character® and The Six Success Skills, such as:

Character & Learning
Trustworthiness & Resilience
Respect & Perseverance
Responsibility & Self-Discipline
Fairness & Diligence
Caring & Learning
Citizenship & Positivity
Responsibility & Self-Discipline
Trustworthiness & Perseverance
Respect & Resilience
Character & Positivity

Inside the Planner

The monthly and weekly content in the CHARACTERCOUNTS!® planners was thoughtfully crafted to become a vehicle for students to approach each day in a character-filled way.

Character-Building Quotes and Statements: Introduce the monthly and weekly themes to students in a way that connects them to the topics and gets them thinking.

In-Depth Topic Explorations: Dive deep into character-building topics and success skills, and provide a rich understanding of the themes.

Thought-Provoking Reflection Questions: Inspire students to apply core ethical values and beliefs and success skills to their own lives through stimulating questions that require them to apply higher-order thinking skills.

Convenient Model-Standard Listings: Identify the Josephson Institute of Ethics Model Standard on each weekly page. Match the weekly content to its standard, and connect it to the corresponding lesson in the CHARACTERCOUNTS!® Way to Go Journals.

TIP: Want to help students become better planners? Check out the **onTRAC® Planner Quick Start** for information on how to use Premier's onTRAC® planning process in your classroom.

Implementing Your Planner Program

Incorporating the planner into your busy schedule was designed to be easy and flexible. At your convenience, review the steps below to get started!

STEP 1: Familiarize yourself with the materials

Review the sections in this guide and additional resources online. Together, they provide a quick orientation to the planner's content and features.

- An Introduction to Your Planner Program (page 1)
- Planner Scope & Sequence (page 3)
- onTRAC® Planner Quick Start (online)

TIP: Send the **Introductory Family Newsletter** home with students to familiarize parents and family members with the student planner.

STEP 2: Define your purpose and goals

Review the list below to help define your goals for using the planner in your class, and add some goals of your own.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve academic performance | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve home-school communication | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Track homework | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage accountability | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve test-taking skills/results | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teach goal setting | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teach time management | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

STEP 3: Plan *how* and *when* you will engage students in the planner's content

The planner is flexible and provides many options for implementation. The content can be broken into sections and examined daily, weekly, or monthly. You also have the option of leading students through the content, or asking them to work through it at their own pace.

Ideas for how and when to use the planner's features and page sections are outlined below.

The Six Pillars of Character® and The Six Success Skills:

Familiarize students with the ethical values and success skills on pages 2-3 in the planner.

Monthly InFocus Pages: Spotlight the planner's monthly themes throughout the year.

Weekly Activities: Deepen students' understanding of the planning themes through the weekly content. Have students review the content once a week as a warm-up, an early-finisher activity, or as homework.

Planner Resource Pages: At the beginning of the students' year, highlight these pages, located at the back of the planner, as a tool they can use in various classes. They provide students a handy reference for quick reminders on math, language arts, science, and more.

The following pages provide you with an overview of the planner's learning outcomes and suggest activities you can use to extend learning about the planner's themes in your classroom. The activities are designed to be used in a classroom setting. While it's recommended that time be set aside regularly to encourage planner use and engage with the content covered, the activities can be used as classroom time permits. As a warm-up or sponge activity, during classroom transition times, or even as an emergency lesson are just a few examples.

TIP: Online **Premier Printables** allow you to take planning to the next level! Our free templates, certificates, and worksheets for both educators and students provide endless planning opportunities. Start printing—and planning—today!

Planner Scope & Sequence

This Scope & Sequence chart provides an overview of the monthly themes as they are presented in the student planner.

	THEME	MODEL STANDARD	LEARNING OUTCOME
AUG.	Character & Learning	C1.2.Importance of Character C1.4.The Six Pillars of Character® A2.1.Growth Mindset SE2.9.Planning SE2.8.Setting Goals	Students will explore the importance of good character and the ability to influence and change their character.They'll focus on the life skill of <i>learning</i> , which will enable them to enrich and improve their academics.
SEP.	Trustworthiness & Resilience	C2.1.Integrity A5.2.Ethical Decision-Making SE3.8.Conflict Management SE2.4 Resilience	Students will examine how their efforts and actions influence being seen as a trustworthy individual.They will focus on the life skill of resilience by examining how a positive outlook helps them bounce back from traumas, disappointments, failures, and misfortunes.
OCT.	Respect & Perseverance	C3.3.The Basics of Respect A3.6.Connection to School Community SE3.7.Collaboration and Teamwork C6.2.Caring & Other Ethical Duties SE1.2.Traits and Attributes	Students will analyze the role respect plays in successful social interactions and development.They will focus on the values, skills, and traits that increase successful achievement of goals even when facing challenges or difficulties.
NOV.	Responsibility & Self-Discipline	C4.1.Compliance: Doing What Is Required A3.2.Full Engagement in Learning Process SE2.2.Self-Discipline C7.2.Civil Responsibilities	Students will delve into what being a responsible person means and looks like.They will focus on doing what they need to do without procrastination or excuses.
DEC.	Fairness & Diligence	C5.2.Making Fair Decisions A4.4.Critical Thinking SE3.1.Social Awareness C5.4.Complexity of Fairness	Students will be encouraged to consider what it takes to be fair.They will focus on the importance of persistent work and effort.
JAN.	Caring & Learning	C6.1.The Basics of Caring A4.9.Intellectual Integrity SE3.2.Empathy C3.4.School Climate SE3.4.Positive Relationships	Students will examine the depth and impact of showing concern for others.They will focus on ways to stay motivated in school.

Planner Scope & Sequence (cont'd)

	THEME	MODEL STANDARD	LEARNING OUTCOME
FEB.	Citizenship & Positivity	C7.5. Improving School Climate A4.5. Create, Innovate (Synthesis) SE1.1. Emotions and Their Impact SE4.7. Positivity	Students will examine the elements of good citizenship. They will focus on being optimistic, enthusiastic, hopeful, and cheerful.
MAR.	Responsibility & Self-Discipline	C4.3. Consequences for Words A2.2. Learning from Mistakes C2.2. Honest Communications SE2.3. Managing Negative Emotions	Students will consider the importance of taking responsibility for their words. They will focus on their ability to manage their feelings and do what's right despite temptations or pressure to do otherwise.
APR.	Trustworthiness & Perseverance	C4.5. Developing and Using Positive Attitudes and Life Skills A1.2. Personal Growth and Lifelong Learning C2.3. Honest Actions SE4.5. Self-Confidence SE4.4. Perseverance	Students will explore honest and truthful relationships. They will focus on the necessity of doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.
MAY	Respect & Resilience	C4.4. Consequences for Actions A5.1. Rational Decision-Making SE1.3. Values, Beliefs, Attitudes, Mindsets SE4.6. Self-Motivation and Action	Students will explore the importance of treating others the way they want to be treated. They will focus on how to recover quickly from difficulties.
JUNE	Character & Positivity	C1.3. Responsibility for Character A3.1. Dedication to Education SE1.4. Self-Acceptance A4.12. Pursuit of Wisdom	Students will examine the long-term development and nurturing of their character. They will focus on staying positive even when there's a good reason to be negative.

Extend the Learning of Your Planner Program

Help students explore character-building skills with simple, adaptable tips and ideas that require little to no prep time.

For Lower Grade Levels

Have students reflect upon their character by creating acrostic poems for their first names. Each letter should start a short, simple word that describes their character. Optional: Have them draw pictures representing the words they create.

Help students explore the concept of trustworthiness. Pair students and have them take turns guiding each other around the classroom while blindfolded. When they finish, discuss how they felt when they were blindfolded and how they were leading their partner.

Have students explore what respect looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Create a classroom bulletin board filled with words, quotes, and drawings that students equate with respect.

Help students reflect upon their responsibilities at home and at school. Ask students to create a list of chores or tasks they are responsible for at home. Ask them to list jobs they must take care of at school. As a class, talk about what happens when we don't take care of our responsibilities.

Explore the concept of fairness with students. Create a set of classroom values or standards that support fairness. For example, "In our class, everyone has a chance to share ideas" or "In our class, we don't interrupt when someone is speaking." After creating the list, talk about how being fair is a way to show others respect.

Give responsibility a theme song! Have students work in groups to come up with a fun, simple song that shares the meaning of responsibility. Have students perform their songs for the class.

Have students create posters that remind people to be trustworthy. Ask students to include pictures that represent honesty, not stealing or cheating, and being loyal to friends, family, and their country.

Promote caring in the classroom. Give students two strips of paper. Have them write their name on one and a time during the school day (e.g., lunch) on the other. Collect the strips and redistribute to students. Tell students they must do something kind for the person whose name they've received at the time specified.

As a class, discuss areas of the school where people might not always show others respect, such as the playground. Then have students work in groups and choose one of the locations. Ask them to list ways they could help make it a more respectful place.

Ask students to reflect upon their personal character. Have them set a goal to change or strengthen one aspect of their character.

Help students explore manners and customs from around the world. Put students in groups and have them research one manner or custom. Ask them to share their findings with the class.

TIP: Access Premier's growing archive of topical **Teacher Lesson Plans!** The plans can be used to support your planner's content or to enhance any class. Topics include:

- Basic Planning
- Digital Citizenship
- Career Planning
- Character
- Study Skills & Test Prep
- STEM
- Health & Wellness
- Anti-Bullying

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For Higher Grade Levels

Have students reflect upon strong character. Ask them to research three people who overcame difficult beginnings. Ask them to identify character traits the people had in common, and ways the common traits helped each person succeed.

Have students work in small groups to create a "Trustworthiness Pledge." Ask them to include three or four behaviors they should always practice in order to be seen as trustworthy. When students finish their pledges, have them share with the class.

Divide the class into small groups. Ask each group to create a list of actions that show respect for others. Then have students work independently to write a reflection on their own actions and assess if their actions show others respect.

Have students work with a partner to brainstorm ways their responsibilities have changed from when they were younger. Then have them discuss how they think their responsibilities will change in the next 5, 10, and 20 years.

Have students work in small groups to create a short skit showing fairness in action. Have students perform for the class or for other small groups.

Have students search the media for examples of kindness. Have them create short slide shows or video montages of the kindness they find.

Have students work in pairs to create a brochure for your school. The purpose is to show younger students what they can look forward to when they come to the school. Ask students to highlight aspects of your school's citizenship.

Have students debate trustworthiness. Ask one group of students to argue that once someone has broken your trust, they can never regain it. Ask the other group to argue that trust can be regained.

Have students work in small groups to research social movements that have used respectful methods to successfully share their message and make a positive impact on the world.

As a class, brainstorm service projects you could do to spread caring throughout your community. Select a project and complete it as a class.

Have students work in small groups to create a simple activity, such as a word search or crossword puzzle that could be used to teach younger students about The Six Pillars of Character®.

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