

Narnian Virtues

Prince Caspian by C.S. Lewis

Character Passport



A Character Education English Curriculum based on the novels of C.S. Lewis

Cortland SUNY

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Name: School:

These materials were developed as part of a research project led by Professor Mark Pike (University of Leeds, UK) and Professor Thomas Lickona (State University of New York at Cortland, US) and were made possible by a grant from The John Templeton Foundation (Grant number 60516).

May 2019

See www.narnianvirtues.leeds.ac.uk for more information

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Note to Students

Getting Your Passport Stamped

All of us want to 'achieve our potential' in life. But unless we have developed the six virtues described in this 'Character Passport', it will be impossible to fulfil our potential.

Acquiring and practising these six virtues—wisdom, love, self-control, integrity, fortitude, and justice—will help you fulfil your potential. You will be able to achieve all sorts of things in life when you have developed these important virtues (good moral habits), and you will be able to achieve more than you could without them.

You'll be happier and will travel further in life if you are a person of good character.

When you travel around the world and leave a country you have visited, you have your passport stamped at customs with a rubber stamp that proves you've visited that country.

In the Narnian Virtues project, you will have your Character Passport stamped by your teacher each time you 'visit' a virtue by doing one of the Home Activities with your parent(s) or carer(s).

Each week your teacher will invite you to show your most recently completed Home Activity in order to get your passport stamped.

'Visiting' a Virtue

You will continue 'visiting' (reading about, thinking about, working on) these virtues many times throughout this curriculum and throughout your life.

Don't think that when you have the stamp, you don't need to 'visit' that virtue any more. To be a person of good character, you will need to come back to each virtue again and again.

The more you practise a virtue, the stronger it becomes. On pages 7-9 you will find the six 'Narnian' virtues defined and explained. These are the virtues you will be working on all term—both at home and in school.

Note to Parents and Carers:

If you share the responsibility of parenting the children in your care, you have the opportunity to help them develop good character. In this workbook, whenever we say 'parent(s)', we are referring to all adults in the home who are serving in the role of a parent.

This term, your child is reading the novel **Prince Caspian** (from C. S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia*) and doing related classroom activities. Besides developing key English skills, your child will have the opportunity to grow in understanding and acting on six virtues shown by characters in the novel: wisdom (good judgement), love, integrity (honesty with self and others), fortitude (including courage), self-control and justice.

This Character Passport book invites you and your child to reinforce these six 'Narnian' virtues in family life through **SIX HOME ACTIVITIES**. We hope you'll find these activities enjoyable and rewarding, as well as helpful in strengthening your child's English skills.

Each time you and your child complete a Home Activity, your child's teacher will 'stamp' that activity in the *Character Passport* book. Some families may be able to do all six activities; others may not be able to complete them all. Just do your best and let us know what in fact you were able to do.

In the Home Activities, with your help, your child will choose two Personal Target Virtues in which he or she most wants to improve during the term—and then make Virtue Improvement Plans (V.I.P.s). We're asking you and your child to have a weekly conversation to discuss how your child is doing on his or her chosen target virtues.

Why Are Parents So Important?

What is the crucial role that parents play in the moral growth of a child?

The family is the first school of virtue. It is where we learn to receive and give love. It's where we learn about commitment and sacrifice. The emotional bond between parent and child deepens the impact of a parent's values and example. Parents are also positioned to surround a child with a spiritual heritage that provides a vision of life's meaning and ultimate reasons to lead a good life.

What the Research Shows

The family is the cradle of learning. Studies show that children do better in school when they feel cared for at home; when the family environment stimulates curiosity and learning; when parents encourage self-discipline and perseverance; and when parents limit TV, monitor homework, and ensure regular school attendance (Barton and Coley, 1992).

In their synthesis of the research on 'Fostering Goodness', Berkowitz and Grych, writing in the *Journal of Moral Education*, identified five 'core parenting practices' that foster children's social and moral development:

- **demandingness** (high expectations and support for meeting them)
- **reasoning** (helping children understand how their actions affect others)
- **nurturance** (warmth and responsiveness)
- **modelling** (setting a good example in the treatment of others)
- **empowerment** (democratic practices that give children a voice in, and responsibility for, helping to create a happy family)

After implementing our *Narnian Virtues* curriculum in autumn 2016 in eight schools in the North of England, we interviewed parents about their experience of the Home Activities that they and their students did together as a key part of the programme. Parents said those activities gave them and their children important openings for conversations about character. For example, one mother said:

It's been a good opportunity for my daughter to reflect on the virtues and vices in the books and how they relate to her own character traits.

Most of the parents interviewed said that the Home Activities had positive impact on their child. Some gave very concrete examples. One mother said that in the weeks after the 'Turkish Delight' family activity on self-control, their son had learned to 'manage his time [on PlayStation] exceptionally well'.

Virtues Vocabulary:

The Six 'Narnian' Virtues Defined

WISDOM

The habit of exercising good judgement; being able to see what is true and good and to choose the best course of action.

Without wisdom, we cannot make good decisions.

Includes CURIOSITY: the habit of being inquisitive; showing the desire to learn or know something. In general, it is wise to want to learn, but wisdom cautions us not to explore what may be bad for us (such as illegal drugs, the occult, and 'bad pictures' like pornography on the Internet or in magazines).

Curiosity is the mark of an active mind, but curiosity about the wrong things can get us in trouble.

LOVE

The habit of acting selflessly, for the good of another, without seeking recognition or reward; willingness to sacrifice for the sake of others by putting their well-being ahead of our own; doing good for others by being kind, caring, generous and loyal.

There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for another.

Love includes FORGIVENESS, the habit of letting go of anger or resentment toward others who have caused us injury.

Many people find forgiveness difficult when someone has hurt them deeply.

Love includes GRATITUDE, the habit of feeling and expressing thanks for benefits received.

Gratitude is love expressed, gratitude leads us to count our blessings.

INTEGRITY

The habit of being true to ourselves and truthful with others; standing up for moral principles and following our conscience; not engaging in self-deception such as telling ourselves that it's OK to do something that, deep down, we know is wrong.

*If we have integrity, we don't deceive others
or ourselves.*

Integrity includes HUMILITY, the habit of being aware of our strengths and shortcomings; striving to correct our flaws and failures; being free from pride and arrogance.

*Without humility, pride blinds us to all of our faults.
Humility is not thinking less of ourselves, but thinking of
ourselves less.*

FORTITUDE

The habit of the doing what is right and necessary in the face of difficulty; the mental and emotional strength, the 'inner toughness', to endure suffering and overcome adversity; exhibiting qualities such as confidence, courage, perseverance and resilience when challenging circumstances demand them.

*They would need fortitude to endure the difficult journey
ahead.*

Fortitude includes COURAGE, the habit of overcoming fear when facing physical danger or social pressure to do what's wrong.

*Moral courage—standing up for what's right when it's
unpopular to do so—is rarer than bravery in battle.*

SELF-CONTROL

The habit of self-restraint; the mastery and moderation of our desires, emotions, impulses and appetites; resisting temptation; delaying gratification in order to achieve a higher goal.

In the absence of self-control, our desires control us.

JUSTICE

The habit of treating everyone with equal respect and fairness; fulfilling our responsibilities; taking responsibility for our actions, sincerely admitting when we've done wrong, and making amends; recognizing that no one—including ourselves—is 'above the law'.

*Justice requires us to treat everyone with respect, take
responsibility for our actions, and recognise that no one has
the right to do wrong.*

Six Narnian Virtues

WISDOM

- Good judgement; choosing the best course of action
- Curiosity (guided by good judgement)

LOVE

- Kindness
- Sacrifice
- Gratitude
- Forgiveness

INTEGRITY

- Honesty with others
- Honesty with ourselves (not deceiving ourselves by making excuses for behaviour we know to be wrong)
- Being true to ourselves by following our conscience
- Humility

Fortitude

- Courage and determination
- Ability to endure suffering and overcome adversity

JUSTICE

- Concern for the rights of others
- Fulfilling our responsibilities
- Taking responsibility for our mistakes

SELF-CONTROL

- Resisting temptation
- Controlling our emotions (such as anger and impatience) and desires (such as wanting more of something than is good for us)

From Vices to Virtues

From Vices...		to Virtues
Foolishness	→	Wisdom
Selfishness	→	Love
Weakness	→	Fortitude
Intemperance	→	Self-control
Injustice	→	Justice
Deceit	→	Integrity

Other Key Definitions

VIRTUE

A good moral habit; an admirable human quality such as wisdom, kindness, truthfulness or courage that is shown with some consistency in day-to-day behaviour.

He had the virtue of being kind to others, except when someone behaved very badly. (Think of Peter, who is generally kind but could be harsh when Edmund was selfish or deceitful.)

VICE

A bad habit; a fault, failing, or weakness.

His vice was being dishonest, like lying when it suited his interests.

HOME ACTIVITY 1

MY CHARACTER

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

Parent(s): Before this activity, consider reviewing and then testing your child on the definitions of the virtues given in the 'Virtues Vocabulary' section above. Your child could test you as well!

Looking back

Student: Last year with *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, you discussed with your parent(s)/carer(s) which of the six 'Narnian' virtues you wished to work on during the 12 weeks you studied that novel. Then you chose two of the following six virtues as your Personal Target Virtues for that term:

- **Wisdom** (making good decisions)
- **Fortitude** (determination and courage in the face of difficulty)
- **Justice** (treating everyone with respect; taking responsibility for your actions)
- **Self-Control** (of your emotions and desires; avoiding addictive behaviours)
- **Love** (being unselfish and kind toward everyone)
- **Integrity** (being honest with self and others; following your conscience, not peer pressure)

Which two virtues did you choose as Personal Target Virtues that term, and why?

My Personal Target Virtue 1 from last year: _____

I chose this because

My Personal Target Virtue 2 from last year: _____

I chose this because

Target Virtue 1 from last year:

Circle one:

No real progress

Some progress

Much progress

Please explain your rating:

Since that term, have you slipped back somewhat, maintained the improvement you made, or continued to improve in that virtue?

Circle one:

Slipped back

Maintained improvement

Continued to improve

Please explain your rating:

Target Virtue 2 from last year:

Circle one:

No real progress

Some progress

Much progress

Please explain your rating:

Since that term, have you slipped back somewhat, maintained the improvement you made, or continued to improve in that virtue?

Circle one:

Slipped back

Maintained improvement

Continued to improve

Please explain your rating:

Looking forward

This year with your Character Passport, you once again have the opportunity to choose two Personal Target Virtues from the six Narnian virtues. Just as before, the target virtues you select should be ones that you particularly want to improve in—those virtues you believe will make a significant difference in your personal character if you can strengthen them.

Again, you should discuss your decision with those who know you best—normally, your parents—and give this serious reflection. You can decide to:

- choose two new virtues to work on, or
- choose one new virtue and continue to work on one of your previous target virtues that you still feel challenged in.

If you decide to continue with one of your previous target virtues, your new **Virtue Improvement Plan** for that virtue should show what you learned from your previous efforts and how you will go beyond those this term as you study *Prince Caspian*. For example, if you worked on self-control last year and your self-control strategies didn't succeed as well as you hoped, what will you do differently this time—and why?

Rate Yourself on Each of the Six Virtues

In order to decide which two virtues you'd like to improve in this time, please rate yourself on each of the six virtues, using the 5-point scale below:

Use this rating scale:

- 1= I seldom show this virtue.
- 2= I sometimes show it.
- 3= I show it about as often as I don't show it.
- 4= I usually show it.
- 5= I almost always show it.

	Circle one per row				
Wisdom (making good decisions)	1	2	3	4	5
Fortitude (determination and courage)	1	2	3	4	5
Justice (showing respect and taking responsibility)	1	2	3	4	5
Self-Control (of emotions, desires and behaviours)	1	2	3	4	5
Love (being unselfish and kind toward everyone)	1	2	3	4	5
Integrity (honesty; following my conscience)	1	2	3	4	5

Discuss Your Self-Assessment with Your Parents

After you've completed your self-assessment:

- Discuss your ratings—and your reasons for each—with your parent(s).
- Ask them if they perceive your strengths and your areas for improvement in the same way that you do—or if they have, in some respects, a different perception.
- Ask their advice on which virtues you should choose to work on this term.

My Personal Target Virtue 1: _____

I chose this because

My Personal Target Virtue 2: _____

I chose this because

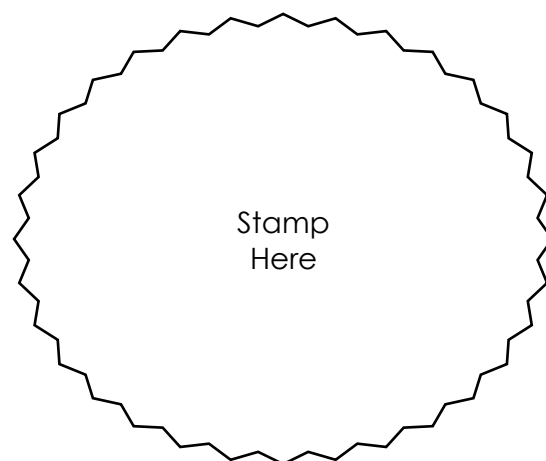
Then decide which virtue you want to work on first—this week.

*Please write one complete sentence, with correct punctuation: What is one specific thing you will do *this* week to try to improve in one of your Target Virtues?*

Target Virtue:

Student: Did you work with your parent(s) or other adults on this activity?	Yes	No
Student's signature		

Parents/Carers comments:
Signature(s) of Parent(s)/Carer(s) who helped:



HOME ACTIVITY 2

My Virtue Improvement Plans (V.I.P.s)

Student: In the first Home Activity, you chose a Personal Target Virtue to start working on. This week, we'd like to ask you to decide how you think you did, using the box below—and *then discuss with your parent(s) your self-rating*. Be honest, and don't be discouraged if you didn't make a lot of progress during the first week. Just keep trying, and celebrate even small victories!

Self-Rating of Progress So Far on Personal Target Virtue 1 (choose one)

My Target Virtue 1: _____

No real progress



Some progress



Much progress



The Four Steps of an Effective V.I.P. (Virtue Improvement Plan)

Your next challenge is to develop a **Virtue Improvement Plan (V.I.P.)** for each of your two Target Virtues. An effective V.I.P. requires that you do four things:

- Strategize by writing out your V.I.P., with specific action strategies.
- Keep track of your results day by day.
- Share and evaluate your results with your parent(s), teacher, and Accountability Buddies in class.
- Revise your V.I.P. on the basis of your experience with it and suggestions from those you shared it with—and then keep trying to improve!

Let's look at each of these four important steps in more detail.

Step 1: Strategize by writing out your V.I.P.

Ask yourself:

- 'In what areas of my life do I experience challenges in practising this Target Virtue?'
- 'What strategies might help me practise this target virtue?'

Your answers to those two questions will be part of your V.I.P. (See examples below.)

Step 2: Keep track of your results

On your written V.I.P., you'll need to record your daily successes—and 'slips'—as you try to practise your target virtues in challenging situations. Let's suppose you've chosen **self-control** and **love** as your two Personal Target Virtues, and you decided to start with self-control. For this week, your V.I.P. for self-control might look like this:

Sample Virtue Improvement Plan V.I.P. FOR SELF-CONTROL

My Target Virtue	Challenges I face with this virtue	Strategies I will try	What happened when I tried this strategy
1. SELF-CONTROL	1. Losing patience when my little sister is doing something to annoy me.	1. Ask her nicely to stop. 2. Count to 20 to keep my temper. 3. Say, 'Would you please stop, or should I get Mum to help?' 4. Ask a parent to ask her to stop.	Asking nicely didn't work, but saying 'Should I get Mum?' did. One time I did have to get Mum. Once I did lose my temper and yelled at her.
	2. Spending too much time on my phone (PlayStation, etc.)	1. Write out an agreement with my parent(s) for when and how long I should be on each day. 2. Set the timer. 3. Lose it for the next day if I don't keep the agreement.	We made an agreement, and setting the timer really did help. Once I went 15 minutes over and lost it for the next day. But it was fair--I had agreed.

Suppose your Personal Target Virtue two is love—being kind and considerate toward everyone, even people you don't especially like. Your V.I.P. for that virtue might look something like this:

Sample Virtue Improvement Plan

V.I.P. FOR LOVE

Target Virtue 2	Challenges I face with this virtue	Strategies I will try	What happened when I tried this strategy
LOVE	1. Arguing with my siblings after my parents have asked us to stop.	1. Say 'Yes, Mum' or 'Yes, Dad'—and then stop arguing. 2. Say to myself, 'This isn't a big deal', and just let it go. 3. Try to get along better by saying and doing nice things.	Mum says it upsets the whole house when we kids bicker, but I get so mad it's hard to stop. Mum said there will have to be a consequence if we don't stop.
	2. Gossiping at school about people my friends don't like.	1. Look down and not say anything. 2. Say, 'Gotta go', and leave. 3. Say something good about the person.	1. Looking down was the easiest thing to do. 2. One time I said 'Gotta go' and did. That was hard. 3. Saying something good was the hardest. 4. Once I went along with what the group was saying.

On the next two pages are: (1) a blank V.I.P. for you to fill in **this week** as you begin work on your Target Virtues 1 and 2, and (2) a 'slips chart' chart for *counting* and *briefly describing* the times you did not practise your target virtues. Keeping a careful record of slips will give you accurate information on how you're doing. It will help you avoid easy self-deceptions ('I don't do that very often', or 'I think I'm getting better'), and enable you to feel good about even small improvements (as you see your slips decrease).

Experts on breaking bad habits (e.g., Percy, 2017) recommend counting slips—even making a day-by-day graph in order to show the actual frequency of a behaviour

that you want to reduce or eliminate, whether it's biting your nails, gossiping about people you don't like, telling lies, or visiting Internet sites your parents wouldn't approve of. Remember, as we're seeing in our study of literature, developing good character is about acquiring virtues and overcoming our faults (vices).

V.I.P. Template, Target Virtues 1 and 2

(to be used this week)

	Challenges I have faced with this virtue	Strategies I will try	What happened when I tried this strategy
Target Virtue 1: _____	1. 2.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
Target Virtue 2: _____	1. 2.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.

V.I.P Slips Chart for Target Virtues 1 and 2

Number of times each day I did not show Target Virtue 1 and 2,
with a brief description of each slip

		Sun. Slips	Mon. slips	Tues. slips	Wed. slips	Thurs. slips	Fri. slips	Sat. slips	Week's Total
Target virtue 1	No. of times								
	Description of my slip								
Target virtue 2	No. of times								
	Description of my slip								

Step 3 in the V.I.P. Process: Share Results

Share and evaluate your V.I.P. results with your parent(s), teacher, and Accountability Buddies in class.

Students: Share your Virtue Improvement Plan with your parents, your Accountability Buddy or Accountability Group at school, and your English teacher. You'll be more motivated to stick to your plan if you've told others about it and then report your progress to them.

Every day, make an effort to share your V.I.P. results and 'slips' chart with someone—most importantly, with your parent(s). Celebrating your successes—and getting encouragement to keep trying if you've had slips—will help you keep striving to improve. Sharing your results with your parents and others will also give you a chance to ask, 'How can I do better?', and get some valuable tips for improving. Be sure to write those down.

In the boxes below, rate the progress you made this week on your two Target Virtues.

Self-Rating of Progress So Far on Personal Target Virtue 1 (choose one)

My Target Virtue 1: _____

No real progress ☐

Some progress ☐

Much progress ☐

Self-Rating of Progress So Far on Personal Target Virtue 2 (choose one)

My Target Virtue 2: _____

No real progress ☐

Some progress ☐

Much progress ☐

Step 4 in the V.I.P. Process: Revise your V.I.P.

Based on your experience with your V.I.P. (*What worked? What didn't?*) and the suggestions you got from others (parents, your teacher, your classmates) when you shared your results, **what will you do differently** to try to make your plan work better next week?

Write out your **revised V.I.P.**, including your new strategies—what, specifically, you will do to improve your results. Try to use some of the synonyms for the virtues listed under Home Activity 4.

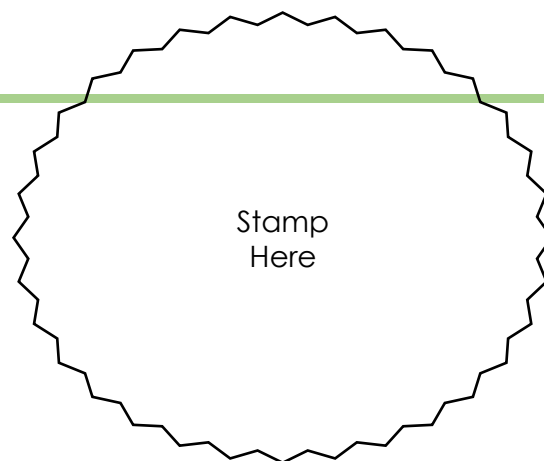
REVISED V.I.P., Target Virtues 1 and 2

(to be used next week)

	Challenges I have faced with this virtue	Strategies I will try	What happened when I tried this strategy
Target Virtue 1: <hr/>	1. 2.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
Target Virtue 2: <hr/>	1. 2.	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.

Student: Did you work with your parent(s) or other adults on this activity?	Yes	No
Student's signature		

Parents/Carers comments:
Signature(s) of Parent(s)/Carer(s) who helped:



HOME ACTIVITY 3

The Life Lessons Interview, Part 1

This activity will help to develop your curiosity by finding out what an 'older person' has learnt from life.

Being curious—wanting to learn new things—is an important part of the virtue of wisdom. Curiosity has been called one of the 'intellectual virtues', like creativity, critical thinking and love of the truth. These intellectual virtues are an important part of human character.

Curiosity keeps us learning—not just while we are students in school but throughout our lives, as lifelong learners. Curiosity inspires scientists, inventors, and others to make discoveries that benefit humankind—such as cures for diseases, better ways to grow and distribute food, and communication technologies that make it possible to be in touch with people anywhere in the world.

However, curiosity about the wrong kinds of things can bring serious harm to ourselves, others, and society. People who experiment with illegal drugs often end up addicted to them and unable to lead healthy, happy, and productive lives. People who get involved with pornography often suffer harm to their brains, a loss of self-control and self-respect, and a reduced ability to experience normal loving relationships. In order to be a virtue, curiosity must be guided by wisdom; it must be directed toward a good goal.

In the story of *Prince Caspian*, the right kind of curiosity plays an important positive role. If the Pevensies had not been curious enough to discover the ancient treasure chamber, they would not have discovered their old Christmas gifts, the tools they needed for their adventure.

Another important theme in *Prince Caspian* is the 'Old Narnians'. They are in hiding from the new regime of Miraz and are a remnant of how it used to be in Narnia—when things were better than the way they are now. It's not that things were always better in the past—often they weren't. But frequently, even when modern times bring certain kinds of progress, good ways of doing things are lost.

Home Activity 3 combines the themes of curiosity and the value of learning lessons from those who have lived longer. It does so by giving you the opportunity to be curious about—and gain wisdom from—the life of an 'Older Person'.

Setting Up the Life Lessons Interview

1. Your first task is to find an Older Person, someone with significant life experience. Your parent(s) can help you with this. It should be someone who is at least 50; the older, the better. (Please include their date of birth in your report.) It could be your grandparent, great-grandparent, another relative, or a neighbour or friend that your family knows.
2. If your Older Person lives in a residential care home or Senior Citizen's residence, make sure you get permission to visit them there. You can email, phone or stop by to ask if there's a request form you need to fill out. If you are visiting your person in their own home, ask their permission for that as well—and ask if it's OK if you bring a friend with you.
3. Explain to your Older Person that you are doing a project on character education. Tell them the six Narnian virtues and the two you are working on and how you're doing that. Give them a copy of the **Life Lessons Interview** (next page), with the questions you'd like to ask. Ask them for permission to record the Interview on your phone. (If you can't do that, take very good notes!)
4. Explain that you would like to visit them three times over the next six to eight weeks—twice to do the interview and a third time to meet with them to talk about your finished interview and what you gained from doing this activity with them. Let them know that you'll give them a copy of your completed Life Lessons Interview as a token of your gratitude for the gift of their time and the sharing of their life. Ask them if it's all right if a parent comes with you to this last meeting (and, of course, ask your parent first if they'd be willing to do that).
5. This Home Activity also includes a small service element because your Older Person might well be a widow or widower and lonely. They will benefit from your visits, your company, and your kind assistance with some small task they'd appreciate help with. (Just ask them, 'While I'm here, is there something I can help with?')

The Life Lessons Interview

Part 1—Your 1st Meeting

1. Do you have any photos—an album or just individual photos—from when you were younger that would help me understand what life was like in those days?
2. What was better in those days—and why?
 - Can you give me some examples?
 - Can you tell me some stories?
3. What was worse or harder in those days—and why?
 - Can you give me some examples?
 - Can you tell me some stories?
4. If you could do one thing in your life over, what would you do differently? Why?
5. What do you wish you'd done in life but never did? Why?
6. What are you grateful for today—what do you count as your blessings? Why?
(Make a list of what your person counts as blessings.)

Part 2—Your 2nd Meeting

1. How does having a good character help a person in life—and how did it help you?
 - Can you give me some examples? Tell me some stories?
2. Who helped you develop a good character—and how did they do that?
 - Can you give me some examples? Tell me some stories?
3. How did you *help yourself* develop a good character? Some examples? Stories?
4. Can you tell me about some experiences that taught you important life lessons?
5. What is the most valuable piece of wisdom you have learned in life so far?
6. What do you think are the three most important character virtues to have? Why?
7. What are some practical tips you would give to young people today about how to develop good character?
 - What mistakes should they try not to make?

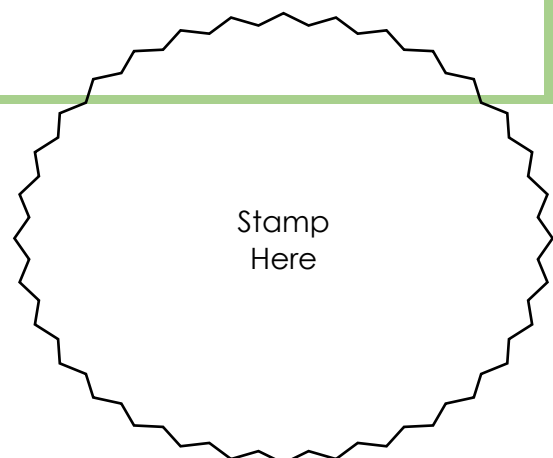
Student: As before, in the box below, rate the progress you made this week on your two target virtues.

Student's Self-Rating of Progress This Week on Personal Target Virtues 1 and 2		
Target Virtue 1:		
No real progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Some progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Much progress <input type="checkbox"/>
Target Virtue 2:		
No real progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Some progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Much progress <input type="checkbox"/>

Parent(s): Discuss with your child his or her self-rating, and what your child learned from trying out the revised V.I.P. for each virtue.
Discuss together how the V.I.P.s can be improved for the next week.

Student: Did you work with your parent(s) or other adults on this Home Activity?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
How long did you spend on this activity?	____ minutes	
Student's Signature		

Parents/Carers: How long did you spend working with your child on this activity? ____ minutes
Comments:
Signature(s) of Parent(s)/Carer(s) who helped:



HOME ACTIVITY 4

The Life Lessons Interview, Part 2

In this activity you will write up your interview, giving it to your interviewee and sharing it with your parent(s).

1. After you complete Part 1 of your Life Lessons Interview, listen to it (if you recorded it) and type up your Older Person's answers in a Q & A format:

Q:

Mrs. Smith:

2. Do the same after you finish Part 2 of your interview.

3. Include, if you like, along with the text of your interview, photos of your person that you've taken (with their permission) during your visits (including one of the two of you together); photos you took of old pictures in a scrapbook they may have shown you; and perhaps clippings about character that may relate to points in your interview.

4. At the end of your interview, write about three valuable lessons about life or character that you learned from doing this interview with your Older Person. For each lesson, explain what the lesson is and why it is valuable for you.

5. Make a nice cover for your Life Lessons Interview. Decorate it if you wish. Give it a title: **A Life Lessons Interview with Mrs. Janet Smith.**

6. Read your Life Lessons Interview to your parent(s). Ask them for their thoughts about your person's answer to each question, and ask your parent(s) how they would have answered that question.

7. Present your completed Life Lessons Interview to your Older Person in your third and final meeting. Invite a parent to come with you. Show your Older Person the report and read to them what you wrote at the end about the three valuable life lessons you are taking away from this experience.

8. With your Older Person's permission, post your Life Lesson Interview, along with your person's photo and birth date, in your classroom as part of a display of all the persons who were interviewed by students for this project.

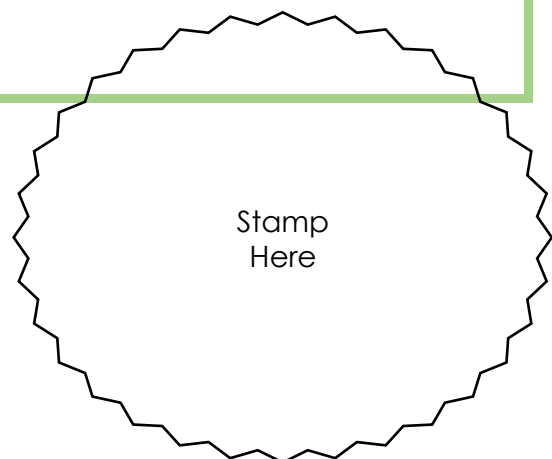
Student: As before, in the box below, rate the progress you made this week on your two target virtues.

Student's Self-Rating of Progress This Week on Personal Target Virtues 1 and 2		
Target Virtue 1:		
No real progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Some progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Much progress <input type="checkbox"/>
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Parent(s): Discuss with your child his or her self-rating, and what your child learned from trying out the revised V.I.P. for each virtue.
Discuss together how the V.I.P.s can be improved for the next week.

Student: Did you work with your parent(s) or other adults on this Home Activity?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Student's Signature		

Parents/Carers comments:
Signature(s) of Parent(s)/Carer(s) who helped:



HOME ACTIVITY 5:

How Can You Make Wise Decisions?

In literature, as in life, people often face difficult decisions.

One such situation in *Prince Caspian* occurs when Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy are lost in the woods—and Lucy tells the others she sees Aslan higher up and that he wants them to follow him. But the others do not see Aslan, and only Edmund thinks they should follow Lucy's advice rather than going down toward where they think the stream is. Peter has to decide: which way should they go?

A second difficult situation arises when Prince Caspian is given two conflicting sets of advice—one from Nikabrik to seek power from the Witch in the impending battle, and contrary counsel to remain true to Aslan and follow him.

The virtue of wisdom—good judgment—helps you, in any situation, to determine what is the best way to achieve your goal.

But how, exactly, can you make the best use of wisdom when you have to make a decision? For example, what should you do if . . .

- A friend or other classmate asks to copy your homework?
- A friend or sibling does something mean to you and doesn't seem to be sorry?
- You see someone doing something wrong, like cheating on a test or taking something that doesn't belong to them?
- You see someone being bullied—physically, or with hurtful words?
- The group you hang out with this year in school tells you not to talk to someone you were friends with last year, because they don't like her?
- Your parents ask you where you've been and what you've been doing, and you're afraid they'll be mad at you if you tell them the whole truth?
- Someone tries to show you 'bad pictures' or Internet videos that your parents wouldn't approve of?

To make the best possible decision in situations like these, you have to be 'wise about wisdom'. You need a *decision-making strategy* in order to:

- Use the wisdom you've got
- Seek advice from wise persons when that would help (it usually does).

How to Make Wise Decisions: Four Questions to Ask

Whenever you face a difficult decision, here are four questions that will help you make a wise decision. Consider:

1. **Choices and consequences:** What choices do you have in this situation and the consequences, good and bad, that each choice might have for yourself and others—now and in the future?
2. **Virtues:** Besides wisdom, which virtues are involved in this situation?
3. **Seeking advice:** Who can you go to for help in making this decision?
4. **Best decision:** What seems like the wisest decision—keeping in mind your choices, the possible consequences, the virtues involved, and the wise advice you receive from wise others?

In this Home Activity, working with your parents, we'd like you to practise this four-part process so you can use it in your life to make good decisions. Let's start with a true story, something that actually happened to a boy named Joe:

Joe (age 11) was a new student in his school. His family had just moved to town that summer. During the first six weeks of school, he didn't make any friends and didn't look forward to going to school. But he finally struck up a friendship with two boys in his class, Sid and Eric.

One day, as the three of them were walking home from school, Sid spotted a package in someone's mailbox. He grabbed it and said, 'Let's go!'—he said they'd done this before—and they ran to the apartment building where Joe's family lived.

Hiding the package under Sid's jacket, they said hello to Joe's mother, went to his bedroom, and opened the package. It contained two gold-plated medallions. 'Oh, cool!' Sid said under his breath. Joe said, 'Yeah, but I think we'd better take them back now. Stealing is against the Ten Commandments'. Sid just shrugged and said, 'Well, I'm not very religious'. He and Eric then each pocketed one of the medallions and went home.

That night at the dinner table, Joe was feeling guilty and nervous about what had happened—and told the family about it. He asked his parents for advice, so now the family faced this dilemma: What should they do?

For the next 45 minutes, Joe's family thought hard and talked about what was the best way to handle this situation. They used the four-part method of making a good decision.

1. What are Joe's choices—and the likely consequences of each?

- He could do nothing. That way he might keep Sid and Eric as friends. But he would feel guilty because the person wouldn't get their stolen property back. And Sid and Eric might do this kind of thing again.
- He could try to talk Sid and Eric into returning the medallions. This time he could give a new reason, like, 'How would you like it if some kids ripped off a package from your family's mailbox?' If that didn't work, he could stop being friends with them. But then he would lose the only two friends he had at school. And the owner of the medallions still wouldn't have them back.
- Joe's parents could call Sid and Eric's parents. That might get the medallions returned, and the parents would know what Sid and Eric had been doing. But there was no telling how the parents would handle the situation. Eric had told Joe his father had a violent temper.
- Joe's parents could talk directly with Sid and Eric and ask them to return the medallions anonymously. That wouldn't get them in hot water with their parents, and it might have a positive effect on their future behaviour. And if they stopped stealing, Joe could keep them as friends.

2. What virtues are relevant here?

- Integrity—which has been violated by the boys' stealing and then hiding the stolen property
- Justice/Responsibility—to take action as a citizen when you know of a crime (such as theft of something from a mailbox)
- Love—wanting to help Sid and Eric do what's right in the future, wanting Joe to have friends at school but ones who have good character
- Justice/Respecting the rights of others—getting the property back to its rightful owner and preventing other people from having things stolen from their mailboxes
- Courage—for Joe to confront Sid and Eric, and for Joe's parents to talk with Sid and Eric's parents.

3. Whose advice should Joe and his family seek?

Without telling the names of the persons involved, they could ask the school counsellor what he or she would recommend. The counsellor would likely say that the parents need to know if their sons are stealing.

4. Considering the choices and possible consequences, the virtues involved, the advice they might get, what is the wisest decision?

For Joe's parents to talk first with Sid and Eric at their apartment, where they had brought the medallions; have them return the property with an anonymous apology; then have them write their parents a letter about what had happened, with a promise never to do it again.

Moral Dilemmas for you and your parent(s) to discuss

Apply the four-part process (just illustrated with Joe's dilemma) to each of the following three dilemmas, writing what you and your parent(s) think in the spaces provided for each step.

Sue's dilemma

This year the popular girls in school have let Sue into their group. But they have told her not to hang around with Jane, a girl she was friends with last year but that the popular girls don't like. Sue was Jane's only friend, and she would feel guilty if she just dropped her. But if she sticks with Jane, the popular girls will probably drop her and might do other mean things to her. She wonders if Jane is too dependent on her and would be better off making a new friend anyway.

What are Sue's choices?	What are the likely consequences of each choice?
What virtues are involved in this decision?	
Who should Sue seek advice from?	What advice might she receive?
We think the best course of action for Sue is.....	
Because.....	

John's dilemma

Bob is struggling in maths class. He just isn't good at maths. His parents put pressure on him to get good grades, but he's sure he's going to do badly on the first maths test of the term. He asks John, a friend who is good at maths, if he can look at his answers during the test. John doesn't really want to—he thinks cheating is wrong—but he feels sorry for Bob and knows the pressure he's under from his parents. He wonders if he should just go ahead and help him this time.

What are John's choices?	What are the likely consequences of each choice?
What virtues are involved in this decision?	
Who should John seek advice from?	What advice might he receive?
We think the best course of action for John is.....	
Because.....	

Sam's dilemma

Sam has noticed some boys picking on Henry in the corridors. When classes change, they bump into him, knock things out of his hands, and push him into the lockers. They also tell Henry that if he says anything to anybody, it will just get worse. Sam fears if he says anything to these guys, they might turn on him and it won't get any better for Henry. He's not sure what to do.

What are Sam's choices?	What are the likely consequences of each choice?
What virtues are involved in this decision?	
Who should Sam seek advice from?	What advice might he receive?
We think the best course of action for Sam is....	
Because.....	

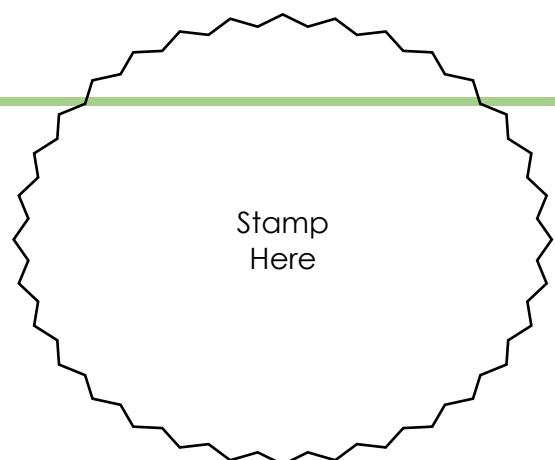
Student: As before, in the box below, rate the progress you made this week on your two target virtues.

Student's Self-Rating of Progress This Week on Personal Target Virtues 1 and 2		
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Parent(s): Discuss with your child his or her self-rating, and what your child learned from trying out the revised V.I.P. for each virtue.
Discuss together how the V.I.P.s can be improved for the next week.

Student: Did you work with your parent(s) or other adults on this Home Activity?	Yes	No
Student's Signature		

Parents/Carers comments:
Signature(s) of Parent(s)/Carer(s) who helped:



HOME ACTIVITY 6:

Develop an Attitude of Gratitude

Ancient wisdom teaches us that gratitude is the secret of a happy life. If you want to be happy, count your blessings every day.

In the *Prince Caspian* story, what do the different characters have to be grateful for? Make a list. You might find it easiest to start with Trumpkin, who loses the archery contest to Susan but by the end of that episode expresses sincere gratitude for several things.

Character in the story	What they have to be grateful for

Gratitude is the habit of feeling thankful and expressing thanks for all that we have. It's an important part of the Narnian virtue of love. An old saying is, 'Love is gratitude expressed'.

If we feel thankful—if we have an 'attitude of gratitude'—we are keenly aware of all that others have done for us. That awareness inspires us to want to give back, to be kind and generous in return. In this way, gratitude motivates acts of love.

If we feel grateful, we are also disposed to express *thanks* for the benefits we have received. Expressing thanks is itself an act of love because it makes others happy. To be appreciated is one of the deepest human needs.

Frequent expressions of gratitude in a family help to create a loving atmosphere and harmonious relations in the home.

The habits of *feeling gratitude* and *expressing gratitude* make us 'other-oriented' rather than self-centred. The psychologist Robert Emmons, over a decade of research, has found that grateful people have more positive relationships and are more aware of situations where they can be helpful. Studies of different cultures have found that practising the virtue of gratitude increases young people's

satisfaction with their lives, their sense of purpose, and their desire to contribute to society.

These many positive effects of feeling and expressing gratitude may be why centuries ago, the Roman statesman Cicero said, 'Gratitude is the parent of all the other virtues'.

Developing an Attitude of Gratitude in Your Family

How can you develop the virtue of gratitude yourself *and* promote it in your family? Below are some ways; discuss them with your parent(s) and **choose three (or more) to do as a family**. Record what you did and how each of the three activities affected you and other family members.

Gratitude Activities We Did	How it affected us

1. **Count your blessings.** Have each family member list, in three columns, (1) people in my life I am grateful for, (2) things I am grateful for, (3) intangibles (like love) I am grateful for. Ask everyone, for the next two days, to read the list when they wake up, at lunch, and before bed. Then share as a family what effect this had on each of you.
2. **Gratitude at dinner.** Every night for a week, have as the dinner topic, 'What are two things you are grateful for today?'
3. **Gratitude Letter.** Sit down and write a letter to someone who has had a positive influence in your life but whom you have not properly thanked. This can be a teacher or a mentor from your past, a grandparent, or anyone else who helped you in some way. The letter doesn't have to be long, but make sure that you're specific about what the person did and how it affected you.

4. **Appreciation Chair.** Pick a chair and designate it as the Appreciation Chair. During the week, each family member takes a turn sitting on it. Everyone else tells that person why they appreciate them and expresses their gratitude for any kindness that was shown by that person during the past year, any help that was given, etc.
5. **Thank the cook!** (from a mother) When I was growing up, my mom worked hard to prepare nutritious, homemade dinners made from scratch for our family of ten every day. She baked homemade bread each week and prepared the vegetables we harvested from our garden. I think at times she felt unappreciated for all the work this entailed. She taught us to give a compliment to the cook after each meal. If we didn't particularly like what was prepared for dinner, we would at the very least say, 'Thank you for dinner, Mom'.
6. **Model gratitude.** Say 'thank you' often in family life—even for the smallest things (like somebody passing something at the table)—and teach all family members to do so. Do the same with anyone who does us a service, including those who wait on us in stores and restaurants.
7. **Thank teachers and other school staff.** Teach students to thank their teachers at the end of a class or school day—and to look for opportunities to thank other school staff like secretaries and custodians who might not get a lot of appreciative comments about the important work they do.
8. **Gratitude Journal.** At bedtime, write down at least five things from the day that you are grateful for. Each night at dinner, share something you put in your Gratitude Journal from the day before. At the end of the week, discuss: 'What were the benefits of doing this? How did it affect you? How do you think it affected our family?'
9. **Gratitude quotes.** Ask all the readers in the family to Google 'gratitude quotes', share their favourite, and say why they chose it. Have each family member post their quote on the fridge. One example, from the writer Anne Husted Burleigh: 'Gratitude is not a feeling but an act of the will. We choose to be thankful, just as we choose to love'.
10. **Gratitude stories.** Invite everyone to find a gratitude story and share it at the table. One example: during World War II, Air Force flying ace and war hero Eddie Rickenbacker was shot down in the Pacific. He drifted on his life raft for 21 days before he was finally found and rescued. A newspaper reporter asked him, 'What's the biggest lesson you learned from being lost on a life raft in the Pacific for 21 days?' Rickenbacker replied, 'That if you have all the fresh water you want to drink and all the food you want to eat, you ought never to complain about anything'.

11. **The No Complaints Challenge.** Challenge all family members to take the 'The No Complaints Challenge'—to try to go 24 hours without complaining about anything. Keep a rubber band around one wrist and change it to the other wrist each time you slip and complain. The next day, at table, discuss: What did you learn from this? Does complaining make us feel better—or worse? What can help us complain less? (One answer: thinking of what we're grateful for.)
12. **What we take for granted.** Discuss how much we all take for granted that we should be thankful for; for example, how much we depend on the invisible labours of others. 'We all drink from wells we did not dig'. As a family, make a list of such things and post it.
13. **Gratitude prayers.** If you're a praying family, encourage your child to pray a prayer of gratitude as soon as he or she wakes up. For example: 'Thank you, Lord, for the gift of this day. Thank you for the gift of my life. Help me to be thankful all day long'. Encourage kids to begin their personal prayer time with prayers of thanksgiving.
14. **When things go badly.** Discuss this statement from St. John of the Cross: 'One prayer of thanks when things go badly is worth a thousand when things go well'. Why do you think he said that? How can we maintain an attitude of gratitude even when things go badly?

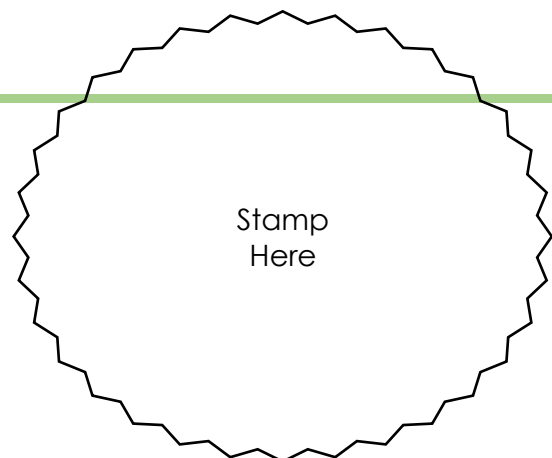
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Student's Signature		

Parents/Carers comments:
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