CHARACTER CONNECTIONS

Theatre Arts

Being a person of good character means you follow the Six Pillars of Character$_{SM}$ every day. You will be learning about many different aspects of theatre, from the basics to developing a puppet show and finally learning about theatre technology. As you work through these projects think of all the ways you can show you are a person of character. During the project someone may ask you to prepare a skit on an important topic and you can show them you are responsible enough to take your skit seriously and perform to the best of your ability. You might also get the chance to cheer someone up by performing for them (Caring). The amount of time and energy you put into preparing also shows people that you respect what you are doing and are serious about your project. Every part of the performance is important, from lighting technician to actor, everyone must be involved and interested in giving the best effort. No matter what opportunities for performance arise throughout your project there will be many ways to show others what you have learned and to show them you are a person of good character.

In this character lesson you will find:

- **Explanation of the Six Pillars of Character.**
- **Explanation of how the Six Pillars of Character relate to your Theatre Arts project.**
- **Activities on how you can demonstrate good character while practicing your Theatre Arts skills.**
- **Questions to help you think of other ways to demonstrate good character in your everyday life.**

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Trustworthiness

- ✓ Always give productive criticism of your fellow actors; never say anything that is untrue or hurtful
- ✓ Don't decide at the last minute that you don't want to be involved; remember everyone is counting on you to do your part.
- ✓ Be dependable and help out to make sure your performance is the best possible

Responsibility

- ✓ Be on time to practices and performances
- ✓ Do what you say you will do; don't try to give the work load to someone else
- ✓ Help everyone else too! Without everyone your performance wouldn't be able to happen
- ✓ Take time to learn about the technology you are using

Caring

- ✓ Share what you have learned with others
- ✓ Go out of your way to perform for a local group of young people of elderly
- ✓ Put in your best effort
- ✓ Be thankful of your fellow project members and of everyone that makes your performances possible

Respect

- ✓ Respect everyone's differences and be sure to portray all of your characters with respect.
- ✓ Tackle serious issues with confidence and respect all sides.
- ✓ Resolve disagreements off the set or stage.
- ✓ Understand that everyone has different talents, respect the choices people make about the jobs they would like to do.

Fairness

- ✓ Make sure everyone has the chance to try everything they are interested in.
- ✓ Take turns being the lead role; that way everyone shares the work.
- ✓ Listen to everyone's ideas before making a group decision.
- ✓ Be open-minded when choosing scripts and theatre jobs; it may not sound like what you want to do at first, but it may work out in the end.

Citizenship

- ✓ Care about your group's goals and help the group reach them.
- ✓ Do what is best for the common good of your group and your community.
- ✓ Share important information with your community through theatre.
- ✓ Offer your skills to organizations in your community.

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Activity: Showing Respect with Puppets

DO:
It's time to plan an around the world puppet show for your 4-H club or other community group. You have already learned how to design different types of puppets and how to perform with these puppets; now it's time to think about the cultures from which your puppets could come. With your project group write a puppet play using characters from around the world. Each person can make a puppet to portray a different country or culture. Research your country to learn about appropriate dress, hair styles, jewelry, makeup, etc. that your puppet should have. Also try to learn a few native words that you could include in your play.

Now that you know culturally specific details about your puppet, come together as a group and write the script. Make sure to include information about each country and interactions between the puppets to show how everyone is different. Showing that everyone is different, but can still respect each other and live happily together should be the goal of your play! After your play is written have fun creating your puppet in any style you like; just remember all of the information you have learned and make it as authentic as possible.

REFLECT:
1. Has there ever been a time where you have seen someone from a different culture and didn't understand their dress, etc.? How did you react? If not, how do you think you would react to this situation?
2. How would it make you feel to visit another country, have everyone look at you and ask you about your nationality?
3. Can you think of other ways to show respect for other cultures through Theatre Arts?

APPLY:
Showing respect for other cultures is one way we can continue to live together and help one another understand our differences and similarities. Learning about another country is a great way to expand your mind and find out new information. By performing with puppets you can share what you learn with others, helping them to better understand and respect other cultures. You don't always have to include puppets of other cultures in your plays, but remember when you do it is very important to respect their culture enough to learn about it and portray the puppet in the correct way.

Expand on this Activity: Invite an International 4-H Youth Exchange (IFYE) participant to join in your skit to help describe their culture or the country they visited on their exchange. If you have an international participant in your area, center your skit around their country, using native dress, food and customs within your skit. Remember to help this person understand that you want to learn more about their country and are interested in sharing what you learn with others.

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Activity: Caring Commercials

DO:
Plan a night of "Caring Commercials" for the program at an upcoming 4-H meeting. Have members of your 4-H club participate in groups to create commercials that demonstrate caring in different ways. Remember to remind them that caring is shown by being thankful, considerate and compassionate for everyone. Create different scenarios for each of the groups and give them 3-5 minutes to create their skit. Have them perform for the group to give them an idea of what Theatre Arts is all about. Here are some ideas for scenarios to get you started:

- You see an elderly woman walking across the street with three bags of groceries almost dropping them all
- A small child is wandering around the department store crying
- Your teacher stays after school every day to help you with your math homework
- Your mom lets you go out to a movie you really want to see, even though it is family night

If the group is doing well with these skits, have them try out different techniques you learned in your project like Improvisation, Pantomime, Role Playing and Creative Movement.

REFLECT:
1. What was it like for you to lead the group?
2. Were you surprised at the actions any of the groups chose?
3. What does it mean to you to show someone that you care about them?
4. Did this activity help you think of times when you could have showed someone a little more caring, but maybe didn't notice the opportunity?

APPLY:
Showing you care is very important, but sometimes it takes some experience to feel comfortable being thankful, compassionate and forgiving. By practicing with skits you can think about what you would do if a specific situation arose which will help you show caring when a situation does arise. Helping your friends see how important caring is shows them you care about them and those around them. You have already displayed caring behaviors by planning and implementing this activity; just remember how much fun this was next time a chance to be caring comes up.