



Program Review Checklist

This checklist provides criteria for selecting **character education materials** for your school or district. It can be used to review *school-wide programs*, *specific curricula*, or *support materials*. These criteria define quality comprehensive character education. You may find that no one program fits all of the criteria, but that a combination of materials meets most of your needs, often in conjunction with material you might develop on your own. To use the checklist, either mark items addressed in the program being reviewed or apply a rating scale (see below) to help you better differentiate programs.

Program/Curriculum: _____

- 0 = not evident
- 1 = poor
- 2 = good
- 3 = very good
- 4 = exemplary

Content & Methodology

- _____ **Promotes core ethical values** (e.g., respect, responsibility, caring, fairness, honesty)
- _____ **Develops conditions that promote a caring classroom climate and school culture** (e.g., addresses relationship building, collaboration, classroom/school norms)
- _____ **Fosters varied dimensions of student growth** (i.e., social, emotional, ethical, intellectual)
- _____ **Develops an understanding of emotions** that underlie behavior and helps students better understand others and manage emotional responses
- _____ **Seeks to decrease detrimental attitudes and behaviors** (e.g., biases, stereotyping, put downs, racial slurs, bullying, gossip, insensitive gender remarks)
- _____ **Provides opportunities for student reflection** on character-related issues (e.g., journal writing, essays, class meetings, class discussions, artistic expression)
- _____ **Addresses the logic of moral arguments** and promotes higher level thinking (e.g., perspective taking, critical thinking, problem solving, ethical decision making)
- _____ **Provides for modeling and practicing of social skills** that demonstrate core values (e.g., interrupting politely, active listening, constructive feedback, respectful communication)
- _____ **Provides opportunities to put core values in action** in ways that promote student autonomy, social responsibility, and caring relationships (e.g., cooperative learning, community service, class meetings, democratic participation, cross-age and peer tutoring, student governance, conflict resolution)

Instructional Issues

- _____ **Is user-friendly** (i.e., clear, comprehensive, easy to use, requires minimal preparation)
- _____ **Is sequential** (i.e., lesson plans logically build on one another) and introduces concepts and strategies in appropriately sized components (e.g., a multiple step problem solving strategy is not introduced in one lesson)
- _____ **Is developmentally appropriate** for the grade levels indicated.
- _____ **Integrates with academic content** and is aligned with district and state education goals and core learning objectives in one or more subjects (e.g., social studies, science, language arts, etc.)
- _____ **Uses a variety of instructional strategies** that meet the needs of students with diverse learning styles (e.g., visual, auditory, kinesthetic), including *active learning* (e.g., role plays, experiential learning, affective exercises, constructivist approach)
- _____ **Appeals to students' interests** by offering relevant stories, vignettes, and dilemmas that are dynamic and closely match issues arising in the lives of students
- _____ **Utilizes varied mediums** (e.g., Internet, videos, CD ROMs, manipulatives, fiction and non-fiction, autobiographies, archival items, art, music)
- _____ **Includes multicultural visuals and narratives** that develop understanding of diverse peoples
- _____ **Provides for student recognition** that encourages intrinsic motivation (i.e., helping students recognize the natural benefits of prosocial acts) and discourages reliance on extrinsic incentives (e.g., peer competition, material rewards)

Teacher and Parent Support

- _____ **Includes a teacher's guide** that is clear, comprehensive, and easy to use and that provides the program's research base, goals, objectives, and evaluation components
- _____ **Provides for staff development** through training, videos, an interactive web site, newsletters, and/or consultation
- _____ **Trains staff in developing caring relationships and ethical practices** within the school community and provides opportunities for reflection on their own growth as character educators
- _____ **Provides a means for ongoing teacher mentoring and support** **Involves parents/guardians** (e.g., through newsletters, shared homework assignments, parent workshops, family-based activities, evaluation surveys)
- _____ **Offers bilingual versions** of parent materials
- _____ **Utilizes community resources** (e.g., community volunteers, youth groups, business partnerships, after-school programs, local government agencies)
- _____ **Assessment Provides varied means for student assessment** (e.g., surveys, portfolios, projects, skill demonstrations) and multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and practice of core values
- _____ **Has positive evaluation results** including both *quantitative* data (e.g., absenteeism, discipline referrals, standardized test scores, behavioral observations, skill and knowledge tests, student/staff/ parent climate and/or attitudinal surveys) and *qualitative* data (e.g., testimonials, narratives) supporting program goals and objectives, preferably conducted by third-party evaluators.

Total Score _____