

Integrity Curriculum
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Beacon Hill Friends Meeting
First Day School 2011-12

Lesson 6: Authenticity - Knowing Your Values – the Measure of Success

Silent worship (5 minutes). *Begin with 5 minutes of silent worship. Use a candle or other object (like the jar of water with sludge slowly sedimenting down) to help kids center down. Anyone can give a message but doesn't have to. Adult models this!*

Snack. *Lay out snack after worship. Available throughout. Popular are popcorn, peanuts, pistachios, fruit, goldfish etc.*

Quotes – *keep these on display throughout the lesson without comment.*

- There is just one life for each of us: our own. ~Euripides, ancient Greek playwright, 500 B.C.
- Once conform, once do what others do because they do it, and a kind of lethargy steals over all the finer senses of the soul. ~Michel de Montaigne, French Renaissance writer, 1590
- Who you are speaks so loudly I can't hear what you're saying.
– Ralph Waldo Emerson, American poet, 1850
- Know thyself. – Socrates, ancient Greek philosopher, 432 B.C.
- The pen that writes your life story must be held in your own hand. ~Irene C. Kassorla, psychologist
- You were born an original. Don't die a copy. ~John Mason, modern American writer

Review of last week (5-10 minutes)

1. Last week we read the story of The Emperor and the Seed. What was it about?
(discuss briefly)

Punchline: the challenge was different than it appeared. Ling thought the challenge was about growing a plant, but really it was about being honest. Likewise, sometimes you think you know what a situation asks of you, but maybe you're wrong. If you betray yourself to conform to what you think the situation calls for, you might still get it wrong. Best to act true to who you really are ! *(do not belabor)*

2. Quickly review the definition of “authenticity” : the quality of being genuine, veritable.

(veritable – from the Latin “veritas”, or true)

3. We talked about three aspects of “authenticity” :

- Know your values
- Follow your heart
- Be yourself

Today we turn to the first of these.

Living Your Values – but what ARE your values? (30 mins)

Today we’ll look at what it means to live your values. Before you can live them, you have to know what your values are. This is not always as easy as it seems.

If kids seem engaged, discuss why it might be hard to know your true self e.g. your values might be those that you’ve been told to believe by others, or maybe your values have changed over time, or they’ve not been tested so you’re not really sure how strongly you believe them).

If kids are not engaged, skip the discussion above and get to the game below.

Sometimes we absorb values without even realizing that we’ve done so. The world rewards certain definitions of success but not others. How success is measured is important because it determines how we act (most of the time we want to be “successful”).

For example, if “success” in school (a good grade) meant standing up straight and keeping our pencils sharp at all times – guess what most of us would do?

Let’s see what happens if we play around with some of the common definitions of success.

Game 1: The Measure of Success. Each child pulls a piece of paper out of a bag. On it is written a certain situation in life or a profession. The child (or entire group together) has 30 seconds to list some of the things that are defined as success for that situation. Now, in another 30 seconds, think of another way (or two or three) that success might be measured. Discuss briefly: how would our behavior change if success were measured in the alternative way?

Examples: (note: only the “situation” column below gets written on the piece of paper. The other columns are examples of what might come up in discussion.)

Situation	Success is measured by...	Alternative measure of success
Sports coach	# competitions won	# injuries, # kids still playing that sport 20 years later
Heart surgeon	# lives saved	Survivors' quality of life
Student – popularity	# friends	# people who would tell you their deepest secret (or other measure of intimacy)
Salesman	# items sold	# of repeat customers, percent of items returned
University professor	# research articles written	Students' teacher evaluations
Author	# books sold	How profound or original was the book? How deeply did it touch readers?
Others?		

Games below are less well-developed. Would they work? Which one is better?

Game 4A: on a slip of paper, in 30 seconds write down 5 things (values) that are important to you (e.g. be a good friend, do well in school, help other people, etc). Now (2 minutes) estimate how much time a week you spend doing those things. Discuss: how much of your time do you spend doing the things you value?

Game 4B: each child estimate the amount of time per day/week you spend doing certain things. (teacher might develop certain categories of activities to jump-start kids' thinking e.g. be with friends, reading, sports, creative activities, video/electronic games, help mom and dad, etc). Now trade time estimates with someone else. Describe what sort of person they are, based only on what you know about them from the way they spend their time.