

# leadworthy<sup>®</sup>

## Character Lessons

Scope & Sequence for Ninth Grade



9<sup>th</sup>

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# How to Use Leadworthy® Character Lessons IN YOUR CLASSROOM

Our K-12 Leadworthy Character Lessons are intentionally designed to support the work you are already doing to build a positive school culture that inspires and empowers students to lead with heart.

Each 30-minute lesson aligns with our Capturing Kids' Hearts® EXCEL Model™. Lessons are grade-level specific, progressive, systemic, and easy to use with minimal preparation. Each month, we provide four lessons. These lessons can be taught once a week in a single sitting or as five different mini-lessons throughout the week — teaching one piece of the EXCEL lesson plan each day.

These lessons also intentionally support and reinforce state and nationally-recognized student needs and skills, including:

- 21st Century Learning Components
- College and Career Readiness Skills

Using our own research on leadership development and the recommendations for character education at the state and national levels, we identified nine initial character traits to grow leadership skills of students.

**Empathy**  
**Self-Direct**  
**Teamwork**  
**Responsibility**  
**Respect**  
**Kindness**  
**Courage**  
**Perseverance**  
**Integrity**

The recommended teaching calendar (seen below) aligns directly with the monthly themes, resources, and dashboard you see in CKH.org.

In addition to weekly lessons, you will also have access to a monthly service-learning lesson. These monthly lessons are not required but provide you with opportunities to integrate service-learning components and projects on campus that align with and support monthly themes.

Service-learning lessons can be used:

- by one class or one grade level
- by multiple classes and grade levels
- or campus wide.



## What You Need to Know to Get Started

### STEP 1:

Choose your structure.

- Whole Lesson Approach: Teach one 30-minute lesson each week.
- Mini-Lesson Approach: Teach a mini-lesson (5–7 minutes) each day using the Capturing Kids' Hearts® EXCEL Model™. For example: Engage on Monday, X-plore on Tuesday, etc.

### STEP 2:

Choose when and where to use these lessons.

- In Elementary:
  - Morning Meeting
  - Social Studies
  - Enrichment
  - End of the day
- In Secondary:
  - Advisory
  - Homeroom
  - Social Studies
  - English

### STEP 3:

Embrace the monthly theme.

- Reinforce the monthly theme through morning announcements, social media posts, and communication with parents and staff members.
- Send home the monthly family newsletter to spotlight the theme and character trait at home.
- Celebrate students and teachers who model these traits each month.

### STEP 4:

Assess your students' progress.

- Teacher Guiding Questions: Use these questions to measure your students' development for each Leadworthy® Character Trait before and after a unit.



LEADWORTHY®  
**CHARACTER TRAITS**  
Recommended Calendar

August / September  
**EMPATHY**

October  
**SELF-DIRECT**

November  
**TEAMWORK**

December  
**RESPONSIBILITY**

January  
**RESPECT**

February  
**KINDNESS**

March  
**COURAGE**

April  
**PERSEVERANCE**

May  
**INTEGRITY**



# NINTH GRADE

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER

## EMPATHY

Understanding and feeling what others are experiencing.

## UNIT OBJECTIVE

Students will build better relationships by recognizing and understanding the feelings of others, practicing ways to be more understanding, and reflecting on the effects of active listening.

## Why Focus on Empathy?

- Empathy builds positive classroom culture. Empathy empowers students to learn to understand each other to build trust and safety in the classroom.
- Empathy strengthens community. Empathy helps students strengthen their relationships with classmates, other students and adults at school, and at home.
- Empathy prepares your students to be leaders in their community. The best leaders understand the people they lead and are able to show they care.

## Empathy in Action:

- Take a different perspective. When you take a different perspective, you put aside your own feelings and reactions to see the situation through another’s eyes.
- Put aside judgment. Take a pause and rather than express conclusions about a situation based on what you see, step back and consider other things you may still need to know or understand.
- Communicate that you understand. Instead of giving advice, respond with reflective phrases like, “It sounds like you...” or “I hear that you...” to express that you understand and care.

## TEACHER GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Are students more aware of others around them? (i.e., they invite a student who is usually quiet into their conversation.)
- During academic discussions, how do students handle opposing viewpoints?



## UNIT OVERVIEW: EMPATHY

### WEEK 1: STEP UP!

- Students will make the connection between understanding their own well-being and their ability to extend empathy to others.

### WEEK 2: LOVE IT OR LEAVE IT

- Students will identify times that they feel the desire to help others.

### WEEK 3: LISTEN & LEARN

- Students will learn how listening helps show empathy.

### WEEK 4: THE EMPATHY CHALLENGE

- Students will practice communicating empathy with a friend.

### SERVICE LEARNING: OUR HOMELESS COMMUNITIES

- Students will discuss and analyze the needs of homeless shelters and will complete a service project focused on donating items people living or visiting shelters might need.



## SELF-DIRECT

Lead yourself to who you want to be.

## UNIT OBJECTIVE

Students will learn and practice skills needed to increase their self-control, which will benefit them as they strive to reach short-term and long-term goals.

### Why Focus on Self-Direction?

- Self-direction strengthens relationships. Self-direction helps to grow social skills and develop meaningful and positive relationships with others.
- Self-direction teaches personal responsibility. Learning to self-direct teaches students to take responsibility for their own actions.
- Self-direction helps us to regulate emotions. Self-direction empowers students to regulate their impulses and emotional responses to situations and circumstances in life.

### Self-Direction in Action:

- Practice goal setting and action planning. When we establish goals and develop action plans, we learn to take intentional steps to successfully achieve goals.
- Monitor and adjust. Provide students with regular feedback and opportunities to self-assess progress toward goals so they can adjust and make improvements in their behaviors.
- Reflect and evaluate. Facilitate discussions and reflection to prompt students to examine what they do, think, and say against their goals and vision for their life and learning.

### TEACHER GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What strategies are students utilizing to balance their responsibilities?
- Do students take the initiative to ask for help as problems occur and within a reasonable timeframe?



# NINTH GRADE

NOVEMBER

## TEAMWORK

Work together to reach a goal.

## UNIT OBJECTIVE

Students will develop their understanding of collaboration on a team as it relates to their willingness to create space for various viewpoints and opinions, commitment to the task, increased productivity, and the quality of the finished product.

### Why Focus on Teamwork?

- Teamwork improves communication. Teamwork helps us improve our verbal and non-verbal communication skills, conveying that we care and have a relevant message.
- Teamwork builds interpersonal awareness. Growing a great team requires us to first build strong relationships through a better understanding of ourselves and others.
- Teamwork celebrates diversity. Teamwork thrives from diverse ideas that come from a mixture of different genders, cultures, expertise, experiences, and problem-solving approaches.
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### Teamwork in Action:

- Call them a team — not a class or a group. A group consists of many different people. A team, however, has a common purpose and a shared responsibility for success.
- Require teams to set expectations and manage their own behavior. Do not tell teams what type of behavior is expected. Rather, let them decide for themselves using a Social Contract.
- Teach and encourage affirmations. Giving affirmations helps connect the team and builds trust, promotes engagement, and boosts a positive culture.

### TEACHER GUIDING QUESTIONS

- During student collaborations, have you observed improvements with students listening and affirming each other and doing their part on a given group task?
- Can you list at least three students who have shown significant improvement in displaying teamwork?



## UNIT OVERVIEW: TEAMWORK

### WEEK 1:

#### TEAMWORK: IT STARTS WITH YOU

- Students will define a team and understand that each member has a unique role.

### WEEK 2:

#### TEAM ROADBLOCKS

- Students will learn about team-building roadblocks and how to overcome them.

### WEEK 3:

#### TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP

- Students will define what makes someone a leader beyond a title.

### WEEK 4:

#### NO CREDIT, NO PROBLEM

- Students will understand that being a leader is not always taking credit for the team's accomplishments.

### SERVICE LEARNING:

#### SENIOR CITIZENS IN OUR COMMUNITY

- Students will interview a senior citizen and understand the importance of leaving a legacy and learning from past generations.



# NINTH GRADE

DECEMBER

## RESPONSIBILITY

Own your thoughts, words, and actions.

## UNIT OBJECTIVE

Students will recognize the importance of taking accountability for their actions and behaviors while deepening their understanding of the effects of positive and negative consequences as it relates to their goals, and the impact on others.

### Why Focus on Responsibility?

- Responsibility teaches resilience. It is not possible to persevere and achieve our dreams without taking personal responsibility seriously.
- Responsibility empowers us to own our actions. There is great power in being able to make conscious, calculated choices to reach goals and manage those things in our control.
- Responsibility teaches us to manage our time and resources. Responsibly organizing and prioritizing needs is an executive function of the brain that improves with practice.

### Responsibility in Action:

- Give students roles and responsibilities. When students have a leadership role in class, they are accountable for contributing positively to the classroom culture.
- Empower students with self-management tools. Provide students with tools to help manage stress and impulsivity while motivating them to meet goals.
- Clearly communicate consequences. Empower students to make choices and experience the consequences of their actions, both positive and negative.

### TEACHER GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How often do you hear students conversing about their goals?
- How are students emotionally handling the pressure of their responsibilities?



## UNIT OVERVIEW: RESPONSIBILITY

### WEEK 1:

#### RESPONSIBILITY TO MYSELF AND OTHERS

- Students will learn they have responsibilities to themselves and others.

### WEEK 2:

#### MY HEALTH: MY RESPONSIBILITY

- Students will understand the importance of being responsible for their health.

### WEEK 3:

#### MAKING RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL CHOICES

- Students will learn more about financial responsibility and how to discern what they are financially responsible for in their world.

### WEEK 4:

#### RESPONSIBILITY TO OTHERS ONLINE

- Students will consider their responsibility to treat others with kindness online.

### SERVICE LEARNING:

#### SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Students will discuss and analyze social responsibility and will complete a service project focused on a social issue the class can agree on as a group. The issue the class chooses should be focused on working together for the common good.



# NINTH GRADE

JANUARY

## RESPECT

Give honor and value to ourselves and others.

### UNIT OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate acts of goodwill toward themselves, others, and the community.

### Why Focus on Respect?

- Respect contributes to a positive culture. People feel safe, supported, and engaged in the context of thoughtful social, emotional, civic, and intellectual interactions.
- Respect decreases conflict. Respect helps us and others to be able to express ourselves without fear of being judged, humiliated, or discriminated against.
- Respect encourages empathy. Respect helps us to understand each other and put ourselves in someone else's shoes.

### Respect in Action:

- Teach students words have power. How we talk to others and ourselves can motivate or discourage, connect or destroy, and hurt or heal. We should choose our words with care.
- Create opportunities for group decision-making. Open dialogue engages students in a process where compromise is crucial to making decisions.
- Vary protocols for classroom sharing. Frequently use open-ended questions, partner sharing, and small-group activities to connect and promote understanding between students.

### TEACHER GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Generally, do you feel that most of your students are leading healthy and balanced lives?
- What actions have you observed students participating in to show that they are mastering the concept of respect?



## UNIT OVERVIEW: RESPECT

### WEEK 1: RESPECT 101

- Students will learn the foundations of respect and develop respect as a character trait.

### WEEK 2: HONORING DIFFERENCES

- Students will learn how to honor those around them through respect.

### WEEK 3: RESPECTING GENERATIONS BEFORE US

- Students will learn the importance of showing honor and respect to previous generations.

### WEEK 4: RESPECT OUR COMMUNITY

- Students will learn how to respect the community and environment in which they live.

### SERVICE LEARNING: RESPECT OUR COMMUNITY

- Students will define the word neighbor to include the people they learn and work with, live near, and share the world with.
- Students will define social responsibility and explore how to express it using art.



## KINDNESS

Be appropriately friendly and compassionate to others.

## UNIT OBJECTIVE

Students will be intrinsically motivated to demonstrate compassion through their words and actions.

### Why Focus on Kindness?

- Kindness boosts positive emotions. Acts of kindness create neural pathways that enhance feelings of wellbeing and the natural flow of feel-good endorphins and neurotransmitters.
- Kindness is self-replicating. When we perform an act of kindness, it is likely to encourage others to act in a similar way.
- Kindness reduces stress and anxiety. Kindness promotes positive relationships with other people. When you build healthy connections with other people, it helps decrease anxiety.

### Kindness in Action:

- Celebrate small things. Start each day with Good Things as a class. Publicly and privately affirm kind and thoughtful actions and attitudes.
- Create opportunities for students to regularly affirm each other. Once a week, dedicate time for students to write notes of affirmation to classmates and school staff members.
- Model kindness. Be mindful of body language, tone, and mindset. Kindness is learned by example!

### TEACHER GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Have you noticed an increase in students acknowledging each other's presence, both verbally and nonverbally?
- How many of your students are actively involved in giving back to the community via a school organization or an outside organization?



## UNIT OVERVIEW: KINDNESS

### WEEK 1: CULTIVATING KINDNESS

- Students will define kindness and identify ways to show kindness toward others.

### WEEK 2: FILLING YOUR TANK

- Students will understand that they must be kind to themselves in order to be kind to others.

### WEEK 3: YOUR BIGGEST COMPETITION

- Students will understand that comparing themselves to others can be detrimental to their journey in life.

### WEEK 4: GROWING A GENEROUS HEART

- Students will learn how and why it is important to be generous to others.

### SERVICE LEARNING: PROJECT KINDNESS

- Students will discuss and analyze the impact of kindness on themselves, their school, and their community.
- Students will complete a service project focused on cultivating kindness in their school and community.





# NINTH GRADE

MARCH

## COURAGE

Develop strength to face something difficult.

## UNIT OBJECTIVE

Students will develop skills that will equip them to overcome difficult, uncomfortable, and uncertain situations.

### Why Focus on Courage?

- Courage encourages engagement. Courage helps students raise their hand, participate, try new things, and voice their opinions.
- Courage builds self-confidence. Courage is the choice to act. By doing something, students increase their belief in themselves and their ability to do difficult or challenging things.
- Courage can help reframe a negative. When something does not go as planned or a student gets upset about a mistake or failure, courage can help them reframe the event in a positive light.

### Courage in Action:

- Provide leadership opportunities! Students can learn and demonstrate leadership by teaching and mentoring others, classroom roles and responsibilities, or community outreach.
- Encourage discussion and debate. Foster curiosity and empower students to formulate ideas and engage in respectful discourse and conversations.
- Celebrate failures. Create opportunities to reduce fear of failure and celebrate when students try something new, even if they are not successful the first time.

### TEACHER GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Are you noticing students taking more risks, asking questions, and attempting to challenge the status quo by providing a different perspective?
- Are students able to effectively communicate problems and concerns that are brought to your attention?



## UNIT OVERVIEW: COURAGE

### WEEK 1: COURAGE AND PURPOSE

- Students will learn how to grow courage and why it is needed to accomplish big things in life.

### WEEK 2: ACCOMPLISHING BIG GOALS

- Students will recognize how their self-belief plays a role in growing the courage needed to reach their goals.

### WEEK 3: TAKING ACTION

- Students will learn about the importance of initiative and being courageous in taking action.

### WEEK 4: FAILING FORWARD

- Students will learn how to embrace failure and grow through their failures.

### SERVICE LEARNING: COURAGEOUS HEROES IN OUR COMMUNITY

- Students will define and give examples of the common good.
- Students will identify characteristics and actions of everyday people who are making a difference for the common good.
- Students will celebrate everyday heroes in the community.



# NINTH GRADE

APRIL

## PERSEVERANCE

Give extra effort to make it through to the end.

## UNIT OBJECTIVE

Students will learn to apply and maintain effort while working toward short-term and long-term goals.

### Why Focus on Perseverance?

- Perseverance encourages positive self-talk and thinking. When faced with difficult tasks, perseverance helps students reframe with positive thoughts, such as “I’m not good at this YET!”
- Perseverance develops empathy. Students gain a better understanding of who they are and develop more empathy and compassion for others who may struggle to reach a goal.
- Perseverance sparks personal growth. Pushing through complex tasks builds resilience and helps students discover how capable they are.

### Perseverance in Action:

- Share stories and challenging experiences. Be vulnerable and share personal experiences when you have struggled with a task or concept and had to work hard to push through.
- Praise effort and process, not intelligence or performance. Affirm students for the process they used to tackle tasks and point out how their abilities grow through their own hard work.
- Give your students the chance to struggle. Struggle builds self-confidence, independence, and perseverance. Resist the urge to intervene immediately and give students time to figure problems out.

### TEACHER GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Are most of your students motivated by extrinsic or intrinsic rewards?
- When faced with a difficult task, are students more apt to ask for help rather than giving up?



## UNIT OVERVIEW: PERSEVERANCE

### WEEK 1: DON'T QUIT

- Students will define perseverance and solve problems to persevere through challenging situations.

### WEEK 2: BOUNCE BACK

- Students will develop an understanding of how their attitude impacts their level of perseverance.

### WEEK 3: UNDERSTANDING GRIT

- Students will understand more about grit and learn from others who have demonstrated grit.

### WEEK 4: HOPES AND FEARS

- Students will learn to encourage other people to persevere in challenging times.

### SERVICE LEARNING: ENTREPRENEURIAL PROJECT

- Students will discuss and analyze the needs and wants of the school and/or local community and will create a product or develop a service and related business plan to produce and market their chosen product or service.



# NINTH GRADE

MAY

## INTEGRITY

Live with honesty and excellence.

### UNIT OBJECTIVE

Students will recognize the importance of being honest and trustworthy in all situations, whether good or bad. Students will gain a greater understanding of the impact their decisions have on relationships and personal goals.

### Why Focus on Integrity?

- Integrity generates trust. When we are honest and follow through on promises, we gain the confidence of our team. Trust allows us to collaborate and achieve more together.
- Integrity encourages self-assessment. Integrity requires our regular self-assessment to align behaviors with our goals and self-beliefs.
- Integrity is essential in leadership. Great leaders decrease anxiety and build strong teams when they are honest, consistent, and responsible.

### Integrity in Action:

- Acknowledge and affirm acts with integrity. Publicly praise students who model acts of integrity, such as honesty and honor. Encourage students to identify classmates who show integrity.
- Use scenarios and role plays. Challenge students with real-life scenarios and situations that allow them to reflect, discuss, and choose the best next step or action.
- Create a culture of accountability. Invite students to give you feedback. Ask students to rate the class based on your Social Contract. Empower students with choice-based consequences.

### TEACHER GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Are students cognizant of how their actions affect others?
- Are students taking more accountability for their actions and placing less blame on external factors?



## UNIT OVERVIEW: INTEGRITY

### WEEK 1:

#### DEFINING INTEGRITY

- Students will define integrity and distinguish between integrity and honesty.

### WEEK 2:

#### THE INSIDE MATTERS

- Students will identify the traits of a leader with integrity.

### WEEK 3:

#### LEADERS IN YOUR LIFE

- Students will understand that integrity is about living a legacy by standing firm in one's values and choosing to do that which is right.

### WEEK 4:

#### INTEGRITY IN MOTION

- Students will identify ways to show integrity in their daily lives.
- Students will review fundamental concepts of previously studied character traits.

### SERVICE LEARNING:

#### LEADERSHIP PROJECT

- Students will discuss and analyze the qualities of a leader and will discuss ways to promote, develop, and celebrate leadership on campus.



Leadworthy® Character Lessons  
UNIT POSTERS

**CONNECT WITH HEART**



**Empathy**  
Understand and feel the heart of another

leadworthy

**THINK, CHOOSE, ACT**



**Self-Direct**  
Lead yourself to who you want to be

leadworthy

**BETTER TOGETHER**



**Teamwork**  
Work together to reach a goal

leadworthy

**DO YOUR PART**



**Responsibility**  
Own your thoughts, words, and actions

leadworthy

**honor you - honor me**



**Respect**  
Act with thoughtfulness

leadworthy

**SPARK THE HEART**



**Kindness**  
Be friendly and compassionate

leadworthy

**STEP UP**



**Courage**  
Develop strength to face something difficult

leadworthy

**FINISH STRONG**



**Perseverance**  
Give extra effort to make it through to the end

leadworthy

**BE LEADWORTHY**



**Integrity**  
Live with honesty and excellence

leadworthy



