



# More than Personality

**Key Ideas:** Unique personalities/Common character traits

**Character Traits:** Respect/Fairness/Honesty

**Level:** Elementary

Good morning, name of school. This is name of narrator with a few words of wisdom.

Some of us like to talk a lot. We just chatter away. Some of us are quiet. We like to listen to the ones who chatter. Some of us smile great big smiles, and when we laugh, our laughter booms across the room. Others of us are shy. We have little grins and soft giggles. Some of us have a dozen friends, others just one special friend.

Our personalities make each of us a one-of-a-kind human being. Isn't that more fun than if we were all exactly alike?

But there are some ways in which we do need to be the same:

***We all need to be respectful toward others. We need to be fair. We need to be honest. And all of us need to try every day to be the best we can be.***

Wouldn't it be great if we were all the same in those special ways?

With something to think about, this is \_\_\_\_\_. Make it a great day . . . or not. The choice is yours.



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- Key Ideas:** Unique personalities/Common character traits
- Character Traits:** Respect/Fairness/Honesty
- Concept:** Students will explore the difference between one's personality and one's character and consider that we all have unique personalities, but should share common character traits.
- Materials:** Suggested activities for art classes may require materials for creating a drawing, painting, or poster.
- Directions:** Read or ask a student to read aloud the Project Wisdom message that accompanies this lesson plan. Ask for volunteers to share responses to the following questions.

## Discussion Generators

1. What would the world be like if everyone had the same personality? What are the best things about a world filled with different personalities?
2. Who is your favorite storybook character? What is it you like most about his or her personality?
3. Think about your favorite storybook character again. Name one of his or her character traits that you like most. Why do you think everyone should have that same character trait? What would the world be like if every single person had that same character trait?
4. How would you describe your personality? What do you like most about your personality?
5. Do you have a friend who has a very different personality than you? How are the two of you different? What do you like best about your differences? How are you alike?
6. It's wonderful that the world is filled with all kinds of personalities. Life is much more colorful and interesting that way. But are there some ways in which we all need to be alike? Name some ways in which everyone should be alike (e.g., we should all be respectful; we should all be fair to one another; we should all be kind, etc.).
7. Can a person have a great personality and not have good character? Explain your answer.
8. How are character traits and personality traits alike? What are some words that we use to describe character? What are some words that we use to describe someone's personality?
9. When choosing friends it's important to not just choose your friends based on personality but also on character. Do you have friends that you really like because of their personality but their character may not be so good? What do you do in those situations? How can we help people with good personalities to also have good character?

**Closing Comments** – Each of us has his or her own unique, one-of-a-kind personality. Some of us are outgoing. Some of us are shy. Some of us like to be funny. Some of us like to ponder and think. Some of us are very lighthearted. Some of us are very serious about anything we do. All our different personalities are as wonderful as a sky full of colorful balloons, but it's what's underneath our personalities that matters most. It's our character that is the most special and important thing about each of us.



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## Follow-up Activities

### Grades K-2

- Read Susan Milord's *Pebble: A Story About Belonging*. Discuss what characteristics make a pebble a pebble (e.g., hard, small, has a color, etc.). List them. Pass out a pebble to everyone (or peanuts, leaves, sea shells, etc.). Identify the characteristics that were listed. Now ask for characteristics that weren't listed that make their individual pebble special (e.g., odd shape, rough or smooth, particular color). Explain that like the pebbles, we each have physical traits that make us all the same and all different (e.g., eyes, hair, etc.). We also each have a personality that makes us special. Ask the students to describe their personality (e.g., shy, funny, etc.). Have them describe their character (e.g., honest, fair, respectful, brave, etc.). Ask them which character traits we want everyone to have. (Have the character traits and personality traits posted on the wall in separate columns for the little ones to refer to.) Then ask students to complete the sentence, "When people see me, I am \_\_\_\_\_ (shy, loud, smiling etc.). I am also \_\_\_\_\_" (honest, fair, respectful, caring, etc.). Students can then make a book with the front covering a self portrait and each page illustrating one of their character traits or personality traits. Entitle the book *All About Me*.
- On the board or on a large piece of paper, create columns. Ask students to name some of their favorite characters from books they have read. Write these names at the top of each column. Then ask students to tell you some of the personality traits and character traits of these characters. (Have some character traits and personality traits posted on the wall for the little ones to refer to.) Have students then pick the character that they think is most like them and have them write about it and illustrate it. For example, "I am most like \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_." Encourage self-reflection when sharing (e.g., give examples of actions that represent these traits and help them make connections).
- Read *Shy Charles*, by Rosemary Wells. Discuss Charles' personality. What did people think of Charles' personality (e.g., timid, quiet, etc.)? What character traits did he show later in the story (e.g., respect, determination, etc.)? What kind of personality do you usually show? What kind of character traits do you show when others need you? Draw and write about your character traits.

### Grades 3-5

- Read Susan Milord's *Pebble: A Story About Belonging*. Pass out a pebble to everyone (or peanuts, leaves, sea shells, etc.). Ask students to study their pebbles carefully. Tell the class that they will have to pick out their pebbles from everyone else's. Have each child write a description of their pebble. Pick up all the pebbles and lay them out randomly. Have the children find their pebbles. Discuss with the children how each pebble was unique even though they are all pebbles. Just like the pebbles are unique, children and



adults have particular personalities that make each person special. Personality is what others see first. But because people, unlike pebbles, work and play together, we all need some of the same character traits to get along. Ask the children what character traits would help us to work and play together. Brainstorm those traits. Divide the class into small groups. Each group takes one character trait and discusses how that trait will help the class work and play well together. Have each group come up with a skit that will show how the trait will help the class get along at recess, in the cafeteria, and working together in the classroom.

- Have students reflect on different personalities (e.g., quiet and shy, outgoing, etc.). Discuss how personalities (what people see) might fool us about what's really on the inside. Read Jane Yolen's *The Emperor and the Kite*. Have children decide what kind of personality the young princess had. What kind of character did she possess? Divide the students into small groups. Have the groups present a public service announcement communicating the differences between personality (what others see of us) and character (e.g., integrity, respect, caring). Encourage various forms of media, art, drama, story, poetry, etc.

## Reading List

### K-5

- *Beautiful Oops*, B. Saltzberg
- *Pebble: A Story About Belonging*, S. Milord

### K-2

- *Chrysanthemum*, K. Henkes
- *One*, K. Otsoshi
- *Sheila Rae, The Brave*, K. Henkes
- *Shy Charles*, R. Wells
- *We Are Alike, We Are Different*, J. Behrens
- *Whoever You Are*, M. Fox

### 3-5

- *The Emperor and the Kite*, J. Yolen
- *The Gardener*, S. Stewart
- *Marvelous Cornelius: Hurricane Katrina and the Spirit of New Orleans*, P. Bildner
- *People*, P. Spier
- *The Relatives Came*, C. Rylant