

## Character Journal/Narrative Writing

**Type of Teacher Tool:** Individual or Small Group Activity

**Targeted Grade Level(s):** 3-12

**Targeted Curriculum Areas:** Character/Social Studies, Writing

### Learning Objectives:

1. The student will develop a deeper understanding of the words compassion, generosity, and volunteering.
2. The student will write journal entries or a narrative about being a volunteer.

### Social Studies Missouri Learning Standards

**1.E.** Character traits and civic attitudes of significant individuals

Describe the character traits and civic attitudes. (2nd-5th)

**5.D. Theme 3** Evaluate laws, events, and perspectives to determine the extent to which individuals and groups could participate in, and realize, the promise of American ideals. (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

**Writing 2.B. (3-5)** Write informative/ explanatory texts that:

- a. introduce a topic or text being studied
- b. develop the topic with simple facts, definitions, details, and explanations
- c. use specific, relevant words that are related to the topic, audience, and purpose
- d. use the student's original language except when quoting from a source
- e. use transition words to connect ideas within categories of information
- f. create a concluding statement or paragraph

**Writing 2.A (6-12)** Follow a writing process to produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, style, and voice are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience; self-select and blend (when appropriate) previously learned narrative, expository, and argumentative writing techniques.

### Model Standards for Academic, Social, Emotional, and Character Development

#### Critical Educational Outcomes—Josephson Institute

**C6. CARING** Students understand that caring — including the virtues of compassion, kindness, benevolence, altruism, charity, generosity, and sharing — is the heart of ethics. They strive to demonstrate a concern for the wellbeing of others by displaying compassion for those in pain or in need by providing support in the form of donations and/or personal service

### Videos/Resources/Materials Needed:

1. Character 51: Making a Difference—Maria Matias and Prom Dresses for All
2. Character 53: Making a Difference—The South County Foster Closet Story
3. Character 55: Making a Difference—The Story of Dawn Putnam and Moms on a Mission
4. Character 59: Making a Difference—Stories of Volunteering with Be the Change
5. Character 64: Making a Difference—Building School Community Through Inclusion

6. Character 65: Students Speak: Why Inclusion is Important in Schools
7. Character 71: Making a Difference—Dean Purdy and the Space Museum
8. Character 73: Making a Difference—Blessing Baskets in Ghana
9. Character 74: Making a Difference—The Story of Fred Domke and Bridge Bread Bakery
10. Character 77: Making a Difference for Pets and Pet Owners
11. Computers for word processing and research

**Student Instructions:**

1. Have students choose one (or more) of the above videos to watch.
2. Discuss the definition of compassion, generosity, and volunteering.
3. Have students brainstorm a list of volunteering ideas or discuss some of these: collect supplies for a local animal shelter or work at a local shelter to read to the animals, read with younger students, help collect items needed for homeless shelters, clean up a playground or some other neighborhood area, visit senior citizen or veteran homes and play games with the residents, or write encouraging letters for children in hospitals.
4. Have students write a personal narrative or three journal entries that describe what it would be like to complete one of these volunteer activities. Describe the volunteer activity, the goal of the activity, the steps taken, how long it took to accomplish, any difficulties with completing the task, successes with the task, what you felt you did the best, and what you may do next.

**Extension Activities:** Carry-out one of the volunteer tasks.

**Assessment/Evaluation Option**

Make a rubric of each of the parts that were to be included in the narrative/journal entries and give credit for each section completed at an acceptable level for the grade level.