

# Dilworth Elementary Character Education

## Hope – May

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**Pre-teach:** Greet the students and tell them that today you will be discussing the trait hope. Ask the following questions and call on different students for answers. Listed below each question are examples of potential responses. You may need to rephrase the students' answers or guide them along.

(Ask) **What does it mean to have hope?**

1. Believing you will be successful.
2. Believing what you desire is possible.
3. Being optimistic and positive about your future.

(Ask) **How can we demonstrate hope in our lives?**

1. Having a positive attitude, even when facing difficult situations.
2. Being willing to work hard and always doing your best.
3. Pursuing your goals and following your dreams.
4. Helping and encouraging others when they are down.
5. Practicing your faith.

(Ask) **Who are some people we know that show hope?**

1. Your parents, grandparents, school teachers and staff.
2. Friends or family members who are dealing with illness or a difficult situation.
3. Helen Keller, Henry Ford, Anne Frank, Martin Luther King Jr., Thomas Edison, Harriet Tubman, Mother Teresa, and others.

**Book:** Read and discuss a story that teaches a lesson about the trait hope.

**Activity:** Complete an activity to go along with your lesson. (Activity suggestions attached) You can incorporate your activity into the lesson at any time.

**Closing comment:** Read the following poem:

Hope is believing your dreams will come true,  
It's knowing you'll be successful in all that you do.  
You will need to work hard and have patience too,  
But when you have hope each day is brand new.  
Have hope for your tomorrow!

**“Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadow. It's what sunflowers do.”**  
~Helen Keller

### Hope Activities

**Lighten Up!** (Suggested for all grades) – All Dilworth 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Classes

**Materials:** Dark sunglasses

If possible, begin by entering the classroom wearing the sunglasses. Exclaim that it is really dark in

here. Everything is so dark, even the walls, desks and students look dark. I wonder why that is? (Someone will likely state that you have on dark glasses.) Your response: Oh, I guess that's true. I don't really need glasses in here. I just left them on because it was easier than taking them off. That may sound kind of silly, but have you ever known someone who talked as if they always had on dark glasses? Someone who always looks on the dark side of everything isn't much fun to be around. Instead of being happy with the sunshine, she is worried because it might rain tomorrow. Instead of being glad to be at school, he is stressed about an upcoming assignment or whether or not he will win the game. For some people, it's easier to be unhappy than it is to be happy. If you are like that, it's time to work on being more hopeful. We demonstrate the character trait of hope by keeping a positive outlook and believing that we will be successful. Don't let problems keep you from the joy hope can bring, not only to yourself, but to others around you. Don't look on the dark side of life (put on your glasses, then take them off again as you continue); lighten up and be a ray of hope and sunshine to everyone around you! (Object Talks for Any Day, by Verna Kokmeyer)

**Act it out!** (Suggested for grades 3 -5) - **All Dilworth 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Classes**

**Materials:** None

Have the students work in small groups and role play situations where they demonstrate giving hope to others. Examples of some situations are: a student does poorly on a test, someone has to move away, a student has a Mom who is sick, another student may be afraid to give a speech in class, a student who did not make the team. Have the groups each act out their situations in front of the class. Fourth and fifth graders might also enjoy discussing the meaning of the following quote from an unknown author: When the world says "Give up!" hope whispers, "Try it one more time."

**Listen Up!** (Suggested for grades 3 -5) – **All Dilworth 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Classes**

**Materials:** CD's of the latest kids' music, CD player

Check into the music kids are listening to lately and find examples of optimistic and hopeful lyrics and those without them. Bring the music in and play it for the class. Have the students listen to and discuss the lyrics. Determine whether or not they offer a message of hope. Discuss how words in the music can influence our thoughts and actions.

**The Top Ten Reason's For Hope Are...** (Suggested for grades 2 – 5) – **All Dilworth 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Classes**

**Materials:** Poster board, marker

Work together as a class and come up with ten top reasons why it is best to have "hope". Consider putting them on a poster board and displaying them in the classroom. Example: Our Top Ten Reasons For Hope Are...

1. It makes you a stronger person.
2. You help and encourage others.
3. You will accomplish more in life.

(Teaching Character, Dotson and Wisont)

**Do What The Sunflowers Do** (Suggested for grades K-2) - **All Dilworth Kindergarten Classes**

**Materials:** A paper plate, scissors, crayons or markers, green construction paper and popsicle sticks

Referring back to the Helen Keller quote, have students decorate a paper plate to look like a sunflower and then attach it to a popsicle stick. The students can cut out small leaves to glue on the sides of the popsicle stick.