

Narnian Virtues

Character Passport

The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis



Narnian Virtues: A Character Education English Curriculum based on the novels of C.S. Lewis



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Name: School:

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Note to Children

Getting your Passport Stamped

All of us want to 'achieve our potential' in life. But unless we have developed the six virtues described in this 'Character Passport', it will be impossible to fulfil our potential.

Acquiring and practising these six virtues (wisdom, love, self-control, integrity, fortitude, and justice) will help you fulfil your potential. You will be able to achieve all sorts of things in life when you have developed these important virtues (good moral habits), and you will be able to achieve more than you could without them.

You'll be happier and will travel further in life if you are a person of good character.

When you travel around the world and leave a country you have visited, your passport is stamped at customs with a rubber stamp that proves you've visited that country.

In the Narnian Virtues project, you will have your Character Passport stamped by your teacher each time you 'visit' a virtue by doing one of the Home Activities with your parent(s) or carer(s). Each week your teacher will invite you to show your most recently completed Home Activity in order to get your passport stamped.

'Visiting' a Virtue

You will continue 'visiting' (reading about, thinking about, working on) these virtues many times throughout this curriculum and throughout your life.

Don't think that when you have the stamp, you don't need to 'visit' that virtue any more. To be a person of good character, you will need to come back to each virtue again and again.

The more you practise a virtue, the stronger it becomes. On pages 7-9 you will find the six 'Narnian' virtues defined and explained. These are the virtues you will be working on all term—both at home and in school.

Note to Parents and Carers

If you share the responsibility of parenting the children in your care, you have the opportunity to help them develop good character. In this workbook, whenever we say 'parent(s)', we are referring to all adults in the home who are serving in the role of a parent.

This term, your child is reading the novel *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (from C. S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia*) and doing related classroom activities. Besides developing key English skills, your child will have the opportunity to grow in understanding and acting on six virtues shown by characters in the novel: wisdom (good judgement), love, integrity (honesty with self and others), fortitude (including courage), self-control and justice.

This Character Passport book invites you and your child to reinforce these six 'Narnian' virtues in family life through six **HOME ACTIVITIES**. We hope you'll find these activities enjoyable and rewarding, as well as helpful in strengthening your child's English skills.

Each time you and your child complete a Home Activity, your child's teacher will 'stamp' that activity in the *Character Passport* book. Some families may be able to do all six activities; others may not be able to complete them all. Just do your best and let us know what in fact you were able to do.

In HOME ACTIVITY 1, with your help, your child will choose the two Personal Target Virtues in which he or she most wants to improve during the term—and then make Virtue Improvement Plans (V.I.P.s). We're asking you and your child to have a weekly *conversation* to discuss how your child is doing on his or her chosen target virtues.

In the Final Evaluation, we ask you and your child to independently rate your child's progress on the two Target Virtues—and then indicate what you each feel you've gained from working on the Home Activities together and what we might do to improve the programme.

Why Are Parents So Important?

What is the crucial role that parents play in the moral growth of a child?

The family is the first school of virtue. It is where we learn to receive and give love. It's where we learn about commitment and sacrifice. The emotional bond between parent and child deepens the impact of a parent's values and example. Parents are also positioned to surround a child with a spiritual heritage that provides a vision of life's meaning and ultimate reasons to lead a good life.

What the Research Shows

The family is the cradle of learning. Studies show that children do better in school when they feel cared for at home; when the family environment stimulates curiosity and learning; when parents encourage self-discipline and perseverance; and when parents limit TV, monitor homework, and ensure regular school attendance (Barton and Coley, 1992).

In their synthesis of the research on 'Fostering Goodness', Berkowitz and Grych, writing in the *Journal of Moral Education*, identified five 'core parenting practices' that foster children's social and moral development:

- demandingness (high expectations and support for meeting them)
- reasoning (helping children understand how their actions affect others)
- nurturance (warmth and responsiveness)
- modelling (setting a good example in the treatment of others)
- empowerment (democratic practices that give children a voice in, and responsibility for, helping to create a happy family).

After implementing our Narnian Virtues Curriculum in autumn 2016 in eight schools in the North of England, we interviewed parents about their experience of the Home Activities that they and their children did together as a key part of the programme. Parents said those activities gave them and their children important openings for conversations about character. For example, one mother said:

It's been a good opportunity for my daughter to reflect on the virtues and vices in the books and how they relate to her own character traits.

Most of the parents interviewed said that the Home Activities had a positive impact on their child. Some gave very concrete examples. One mother said that in the weeks after the 'Turkish Delight' family activity on self-control, their son had learned to 'manage his time [on PlayStation] exceptionally well'.

Home Activity 1

My Character: Choosing Two Target Virtues

Parents: Before doing this activity, you could test your child on the definitions of the virtues given in the Virtues Vocabulary section above. This is something you could do together regularly throughout the project, to check that your child is learning and remembering the definitions. They could test you as well!

Student Self-Assessment (based on the six Narnian virtues): **Please tick all that apply to you; if you feel both statements for a particular virtue are true—that you show it some of the time but would like to do so more often—then tick both.**

Wisdom

- I show good judgement and make good decisions.
- I'd like to show better judgement and make good decisions more of the time.

Love

- I show kindness toward everyone in my family and toward people outside my family.
- I'd like to be kind more of the time.

Fortitude

- I overcome difficulties and failures and don't give up when the going gets tough.
- I'd like to show greater determination to keep trying when the going gets tough.

Integrity

- I stand up for what's right and follow my conscience instead of giving in to pressure.
- I'd like to stand up for what's right and follow my conscience more often.

Self-control

- I show self-control by resisting temptation and by not losing my temper or patience.
- I'd like to show greater self-control in more situations.

Justice

- I treat everyone with respect and 'own up' when I do something wrong.
- I'd like to be more respectful toward others and more responsible by admitting when I've done something wrong.

Choosing Two Target Virtues

Step 1, Parents/Carers: Suggest Three Target Virtues

In English, your child has been analysing virtues exhibited in the novel *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. A related activity had children put leaves on a Virtues Tree showing the virtues they wished to grow in. The 'My Character' exercise on the previous page was another step in that process. *Now please help your child choose two virtues to try to improve in during this school term. To help narrow it down to two virtues, can you suggest three you think he or she would benefit by working on?*

Parent 1 (suggestions for your child to consider):
Suggested Personal Target Virtue 1: _____
Suggested Personal Target Virtue 2: _____
Suggested Personal Target Virtue 3: _____

Parent 2:
Suggested Personal Target Virtue 1: _____
Suggested Personal Target Virtue 2: _____
Suggested Personal Target Virtue 3: _____

Step 2, Student: Choose Your Two Personal Target Virtues

After discussing with your parents their suggestions, list below the two Personal Target Virtues you are choosing to work on—and explain why. *Then decide which virtue you want to work on first—for this week. (Later, we'll ask you to begin to work on Target Virtue 2.)* For each Target Virtue, please write *at least one complete sentence* explaining why you chose that virtue. Make sure your punctuation is correct.

My Personal Target Virtue 1: _____
I chose this because
.....
.....
.....

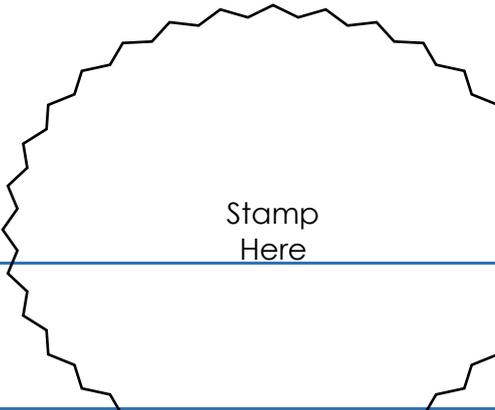
My Personal Target Virtue 2: _____
I chose this because
.....
.....
.....

Step 3, Student: Begin Working on Your Target Virtue 1

Please write one complete sentence, with correct punctuation: What is one specific thing you will do this week to try to improve in your Target Virtue?

Handwriting practice area with four sets of dotted lines for writing a sentence.

Student: Did you work with your parent(s) or other adults on this activity?	Yes	No
How long did you spend on this activity? ____ minutes		
Student's signature		

Parents/Carers: How long did you spend working with your child on this activity? ____ minutes	
Comments:	
Signature(s) of Parent(s)/Carer(s) who helped:	

Home Activity 3

What Is Your 'Turkish Delight'?

Among the most memorable character learning moments in reading and reflecting on *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* are the episodes of Edmund and the Turkish Delight.

In England during the 1950s, having Turkish Delight was popular at Christmas time. But the Turkish Delight in the novel is enchanted by the White Witch—and highly addictive. Edmund will do just about anything to get it, even betraying his own siblings.

At the end of this *Character Passport* book, in Appendix 1, are all 12 extracts from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Extracts 2, 3, and 7 describe Edmund's craving for Turkish Delight. Extracts 2 and 3 are the focus of the Week 2 and Week 3 lessons of the *Narnian Virtues* curriculum. So that you and your parent(s) have a shared understanding of Edmund's struggle, take a moment now to read those two extracts (reprinted below) aloud to your parents:

Extract 2: Edmund and the Turkish Delight

'Turkish Delight, please, your Majesty', said Edmund.

The Queen let another drop fall from her bottle on to the snow, and instantly there appeared a round box, tied with green silk ribbon, which, when opened, turned out to contain several pounds of the best Turkish Delight. Each piece was sweet and light to the very centre and Edmund had never tasted anything more delicious. He was quite warm now, and very comfortable.

While he was eating, the Queen kept asking him questions. At first Edmund tried to remember that it is rude to speak with one's mouth full, but soon he forgot about this and thought only of trying to shovel down as much Turkish Delight as he could, and the more he ate the more he wanted to eat, and he never asked himself why the Queen should be so inquisitive.

[...]

At last the Turkish Delight was all finished and Edmund was looking very hard at the empty box and wishing that she would ask him whether he would like some more. Probably the Queen knew quite well what he was thinking, for she knew, though Edmund did not, that this was enchanted Turkish Delight and that anyone who had once tasted it would want more and more of it, and would even, if they were allowed, go on eating it till they killed themselves. But she did not offer him any more.

Extract 3: Edmund Wants More Turkish Delight

'Son of Adam, I should so much like to see your brother and your two sisters. Will you bring them to see me?' 'I'll try', said Edmund, still looking at the empty box.

'Because, if you did come again - bringing them with you of course - I'd be able to give you some more Turkish Delight. I can't do it now; the magic will only work once. In my own house it would be another matter'.

'Why can't we go to your house now?' said Edmund. When he had first got on to the sledge he had been afraid that she might drive away with him to some unknown place from which he would not be able to get back; but he had forgotten about that fear now.

'It is a lovely place, my house', said the Queen'. I am sure you would like it. There are whole rooms full of Turkish Delight, and what's more, I have no children of my own. I want a nice boy whom I could bring up as a Prince and who would be King of Narnia when I am gone. While he was Prince he would wear a gold crown and eat Turkish Delight all day long; and you are much the cleverest and handsomest young man I've ever met. I think I would like to make you the Prince - someday, when you bring the others to visit me'.

'Why not now?' said Edmund. His face had become very red and his mouth and fingers were sticky. He did not look either clever or handsome, whatever the Queen might say.

As you read aloud, pay attention to your expression and intonation as well as your clarity and enunciation.

Your Turkish Delight

As part of the Week 3 classroom lessons, you were asked to begin thinking about your own 'Turkish Delight' and how you might try to control it:

Activity you did in class: Write about the things you struggle with. When do you find it difficult to do the right thing, to turn off a screen, or not to eat something?

Using the kind of language to help the reader empathise with your struggle, describe how you feel about the things that test your self-control. Then, write down a strategy to help you gain self-control. Perhaps you could set a time limit for yourself if you know you spend too long doing something, or ask someone to help you monitor how you are spending your time.

My Turkish Delight

In their book *Willpower* (2011), psychologist Roy Baumeister and science writer John Tierney note that many personal and societal problems are in part a failure of self-control: compulsive spending and borrowing, underachievement, procrastination at work, substance abuse, unhealthy diet, and explosive anger. They report that in a recent global survey, when people were asked to rank their character failings, *the lack of self-control topped the list*.

Family Activity: Discuss: Why is self-control so hard? Then, as a practical way for the whole family to work on improving in this challenging virtue, here is the 'Turkish Delight' activity we'd like you to do:

1. Find a small empty box, then give each family member (including yourself) a card or piece of paper. Ask them to write their answer to the question, What is your 'Turkish Delight'?
2. Then ask each person to read their card to the family, saying one thing they could do to try to get more control over whatever their 'Turkish Delight' is. After reading their card, the person asks the rest of the family: What else do you think I could do to gain more control over my 'Turkish Delight'? Family members should offer their suggestions in a respectful and supportive way.
3. Using their own ideas and, if possible, some of the family's suggestions, each person then writes out their **'Turkish Delight' Self-Control Plan** on the back of their Turkish Delight card, makes a copy to use as a reminder, and puts the original card in the box.
4. Once a week (or every other week), get the family together and have each person take their card out of the box and answer two questions:
 - What progress have I made in gaining more control over my 'Turkish Delight'?
 - What else could I do?

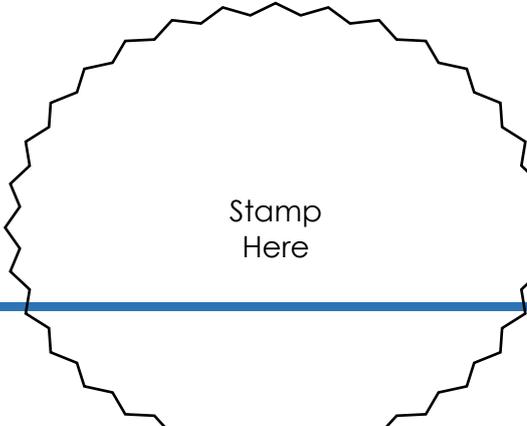
The family should applaud the person's progress before offering additional helpful suggestions that the person may wish to consider.

Student: As before, in the box below, rate the progress you made this week on your two target virtues.

Student's Self-Rating of Progress This Week on Personal Target Virtues 1 and 2		
Target Virtue 1:		
No real progress	Some progress	Much progress
Target Virtue 2:		
No real progress	Some progress	Much progress

Parent(s): Discuss with your child his or her self-rating, and what your child learned from trying out the revised V.I.P. for each virtue. Discuss together how the V.I.P.s can be improved for the next week.

Student: Did you work with your parent(s) or other adults on this activity?	Yes	No
How long did you spend on this activity? _____ minutes		
Student's signature		

Parents/Carers: How long did you spend working with your child on this activity? _____ minutes
Comments:

Signature(s) of Parent(s)/Carer(s) who helped:

References

Baumeister, R. F. and Tierney, J. (2011) *Willpower: Rediscovering the Greatest Human Strength* (New York: The Penguin Press).

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