

Friendship

A friend is a
person who
knows me and
still likes me.

A friend may well be
reckoned the masterpiece
of nature.

Ralph Waldo Emerson



December Character Connection Theme: Friendship

Definition

Friendship is “the condition or relation of being friends.” It is a “friendly feeling toward another” or “friendliness.”¹ A friend is a favored companion, a comrade² that one knows, likes and trusts. A friend supports, patronizes, and sympathizes.

Background

The 1997-98 Lindon Elementary PTA President wrote, “Every parent knows how crucial the choice of friends is for every child. Childhood friendships tell parents which way their children are behaving. They are important because good friends bring you up and bad friends bring you down. So it matters who our children’s friends are. We must teach children how to recognize counterfeit friendships, to know they are injurious, and to realize what is less than noble in us. Having friends is only half the relationship, of course, though it is the half that both children and parents tend to be most consciously concerned with. Being a friend is often more important to our moral development. The other side of ‘good friends bring you up’ is the side where you are the good friends, the active agent that brings the other up. To befriend a friendless or less fortunate schoolmate can be a profoundly maturing activity for a child.”

Nancy Devlin, columnist for the Star-Ledger of Newark, N.J. wrote, “Some children have computer friends and feel that is a satisfactory substitute. It is not the same. They can cut off computer friends by the flick of a switch. That is not emotional support. It is passive friendship. True friendship requires commitment and give and take. Children who have acquired this skill live happier lives and seem to thrive.”³

Perhaps the greatest challenge is to be a friend to someone who will not yet accept friendship. Mohandas Gandhi said, “It is easy enough to be friendly to one’s friends. But to befriend the one who regards himself as your enemy is the quintessence of true religion. The other is mere business.”⁴

Quotes

“A friend hears the song in my heart and sings it to me when my memory fails.”—Readers Digest⁵

“The only reward of virtue is virtue; the only way to have a friend is to be one.” --Ralph Waldo Emerson⁶

“Love is blind. Friendship closes its eyes.”--Anonymous⁷

“Friendship is the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with someone, having neither to weigh your thoughts or measure your words.” --George Eliot⁸

“Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Walk beside me and just be my friend.” --Albert Camus⁹

“Friendship improves happiness,
and abates misery,
by doubling our joy,
and dividing our grief.
--Joseph Addison¹⁰



¹ “friendship” The American Heritage Dictionary

² “friend” The American Heritage Dictionary

³ Devlin, Nancy. “Making friends: Parents can help children develop the skills needed to get along with peers,” Deseret News, March 12, 1997

⁴ “friend,” <http://www.quotationreference.com/quotefinder.php>, accessed November 7, 2001

⁵ http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_friendsandfriendship.html

⁶ The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, Third Edition, Oxford University Press, page 206

⁷ The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, Third Edition, Oxford University Press, page 9

⁸ Youth Motivation Institute, <http://www.a-motive.com/quotes.html#Friendship>, accessed November 6, 2001

⁹ “friend,” <http://www.quotationreference.com/quotefinder.php>, accessed November 8, 2001

¹⁰ The Treasure of Friendship. 1968 Hallmark Cards, Inc., page 20

Activities

**Ask each student to take an apple from a bag. Have the students look very carefully at their apple, noticing its shape, color, etc. Perhaps they can even decide the name of their apple. Ask a few students to tell about their apple. Perhaps they would like to write a story about their apple and how their friendship started. Then gather the apples back into the bag, mix them up and see if the students can find “their” apple. Comment on how we are all important distinct individuals with unique and interesting qualities. *Being a friend to someone means learning about and then being able to recognize and value him or her.*

**Have students sit in a circle. As a ball is tossed to each student he or she says a favorite (food, color, place, person . . .) During the next round, the person receiving the ball must remember and say the favorite of the person tossing the ball.

**Give a “Friend of the Day” award.

**Have students be a secret pal at recess with someone in the class.

**Make a friendship Christmas wreath. As each student reaches out in friendship to another, have the student trace his hand on green paper and write his name and that of the new friend. Add the hand to the wreath, forming holly leaves.

**As a class, memorize a poem such as this one:

“Make new friends, but keep the old;
Those are silver, these are gold.
New-made friendship, like new wine,
Age will mellow and refine.
Friendships that have stood the test—
Time and change—are surely best;
Brow may wrinkle, hair grow gray;
Friendship never knows decay.
For ‘mid old friends, tried and true,
Once more we our youth renew.
But old friends, alas! May die;
New friends must their place supply.
Cherish friendship in your breast—
New is good, but old is best;
Make new friends, but keep the old;
Those are silver, these are gold.”¹¹ --Joseph Parry



Stories

Friends¹²

At the November 21, 1997 meeting of Character Connection, a Lindon community member told a story of a Minnesota math class: At one point in the lesson, the math teacher assigned the students to write the name of each member in the class on a piece of paper. Beside the name, the student was to write a positive comment about that student. The teacher then gathered the papers. For each student, the teacher compiled the list of positive comments from his class members. At the next class, the teacher passed these papers out and gave the students just a few minutes to look them over, then continued with the subject for the day. After several years, the teacher attended a funeral for one of these students. She was shown this same list, now worn and tattered, that was found with the deceased student. Several other students standing nearby also told of the importance their lists had been. *Read*

¹¹ The Treasure of Friendship. 1968 Hallmark Cards, Inc., page 27

¹² from 1997 Lindon Elementary Character Connection resources.

the complete story at <http://www.snopes.com/glurge/allgood.asp>.¹³ The esteem and good words of peers and friends is priceless.

A Friend at the Window

The October 29, 1997 Provo Daily Herald carried an article by Rusty Payne about an 81 year old Orem man, Evaughn McCandless, who had acquired many friends. After McCandless' wife died in 1987 a group of friends decided they would drive by and wave or maybe even stop in for a visit. The idea became popular with others and soon "McCandless became a well-known entity in Provo and Orem."

"Whether you were having a good day or a rough one, you always knew you had a friend ready to wave and smile at you as you drove by . . . Because of the popularity and many friendships he made, McCandless passed away with four guest books worth of visitors' names, as well as four photo albums of pictures of his new friends." A song was even composed about his smiles, waves and friendships. *Simple thoughtful acts can make and strengthen friendships!*

Writing or Discussion Topics

**Have students talk to their parents about friendship, their best friends, how they make friends, and how they continue friendship. What does friendship have to do with the world of work?

**Have students write about how they met their friend.

**Is it easier to be a friend with someone who is the same as you or different from you? Why?

**Have students complete the sentence, "Friendship is like a _____ because _____."

**It is said that the roots of giant sequoias are just barely below the surface. The trees grow only in groves with their roots intertwined together. When the storms and winds blow, the trees hold each other up.¹⁴ *What qualities are needed to build strong friendships? How can friends hold each other up?*

**A person who signed himself as "Looking for Friends" asked Abigail Van Buren how to make friends. Part of her reply was, "Being a good conversationalist is an art that can be cultivated . . . Being a good listener will do more for you than being a good talker. People enjoy talking about themselves when given a chance, and they'll end up thinking you are a fascinating conversationalist."¹⁵ Have students write some helpful advice to "Looking for Friends" on how to acquire and keep friends.

Role Plays

**An alien spaceship has just landed. *How would David befriend the aliens?*

**Kara has just moved to Japan. She does not speak Japanese. *How can Kara make friends?*

Book List

The Velveteen Rabbit by Margery Williams

How the Grinch Stole Christmas by Dr. Suess

Pink and Say by Patricia Polacco

One of Each by Mary Ann Hoberman

"What Was I Scared Of?" *The Sneetches* by Dr. Suess

"The Bear and the Traveler" (*The Book of Virtues*, page 271)

"The Cat and the Mouse in Partnership" (*The Book of Virtues*, page 272)

"Selfish Giant" (*The Book of Virtues*, page 292)

"Rockinghorse Land" (*The Book of Virtues*, page 286)



January: Cooperation

February: Trustworthy

March: Accountability

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¹³ Mikkelson, Barbara and David P. "All the Good Things!" <http://www.snopes.com/glurge/allgood.asp> accessed June 12, 2005

¹⁴ Youth Motivation Institute, <http://www.a-motive.com/quotes.html#Sequoias>, accessed November 6, 2001

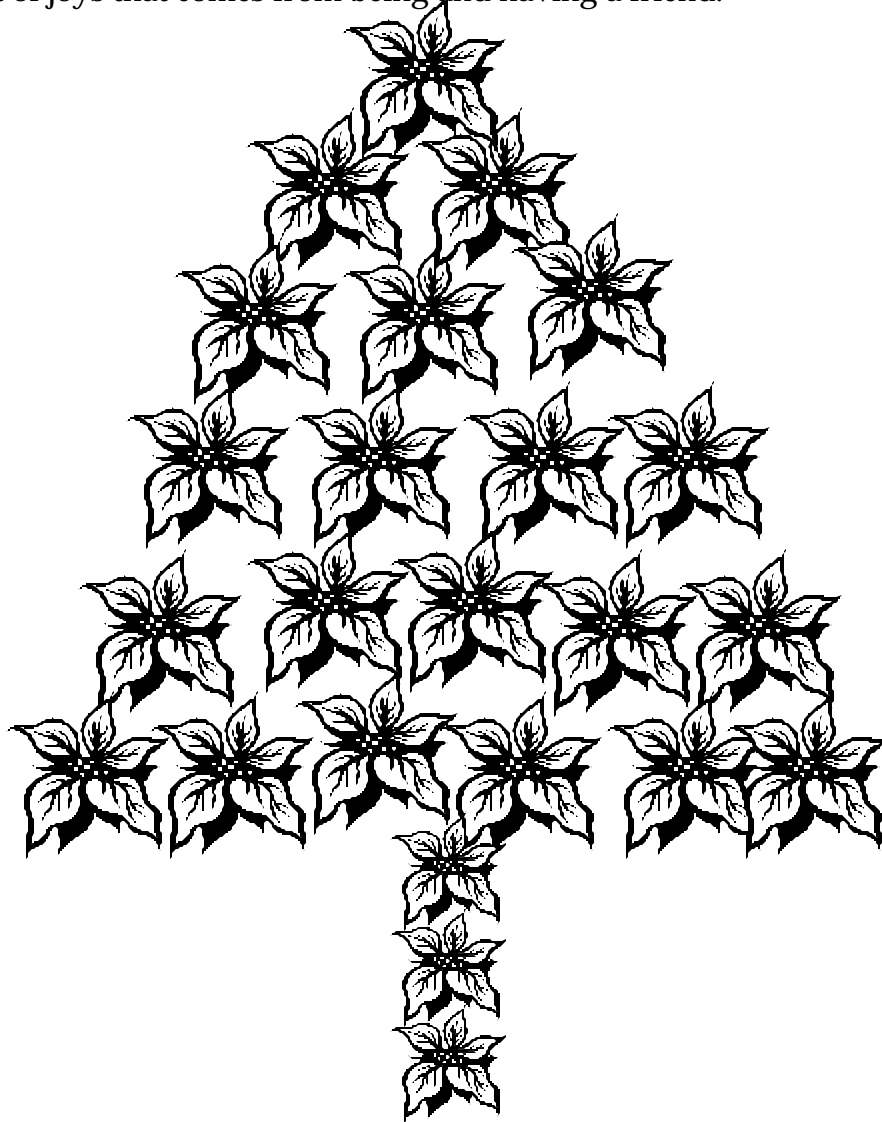
¹⁵ "Listening more important than talking when making friends," Deseret News, Thursday, October 9, 1997



Name _____

Friendship Advent Calendar

Lois L. Kaufman said, "Plant a seed of friendship; reap a bouquet of happiness." Each day of December, plant a seed of friendship through a kind act or word. Color one poinsettia on the Christmas tree and write about your kindness on the back of this paper. On December 24th reflect on the bouquet of joys that comes from being and having a friend.



"A friendship can weather most things and thrive in thin soil -- but it needs a little mulch of letters and phone calls and small silly presents every so often -- just to save it from drying out completely." —Pam Brown

"True friendship is like sound health, the value of it is seldom known until it be lost." —Charles Caleb Colton

"Go oft to the house of thy friend, for weeds choke the unused path."-- Ralph Waldo Emerson¹⁶

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¹⁶ http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_friendsandfriendship.html, Accessed Nov. 8, 2001