

*Loyalty*

Being  
Committed and  
Worthy of Trust

“Unless you find  
some sort of  
loyalty, you  
cannot find unity  
and peace in your  
active living.”

~ Josiah Royce ~

## May Character Connection Theme: Loyalty

### Definitions

Loyalty is “the state or quality of being loyal; faithfulness to commitments or obligations.” It “connotes sentiment and the feeling of devotion which one holds for one’s country, creed, family, friend, etc.”<sup>1</sup> Here are some ways to show loyalty:

- \*Be a good friend
- \*Don’t talk about others behind their backs
- \*Be strong in what you believe and care about
- \*Choose carefully what you are loyal to



Edwin Hubbel Chapin said, "No more important duty can be urged upon those who are entering the great theater of life than simple loyalty to their best convictions."

During the Civil War, on September 6, 1862, when Confederate troops marched through Frederick, Maryland, Mrs. Mary Quantrell, a Unionist, and her young daughter stood at their front gate and boldly waved the Stars and Stripes. A Confederate officer was touched by their bravery. He saluted Mrs. Quantrell and said, "To you, madam, not your flag."<sup>2</sup> John Greenleaf Whittier popularized the incident in his poem, "Barbara Frietchie." (<http://www.rootsweb.com/~orducw/poem.htm>) However, instead of writing about Mrs. Quantrell, in his poem he used the local legend Barbara Frietchie, and Confederate leader Stonewall Jackson.<sup>3</sup>

Said Norman Thomas, "The secret of a good life is to have the right loyalties and hold them in the right scale of values." Loyalty is standing by family, friends and country. A loyal person does not spread rumors or engage in gossip. "An ounce of loyalty is worth a pound of cleverness." (Elbert Hubbard)

### Quotes

"Unless you can find some sort of loyalty, you cannot find unity and peace in your active living." ~Josiah Royce~

**"Loyalty means nothing unless it has at its heart the absolute principle of self-sacrifice."** ~Woodrow T. Wilson~

"You can buy a person's time; you can buy their physical presence at a given place . . . but you cannot buy loyalty. You cannot buy the devotion of hearts, minds, or souls. You must earn these."

~Clarence Francis~

"The best things in life are never rationed. Friendship, loyalty, and love. They do not require coupons." ~George T. Hewitt~<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>From Webster Encyclopedia Dictionary, Pg. 851.

<sup>2</sup> <http://cgibin1.erols.com/kfraser/frietchieexp.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <http://cgibin1.erols.com/kfraser/frietchieexp.htm>

<sup>4</sup>[http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/quotes\\_search.html](http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/quotes_search.html)

## Activities

\*\*Read the following poem and discuss how being loyal requires sacrifice, not just words:

### Which Loved Best?

"I love you, Mother," said little John: Then, forgetting his work, his cap went on,  
And he was off to the garden swing, and left her the water and wood to bring.  
"I love you, Mother," said rosy Nell—"I love you better than tongue can tell";  
Then she teased and pouted full half the day, till her mother rejoiced when she went to play.  
"I love you, Mother," said little Fran; "Today I'll help you all I can;  
How glad I am that school doesn't keep!" So she rocked the babe till it fell asleep.  
Then, stepping softly, she fetched the broom, and swept the floor and tidied the room;  
Busy and happy all day was she, helpful and happy as child could be.  
I love you, Mother," again they said, three little children going to bed;  
How do you think that mother guessed which of them really loved her best?<sup>5</sup>



\*\*Write each student's name on a slip of paper and put in a hat. Have students each draw a name out of the hat. For one week have them practice being a good friend to the person they picked. If appropriate, have some students share their experiences about how to be a good friend.

\*\*Help the class understand the damage of gossiping or talking behind someone's back by playing "the gossip game." Line class up and whisper a statement into the ear of the first person in line. Have them repeat what they heard to the next person in line and so forth. Have the last person repeat out loud what he heard. Then repeat what the original statement was. *How far off were the two statements? How does this compare with what happens to gossip?*

## Stories

### Loyalty to a Brother

"One of two brothers fighting in the same company in France fell by a German bullet. The one who escaped asked permission of his officer to go and bring his brother in. 'He is probably dead,' said the officer, 'and there is no use in your risking your life to bring in his body.' But after further pleading the officer consented. Just as the soldier reached the lines with his brother on his shoulders, the wounded man died. 'There, you see,' said the officer, 'you risked your life for nothing.' 'No,' replied Tom. 'I did what he expected of me, and I have my reward. When I crept up to him and took him in my arms, he said, 'Tom, I knew you would come—I just felt you would come.'"<sup>6</sup>

### Nathan Hale

Ever since Nathan Hale was executed by the British in 1776, his name has been recognized for extreme loyalty to his country. Washington needed to know the dispositions and intentions of the British forces and asked Hale and other officers of his regiment to volunteer for an intelligence mission behind enemy lines. Nathan Hale alone stepped forward. Before the mission he said "I am fully sensible of the consequences of discovery and capture in such a situation. . . Yet. . I wish to be useful, and every kind of service, necessary to the public good, becomes honorable by being necessary." Disguised as a schoolmaster, he crossed into British territory and obtained the needed information. He hid the information in his shoe and was returning home when the British captured him. The next morning, without sympathy or support,

<sup>5</sup>Bennett, William J., The Book of Virtues. Simon & Schuster, 1993.

<sup>6</sup>Bennett, William J., The Book of Virtues. Simon & Schuster, 1993.

save that from above, he was executed following this famous statement “I only regret, that I have but one life to lose for my country.”<sup>7</sup>



## Knute Rockne

Knute Rockne was the coach of the Notre Dame’s football team from 1918-1930. He had a phenomenal coaching record: 105 games won, 12 lost, 5 tied. Rockne preached loyalty, and he practiced it by remaining at Notre Dame despite many attractive offers from other schools. His loyalty was cemented by an incident that happened in 1921. His team was upset by Iowa despite the fact that they were favored to beat Iowa. The glum coach and team pulled into their destination on the train at 1:00 a.m. when they heard the familiar Notre Dame cheer known as the Skyrocket. They discovered a thousand boys had marched three miles into town to meet the beaten team. The coach had trouble pulling himself together but finally said “After this I will never leave Notre Dame as long as you want me.” And he never left.<sup>8</sup>

## Writing or Discussion Topics

\*\*Discuss different ideas, values, and people that solicit loyalties. How should loyalties be determined? Have students talk to their parents about loyalty in families and at the work place. How is loyalty shown to siblings, parents, employers, and fellow employees? Are there circumstances where certain loyalties would be inappropriate? Have students write about an experience they have had in being loyal to someone or something.

\*\*Talk about the false loyalty to friends that is exhibited by “not telling on them” or lying to protect them. Explain that if someone has done something wrong, a truly loyal companion would try to help him to admit and rectify the mistake. If the destructive behavior continued, a good friend would tell someone before the trouble escalated.<sup>9</sup> Talk about the idea that loyalty to a friend is really loyalty to their best interest.<sup>10</sup>

\*\*Discuss whether or not loyalties change and whether it is acceptable for them to change.

## Role Plays

\*\*Mike is on a soccer team that has lost every game this season. There are only 3 games left and Mike is discouraged. He doesn’t want to finish the season. *How could Mike show his loyalty to his teammates and coach? Do you have to like what you are loyal to?*

\*\*Kaitlin has had the same group of good friends for 4 years. Jane, a new girl, wants to be friends with Kaitlin but doesn’t like the rest of the group. Jane says things to Kaitlin to get her to stop being friends with them. *What could Kaitlin say to Jane to show her loyalty to her group of friends? How does someone determine who they want to be loyal to?*

\*\*Doug believes strongly that dishonesty in school is wrong. He heard his friend Steve bragging one day about cheating on a test. Later the teacher asked Doug if he knew whether Steve cheated on the test. *What will Doug have to do to determine his loyalties in this situation? Are loyalties stronger than friendships?*

## Book List

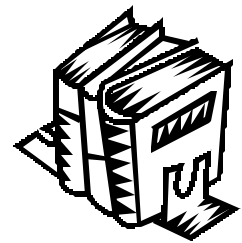
Rabbit Inn by Patience Brewster

Toot and Puddle by Holly Hobbie

A Special Trade by Karen Gundersheimer

Julius the Baby of the World by Kevin Henkes

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<sup>7</sup>Bennett, William J., The Book of Virtues. Simon & Schuster, 1993.

<sup>8</sup>Bennett, William J., The Book of Virtues. Simon & Schuster, 1993.

<sup>9</sup>Eyre, Richard and Linda, Teaching your Children Values. Simon & Schuster, 1993.

<sup>10</sup> Kalas, Steven, “Human Matters: A friend is loyal only to a friend’s best interests, <http://www.lvrj.com/living/8153997.html>, accessed August 1, 2007

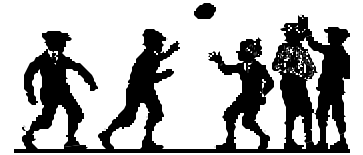
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### Loyalty Word Search



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loyalty  
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devoted  
 loyal  
 fealty  
 obligation  
 patriotism



