

Storyvalues and Character Education

About Storyvalues, Character Education and Social Emotional Learning

Storyvalues is an interactive online resource that uses the ancient oral tradition of storytelling as a foundation for character education, SEL, literacy, language arts and inclusive community building. At the centre of the program are recorded and written versions of classic myths, legends and folktales selected for their ability to model character values, cultural identity and creative thinking.

Storyvalues - Conceptual Background

Stories (and storytelling) have been used throughout history as a fundamental way in which values have been passed along through succeeding generations. **Storyvalues** is a modern expression of this ancient tradition, expanded in scope through use of recorded stories, interactive online media, graphics, video, art, music and follow up materials that deliver content to meet modern educational requirements.

At the centre of the program are selected stories presented in written and recorded form. The recordings, featuring narration enhanced with culturally accurate music and sound effects, provide active listening experiences that inspire creative visualization and imaginative participation in each story. Extensive follow up materials provide educators and parents with discussion and activity suggestions that facilitate students understanding of the character attributes, SEL concepts and cultural context of each story.

The program is presented as a media-rich interactive web experience that offers opportunities for elementary school students to become knowledgeable in traditional literature, world culture, music, art and other areas of study.

Using Stories as a Foundation for Social Emotional Learning

Storytelling is a tradition and art that is shared by every culture on earth. Through stories we communicate individual insight and perspective; we give voice to archetypal situations and characters that speak to the unified human experience that underlies personal and cultural diversity.

Stories embody conflict, resolution, decisions and consequences; they provide models of heroism and integrity as they inform the intellect and spark the imagination. Fundamentally, they present a gestalt of information that encompasses fact, imagination, dreams and reality, to express the qualities of life that define the human experience. As such, they are an ideal vehicle with which to explore the positive character values people of all cultures share.

Storyvalues Program Details

Storyvalues consists of two components: *Storyvalues Interactive for School* and *Storyvalues Interactive for Home*. Both support a wide range of curricular and co-curricular areas of study, including but not limited to: Social Studies, History, Literacy, Arts Education, Reading, Language, Geography, Equity and Diversity, Positive Learning Climate and Bullying Prevention.

We have organized the essential elements of Character Education in the following ways:

- 1. Respect for Diversity**
- 2. Citizenship Development**
- 3. Learning and Academic Achievement**
- 4. Parent and Community Partnerships**

Storyvalues supports the essential elements of Character Education in the following ways:

1. Respect for Diversity

Every aspect of Storyvalues is devoted to increasing awareness of and respect for diversity.

Multicultural folktales model the positive character values and forms of creative expression that people of

every culture have in common. Using stories as a point of entry, students explore, experience and learn about traditional literature, music and art from around the world. The interactive media and follow up materials present opportunities to develop and manifest positive character attributes through inclusive story-based classroom discussions and cooperative learning activities.

Storyvalues provides students with a positive interactive media experience that reflects and celebrates the multicultural world in which we live. The program offers opportunities to become familiar with multiple points of view and ways to manifest inclusiveness in class, school and in society.

2. Citizenship Development

Storyvalues supports the development of responsible citizenry in specific ways: The *Character Education* component of the program focuses on engendering positive character values while highlighting the roles and responsibilities of each student in contributing to safe, supportive learning environments and communities. Stories and follow up discussion and activity suggestions explore cultural and personal diversity, supporting inclusive community through cooperative learning and creative activities. Specific applications (such as bullying prevention and environmental awareness) are indicated in the program index.

Storyvalues places strong emphasis upon empowering the individual to manifest his or her own best potential, to the benefit of self and society. **Storyvalues** thus contributes to the essential goals of helping students achieve respect for self and others and to be positive, active, contributing members of society.

3. Learning and Academic Achievement

As an interactive online resource, **Storyvalues** presents opportunities for students to experience the character development potential of traditional literature in several ways; through audio recordings, video, informative pop up windows, sound files, art, motion design and graphics. Most importantly, the program engages students in being active participants in the learning process by providing materials and lessons that appeal to the imagination as well as the intellect.

Storyvalues also provides excellent support for *Language* and *Arts Curriculums*. Using **Storyvalues**, educators can fulfill SEL and Character Education requirements with study plans that encompass a wide range of curricular and co-curricular areas of study. Many educators use **Storyvalues** as a foundation for multimedia projects, dramatic presentations and character education assemblies.

4. Parent and Community Partnerships

Storyvalues facilitates parental involvement in school and district literacy, SEL and character education initiatives by providing access to the program to students and their families at home. When a district licenses the **Storyvalues Interactive** program, families have access to the same stories that are available at school.

For school use, educators are provided with extensive follow up discussion and activity suggestions that accompany each story.

For home use, parents may access a truncated version of these materials, presented as an easily accessible online interactive slide show. In both cases, the follow up materials explore the character education, cultural and creative content embodied in the story with discussion and creative activity suggestions.

By providing the program for use at home, **Storyvalues** can serve as a bridge between the school and the community, providing materials that reflect and celebrate cultural and personal diversity, emphasizing the positive character values and creative expressions people of every culture have in common.