

# Character Strengths

Kindergarten - Fifth Grade

Compiled by A. Nicoliadis and M. Naylor

# Goals for the Year

- To create a school environment where students start to know themselves as learners and people
- To help students see the strengths in themselves and each other
- To build relationships and create a context for problem solving and celebrations

<b>WISDOM</b>	<b>CREATIVITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Originality</li> <li>• Adaptive</li> <li>• Ingenuity</li> </ul>	<b>CURIOSITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest</li> <li>• Novelty-Seeking</li> <li>• Exploration</li> <li>• Openness</li> </ul>	<b>JUDGMENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical Thinking</li> <li>• Thinking Things Through</li> <li>• Open-mindedness</li> </ul>	<b>LOVE OF LEARNING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mastering New Skills &amp; Topics</li> <li>• Systematically Adding to Knowledge</li> </ul>	<b>PERSPECTIVE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wisdom</li> <li>• Providing Wise Counsel</li> <li>• Taking the Big Picture View</li> </ul>
<b>COURAGE</b>	<b>BRAVERY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valor</li> <li>• Not Shrinking from Fear</li> <li>• Speaking Up for What's Right</li> </ul>	<b>PERSEVERANCE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistence</li> <li>• Industry</li> <li>• Finishing What One Starts</li> </ul>	<b>HONESTY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authenticity</li> <li>• Integrity</li> </ul>	<b>ZEST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vitality</li> <li>• Enthusiasm</li> <li>• Vigor</li> <li>• Energy</li> <li>• Feeling Alive</li> </ul>	
<b>HUMANITY</b>	<b>LOVE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both Loving and Being Loved</li> <li>• Valuing Close Relations with Others</li> </ul>	<b>KINDNESS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generosity</li> <li>• Nurturance</li> <li>• Care &amp; Compassion</li> <li>• Altruism</li> <li>• "Niceness"</li> </ul>			<b>SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aware of the Motives/Feelings of Self/Others</li> <li>• Knowing what Makes Other People Tick</li> </ul>
<b>JUSTICE</b>	<b>TEAMWORK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizenship</li> <li>• Social Responsibility</li> <li>• Loyalty</li> </ul>			<b>FAIRNESS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just</li> <li>• Not Letting Feelings Bias Decisions About Others</li> </ul>	<b>LEADERSHIP</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizing Group Activities</li> <li>• Encouraging a Group to Get Things Done</li> </ul>
<b>TEMPERANCE</b>		<b>FORGIVENESS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mercy</li> <li>• Accepting Others' Shortcomings</li> <li>• Giving People a Second Chance</li> </ul>	<b>HUMILITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modesty</li> <li>• Letting One's Accomplishments Speak for Themselves</li> </ul>	<b>PRUDENCE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Careful</li> <li>• Cautious</li> <li>• Not Taking Undue Risks</li> </ul>	<b>SELF-REGULATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-Control</li> <li>• Disciplined</li> <li>• Managing Impulses &amp; Emotions</li> </ul>
<b>TRANSCENDENCE</b>	<b>APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY &amp; EXCELLENCE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awe</li> <li>• Wonder</li> <li>• Elevation</li> </ul>	<b>GRATITUDE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thankful for the Good</li> <li>• Expressing Thanks</li> <li>• Feeling Blessed</li> </ul>	<b>HOPE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimism</li> <li>• Future-Mindedness</li> <li>• Future Orientation</li> </ul>	<b>HUMOR</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playfulness</li> <li>• Bringing Smiles to Others</li> <li>• Lighthearted</li> </ul>	<b>SPIRITUALITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religiousness</li> <li>• Faith</li> <li>• Purpose</li> <li>• Meaning</li> </ul>

# How to Tap Into Your Character Strengths to Change Your Life

Created by **happify**

Science-based activities & games for a happier, healthier life at [Happify.com](http://Happify.com)

## CHARACTER STRENGTHS

Character strengths—our capacity for thinking, feeling, willing and behaving—reflect what's best in us. They're part of how we positively identify ourselves.



### HOW IT WORKS



Over 10 years ago, some of the world's leading psychologists like **Martin Seligman** and **Christopher Peterson** came together to compile character strengths that people of all ages, cultures and nations exhibit.

The **VIA Institute on Character** created scientifically valid assessments to help people determine their unique strengths profile.



There are 24 VIA character strengths that fall under 6 broad categories:

<b>Wisdom &amp; Knowledge</b> ✓ Creativity ✓ Curiosity ✓ Love of Learning ✓ Judgment ✓ Perspective	<b>Justice</b> ✓ Teamwork ✓ Fairness ✓ Leadership
<b>Courage</b> ✓ Bravery ✓ Honesty ✓ Perseverance ✓ Zest	<b>Temperance</b> ✓ Forgiveness ✓ Prudence ✓ Humility ✓ Self-Regulation
<b>Humanity</b> ✓ Love ✓ Kindness ✓ Social Intelligence	<b>Transcendence</b> ✓ Appreciation of Beauty ✓ Gratitude ✓ Hope ✓ Humor ✓ Spirituality

Each one of us possesses all 24 strengths, but in different amounts. Your "signature strengths" are your top strengths—the ones that are most essential to who you are.

**The most prevalent character strengths in human beings are:**

1. Kindness
2. Fairness
3. Judgment
4. Honesty
5. Gratitude

### The least common?



1. Prudence
2. Modesty
3. Self-regulation

Not only do our character strengths make us feel good about ourselves, but science shows that using and developing them also makes us happier and healthier.

### THE KEY? ACTUALLY USING YOUR STRENGTHS!

One study found that those who use their character strengths experience greater physical and mental well-being than those who don't.



That's because tapping into our strengths helps us make progress on our goals, boosting our feelings of independence and competence.

### TO USE ONE OF YOUR STRENGTHS TODAY ...

<p><b>Pique your curiosity</b> by eating at a restaurant you've never tried before.</p>	<p><b>Stoke your creativity</b> by rearranging a room in your home.</p>	<p><b>Encourage your love of learning</b> by memorizing five new vocabulary words.</p>
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<p><b>Practice perseverance</b> by chipping away at a tough project at work.</p>	<p><b>Renew your zest</b> by trying a new, physically challenging activity.</p>
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## USING YOUR STRENGTHS BOOSTS YOUR HEALTH

If you're sick, tapping into your strengths—especially **bravery, kindness, and humor**—can help:

Research shows that physical disorders take less of a toll on life satisfaction if someone is high on these character strengths.



**There's good reason to have an attitude of gratitude:** Counting your blessings is linked to fewer physical symptoms, optimism, more time spent exercising and improved well-being.

**Do you use your heart or your head?** Turns out strengths of the "heart" (like love and gratitude) are more strongly associated with well-being than are strengths of the "head" (like creativity and judgment).

## USING YOUR STRENGTHS AT THE OFFICE

## USING YOUR STRENGTHS AT THE OFFICE

In one study...

**81%** of people who've had strengths-based career counseling are employed **VS.** **60%** of people who've had conventional career counseling

**Looking to Lean In?** Research shows that women who use their signature strengths in the workplace create a "virtuous circle" in which they're able to overcome obstacles that had impeded them from using their strengths in the past.

**4 is the magic number** Use 4 or more of your signature strengths at the office and you'll have a more positive work experience.

**Feeling Swamped?** Strengths that were determined to be a "high match" with work demands are honesty, judgment, perspective, fairness and zest.

## MEN VS. WOMEN

In a study of gender differences and character strengths:

**Women scored highest on:**

- ✓ Honesty
- ✓ Kindness
- ✓ Love
- ✓ Gratitude
- ✓ Fairness

**Men scored highest on:**

- ✓ Honesty
- ✓ Hope
- ✓ Humor
- ✓ Gratitude
- ✓ Curiosity

**Did You Know?** Women tend to be higher on gratitude than men, even though this trait ranks fourth for both sexes.

## TAP INTO YOUR STRENGTHS, BOOST YOUR MOOD

The 5 strengths that are most connected with happiness are:

1. Curiosity	2. Zest	3. Hope	4. Gratitude	5. Love
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If you're high on **zest**, you're more likely to view your work as a "calling" rather than as a means for money or career advancement.

Using your signature strengths—those strengths most essential to who you are—in a new way each day has been shown to increase happiness and decrease depression for 6 months.



### NEED SOME INSPIRATION? TRY ...

<p>Showing <b>kindness</b> by visiting an elderly relative or neighbor in a nursing home.</p>	<p>Showing <b>loyalty</b> by cooking a favorite meal for a friend this weekend.</p>
<p>Expressing <b>honesty</b> by owning up to one little white lie you told this month—even if it's just to yourself!</p>	<p>Remembering <b>optimism</b> by naming one positive outcome of a recent negative event.</p>
<p>Being <b>grateful</b> by writing a note to someone who influenced you as a kid.</p>	<p>Exploring <b>leadership</b> by organizing a team-building activity with your co-workers.</p>
<p>Feeling <b>love</b> by requesting a special date with your partner one night this week.</p>	<p>Tapping into your <b>humor</b> by learning—and telling—one new joke today.</p>

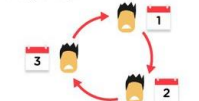
**Want to give your happiness the biggest boost?** Send a nice, quick email to a loved one. One study showed that this amplified the mood-boosting effects of using your strengths.



**Use a strength today, reap the rewards tomorrow** One study found a relationship between using signature strengths the previous day and positive mood the following day.

If you're feeling a little down, it's even more important to use one of your strengths today:

Research shows a connection between decreased mood and not using a strength the next day, creating a negative cycle.



**So, what are your top strengths?** Get to know yourself better by taking the VIA assessment on Happify! Visit [Happify.com/strengths](http://Happify.com/strengths)



Brought to you by **happify**™ Build skills for a happier life with fun, science-based activities and games at [www.happify.com](http://www.happify.com)

# Character Strengths Resources

(Links can be accessed in presentation mode)

- For educators: [viacharacter.org](http://viacharacter.org)
- Graphics: [viacharacter.org/ Classification](http://viacharacter.org/Classification)
- [classdojo.com](http://classdojo.com)
- [edutopia.org](http://edutopia.org)
- [perts.net](http://perts.net) (growth mindset)
- [Character Education Books](http://www.santeesd.net/cms/lib/ca01000468/centricity/domain/26/character_ed_bibliography.pdf)  
[http://www.santeesd.net/cms/lib/ca01000468/centricity/domain/26/character\\_ed\\_bibliography.pdf](http://www.santeesd.net/cms/lib/ca01000468/centricity/domain/26/character_ed_bibliography.pdf)
- [youtube](https://www.youtube.com)

# More Character Strength Resources

(Links can be accessed in presentation mode)

- Character Lab [characterlab.org](http://characterlab.org)
- [Science of Character](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3nT2KDAGOc) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3nT2KDAGOc>
- [Pinterest](#)
- Teachers Pay Teachers [teacherspayteacher.com](http://teacherspayteacher.com)
- [sunshine-parenting.com](http://sunshine-parenting.com)
- [khanacademy.org](http://khanacademy.org)
- [Scholastic](#)