



Unity

February

Unity

Character Qualities

- Responsibility
- Respect
- Thankfulness
- Caring
- Perseverance
- Unity
- Integrity
- Service
- Moral Courage
- Citizenship
- Fairness
- Self Control

“I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.”

Martin Luther King Jr.

City of Mission Viejo
200 Civic Center
Mission Viejo, CA 92691

Unity is a quality which includes many positive features, such as teamwork, agreement, harmony, support, sharing, selflessness, oneness, collaboration, brotherhood, and friendship. Families, sports teams, bands, choirs, orchestras, businesses, service organizations, schools, churches, and neighborhoods are all areas where *unity* is imperative.

Unity is the mainstay of many organizations and professions. This is evident by uniforms worn by members, common goals, and teamwork required in order to achieve a mission. Some examples include the Armed Services, police and fire departments, sports teams, surgical teams, music groups, and service organizations. Experts in the business world have listed *unity* among the most important traits a leader must provide in order to be successful. One executive stated, “Success can only be achieved when there is a *unity* of effort to obtain it.”

The human body provides a good example of *unity*. There are many diverse parts, each with a different purpose, but all work together for the common good of the entire body.

Stephen Covey states in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, that *unity* is not uniformity or sameness. Rather, it is “oneness” or “complementariness.” Webster defines “complement” as that which completes or brings to perfection. Achieving *unity* with others creates the synergy which makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts. *Unity*, or complementing each other in a group or project, provides the advantage of synergy.

Sean Covey also describes great teamwork as a piece of music. All of the voices and instruments may be singing and playing at once, but they are not competing. Individually, the instruments and voices make different sounds, play different notes, pause at

different times; yet they blend together to create a whole new sound! He states that synergy is achieved when two or more people work together to create a better solution than either could alone.

America is a diverse country, made up of individuals of different ethnicities and cultures. We are 50 individual States, yet we are the *United* States of America. The inscription on our money, “E Pluribus Unum” (from the many come one), our flag, and the Pledge of Allegiance are great reminders of the *unity* of our Nation: ***I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands: one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.***

Through *unity* we can recognize our limitations and appreciate the resources available through others. We are all stronger when we work together!

The Father and His Sons ***An Aesop’s Fable on Unity***

A father had a family of sons who were perpetually quarreling among themselves. When he failed to heal their disputes by his exhortations, he determined to give them a practical illustration of the evils of disunion; and for this purpose he one day told them to bring him a bundle of sticks. When they had done so, he placed the bundle into the hands of each of them in succession, and ordered them to break it in pieces. They tried with all their strength, and were not able to do it. He next opened the bundle, took the sticks separately, one by one, and again put them into his sons’ hands, upon which they broke them easily. He then addressed them in these words: ***“My sons, if you are of one mind, and unite to assist each other, you will be as this bundle, uninjured by all the attempts of your enemies; but if you are divided among yourselves, you will be broken as easily as these individual sticks.”***

Books and Movies of Character

Fiction Books

Building a Bridge
by Lisa Shook Begaye
(Kindergarten to 2nd Grade)

The Other Side
by Jacqueline Woodson
(Preschool to 3rd Grade)

Sister Anne's Hands
by Marybeth Lorbiecki
(Preschool to 3rd Grade)

We All Sing With the Same Voice
by J. Philip Miller
(Preschool to 2nd Grade)

Yo! Yes?
by Chris Raschka
(Toddler to 1st Grade)

Nonfiction Books

Peaceful Protest: The Life of Nelson Mandela By Yona Zeldis McDonough
(1st to 5th Grade)

Tecumseh, 1768-1813
by Rachel A. Koestler-Grack
(4th to 7th Grade)

Democracy Reader: Classical and Modern Speeches, Essays, Poems, Declarations, and Documents on Freedom and Human Rights Worldwide
edited by Diane Ravitch (Adult)

Movies

Miracle
Remember the Titans

What is Unity?

- Working together; teamwork.
- Pursuing a shared vision or goal with another.
- A family or team.
- Synergy; the increased effectiveness that results when two or more people or businesses work together.
- Sharing a common faith.
- Supporting others.

Quotes:

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” *Helen Keller*

“In order to have a winner, the team must have a feeling of unity; every player must put the team first, ahead of personal glory.” *Coach Paul Bear Bryant*

“People who work together will win, whether it be against complex football defenses, or the problems of modern society.” *Coach Vince Lombardi*

“No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent.” *John Donne*

“A house divided against itself cannot stand.” *Abraham Lincoln*

“We cannot be separated in interest or divided in purpose. We stand together until the end.” *Woodrow Wilson*

I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot. Together we can do great things. *Mother Teresa*

“The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime.” *Babe Ruth*

Practicing Unity

- View your family, your business colleagues, your musical groups, your clubs, your church, all of your group involvements, as a Team!
- Work together effectively with your family, your team, your group, or your organization.
- Accept and value differences between yourself and others.
- Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of others and yourself, and understand the value of working together to accomplish more than you may be able to do on your own.
- Brainstorm with others to discover new ideas and strategies.
- As a family or in your classroom, go through the Pledge of Allegiance, phrase by phrase. Confirm that the children understand the meaning.
- Take pride in being an American, a member of a Team, united under our great flag which symbolizes the “land of the free and the home of the brave!”

Applying Unity

- Watch the Movies of Character as a family and discuss.
- Hold a regular Family Night to build **unity** in your family.
- Participate on a sports team, music group, or with a service club.
- Cooperate with others.
- Work with others on projects.
- Plan school spirit days or events.
- Value the differences of others and consolidate your efforts.

Personal commitments to **unity**:

- I will be a team player.
- I will appreciate the talents of others and use synergy to achieve more than I could do alone.
- I will work with others to accomplish a task or goal.
- I will do my part on group projects.
- I will be respectful of others.
- I will strive to find the “win-win” in working with others.
- I will support the efforts of others to promote the common good.