

Character Development

Character from Characterlabs.org

Character	Skills
GRIT	Finished whatever s/he began Stuck with a project or activity for more than a few weeks Tried very hard even after experiencing failure Stayed committed to goals Kept working hard even when s/he felt like quitting
OPTIMISM	Believed that effort would improve his/her future When bad things happened, s/he thought about things they could do to make it better next time Stayed motivated, even when things didn't go well Believed that s/he could improve on things they weren't good at
SELF CONTROL (school work)	Came to class prepared Remembered and followed directions Got to work right away instead of waiting until the last minute Paid attention and resisted distractions SELF CONTROL (interpersonal) Remained calm even when criticized or otherwise provoked Allowed others to speak without interrupting Was polite to adults and peers Kept temper in check
GRATITUDE	Recognized what other people did for them Showed appreciation for opportunities Expressed appreciation by saying thank you Did something nice for someone else as a way of saying thank you
SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE	Was able to find solutions during conflicts with others Showed that s/he cared about the feelings of others Adapted to different social situations
CURIOSITY	Was eager to explore new things Asked questions to help s/he learn better Took an active interest in learning
ZEST	Actively participated Showed enthusiasm Approached new situations with excitement and energy

In terms of Big Five personality, grit and self-control both load on the conscientiousness factor, which also encompasses **dependability, punctuality, and orderliness**, among other facets (Duckworth, et al., 2007; MacCann, Duckworth, & Roberts, 2009).

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<http://choiceskills.com/LifeSkills/CharacterTraits/Thinking-LifeSkills.html>

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The Clear Thinking Team

There are seven skills we all use to process information. These faculties give us the ability to reason, make conscious choices and to act upon those choices. The greater our skill level in using these skills the better we are able to act in a manner that will reliably produce happiness and well-being. They are an essential part of thinking rightly.



Unfortunately, we tend to think of them, if we think of them at all, as attributes that we are endowed with by nature rather than as skills that must be developed. As a result, most of us do very little to consciously improve our ability to think or reason clearly.

In this condition we become susceptible to faulty thinking. If the most powerful things in the world are ideas, the most empowering thing in the world is to be able to distinguish good ideas from bad ideas. This is the great advantage young people can derive from making a serious effort to develop the following C skills.

Criticism

The ability to examine, analyze, compare, evaluate, make judgments, and form opinions

Creativity

The ability to imagine, originate, invent, design, and develop new things

Curiosity

The ability to wonder, question, investigate, explore and seek out new information.

Concentration

The ability to pay close attention and stay on task.

Communication

The ability to effectively exchange information with others, especially through reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Correction

The ability to correct errors in one's own attitudes, beliefs, and actions

Control

The ability to effectively govern one's own conduct.

By helping young people consciously and deliberately focus on developing these skills, several **important benefits can accrue**. You will find your students doing things like:

- Taking **greater ownership** of their thoughts and actions
- Being **more teachable** and interested in learning
- Possessing **keener insight** and understanding
- Exercising more **effective self-management skills**
- Becoming **better problem solvers**

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- Developing greater **skill in overcoming** the influences of **faulty thinking**
- Being **more respectful** to each other, and
- Making **better choices**

The wonderful thing about teaching the C skills is that **virtually everything you do in the classroom offers an opportunity to learn about and practice them.** While students already possess these skills to one degree or another, they are typically underdeveloped, unevenly developed, and greatly underutilized. Your primary challenge is to make the learning of them a conscious and determined effort. If you do so, you will find the results most encouraging.

"If Ideas are the most powerful things in the world, then the most empowering thing in the world is to be able to distinguish a good Idea from a bad idea."