

# 50 Character Building Activities

## *Self-Esteem*

1. Share stories with your student about times when an adult made you feel special. How did it affect you?
2. Agree that each of you will praise each person in your family at least once a day for a week. Plan to talk about how it felt and what happened.
2. Read a book or short story together and then each share different ending ideas.
3. Draw pictures about the nicest thing that happened yesterday.
4. Think of a way you and your student could work together and help another person feel more capable.



## *Goal Planning*

1. Together cut out magazine photos of interesting places. Paste the photos on sheets of paper and underneath list why the pictures look appealing. Make an album.
2. Talk about the nicest gifts you have received that cost no money. What would you or your student especially like that would not cost anything?
3. Each draws a picture of your ideal room. Where would the furniture be? What would you want in the room? Draw a picture of how you might reorganize the room if you could. Add colors.
4. Talk about how long it takes to get to school. Have him/her practice timing the trip. Does he/she stop along the way? Where and why?
5. Figure out how long it takes to go to the grocery store, the dentist, to a friend's. What are the differences in getting ready for these trips? What does each of you think about these places?

## *Communication*

1. Find a poem you both enjoy. Help each other memorize it.
2. Listen together to your student's favorite musical group. Write down or get a copy of the lyrics to one of the songs and talk about it.

3. Talk about what skill has been the hardest for each of you to learn. Consider learning something new together.
4. Make a list of ten questions you would probably ask in a foreign country. Ask someone who speaks that language to teach you to say the ten questions. Practice together.
5. Talk about teaching. Who was your best teacher? Why? Who does your student consider best? Why? What qualities do your answers have in common?

## ***Responsibilities***

1. Make a list of jobs involved with caring for a pet. If you have a pet, what special jobs are involved? What responsibilities would each of you enjoy doing? Who would do the other tasks?
  2. Make a list of ten jobs around the house. Talk about who does them, and what one needs to know in order to do them.
  3. Discuss what a budget is. Who uses them and why? Would it help each of you?
  4. Imagine what a teacher might do with a million dollars. What would a coal miner do? a doctor? an explorer? a musician? Each of you? Why?
  5. Talk about ways to use clothing and other items that you no longer need. Discuss the choices you could consider.
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1. Each of you tries spending an hour without using electricity. Take notes and later talk about ways you would have to adjust your life style. Think of one thing everyone could do to reduce use of electricity. (Example: give up a different kitchen appliance each week).
  2. Talk about what things in each of your homes are most important to each family member. If you had 15 minutes to leave, what three things would you want saved? Where do you keep them? Does anyone else know they are important to you?
  3. Help your student draw a diagram of his/her home. Indicate the fastest routes to the exits from each room.

4. Plan birthday menus that would please a relative or each other. Decide who would be responsible for the preparation of the meal. Write down the menus and share your idea with the special person – along with a hug.
5. Make a list of family food favorites and their primary ingredients: main dishes, fruits, vegetables, and desserts. Ask an older student to help you figure the cost of each item or dish.

## ***Commitment***

1. Share with your student a memory about someone you cared about when you were very small.
2. Make a collection for a week of news articles or photos about people who did nice things for others.
3. Start a collection of favorite cartoons to decorate gifts.
4. Write secret notes to family members or other friends thanking them for something special they have done. If the student cannot write, then ask him/her to draw a picture of the event and then give it to the person.
5. Talk about your favorite dreams. What would you have to do to make them come true? Could anyone help? How?



## ***Teamwork***

1. Plan with your student to teach him/her one new skill a month.
2. Work together to create another list for outdoor responsibilities: yard work, shopping, other errands, and car maintenance. Decide how the student can participate in these tasks.
3. Discuss the different responsibilities associated with team sports: football, baseball, basketball, relay races and others. What happens when someone doesn't do his/her part? What can others do?
4. Think about three or four places within the area that you might enjoy visiting. Plan an imaginary trip together. Share in the responsibilities of learning about the place and planning for the trip. Perhaps you will want to visit the library to get additional information or ask someone who has been there.

5. Talk about how to prepare for a trip to the place that sounds best. What preparations would need to be made in your family? How can you share the responsibilities?



### ***Balancing Priorities***

1. Talk about regular bills and occasional expenses. Explain how a budget works and help the student learn the process.
2. Choose a foreign country or U.S. city that you both might want to visit someday. What would you like to know about it? Why is it appealing?
3. Talk about homework: its purpose, its frustrations, its rewards.
4. Decide what you can do together to improve the homework process. Do it.
5. Agree on a method of evaluating the homework process changes.



### ***Determination***

1. Decide on a project or recipe that you might do together that would involve more than one step. Outline the steps for planning, preparation, completion.
2. Using your plan, divide responsibilities, agree on a timeline and a reward for completion. The reward should be appropriate and might be as simple as shared popcorn, applause, or first choice on a TV program.
3. If you do not have one, set up a home recycling system. If you do have one, talk about how effective it is and brainstorm on how to improve it.
4. Decide together on a skill you and your student could work on together. It might be something you already know, but which you both wish to improve. Perhaps it is cookie decorating, working on a harder jigsaw puzzle than you usually do, reading aloud a new and long book, memorizing multiplication tables, or distance walking.
5. List the education or experience required for three interesting occupations.

## ***Decision Making***

1. Watch the same TV program several times. Talk about decisions the characters made.
2. Make a list of five to ten things you and your student have learned about other people's approaches to making decisions.
3. Talk about safety in your home. Discuss the areas where one must be especially careful.
4. Research what methods of public transportation are available in your neighborhood. Have you tried them?
5. Talk about how old a student should be to use public transportation alone. What would he/she have to know? Who could help if there's a problem?