

CODE *of* HONOR

GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION

Common courtesy isn't so common anymore, is it? We hear "please" and "thank you" and "excuse me" a lot less frequently. Perhaps it's because our technology has made us increasingly isolated from each other in the physical world—think noise-canceling headphones—while we network more and more in the virtual world. We're in the process of losing the social niceties that used to make public interactions more pleasant.

Of course, courtesy goes beyond just holding doors open for people, making eye contact, and smiling.

It also involves a culture of what you could think of as "customer service"—focusing on another person's needs and anticipating, meeting, or exceeding them. "Customer service" isn't a phrase we usually think of in terms of our educational system. But as CognitiveGenesis and other studies and reports have shown, Adventist Education is a strong "brand" that gets results for its students—not just success in this world, but preparation for the next.

You may have heard me tell this story before, but the inspiration for the Code of HONOR program was a visit to one of our schools for an after-hours meeting. A fourth-grade boy saw me approaching the front door and, completely of his own accord, greeted me, asked if he could help me, and walked me to my meeting. I was so impressed with his poise and courtesy, and it made me desire to have every guest at every one of our schools have the same incredible experience I did. I can't think of a better way to help visitors realize that Adventist schools really are different.

I know that Adventist teachers and administrators are some of the hardest-working educators around. So I wouldn't ask this you to implement this program without giving you resources to make a program of "customer service" easy. We developed the Code of HONOR website and materials to give you and your students some fun and creative ways to discover—or rediscover—the joy of giving people great experiences with through compassion, consideration, and courtesy.

Thanks so much for what you do.

In Christ,



Larry Blackmer

MAKING THE CODE OF HONOR A PART OF THE CLASSROOM

1. TALK WITH YOUR STUDENTS

Talk with your students about courtesy and customer service. Lead a discussion about why it's still appropriate to be polite and kind. Ask students about times when other people have made them feel important and valued, and how they did that.

2. SIGN OUT THE FLIP VIDEO RECORDER FROM THE COORDINATOR

If you or your classroom doesn't have a video camera, talk to the coordinator about purchasing one for the school and signing it out to various teachers and students when they're ready to record their videos. Have your students write a script and film a short video. Give it to the program coordinator to upload to the Code of HONOR website.

3. MAKE COURTESY A PART OF YOUR CLASSROOM

Use the classroom ideas below to get inspired about other ways you can get your students excited about courtesy and customer service.

ASSIGNMENT IDEAS

These ideas and sample assignments are provided inspire you to think of ways you can get your students thinking about courtesy and customer service.

YOUNGER GRADES

CONTEST

Ask each of your students to come up with an idea for a courtesy-themed bulletin board or other display for the classroom. Have the students vote on which is their favorite. Have students help create the winning bulletin board for their classroom.

ROLE PLAY

Have students make a list of times when they can be courteous at school—opening doors, saying “please” and “thank you,” introducing themselves to a visitor, etc. Divide students into groups and have them role play what to say and how to act in these situations. Have them present their short skits to the class if appropriate. This is great practice for scripting and filming their own Code of HONOR videos.

FILM A VIDEO

Use the students' experience role playing (and watching several videos on the Code of HONOR website) to get them to think of an idea and then film a very short video showing some aspect of courtesy or customer service. You may wish to get a parent volunteer to help you film as you work with the students on performing their videos. Upload the video to the Code of HONOR website and encourage your students to view the video and others submitted by Adventist schools across North America.

DAILY LISTS

Ask students to make a list of 3–5 acts of courtesy they can perform each day. For a designated period of time—a week, a month, a quarter—have them perform at least 3 acts of courtesy each day and share what they did with the class at the end of the school day. Students could have a “courtesy diary” where they record or check off acts of courtesy each day, and the student who performs the most acts of courtesy could win a prize.

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OLDER GRADES

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE 1

Ask students to think of a time when someone was very courteous to them, or showed them customer service above and beyond the norm. Have them write a short essay, story, or poem about the experience and share it with the class. Encourage them to think of ways that they could be courteous in the same way to someone else and create a story for them to tell later on. Give them the assignment to perform this courteous act for someone else and then write an essay, story, or poem about what it was like to do for someone else what they had done for them.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE 2

Have your students choose the most courteous person they know or have known and write an essay or poem about that person and what made them so memorable in this way

OBSERVATION

Ask your students to go to a shopping mall or other public place appropriate to your location. Tell them to spend some time watching people interacting with each other and describe—either as an essay or as a speech to the class—examples of:

1. A disregard of courtesy
2. Extreme discourtesy
3. Courtesy in action

HISTORY

Ask students to choose a particular decade in American or English history (for example, the 1840s or the 1950s) and research the courtesy customs of that time. Have them write a report that they present to the class for discussion.

SCRIPT AND FILM A VIDEO

Give your students the assignment of watching several videos on the Code of HONOR website and then scripting and filming a very short video showing some aspect of courtesy or customer service. Go over topics in advance to make sure there's a wide variety. You may wish to get a parent volunteer to help you film as you work with the students on performing their videos. Upload the video to the Code of HONOR website and encourage your students to view the video and others submitted by Adventist schools across North America.