



Middle / High School Writing Exercise

Time allotted: 15 - 30 minutes (8 minutes to screen film, 7 - 22 minutes to write)

Materials needed:

- *The Science of Character* short film + computer + projector + screen
- Paper and writing utensils per student
- Periodic Table of Character Strengths poster (Download it or request it for free)

Writing prompts:

1. As the film notes, working on our character strengths has been important since ancient times. Can you think of any myths that illustrate the importance of particular character strength?
2. The world has changed tremendously in the last few thousand years. What character strengths do you think are important in the digital age? Can you think of something that you or someone else posted online that demonstrated a particular character strength?
3. Given that the Web allows a lot of anonymity, and permits people to try on different personas, what happens to our character when we're online? Do our character strengths remain constant?

Extension:

4. Character strengths are like muscles—they get bigger the more you use them. Which “character muscles” do you want to grow? How do you think you might do that?
5. Nobody’s perfect. Sometimes it’s good to mess up, because that’s one way we learn and build our character strengths. Think about a time you really messed up. What did you learn? Is there a character strength that grew in you after you learned from what happened?
6. *Watch your thoughts, they become words;
watch your words, they become actions;
watch your actions, they become habits;
watch your habits, they become character;
watch your character, it becomes your destiny.*
- Frank Outlaw, 1977

How would you update this quote today?

Watch your texts, they become _____ ;
 Watch your tweets, they become _____ ;
 Watch your Instagrams, they become _____ ;
 Watch your Facebook posts, they become _____ ;
 Watch your comments, they become _____ .