

SASO MIDDLE SCHOOL CHARACTER EDUCATION LESSON

TOPIC: REPUTATION

Dr. Carolyn Peluso Atkins, Professor
West Virginia University



Note to Teacher: This lesson encompasses all of the Six Pillars of Character (josephsoninstitute.org): Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. Specifically, it focuses on demonstrating honesty, reliability, respect, accountability, kindness, and cooperation. It offers the teacher guidelines to follow after students have viewed the SASO DVD of Elizabeth Repella (*Volume I. Reputation*).

Discussion questions, scenarios, and suggestions for writing and speaking assignments have been designed to develop student critical thinking, reflection, interaction, and creativity. They are interchangeable and should be determined by the teacher.

With regard to discussion questions and scenarios, teachers may pose questions to students individually or in small groups. With regard to the latter, a spokesperson for each group may be selected to summarize his or her group's discussion to the rest of the class.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you define reputation?
2. How did you learn about reputation?
3. Is self-discipline/self-control related to reputation? Why or why not?
4. Give examples of how your reputation could be tarnished.
5. How can you teach someone about reputation?
6. How can you teach someone about practicing self-discipline/self-control?
7. How can you teach someone about building a good reputation?
8. Who comes to mind as someone having a good reputation? Why?
9. Who comes to mind as someone having a bad reputation? Why?
10. What does it mean to "Think before you act"? Provide examples.
11. What does it mean to be accountable for your actions? Provide examples.

Scenarios: What would you do?

1. Some of your friends are smoking and drinking alcohol and they ask you to join them. What would you do?
2. When you volunteered to work at a charity event, you didn't realize that it conflicts with a trip to an amusement park with your best friends and their families. What would you do?
3. Your friends brag to you about having vandalized school property. What would you do?
4. Your friend is having the biggest party of the year, but you promised your parents that you would babysit your little brother. You know that it's too late to get another sitter. What would you do?

Writing/Speaking Assignments: Students either may write a paper or give an oral presentation about the topic (length and guidelines to be determined by the teacher).

1. Define reputation and give examples of different types of reputation.
2. How do you define self-control/ self-discipline? Is self-control/self-discipline related to reputation? If it is, explain how.
3. Discuss and give examples of a time or times when you demonstrated self-control/self-discipline.
4. How do you define peer pressure?
5. Is peer pressure always bad? Please explain.
6. Discuss and give examples of how you deal with peer pressure.
7. When you apply for a job, should the employer consider your reputation along with your skills and work performance? Why or why not?
8. What effect has the Internet had on building or ruining reputations?
9. Name and discuss someone in the media who has a good reputation.
10. Discuss which of your family members has a good reputation.
12. Discuss whether it is easier to maintain a good reputation or to ruin a reputation.
13. Explain whether or not someone can ruin another person's reputation.
14. If you say something about your friend and it is the truth, is it still gossiping? Give examples.
15. Why do people gossip? Do you gossip?
16. Discuss the purpose of gossiping.
17. What are some things you can do to change how others think about you?
18. Write a nonfiction or fiction story about reputation.
19. Write a song or poem about self-control/self-discipline or reputation.

20. Select one of the quotes below and explain what it means. Identify the author of the quote and describe who that individual is (e.g., Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States).

Quotations about Reputation:

1. A man can get a reputation from very small things. (Sophocles)
2. Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing. (William Shakespeare)
3. Associate with men of good quality, if you esteem your own reputation; for it is better to be alone than in bad company. (George Washington)
4. Glass, china, and reputation are easily cracked and never mended well. (Benjamin Franklin)
5. Be more concerned with your character than your reputation. Your character is what you really are while your reputation is merely what others think you are. (John Wooden)
6. Good will, like a good name, is got by many actions, and lost by one. (Lord Jeffrey)
7. Dare to be different, when the difference is right. (Sister Cirella)
8. Until you've lost your reputation, you never realize what a burden it was or what freedom really is. (Margaret Mitchell)
9. You don't build a reputation on what you are going to do. (Henry Ford)
10. Live so that your friends can defend you but never have to. (Arnold H. Glasgow)
11. The most important thing for a young man is to establish credit – a reputation and good character. (John D. Rockefeller)
12. It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently. (Warren Buffett)
13. A single lie destroys a whole reputation for integrity. (Baltasar Gracian)
14. Build your reputation by helping others build theirs. (Anthony J. D'Angelo)
15. A good reputation is worth more than money. (Publilius Syrus)
16. It is the duty of everyone to strive to gain and deserve a good reputation.

(Francis Atterbury)

17. A reputation for a thousand years may depend upon the conduct of a single moment. (Ernest Bramah)
18. To speak ill of others is a dishonest way of praising ourselves. (Will Durant)
19. A reputation once broken may possibly be repaired, but the world will always keep their eyes on the spot where the crack was. (Joseph Hall)
20. It is generally much more shameful to lose a good reputation than never to have acquired it. (Pliny the Elder)
21. Do not repeat anything you will not sign your name to. (Author Unknown)
22. It's your reputation at stake – take control of it. (Author Unknown)
23. No reputation in the world is worth losing what it is that makes you unique. (Author Unknown)
24. Reputations are created every day and every minute. (Christopher Ruel)
25. The harder you throw down a football and good character, the higher they rebound; but a thrown reputation is like an egg. (Austin O'Malley)