

POSTER: A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT

Key points to make in relation to the poster

- Success as a student is more than just academic success. Success as a student involves a lot of other qualities above and beyond getting good marks and finishing your work first. The ones listed here are some examples of these qualities but it is not an exhaustive list – there are many other qualities that are also important in a successful student. Focus on the importance of achieving balance in your life.
- Encourage students to recognise their own special, unique talents and accept that everyone is good at different things. (See “Diamond of the Week” in the appendix). The important thing is to recognise what your talents are and to use them to benefit yourself and others in the community. It is also very important to remind students often that nobody can be expected to be perfect at everything and that everyone makes mistakes – one of the qualities of a successful student is to accept this and to be able to pick themselves up and use the mistake as an opportunity to grow stronger.

Quotations/sayings

- Try not to become a man of success but rather try to become a man of value. (Albert Einstein)
- As long as we are persistent in our pursuit of our deepest destiny, we will continue to grow. We cannot choose the day or time when we will fully bloom. It happens in its own time. (Denis Waitley)
- To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a little better; whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has
- The aptitudes of students for specific subjects like mathematics or literature should be ascertained by teachers and students should be encouraged to develop their special talents. Instead, what is being done today is to make students take up courses which will enable them to have lucrative careers. Jobs and a good life have become the aim of education. Education should comprehend development of the body, the mind and the spirit. It should be concerned with Constant Integrated Awareness.
- What is the use of acquiring any amount of knowledge available in the world if one does not have character? This is the reason for the loss of balance in the case of modern people in general and the educated people in particular. If you lose your balance when riding a bicycle you are likely to have an accident. Similarly if there is a lack of balance between knowledge and character in your life’s journey you are surely exposing yourself to serious accidents.

- Education should be pursued not merely for acquiring degrees but for cultivating human values. All riches are ephemeral. Do not become slaves of wealth. Become subjects of good qualities. Wealth without character is worthless. Life becomes ideal when character constitutes one's wealth. The blossoming of one's character leads to radiance in life.
- The education process will not be complete unless, together with specialisation in specific subjects, one acquires general knowledge and develops common sense. Many famous scholars who had significant scientific achievements to their credit have been lacking in general knowledge and the commonsense required in daily life.
- For a person to be deemed educated, his behaviour should be good, his actions useful to society and his feelings should be compassionate and kind. One should have concern for the welfare of all beings.
- People feel that education helps in materialistic pursuits and rest content with this. This is not a right attitude. Education should promote culture. It is not by education alone but by culture that one gets refined.
- Students should get rid of the idea that education is for earning a living. They must realise that they owe a duty to their Motherland and the world.
- It would be wrong to call it education if it merely teaches the meanings of words. The basic aim of education is to make people of character and virtue. Many people think that knowledge is power. It is not so. In fact, character is power. Education should confer humility. One's personality blossoms only when one has humility along with knowledge.
- Education does not mean imparting of verbal knowledge. The knowledge that is gathered in schools and colleges should be capable of being used for service to society and helping to improve the conditions of one's fellow human beings.
- Education is not to be taken as a process of filling an empty sack and pouring out its contents, making the sack empty again. It is not the head that has to be filled through education. It is the heart that has to be cleansed, expanded and illumined. Education is for life and not for mere living.
- Self-confidence: Without self-confidence no achievement is possible. If you have confidence in your strength and skill, you can draw upon the inner springs of courage and raise yourselves to a higher level of joy and peace.
- Time management: Time should be used in a useful manner. If we waste time, our lives will be wasted.
- Time management: Every tick of the clock snips a length in the thread of life. Use the present moment best, to sharpen your skills, to broaden your intelligence, to expand your heart, to master the techniques to face challenges of life with courage and equanimity.
- Discipline: I want each one of you to grow into a strong, steady and straight person. Your eyes should not seek evil sights; your ears should not seek evil tales; your

tongue should not seek evil speech; your hands should not seek evil acts; your minds should not seek evil thoughts. Be pure and be full of love. Help those who are in a worse condition and serve those who need your help.

- **Discrimination:** Education should be utilised for developing the power of discrimination between right and wrong, good and evil. Without discrimination, a human being is worse than an animal.
- **Character:** A characterless person is like a pot with many holes, useless for carrying water or storing it.
- **Character:** Goodness is the most important thing for anyone. Whatever one's wealth, knowledge or position, the most essential quality is character.
- **Making mistakes:** Show me a person who has never made a mistake and I'll show you a person who has never learned anything. (Source unknown)
- **Making mistakes:** Mistakes are an essential part of learning. (Source unknown)
- **Making mistakes:** All my successes have been built on my failures. (Benjamin Disraeli)
- **Persistence:** "As long as we are persistent in our pursuit of our deepest destiny, we will continue to grow. We cannot choose the day or time when we will fully bloom. It happens in its own time." (Denis Waitley)
- **Persisting through lesser difficulties builds your capacity to persist through greater difficulties, and achieve even greater things.** (Brian Tracy)
- **The wise man turns all opposition into opportunity.** (Paul Brunton, *The Quest of the Overself: The Classic Work on How to Achieve Serenity of Mind*)

Suggested Starting Points

- Invite guest speakers who are employers and/or successful in their fields to talk about the qualities they look for when hiring employees and the kinds of people who succeed in the business/professional field (to emphasise the importance of qualities other than academic marks)
- Have some students do some preliminary work in class about what they think is a successful student and share their experiences.
- Start with a blank poster and ask students to contribute their own ideas about the qualities of a successful student.
- Roleplay some of the consequences of not displaying one or more of the qualities listed.
- Prepare scenarios of different kinds of students and have students roleplay them. For example, Johnny always gets full marks for spelling. But when Billy asks him to help him with his work he refuses. Ask children whether Johnny is a successful student

despite being able to get high marks. A student who is a genius and always scores high marks goes for a job interview and is unsuccessful because he doesn't have communication skills.

Stories

- Read/tell stories that demonstrate each of the qualities (selected from real-life stories or other stories from the local culture), eg:
- Never give up (see appendix: determination and courage to learn from mistakes)
- Confidence and self-esteem (see appendix)
- Monetary Reminder (see appendix – time management)
- A Full Jar (see appendix – time management)
- Tell stories about famous people from the local culture who have been academically successful but have also been good people.
- Stories about people who have special qualities that are not necessarily academic (eg Sara, in appendix)

Silent sitting

Here we suggest using the visualisations for finding our special strengths/talents and putting them to good use to help ourselves and others (see “Diamond of the Week” in appendix).

It is also a good opportunity to utilise the light visualisation (see appendix) – extensive research evidence exists to suggest that this helps to improve students' academic performance as well as their concentration, behaviour and character. (For some examples of children's experiences, please visit our website www.ssehv.org.)

Follow-Up Activities for the Classroom

- Explore each of the qualities separately and develop an understanding of what each means.
- Ask students to suggest what other qualities/criteria are missing from the list. Add new steps with their suggestions.
- Topic for class meeting: What is the difference between being a successful student and a successful person? Can you be a successful person and not a successful student? Can you be a successful student and not a successful person?
- Get materials on the development of qualities, such as time management, and encourage students to work on the strategies that are suggested. (This can be linked also to the poster “Do Not Waste”)

- Ask children to think about the questions: “What is really important in your life? What really matters? What would you be better off doing more of and what would you be better off doing less of?” (questions from R. Walsh, *Essential Spirituality*. Wiley, 1999). Use silent sitting to visualise their answers either before or after discussing these questions.

Community service/Selfless service/Ceiling on Desires

- Reward students who are examples of the qualities of a good student that have been discussed in relation to this poster.

