

1998

## Community Connections Kit: Practical Materials for Involving Your Community in Character-Building

Wise Skills Resources

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# Community Connections Kit

Practical Materials for Involving Your  
Community in Character-Building

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*A unique educational venture providing schools and communities with practical and affordable materials for building character in young people.*

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# Community Connections Kit

This unique resource provides ready-to-use materials to involve volunteers and your entire community in character-building!

See These Pages!



## Involve Parent/Community Volunteers

Actively engage school volunteers with the *WiseSkills* Community Component

See Pages 3-9!

## Highlight Ongoing Speakers from Your Community!

Volunteers recruit local career speakers/positive role models using pre-written forms, letters, and memos.

See Pages 17-40!

## Involve Students in Regular Service Projects!

Volunteers coordinate and arrange school and community service projects using ready-to-go letters and forms.

See Pages 41-62!

Have a *WiseSkills* Training for Teachers & Volunteers at Your School! See pages 4-9 for more info.



P. O. Box 491, Santa Cruz, CA 95061  
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# The *WiseSkills*<sup>™</sup> School Program

## **Crisis**

Many recognize that there is a crisis in American schools today. School violence rates are increasing. Test scores are plummeting in many areas. High dropout rates continue to plague numerous school districts. And our prisons are bursting with men and women who have failed in school. While school districts and state governments wrestle with making our educational system effective, schools are faced with mounting social problems that cannot be solved by merely teaching academic skills.

## **Character Skills**

Many elementary students come to school today without crucial character skills that will help them succeed not only in school, but in their futures as well. Though many schools offer stimulating and creative academic programs, students cannot achieve academic success without strengthened self-esteem and critical personal qualities. Without the bedrock of important life skills, many of today's students remain unable to learn, accept and meet challenges, and find success in academic areas. Unfortunately, students who are not successful in school often experience other more devastating failures later in life.

## **Career Awareness/Positive Role-Modeling**

Unfortunately, many young people are growing up in communities with few positive adult role models who are engaged in a diversity of careers. Moreover, schooling is often focused solely on academic preparation and, consequently, those students who do not go on to college may enter the work force unprepared and unaware of the different occupations and professions that exist. This lack of career awareness may lead to a declining interest in the educational process, as school is perceived as being irrelevant to their lives. Because growing numbers of youth see no tangible benefit of school success, many students drop out of school during their teenage years.

## **Community Service**

At the same time, many students lack the important experiences of actively serving their community and meeting the needs of others. Engaging in service projects builds students' self esteem, increases school and class morale, and provides unique and formative experiences which teach students the importance of contributing to others. While many educators recognize the importance of teaching and modeling good citizenship, it is often difficult for educators and administrators to schedule regular school and class community service projects. Consequently, many students do not see themselves as valuable, contributing members of our society.

As students are prepared for the 21st century, it is essential that they are equipped with the crucial character skills and experiences that will give them the ability to succeed in school and in their adult lives. Many schools do not offer comprehensive programs that integrate the teaching of positive character across-the-curricula, expose students to diverse career possibilities, and provide opportunities for service while actively involving parents and the community.

# WiseSkills™

**WiseSkills** is an innovative program that provides practical, user-friendly materials to help schools and districts implement effective and comprehensive character education. The program features an easy-to-use interdisciplinary curriculum and can include actively involving parents and community members in character-building. The goals of **WiseSkills**, when fully implemented school or district-wide, are listed below:

## WiseSkills Goals

1. Students will gain important character qualities which will help them find success in and out of school.
2. Students will develop an awareness of career opportunities as they are exposed to different professions and occupations.
3. Students will grow in responsibility towards others and their community and will see the value of becoming responsible citizens of our society.
4. Parents and community members will become involved in character-building by developing partnerships between the school and community resources.

While **WiseSkills** is designed to be used as a comprehensive, schoolwide program, the curricula can also be used effectively in specific grade levels or by individual teachers or counselors. In addition, the **WiseSkills** Administrators Handbook features a variety of resources to help administrators develop and implement a set of core values and provides practical ideas for creating and maintaining a positive school climate.

**WiseSkills** uses 3 different modes to teach young people good character--referred to as the 3 E's: 1) *Explaining*: Teaching good character using the **WiseSkills** class curricula; 2) *Eying*: Highlighting ongoing career speakers/positive role models; and 3) *Experiencing*: Engaging students in meaningful service-learning experiences. **WiseSkills** weaves these three simple ways all people learn positive values to create a consistent and powerful character-building program.

**WiseSkills** includes both a *Classroom Component* and an optional *Community Component*. Whether a school chooses to implement one or both components, the **WiseSkills** elements work together to complement academic learning with teaching students *wisdom*, defined as "making good choices for myself and others." With **WiseSkills**, students learn the importance of not just being smart, but being *wise* as well!



# **WiseSkills™** Components

## **Classroom Component**

Teachers receive an optional one-day training on how to use **WiseSkills** and integrate the program into the language arts and social studies curricula.

- WiseWords™** (K-2): Easy-to-use class curricula that teaches positive character by exposing students to the words and lives of a variety of multicultural historical figures. Organized into 8 monthly *Character Themes* and 32 weekly skills.
- WiseQuotes™** (3-5):
- WiseLives™** (6-8):

## **Community Component**

School volunteers receive an optional training on how to use the **Community Connections Kit** to contact local businesses and organizations to arrange:

- 1. Career Speakers:** Community members who serve as positive role-models for students by sharing about their careers and how they have found success in life.
- 2. Service Projects:** Neighborhood projects where students actively contribute to their community by visiting nursing homes, painting over graffiti, working on a local issue, or other projects that build good citizenship.
- 3. Class Partnerships:** Consistent elementary partnerships where older children pair up with younger students to tutor, help with class assignments, and engage in other activities.

## **Administrative Support**

- 1. WiseSkills Administrator's Handbook:** Resources for creating a comprehensive character education program and supporting **WiseSkills** with schoolwide activities.

# The *WiseSkills*™ Training

The *WiseSkills* Training is an one-day, interactive workshop that provides an entire school with a thorough orientation to the *WiseSkills* program. After an introductory overview exploring the area of character education, participants learn about the difference between teaching *knowledge* and teaching *wisdom*, how to promote effective drug and violence prevention, and practical ways to build a school culture where positive character is modeled by adults. Teachers gain ideas for designing simple character-building activities using the multicultural quotations featured in the *WiseSkills* curricula.

Because *WiseSkills* uses the words and lives of great role models, teachers learn how to integrate *WiseSkills* thematically across-the-curriculum. Participants work together in grade-level groups or teams to strategize specific ways to connect the program to academic subject areas, especially *language arts* and *social studies*. The training provides many opportunities for interaction and engages participants through brainstorming, discussion, reading, writing, and role-playing. Teachers return to their classrooms fully prepared and excited about using *WiseSkills* with their students!

## Community Component Option: Parent/Community Volunteers

The *WiseSkills* Training can also include equipping school volunteers to facilitate the *WiseSkills* Community Component and learn how to be effective community liaisons. Using the **Community Connections Kit**, volunteers receive practical guidelines for finding ongoing career speakers and arranging regular community service-learning projects throughout the school year.

### The *WiseSkills* Training

1. Student Needs
  - Risk Factors
  - Behavior Problems
2. Character Education
  - The Roots of Character Education
  - The 3 E's: Explaining, Eying, and Experiencing
  - Prevention/Resiliency
3. The *WiseSkills* Program
  - Integrating *WiseSkills* into Subject Areas
  - Using Character Quotations
  - Designing Role-Plays
  - Using the *WiseSkills* Materials
4. Parent/Community Volunteer Responsibilities
  - Contacting Local Businesses and Organizations
  - Using the Community Connections kit
5. Teacher & Volunteer Cooperation

## **WiseSkills Community Component**

An optional part of the **WiseSkills** program is actively involving parents and community members in character-building. The *Community Component* is a wonderful way to complement the classroom activities with local positive role models and opportunities for hands-on community service. A small group of parent/community volunteers can be invited to participate in the **WiseSkills Training**, where they will each be provided with a **Community Connections Kit**. This kit features practical guidelines and ready-to-go letters and forms to help volunteers involve local businesses and organizations in character-building. During the **WiseSkills Training**, volunteers learn simple ways to use the **Community Connections Kit** to help them find ongoing career speakers and organize regular service projects for one or more classrooms.

Depending on what each school decides, volunteers are assigned to one classroom or a small group of classrooms. Volunteers are responsible for arranging speakers and service projects for those classrooms. Volunteers can schedule service projects can be scheduled monthly, quarterly, or once per semester. For career speakers in elementary schools, weekly, biweekly, or monthly assemblies of four to seven classes works well. For middle schools, it can be helpful to combine two or more classrooms when guest speakers share with students.

The **WiseSkills Community Component** activities that parent/community volunteers can facilitate include:

1. Ongoing Career Speakers
2. Regular School/Community Service Projects
3. Elementary Class Partnerships

## ***WiseSkills* Community Component** **Volunteer Responsibilities**

- **Recruiting:** Arranges guest career speakers for the classrooms or small group of classrooms that they are responsible for.
- **Arranging:** Helps organize school / community service projects with local organizations for the classrooms or group of classrooms they are responsible for.
- **Scheduling:** Assists classroom teachers in coordinating elementary class partnerships.

## 1. Ongoing Career Speakers

While many schools have occasional speakers who share about their careers, most do not regularly highlight local community members who are positive role models of success. Having consistent career speakers reinforces the character skills taught in the curriculum, practically demonstrates the relevance of positive character, and exposes students to a variety of careers and occupations. Career speakers are an excellent opportunity for schools to combine career awareness with character-building.

For elementary schools, weekly, biweekly, or monthly school assemblies are excellent opportunities for speakers to share with students. For middle schools, two classrooms can combine to hear speakers.

Regular 25-30 minute elementary assembly programs reinforce the specific *WiseSkills* positive values while inspiring vision for the future and building a sense of school morale and purpose.

One way to organize elementary assemblies is to divide the entire school into small assembly groups comprising four to six classrooms of different grade levels. Each assembly group has a regular time when they meet for an assembly. The parent/community volunteer for that assembly group and the principal should be present during these assemblies. Each teacher teaches the *WiseSkills* curriculum during the week, with an assembly set aside weekly, biweekly, or monthly.

The career speakers featured in the regular assemblies broaden students' horizons and demonstrate the importance of school achievement and positive character. Speakers share with students about their occupations and how they have found success in their lives. Having students regularly see positive role models reinforces the values and character skills being learned in the classroom. Teachers can also have students keep a *Career Journal* to record and discuss the different occupations featured. (The *Career Journal* can be found in the **Journals & Logs** section of the *WiseSkills* curriculum.

In addition, each class can recite the quote they discussed and memorized during the week, with one student from each class briefly summarizing the lesson of the saying and leading their class recitation. Each assembly can also involve student awards, including **WiseStudent!** award certificates (available from *WiseSkills* Resources).

### Elementary Assemblies Can Include:

1. Guest Career Speakers
2. Recitations of Quotes
3. Student Awards
4. Classroom Presentations
5. Singing
6. Sharing Service Projects



The Community Connections Kit provides:

1. Letters to businesses
2. List of occupational categories
3. Suggested topics for speakers
4. Practical forms for organizing names of speakers
5. And more!

### Career Speaker Topics

1. Training & education
2. Job responsibilities
3. Positive & negative aspects of their career
5. What character qualities are important at their job?
4. How did they succeed when they were young
6. Advice to students

## 2. Regular Service Projects

It is important that students engage in meaningful projects that benefit others outside the school. A crucial element in the *WiseSkills* program is the involvement of students in actively serving their immediate community. These community service projects are a continuing application of the principles and character skills being learned in the classroom.

Not only do service projects build a sense of community as students work together, but they also develop good citizenship and responsibility towards others, which is an important part of becoming full participants in society. Community service greatly enhances self-esteem, as students begin to see themselves as contributors to others and not just as recipients of information in school. Moreover, these projects can make schooling more relevant, as necessary jobs can be integrated into appropriate subject areas.

Students and parents generate ideas of how they can serve their surrounding community. Teachers discuss these ideas with their students and together each class comes up with its own service project for the school year. After students have decided on a project, volunteers contact community organizations and services to find a project for each classroom they are responsible for. It may be necessary for some classrooms to have the same service project.



**The Community Connections Kit provides:**

1. Letters to community organizations
2. Ideas for school/community service projects
3. Suggested contacts for projects
4. Memos to teachers
5. And more!

### Service Projects

1. Convalescent Homes: Visiting, sharing projects, performing
2. Special Education Classes: Visiting, helping, performing
3. Environmental Groups: Park planting, recycling,
4. Community Issues: Petitions, letters, Council meetings
5. Social Services: Soup kitchen, homeless shelter, food pantry
6. Local Museums: Oral histories, creating exhibits
7. Hospitals: Visiting, sharing projects, performing
8. Local Government: Clean-ups, painting over graffiti

### 3. Elementary Class Partnerships

Volunteers can also help elementary teachers arrange special activities between older and younger students. Class partnerships teach young people the importance of good citizenship skills as older children work regularly with younger students. Older students can feel a sense of responsibility to be good models, while younger students enjoy the attention and look to older children as examples of behavior and attitude.

Activities can include helping students academically as well as working on various projects or chores together. Consistent class partnerships are simple ways for students to apply positive character skills by developing cross-age relationships that are maintained through semi-regular activities, games, chores, and class projects.

Rather than being task-oriented where older students only help with specific jobs or needs, class partnerships can foster positive relationships between older and younger students. For that reason, each older child works with the same student (or small group) during a quarter or semester. This allows genuine connections to develop and creates a positive school environment where students begin to care for one another and for their school.

Class partnerships build the self-esteem of all students, as positive attitudes and good behavior are modeled and emulated. When older students are put in situations where they are examples to younger children, in most cases they respond by being good models. This modeling reinforces what students are already learning in the class curriculum.



**The Community Connections Kit provides:**

1. Scheduling forms
2. Calendars
3. Memos to teachers

#### **Class Partnership Activities**

- |                                     |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Doing classroom or school chores | 5. Helping with class assignments |
| 2. Reading together                 | 6. Outdoor games                  |
| 3. Tutoring                         | 7. Taking a field trip together   |
| 4. Art projects                     | 8. Writing stories together       |







# The *WiseSkills*<sup>™</sup> Class Curriculum

The *WiseSkills* program includes an interdisciplinary curricula that uses the words and lives of multicultural figures to teach K-2 students positive values and character skills. The program takes only a small amount of classroom time and requires little or no teacher preparation. Through short, regular activities, students learn character skills such as honesty, responsibility, respect, conflict resolution, communication, service, self-control, tolerance, and many others. Because the *WiseSkills* curricula uses real people and authentic speeches, poems, and proverbs, it can be easily integrated into the *social studies* and *language arts* curricula.

## *WiseSkills* Curricula Goals

1. Students will learn and apply important character skills which will build their self-esteem and lead to greater success in and out of school.
2. Students will be exposed to the words and lives of a variety of historical figures from diverse cultural backgrounds.
3. Students will experience a safe and healthy classroom environment that promotes positive choices.

## Scope

The *WiseSkills* curricula defines 32 *WiseSkills* divided into 8 monthly *Character Themes*. A *WiseSkill* is a positive character trait that helps students be wise and make good choices. Each *WiseSkill* features a variety of historical quotations teachers can choose from, along with discussion topics, class activities, journal writing ideas, suggested role-plays, and more. The curricula is designed to have students learn a different *WiseSkill* and quotation each week, with four weeks left for review throughout the school year.

The *WiseSkills* monthly *Character Themes* allow an entire school to focus on specific qualities for an entire month and engage students with a variety of activities and projects. Monthly themes provide excellent opportunities to integrate character skills into subject areas throughout the month.

On the following pages are the 8 monthly *Character Themes*, the 32 *WiseSkills*, and the authors included in the biographies in the class curricula.

# WiseSkills™ Monthly Character Themes

## Character Theme: Positive Attitude

<i>Wise-Skill #</i>	<i>WiseSkill</i>	Authors Featured in Character Portraits
1	Keeping a Positive Attitude	M. Curie A. Frank D. Tutu M. Washington
2	Positive Speech	Jesus St. Paul Mother Teresa
3	Positive Thoughts	R. W. Emerson J. Jackson Solomon E. C. Stanton
4	Thankfulness	L. M. Alcott Epicurus B. Gracián

## Character Theme: Respect

5	Self-Respect	Jesus B. Gracián A. Lincoln E. Roosevelt
6	Respect for Authority	Aristotle A. Frank St. Paul Solomon
7	Respect for Others	J. Addams Jesus Confucius St. Paul
8	Tolerance	L. M. Alcott A. Einstein J. Jackson Chief Joseph H. Keller M. L. King, Jr.

## Character Theme: Responsibility

9	Dependability	Jesus A. Frank H. Keller Mohammed
10	Perseverance	Mohammed W. Shakespeare H. B. Stowe
11	Initiative & Effort	J. Addams Confucius J. Jackson F. Nightingale
12	Being a Good Example	C. Chavez Jesus Solomon

## Character Theme: Self-Discipline

13	Learning from Discipline	Epicurus Solomon
14	Self-Control	L. M. Alcott Aristotle M. Montessori L. Tzu
15	Patience	R. W. Emerson St. Paul Sa'di Solomon
16	Keeping a Good Conscience	A. Frank W. Shakespeare E. C. Stanton

# WiseSkills™ Monthly Character Themes

## Character Theme: Relationships

Wise-Skill #	WiseSkill	Authors Featured in Character Portraits
17	Cooperation	J. Jackson E. Roosevelt Solomon B. T. Washington
18	Honesty	R. W. Emerson Mohammed W. Shakespeare Solomon G. Washington
19	Friendship	Aristotle A. Bradstreet R. W. Emerson Solomon G. Washington
20	Courage	M. L. King, Jr. Mohammed E. Roosevelt

## Character Theme: Personal Goals

21	Developing Talents	A. Pavlova B. T. Washington
22	Facing Challenges	L. M. Alcott A. Einstein H. Keller E. Roosevelt B. T. Washington
23	Having Hopes & Dreams	Aristotle M. Gandhi J. Jackson M. Montessori W. Shakespeare
24	Goal Setting	Q. Christina Confucius A. Frank E. Roosevelt

## Character Theme: Citizenship

25	Compassion	Jesus St. Paul Mother Teresa
26	Humility	Jesus D. Day R. W. Emerson St. Paul Solomon
27	Service	C. Chavez M. Curie E. Roosevelt Solomon Mother Teresa B. T. Washington
28	Good Citizenship	H. Clinton H. Keller Mohammed

## Character Theme: Conflict Resolution

29	Communication	P. S. Buck Confucius E. Roosevelt
30	Managing Feelings	L. M. Alcott Aristotle G. Buddha Solomon
31	Forgiveness	Jesus St. Paul A. Pope Solomon
32	Resolving Conflicts Wisely	Jesus A. Einstein M. Gandhi M. L. King, Jr. E. Roosevelt Solomon

## **WiseSkills™** Curricula Materials

The **WiseSkills** curricula features 32 **WiseSkills** divided into 8 Character Themes. Skills are taught to students using the lives of real people in history. Materials feature a variety of class activities and provide maximum flexibility for teachers.

1. **Character Themes:** Thematic monthly units that focus on 4 weekly **WiseSkills**. Each theme features a variety of teaching resources, including:
  - A. Interdisciplinary Projects
  - B. Multicultural Quotations
  - C. Discussion Topics & Class Activities
  - D. Reproducible Learning/Reflection Pages
2. **Quotation Activities:** Simple activities that can be used with any of the quotations. Activities include writing, drawing, and interviewing.
3. **Journals & Logs:** Ongoing records and logs of the quotes and skills students learn, career speakers they meet, and service projects they do.
4. **Character Portraits:** Brief biographies of 42 quotation authors that highlight their positive character qualities.
5. **Author Index:** An easy-to-use index referencing all of the authors featured throughout the curricula.
6. **Peer Mediation:** Easy-to-use resources that foster effective conflict resolution. Throughout the year, all students can be equipped to be peer mediators.
7. **Parent Newsletters:** One-page newsletters that invite parental input and inform parents about different aspects of the **WiseSkills** program.

## WiseSkills Theme

The theme of **WiseSkills** is *wisdom*. It is important that students understand the difference between *wisdom* and *knowledge*. Knowledge is the accumulation of facts and information which students learn in *social studies, science, math* and the other subject areas. Wisdom, on the other hand, is making positive choices. While knowledge focuses on *information*, wisdom focuses on *actions*. A helpful ongoing definition of wisdom is: **"Making good choices for myself and others."** Each **WiseSkill** teaches students a different way to apply wisdom and make positive choices.

To begin teaching **WiseSkills**, teachers should familiarize students with the important difference between wisdom and knowledge. Teachers should emphasize that everyone can be *wise* no matter how *smart* they are, or how well they do in school. In addition, throughout the year classroom discipline can be tied in with the concept of wisdom and making good choices. Below are some theme quotations that teachers may post in the classroom and discuss at the beginning of the year.

### **WiseSkills Theme Quotations:**



Never mistake knowledge for wisdom. One helps you make a living; the other helps you make a life.

*Sandra Carey*



Wisdom is knowing what to do next; skill is knowing how to do it; and virtue is doing it.

*David Starr Jordan*



Each person's character shapes his fortunes.

*Latin Proverb*



Wisdom is got by character, not by age.

*Plautus*



Happy is the person who finds wisdom... Wisdom will make your life pleasant. It will bring you peace. As a tree makes fruit, wisdom gives life to those who use it. Everyone who uses wisdom will be happy.

*King Solomon*



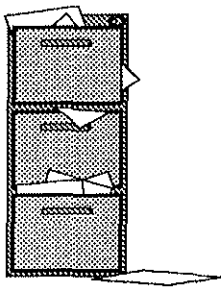
Wisdom is the most important part of happiness.

*Sophocles*









# Finding Career Speakers

- 1. Guidelines for Finding Career Speakers**
- 2. Job Categories**
- 3. List of Speaker Contacts**
- 4. Letters to Speakers**
- 5. Memos to Teachers**
- 6. Interview Questions**
- 7. Speakers Master List**
- 8. Calendar**
- 9. Additional Elementary Activities**

# Guidelines for Finding Career Speakers

You are responsible for developing contacts with the community to find speakers to share with students about their careers and how they have found success in life. Speakers serve as positive role models for students, demonstrating the practical importance of the life skills they are discussing in class.

When finding speakers, you should consider:

1. **Diversity:** Ideally, speakers should represent a variety of cultures and occupations. Students should see career speakers who reflect the school's ethnic makeup, but should also be exposed to people from other cultural groups.
2. **Topics:** Speakers should share about their jobs as well as what has helped them find success through their childhood, teen years, and adulthood. Some speakers may choose to be "interviewed" by you, a teacher, or the principal. Interview questions are provided in this Community Connections Kit.
3. **Presentations:** Speakers should try to communicate on a level appropriate for students. Speakers should be encouraged to bring in any props or materials that may help them communicate better.

To find speakers, begin with contacting organizations such as these in your community:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Service Groups
- Speaker Bureaus

Name of Organization	Address	Phone Number	Contact

# Job Categories

In order to expose students to a variety of careers, below is a list of six occupational categories with a few examples of jobs in each category. These categories and examples should give you an idea of the various resources to contact in your community.

## I. Artistic

- Writers
- Artists
- Dancers
- Actors
- Film production
- Musicians

## II. Business

- Store owners
- Sales
- Real Estate
- Clerical
- Accounting
- Computers

## III. Industrial

- Factory
- Food Processing
- Mining
- Welding
- Manufacturing
- Chemicals

## IV. Mechanical

- Carpentry
- Plumbing
- Electrical
- Masonry
- Woodworking
- Food Preparation

## V. Professional

- Science
- Law
- Education
- Social Work
- Technology
- Management

## VI. Service

- Police
- Security
- Beautician
- Airline attendant
- Transportation
- Maintenance

# List of Speaker Contacts

To help you recruit people from a variety of careers, these are forms you can use to list companies and contacts that may be willing to come and share with students. For your convenience, careers are divided into the six occupational categories with examples from each category listed at the top of each page. While it may be difficult to get speakers in every category, try to find as much variety as you can.

## I. Artistic

- Writers
- Artists
- Dancers
- Actors
- Film Production
- Musicians

Contact	Name of Company	Address	Phone Number

## II. Business

- Store owners
- Sales
- Real Estate
- Clerical
- Accounting
- Entrepreneurs

Contact	Name of Company	Address	Phone Number

### III. Industrial

- Factories
- Food Processing
- Mining

- Welding
- Manufacturing
- Chemicals

Contact	Name of Company	Address	Phone Number

#### IV. Mechanical

- Carpentry
- Plumbing
- Electrical

- Masonry
- Woodworking
- Food Preparation

Contact	Name of Company	Address	Phone Number

## V. Professional

- Science
- Law
- Education

- Social Work
- Technology
- Management

Contact	Name of Company	Address	Phone Number



## VI. Service

- Police
- Security
- Beautician
- Airline attendant
- Transportation
- Maintenance

Contact	Name of Company	Address	Phone Number



Dear Sir or Madam:

Our school is using the *WiseSkills* program, which includes regularly bringing in a variety of guest speakers from the community who share briefly about their careers and how they have found success in life. This allows students to see positive role models in their community and exposes them to career possibilities for their futures.

We would like to know if individuals working for your business or organization would be willing to come and talk with our students one day for 10-20 minutes. Speakers do not need to give a large presentation but simply share with students about what they enjoy about their career and what has helped them find success. This exposes our children to adults working in the community in various occupations.

If you or someone else would like to come to our school one day during this school year, please call me at the number below:

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

*WiseSkills* Parent Volunteer



Dear

Thank you for offering to come to our school to share briefly about your career and your life. Below is a list of suggested topics you can address. Please feel free to choose only a few to emphasize. Try to keep your presentation at an appropriate level for our students. If you would like to be interviewed instead of giving your own presentation, please let me know.

### Topics

1. What is the name of your job?
2. What exactly do you do at work?
3. What made you choose this career?
4. What training or education did you need??
5. What do you like about your job?
6. What do you not like about your job?
7. When you were young what did you do that helped you succeed?
8. As an adult, what personal skills do you feel are important to be successful?
9. What advice can you give to students about school or their futures?

Again, thank you for coming to our school soon. Below is a confirmation of the date(s) and time(s) we are expecting you. We are looking forward to seeing you.

Date	Time	School Address	School Phone Number

Sincerely,

**WiseSkills** Parent Volunteer



Dear

Thank you again for coming to our school. Our students enjoyed hearing about your career and life experiences. If you know anyone who might also be interested in coming and speaking to our students, please tell them to give me a call at my number below. Or you can contact me and I will be glad to contact them.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

***WiseSkills*** Parent Volunteer

# memo:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher

From: \_\_\_\_\_

*WiseSkills* Parent Volunteer

Re: Career Speakers

Below is a list of the career speakers I have arranged to speak with your students.

Date	Career Featured

***memo:***

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
*WiseSkills Parent Volunteer*

Re: Career Speaker

## Our Next Career Speaker:

• Date:

• Time:

• Place:

• Career Featured:

## Interview Questions

Some speakers may feel more comfortable if they share with students by being interviewed by you, a student, or a teacher. Below is a list of questions that can be used to interview career speakers:

### Questions

1. What is your job?
2. What are your job responsibilities?
3. Why did you choose this career?
4. What training or education did you need?
5. What do you like about your job?
6. What do you not like about your job?
7. When you were young, what helped you succeed?
8. As an adult, what personal skills do you feel are important to be successful?
9. What advice can you give to students about school or their futures?

# Career Speakers Master List

[illegible]



Month of \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

# Additional Elementary Activities

While most elementary assemblies feature career speakers, Parent Volunteers may need to schedule some alternate activities instead of speakers. This may be necessary if: 1) A speaker cancels an appointment; 2) The Parent Volunteer is unable to find a speaker for a certain date; or 3) Students need some variety in the assembly programs.

On the next few pages are suggested activities for assemblies which take little preparation and reinforce the skills taught in the class curriculum.

## I. Students and School Personnel

1. Have a teacher, the principal, or someone else on the school staff share about his/her life and career.
2. Have one classroom share about their service project.

## II. Audio Tapes

These are tapes which are available from public libraries or educational publishers. While most of the tapes are for the primary grades, they can also work for older students as well.

1. *Aesop's Fables*
2. *An Incredible Journey* by Laura Simms
3. *A Place to Be* by Jay Ungar and Lyn Hardy
4. *Cabbage Soup* by Children's Radio Theater
5. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* (Sundance)
6. *Rumpelstiltskin* (Sundance)
10. *Stone Soup* (Sundance)
11. *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble* by William Steig
12. *Tales on the Wind* by Marcia Lane
13. *The Emperor's New Clothes* (Sundance)
14. *The Magic Fish Rap* by Bernice and Jan Chardiot
15. *The Rainbow Kingdom*
16. *The Selfish Giant*
17. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (Sundance)
18. *The Three Billy Goat's Gruff*
19. *The Ugly Duckling*
20. *Under One Sky* by Ruth Pelham
21. \_\_\_\_\_

### III. Big Books

These are large books with pictures which can be read to students by a teacher or the principal.

1. *Bread and Jam for Frances* by Russell Hoban
2. *Bremen Town Musicians* (Troll)
3. *Have a Dream* (Sundance)
4. *Peter's Chair* by Ezra Jack Keats
5. *Spelling Bee* (Troll)
6. *Stone Soup* (Troll)
7. *The Lion and the Mouse* (Troll)
8. *The Little Red Hen* by Alyson Butler
9. *The Three Little Kittens* by Aaron Gurbich
10. *Tommy at the Grocery Store* by Bill Grossman
11. *Young Abraham Lincoln* (Troll)
12. *Young Amelia Earhart* (Troll)
13. *Young George Washington* (Troll)
14. *Young Harriet Tubman* (Troll)
15. *Young Helen Keller* (Troll)
16. *Young Jackie Robinson* (Troll)
17. *Young Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Troll)
18. *Young Orville and Wilbur Wright* (Troll)
19. *Young Pocahontas* (Troll)
20. *The Ugly Duckling* (Troll)
21. *You Look Funny* (Troll)
22. \_\_\_\_\_
23. \_\_\_\_\_
24. \_\_\_\_\_
25. \_\_\_\_\_

#### IV. Posters and Bulletin Board Sets

These are posters and large illustrations dealing with a variety of themes related to values and positive character skills. The school principal or a teacher can easily present the information and engage students in a brief discussion.

1. *African-American Leaders* (Frank Schaffer)
2. *American Achievers* (Trend)
3. *American Leaders--Social and Political* (Trend)
4. *Careers* (Frank Schaffer)
5. *Discovery Posters--Our Environment* (Trend)
6. *Discovery Posters--Outstanding Black Americans* (Trend)
7. *Drug Education* (Frank Schaffer)
8. *Ecology and the Environment* (Frank Schaffer)
9. *Ecology Educators* (Beistle)
10. *Exploring Our Emotions* (Trend)
11. *Famous Americans* (Frank Schaffer)
12. *Good Conduct Counts* (Frank Schaffer)
13. *Good Health Habits* (Beistle)
14. *Hispanic American Achievers* (Trend)
15. *Look at Me and I'm Drug Free* (Trend)
16. *Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Frank Schaffer)
17. *Protect the Ozone* (Trend)
18. *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle* (Trend)
19. *Survival Signs and Symbols* (Trend)
20. *Self-Esteem* (Frank Schaffer)
21. *Study Habits* (Trend)

## V. Videos

These are videos which may be available from public libraries, video stores, or educational publishers. The topics of these films relate to careers or character skills. Unless otherwise indicated, each video is 30 minutes or less.

1. *A Thanksgiving Story* (HBJ)
2. *All About Paper* (Rainbow Educational Videos)
3. *All About Wood* (Rainbow Educational Videos)
4. *All About Wheat* (Rainbow Educational Videos)
5. *Away We Go: All About Transportation* (Rainbow Educational Videos)
6. **Berenstain Bears Series:**
  - The Berenstain Bears and the Truth*
  - The Berenstain Bears and the Missing Dinosaur Bone*
  - The Berenstain Bears--No Girls Allowed*
  - The Berenstain Bears Get Stage Fright*
  - The Berenstain Bears in the Dark*
  - The Berenstain Bears Learn About Strangers*
  - The Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners*
  - The Berenstain Bears--The Trouble with Friends*
  - The Berenstain Bears--Too Much Birthday*
  - The Berenstain Bears Get in a Fight*
  - The Berenstain Bears and the Messy Room*
7. *Bonnie Consolo*
8. *Booker* (40 minutes)
9. *Cartoon All-Stars to the Rescue*
10. *Child Awareness Series: It's OK to Say No to Drugs* (Permabound)
11. *Drugs: A Primary Film* (Permabound)
12. *Donald's Crime* (Disney)
13. *Emperor's New Clothes* (Sundance)
14. *Everyone Has a Job to Do* (HBJ)
15. *Families* (Churchill)
16. *Granpa* (Showtime)
17. *Kid Safe: The Video*
18. *Michael Jordan--Air Time* (55 minutes)
19. *Michael Jordan's Playground*

## V. Videos (continued)

20. *Mother Teresa* (82 minutes)
21. *News Travels Fast: All About TV Newscasting* (Rainbow Educational Videos)
22. *Rainbow War*
23. *Sound of Sunshine, Sound of Rain*
24. *Spud Webb: Reach for the Skies* (60 minutes)
25. *Stanley the Ugly Duckling*
26. *Stone Soup* (Troll)
27. *Strong Kids, Safe Kids*
28. *The Choice is Up to You* (HBJ)
29. *The Dog Days of Arthur Cane* (ABC Weekend Special)
30. *The More We Get Together* (HBJ)
31. *The Velveteen Rabbit*
32. *There's a Nightmare in My Closet*
33. *Too Smart for Strangers*
34. *Thomas the Tank Engine and Friends Series:*
  - James Learns a lesson and Other Stories*
  - Daisy and Other Thomas Stories*
  - Thomas Gets Tricked and Other Stories*
  - Thomas Gets Bumped and Other Stories*
  - Thomas, Percy, & the Dragon and Other Stories*
  - Trust Thomas and Other Stories*
35. *Value of... Series: (Permabound)*
  - Value of a Good Attitude*
  - Value of a Good Education*
  - Value of a Good Sense of Humor*
  - Value of a Helping Hand*
  - Value of Being Conscientious*
  - Value of Completing a Task*
  - Value of Enthusiasm*
  - Value of Good Manners*
  - Value of Planning Your Time*
  - Value of Positive Thinking*
  - Value of Responsibility*
  - Value of Special Friends*
  - Value of Training and Practice*
36. *We Kids Can: The B.A.T. Club* (Silver Burdett)

## V. Videos (continued)

### 37. Winnie the Pooh: (Disney)

*Good Citizenship*

*Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day*

*King of the Beasties*

*Newfound Friends*

*There's No Camp Like Home*

*Windsome, Lose Some*

### 38. You Can Choose... Series: (Incentives for Learning)

*Cooperation*

*Being Responsible*

*Dealing with Feelings*

*Saying No*

*Doing the Right Thing*

*Dealing with Disappointment*

*Appreciating Yourself*

*Asking for Help*

*Being Friends*

*Resolving Conflicts*

39. \_\_\_\_\_

40. \_\_\_\_\_

41. \_\_\_\_\_

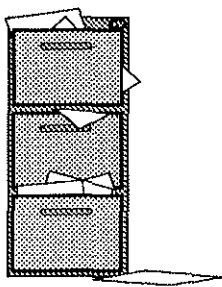
42. \_\_\_\_\_

43. \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:**



Arranging Service  
Projects



# Arranging Service Projects

- 1. Guidelines for Arranging Service Projects**
- 2. Questions to Ask Community Groups**
- 3. List of Community Groups**
- 4. Memos to Teachers**
- 5. Letters to Community Groups**
- 6. Service Projects Master List**

# Guidelines for Arranging Service Projects

Service projects give students an opportunity to apply many of the life skills they are learning in class. It also allows them a chance to contribute to others and not just receive information at school. This is important as students are prepared to become democratic citizens of our society.

Your job is to organize service projects for each classroom you are responsible for. Teachers will discuss with their students what they would like to do to contribute to their community. After each class decides on three projects they are interested in, you will need to contact different community groups to find out which project will work best. Once a project is decided, it is a good idea to have someone from the organization come to the school and share with the class about how their group helps the community and what students will do.

To determine which projects will work best, use the questions on the next page and consider:

- 1. Age of students:** While teachers will have a good idea of which projects would be appropriate for their grade levels, you should also ask each community group which ages they think would work best.
- 2. Location:** Project sites that are walking distance from the school work best, but many sites will be too far to walk. In many school districts, school buses are available for free if classes use "dead bus time," which refers to using buses for local trips during certain hours. Some districts do not allow car pooling. You will need to talk to the principal or contact your district office and find out what transportation options are available.
- 3. Commitment:** While community groups are certainly busy, it is important that organizations are committed to the service projects. You should find a contact at each site that will help you coordinate needs and times. If you find it difficult to develop an ongoing relationship with people in an organization, a project may not work at that site.

## Questions For Community Groups:

- What are some ways that students can contribute to the work you do?
- Which ages would be appropriate to help you?
- What time is best for students to come?
- How often should classes come?
- Could someone come to the classroom and share about how students can help?
- What are some things students should be careful about?
- How can students be prepared to help you?

# List of Community Groups

Service projects give students an opportunity to actively help others in their community. These projects increase students' self-esteem and build a positive class spirit as students work together to serve others. To develop contacts for projects, find out some of the organizations and services in your community. The list below should help you find the local resources that can serve as sites for projects. Make sure you find someone at each site that can be your contact for organizing the service project.

## Hospitals

Many people in our hospitals could use the refreshment and encouragement of children. This could involve actually visiting or may just include bringing student art work or stories for patients to enjoy during their stay. In your area, students may even be able to visit children who have serious illnesses.

### Service Projects

1. Visiting with patients
2. Serving snacks to patients
3. Sharing art work with patients
4. Performing music or skits to patients
5. Students read stories to children who are patients

Hospital Name	Address	Phone Number	Contact

# Convalescent Homes

Convalescent homes are perfect opportunities for young people to actively serve a very needy population. Most likely, there are convalescent homes near the school. One may even be walking distance. Students can visit with residents, make art projects for them, interview them about their lives, perform songs and skits, or other activities. Activities Directors at convalescent homes are always looking for creative activities for their residents.

## Service Projects

1. Perform songs or skits
2. Visit and build relationships
3. Gather oral histories
4. Share art work
5. Read stories
6. Make special cards

Convalescent Home Name	Address	Phone Number	Contact

# Museums

Museums not only offer resources for the class to use while studying various subjects, but they can also offer ways for students to get involved in their local community. Teachers could have students contribute to a museum exhibit that ties into their class curriculum. Museum projects would work best with older students.

## Service Projects

1. Gather oral histories from older members of the community and make a booklet
2. Help gather historical photographs and artifacts from the community for an exhibit on local history
3. Help put together an exhibit at the museum
4. Help organize information and materials for museum projects.

Museum Name	Address	Phone Number	Contact

# Social Service Organizations

In your community, there are various groups and organizations that provide important social services to residents. These can include homeless shelters, church soup kitchens, and groups that provide food at reduced prices for low-income residents.

## Service Projects

1. Help prepare or serve food at a soup kitchen
2. Help out at a homeless shelter
3. Load or sort food at a low-cost food service organization
4. Serve water or snacks to people waiting in line at a government office

Organization Name	Address	Phone Number	Contact



# Elementary & Special Education Schools

Students gain empathy for others as they serve people who are more needy than themselves. In your county or school district, there are a variety of special education schools that provide educational services for the emotionally, physically, and mentally disabled. Special education teachers are often very excited to have regular school children come to their classrooms and be with their students. Middle school students can also work with regular elementary students.

## Service Projects

1. Develop consistent relationships with students
2. Perform music or skits
3. Take field trips together
4. Tutor or read together

School	Address	Phone Number	Teacher

# Environmental Groups

There are probably groups in your community that work on local environmental issues. These include groups that plant trees, recycle, organize clean-ups, and other activities. Working with these groups allows students to have a direct impact on the environmental health of their community and may relate to material being taught in the classroom.

## Service Projects

1. Organize a recycling program at the school
2. Organize a community clean-up
3. Plant trees in a park or in the neighborhood
4. Paint over graffiti in the neighborhood

Environmental Group	Address	Phone Number	Contact

## City Services

There are a wide variety of municipal services and agencies which may be willing to have students work with them on service projects in the community. These may include painting over graffiti, park clean-up, planting flowers, or other community beautification activities.

[illegible]

[illegible]

# Local Issues

Older students can get involved in neighborhood or city issues that affect their lives or others. Students will often rise to the challenge of becoming leaders in their community and can also learn good citizenship. This could include organizing petitions, attending City Council meetings, writing letters, and informing their community about the issue.

## Community Issues

1. Traffic safety (stoplights, speed bumps, etc.)
2. Transportation (buses, scheduling, routes)
3. Funding issues (libraries, museums, parks)
4. Neighborhood crime
5. Homelessness

## Relevant Issues in Your Community:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Ideas for How to Get Students Involved:

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# ***memo:***

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
*WiseSkills* Parent Volunteer

Re: Service Project

Below is a list of some ideas for Service Projects. Discuss these with your students and come up with three ideas for your Service Project.

## **1. Hospitals**

- Visit patients
- Share art projects
- Serve snacks
- Perform songs or skits

## **2. Convalescent Homes**

- Perform songs or skits
- Read students' stories
- Visit and build relationships
- Share art projects

## **3. Museums**

- Work on an exhibit
- Help with a project
- Make a booklet of oral histories
- Gather historical photographs

## **4. Social Service Organizations**

- Help at a homeless shelter
- Help prepare food at a soup kitchen
- Sort food at a low-cost food service organization

## **5. Elementary & Special Education Schools**

- Develop relationships
- Perform music or skits
- Take field trips together
- Tutor and read together

## **6. Environmental Groups**

- Start a recycling program
- Organize a community clean-up
- Plant trees in a park
- Paint over graffiti

## **7. Local Issues**

- Organize petitions
- Attend City Council meetings
- Write letters
- Inform the community

# memo:

Below is a list of project sites that are within walking distance of our school.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Teachers

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
*WiseSkills Parent Volunteer*

Re: Service Project

Name of Group or Organization	Address and Phone Number	Distance from School	What Students Can Do
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

# ***memo:***

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher

From: \_\_\_\_\_

*WiseSkills* Parent Volunteer

Re: Service Project

Please write 3 ideas for your Service Project that your class decided on and return to me:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

I will be contacting community resources to arrange your project. I will then communicate with you which project will work best.

Thank you.



# memo:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher

From: \_\_\_\_\_

*WiseSkills* Parent Volunteer

Re: Service Project.

After taking your class's suggestions and contacting various community resources, I have found that this Service Project will probably work best:

Name of Organization:	
Address:	
Phone Number:	
What Students Can Do:	
Transportation:	School Bus____ City Bus____ Car pools____ Walking____ Other:

Please fill out the form below and return to me. Thanks!!

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ This project is fine. These are the times we are interested in going.

Day of the week:

Occasionally

☐

Quarterly

☐

Monthly

☐

Weekly

☐

Time:

☐ I don't think this will work. Please talk to me.

# ***memo:***

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher

From: \_\_\_\_\_

*WiseSkills* Parent Volunteer

Re: Service Project

Your next Service Project is scheduled below:

Date:	
Time:	
Location:	
Transportation:	School Bus____ City Bus____ Car pools____ Walking____ Other:

If you have any questions, please contact me at this  
phone number:

--



Dear Sir or Madam:

Often today's students miss out on the valuable experience of helping others in their community. These experiences build young people's self-esteem and makes them feel that they, too, can be contributors to others.

Our school is using the **WiseSkills** program which teaches students important character skills and involves them in actively serving their community. We are looking for places for our students to get some hands-on community service experiences. We are interested in having at least one classroom work with your organization. Working with organizations like yours gives young people formative experiences that will prepare them to become full participants in our society.

If you would be able to have some students work with you, please call me at the number below. We hope the important work you do in our community can be shared with our students.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

**WiseSkills** Parent Volunteer



Dear

Thank you for allowing our students the opportunity to work with your organization to serve our community. Hopefully these will be memorable experiences for children that will inspire them to be active citizens as they get older.

Below is a confirmation of the work students will be doing with you, including the dates and times they will come.

Age of Students: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

What Students Will Do: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date(s):					
Time(s):					

Again, thank you for having our students engage in such a meaningful project. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at the number below.

Sincerely,

*WiseSkills* Parent Volunteer

# Service Projects Master List

Classroom	Service Project	Frequency
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

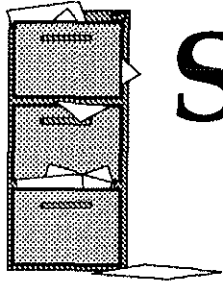
Notes:

## Notes:

**Notes:**







# Scheduling Class Partnerships

- 1. Guidelines for Scheduling Class Partnerships**
- 2. Memos to Teachers**
- 3. Class Schedules**
- 4. Class Partnerships Master List**

# Guidelines for Arranging Class Partnerships

Because of the class time required, some teachers may choose not to have class partnerships. For those teachers who want their students to develop cross-age relationships, the activities can be arranged by the teachers themselves. However, if teachers would like, Parent Volunteers can assist them in coordinating the activities between the two classrooms. When helping teachers, Parent Volunteers should consider the following:

1. **Relationships:** The focus of the WiseFriends class partnerships is not merely tutoring or reading together, but rather having students develop genuine caring and modeling relationships with one another. This builds school morale and reinforces important character skills.
2. **Frequency:** It is important that each teacher clarifies how often he/she wants to have a WiseFriends activity. Activities can be biweekly, monthly, quarterly, or once each semester.
3. **Variety:** If possible, it is best for classrooms to have a variety of activities together. Opportunities should be given to have older students lead or be responsible for younger students in some capacity.

# memo:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher

From: \_\_\_\_\_

*WiseSkills* Parent Volunteer

Re: Class Partnerships

To arrange a time for your class to get together with your WiseFriends, please fill out the times you are available and any ideas of what you would like to do together. Then return this form to me. Thank you.

Your WiseFriends:

## Available Times

Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

How often would you like to  
have a WiseFriends activity?

## Ideas for WiseFriends Activities

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

# memo:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher

From: \_\_\_\_\_

*WiseSkills* Parent Volunteer

Re: Class Partnerships

The date and time for your next  
WiseFriends activity is written below:

Date:

Time:

Activity:

---

---

---

Meet at:

---

# Class Schedules

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

# Class Partnerships Master List

Classroom	Classroom	Frequency of Activities
	↔	
	↔	
	↔	
	↔	
	↔	
	↔	

Notes:

# Notes:

## Notes:





