

Give students a memorable way to recite the core values

“Here's our secret: we teach core values as deliberately as we teach algebra or reading comprehension.”

Bailey Thomson, SPARK Schools
as quoted in “Teaching Core Values” on gettingsmart.com

If core values are going to permeate your school and your students' lives, they will need to be memorable. In other words, you will need to define them in a way that students can memorize and retain.

Define them in one sentence

The schools quoted from above have five core values which are:

- » Service--I serve my classmates, community and country.
- » Persistence--I am persistent. I never give up.
- » Achievement--I achieve my best in all that I do.
- » Responsible--I am responsible for my actions.
- » Kindness--I treat everyone around me with kindness.

You may have noticed that the initial letters for each core value also spells the school name.

I am not advocating these values or these definitions, just pointing out that they are short enough to be easily memorized (and apparently are recited each morning as part of the school-starting routine).

Incorporate a memory aid such as hand gestures

Loma Linda Academy has the following four core values which are not only short, but also incorporate hand gestures as a memory aid.

- » Emotional intelligence--The power to see, understand and impact feelings.
- » Respect--The power to treat yourself and others like God's children.
- » Integrity--The power to do the right thing at all times.
- » Grit--The power to never give up on your goal even when it's tough.

Notice that each statement begins with "the power." The hand gesture that goes with the start of each is both arms flexed to indicate power. I'm sorry I can't remember the rest of the hand gestures for each statement--but you get the idea.

Or, set value statements to music

As you already know, music is a great way to help with memorization. Scripture songs from the 1970s are an example of this. Clearly this will take additional talent--but if you've got it, use it.

Delegating:

You should involve your staff in deciding which key characteristics of each value you want to emphasize. But you can delegate writing them to a good word smith.

Credits:

Thank you again to Clayton Koh and Linda Tambunan Nystrom of Loma Linda Academy's elementary school for your willingness to share your great ideas and hard work.

Binder tab: June

School size: All

Marketing process step:

- 1) Who are we?
- 2) What do families want?
- 3) What needs to change?
- 4) How do we tell our community?
- 5) How do we track results?