

State Operated Programs of Virginia

Sharpening Our Perspective

Brought to you by: The Cultivating Character Committee

Citizenship, Service, Cooperation, and Responsibility

May 2017

Words of Wisdom

Who bears the **responsibility** of aiding to the betterment of a nation? And how do you impress upon your membership a call to action? During his inaugural speech in 1961, President John F. Kennedy rendered these words to our nation: "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country." President Kennedy's timeless direction to every U.S. **citizen** was simple. Regardless of ethnicity or religion, what can I (as a human) do to make my community, district, and/or state a better environment for all?

Today, the *Cultivating Character Committee* asks a similar question. How can we improve upon our vision in Virginia SOP's? The month of May 2017 marks the one-year anniversary of the first *Sharpening Our Perspective* newsletter sent out across the state. Our goal was to create a tangible resource applicable to all of SOP and anyone wanting to learn about SEL and cultivating character in the lives of young people in Virginia and beyond. At times, the ongoing work has been challenging, but surely work that we love producing. Hopefully we have provided you with ideas, lesson plans, and inspiration throughout the past year. Please let us know!

As the testing season is upon us and we are winding down our regular school programming, take a moment to thank those around you for their **service**: especially those who keep us safe every day. See "**Spotlight On: May Madness**" on page two of this newsletter for ideas to help celebrate our colleagues. Also, take a moment to reflect on your **responsibilities** to your school, your center, or your organization and give thought to how you (and others) can provide services to individuals in need. For it is through **service** and **cooperation** that we truly improve ourselves and the lives of those around us. Happy May!

- Daniel Woodard, Special Education Teacher
Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Center

Ready Resources

Click on the links below for:

[ILA's Article Take Action for Social Good: Four End-of-Year Literacy Projects](#)

[Getting Smart's Article Culminating Passions: Student Leadership for School-Wide Change](#)

[Getting Smart's Article 14 Quotes to Remind Us We are Changemakers](#)

[The Civics Education Initiative: 100 Facts Every High School Student Should Know](#)

[50 Community Service Ideas for Teen Volunteers](#)

Videos:

[Responsibility Foundation - What is Responsibility?](#)

[What is Community Service?](#)

[Wisdom of Geese](#)

The Vision Statement of the Cultivating Character Committee:

Empowering SOP educators to cultivate social emotional intelligence and excellence of character.

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- ◆ Words of Wisdom
- ◆ Ready Resources
- ◆ Spotlight on: May Madness!
- ◆ YA Books of the Month

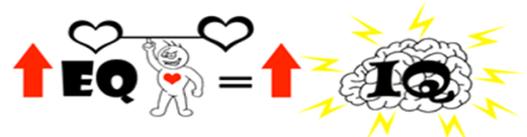
"Honor bespeaks worth.

Confidence begets trust.

Service brings satisfaction.

Cooperation proves the quality of leadership."

- James Cash Penney



Spotlight On: May Madness!

Forget March Madness, May is bursting with week and month-long celebrations related to Character Education. Here is the rundown for you (in chronological order), complete with a few suggestions and resources:

National Physical Education and Sport Week is May 1st-7th and is a great opportunity for P.E. teachers to stress personal **responsibility** for one's health and fitness along with the spirit of **cooperation** in games and sports. Visit [Shape America](#) to learn more about this week and to explore suggested activities and further resources.

How wonderful for all of us in our centers throughout the state that **Teacher Appreciation Week**, **Correctional Officers Week**, and **Nurses Week** are all taking place **May 6th-13th** across the country. Not only should we take some time to celebrate and appreciate ourselves and our colleagues, but we should also point out to our students that these careers are all **service-oriented**. We can [#ThankATeacher](#) and indulge ourselves with some [TAW Freebies, Deals, and Discounts](#). We can [read, post, and share the following proclamation](#) and be sure to thank our **correctional colleagues** for all that they do to help keep us, our students, and our communities safe. We can recognize and thank our facility **nurses** and encourage them to take care of themselves by [joining this webinar presented by the American Nurses Association](#). And finally, we can encourage our students to give back by [exploring service-oriented careers](#) and [community service projects for teens](#).

May's month-long celebrations include **Military Appreciation Month** and **Asian Pacific-American Heritage Month**, which are great opportunities to examine **citizenship**, and **Mental Health Awareness Month**, which is a great opportunity to embrace **cooperation**. Click on the following sites for more information, suggested resources, and activities:

Military Appreciation Month	Asian Pacific-American Heritage Month	Mental Health Awareness Month
Official NMAM Website	Official APAHM Website	Mental Health America Website
Ways to Participate in NMAM	APAHM Resources for Teachers	Mental Health America of Virginia Website

May is just one of those months that is chock-full of opportunities to connect our students with Character Education based on what is going on in the world around them. Happy planning!



- Kristin Sheetz
Literacy Coach
Loudoun County JDC

YA Books of the Month

These Young Adult novels feature:

Citizenship, Service, Cooperation, and Responsibility

***Code Name Verity* by Elizabeth Wein**

Click for

[Summary and Review](#)

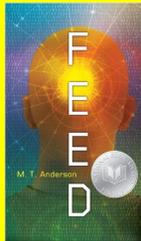


Feed by

M.T. Anderson

Click for

[Summary and Review](#)



Whirligig

by

Paul

Fleischman

[Click for Summary and Review](#)

Be A

Changemaker: How to Start

Something That Matters

by Laurie Ann

Thompson

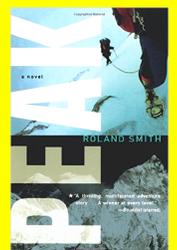
Click for Summary and

[Review](#)



[Click for Summary and Review](#)

Peak by Roland Smith



[Click for Summary and Review](#)

Ideas for our June/July newsletter? Have a resource or teaching tip to share? Is your center doing something with character education you want the rest of the state to know about? Please submit them to Kristin.Sheetz@lcps.org.