

**The Heart of the Iditarod is the Heart of Our Classroom
Character Education – Teaching the Hearts of Our Students**

Developed by: Cathy Walters

Discipline / Subject: Character Education

Topic: Attitude

The Iditarod is the Last Great Race. Teach students what a good attitude looks like using the acronym RACE.

R – Respect and Responsibility

A – Attitude

C – Compassion

E – Excellence

Grade Level: PK-2

Resources / References / Materials Teacher Needs:

- Attitude Song
- Book lists provided
- *Big-Enough Anna* by Pam Flowers
- *Dougie* by Pam Flowers
- *Togo* by Robert Blake
- *The Great Serum Run* by Debbie S. Miller
- *The True Story of Balto* by Natalie Standiford
- The following 2008 video clips from the Iditarod Insider at www.iditarod.com
 1. March 2 – Dee Dee Still Thinking about 2007
 2. March 2 – Hans Gatt
 3. March 5 – Cindy Gallea in Takotna
 4. March 6 – Tipped Sled On Rainy Pass
 5. March 6 – Gebhardt Explains His Late Arrival To Cripple
 6. March 12 - Moment of the Race

Lesson Summary: Through song, reading, discussion, and viewing mushers in action students will identify and demonstrate a good attitude.

Standards Addressed: (Local, State, or National)

Although there are no character education standards, the Character Education Partnership, which sponsors the Schools of Character Program, states Principle 1: Schools of character are those that promote core ethical values as the basis of good character and Principle 2: Students grow to understand core values by studying and discussing them, observing behavioral models, and resolving problems involving the values.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to tell if characters in literature have a good attitude.
- Students will identify those behaviors that

Method of Assessment for Learning:

- Students will be recognized for having a good attitude by having their name

<p>demonstrate a good attitude by mushers in the video clips they watch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will memorize and perform their song about Attitude at a school assembly or for their buddies. • Students will act out examples of good attitude for another class or in groups for each other. 	<p>placed on a poster of a giant sled. The acronym RACE is written across the top. When a student is “caught” having a good attitude their name goes under the “A” if they are “caught” showing respect or responsibility their name goes under the “R” and so on.</p>
<p>Procedural Activities: Each quarter of the year focus on a different tenet of the acronym RACE. Remind your students that there is an Iditarod thread woven through the entire school year and that in matters of character we can learn a lot from all those associated with the Last Great Race on Earth. Select a day of the week and set a time aside that you call, “Matters of the Heart.” Make it a priority to spend time at least once a week focusing on character. On your first meeting introduce the song, <i>Attitude</i>. Sing it daily until your students have it memorized and then at least once a week throughout the quarter. During the “Matters of the Heart” time read a selection from the book list provided and/or show a selection from the Iditarod Insider. Discuss how the character and/or musher demonstrated good attitude. Ask the children if they have seen anyone in class have a good attitude. Make this a weekly question so they will begin to look for those behaviors and be able to report them to the class.</p>	
<p>Materials Students Need: To encourage family conversation about the character education tenets you can incorporate a “Baggy Book” Program. This is explained in the respect and responsibility lesson. Make parents aware of the Iditarod Insider and which videos their children have seen in your weekly newsletter – spread the excitement and adventure of the Last Great Race!</p>	
<p>Technology Utilized to Enhance Learning: www.iditarod</p>	
<p>Other Information: The Last Great Race Character Education program can be adjusted to any age group by changing or adding on to the book list. I have used the songs, Iditarod Insider, and Iditarod themed books with PK – 5th and it works well with each grade. Please remember that there are many more examples of good attitude on the Iditarod Insider. I have just given you a few to get started.</p>	
<p>Modifications for Special Learners/ Enrichment Opportunities This quarterly themed character education program can be used in other time frames. I have used it in a one-week summer camp focusing on a different tenet Monday through Thursday and then on Friday I have my campers display those good musher traits in playing Dog Bootie Relay. It could also be used as a one-month program, discussing one tenet a week. Please feel free to adapt it to your needs!</p>	