

**Heartwood Ethics & Character  
Education Curriculum**

# **Implementation Guide for School Counselors**



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## Welcome to Heartwood

### The Case for Heartwood

Heartwood Ethics and Character Education Kits have been used in 40 states across America for 16 years. Heartwood is a widely respected and proven character education program that uses award-winning children's stories to illustrate seven moral attributes: *Courage, Loyalty, Justice, Respect, Hope, Honesty, and Love*. It is easy to implement and integrate the program into the daily classroom curriculum.

For years, teachers, counselors, and support staff have been using the Heartwood Curriculum not only as an educational resource, but also as a way to help young people understand the universal ethical attributes and realize the value of practicing them in daily life.

Our children's developmental years are filled with challenges, issues, problems, and dilemmas. Because of an increase in demand from educators, counselors, and after-school staff for materials and tools to help students face affective, social-emotional and behavioral challenges, Heartwood has developed a counseling guide for the existing kits based on the seven character attributes. Some of the books mentioned in this guide illustrate and address more than one attribute. The books are listed under the attribute that is the dominant theme of the book. When the counselor presents the material, it is important to make students aware that the attributes are interrelated.

### Counseling Overview

Once issues and concerns are identified for individuals or groups of students, the helping professional can use the stories and strategies in the kits to open doors for discussion and begin exploring strategies for addressing issues. Whether working one-on-one, in small groups, or with entire classes, the counselor can guide students in recognizing connections between the experiences of characters in the stories and their own lives. This will give the counselor one more tool to help students achieve success across the full range of school experiences.

### The Counselor's Role

The counselor assumes a significant role in teaching the Heartwood curriculum. The more the counselor and the teacher cooperate and communicate, the more the students will benefit. It is highly recommended that the helping professional become familiar with the Heartwood kits and stories at each grade level. This will enable the counselor to select from a wide range of tools and strategies to use in addressing their students' concerns. One option to using this guide would be to have the counselor do the lesson and the teacher do the follow up.

The counselor or teacher should first determine the needs of the student(s), the specific problems or issues to be addressed, and what Heartwood materials would be appropriate for the given situation. The more a counselor or teacher is familiar with the individual student(s) and the materials, the easier this will be.

## The Attributes

Attribute	Counseling Issue	Book*	Level
<b>Courage</b> <i>Standing up</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing up for oneself</li> <li>• Facing fears and challenges</li> <li>• Taking action in difficult situations</li> <li>• Coping with bullies</li> </ul>	<i>Abiyoyo</i>	1/2
		<i>The Storm</i>	4/5
<b>Loyalty</b> <i>Friendships</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building, repairing, and maintaining relationships</li> <li>• Facing prejudices dealing with race, sex, or abilities</li> <li>• Developing a sense of belonging</li> </ul>	<i>Teammates</i>	3/4
		<i>Coolies</i>	5/6
<b>Justice</b> <i>Fairness</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facing unfair situations</li> <li>• Doing the right thing, even when it is difficult</li> <li>• Exploring the notions of compromise and negotiation</li> </ul>	<i>King of the Playground</i>	1/2
		<i>The Memory Coat</i>	5/6
<b>Respect</b> <i>Acceptance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepting differences</li> <li>• Helping bullies understand the impact of their actions</li> <li>• Listening to other points of view</li> </ul>	<i>Chicken Sunday</i>	2/3
		<i>Be Good to Eddie Lee</i>	5/6
<b>Hope</b> <i>Feelings</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying and coping with fear, anger, grief, loneliness, loss, jealousy, and sadness</li> <li>• Setting and working toward goals</li> </ul>	<i>Angel Child, Dragon Child</i>	1/2
		<i>Peppe the Lamplighter</i>	4/5
<b>Honesty</b> <i>Trust</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telling the truth, even when it is difficult</li> <li>• Accepting responsibility for ourselves and our obligations to others</li> <li>• Obedience to rules</li> </ul>	<i>A Day's Work</i>	2/3
		<i>Sunshine Home</i>	4/5
<b>Love</b> <i>Caring</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family relationships</li> <li>• Friendships</li> <li>• Self esteem</li> <li>• A variety of loving, healthy relationships</li> </ul>	<i>Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters</i>	2/3
		<i>The Lady in the Box</i>	5/6

\* See page 35 for additional books that address counseling issues.

## The Process

### Setting the Stage

This is the time to begin to build and strengthen the partnership an adult and child share in trying to solve problems. The actual amount of time spent on the introduction, reading the stories, and the discussion will depend on the counselor and the student. Like a piece of string, the session should be as long or as short as it needs to be to accomplish the task at hand.

Where is the best place to work with Heartwood? The counselor is the expert. It might be in the counseling office, in the classroom or the library — with groups, on the steps in a quiet hallway, or on the playground away from noise. Choose an appropriate time for reading aloud when the student can listen without distraction, and when a dialog can be established and the counselor can assist the student in making connections between issues at hand and experiences in the stories. In short, choose a time and place where helping, understanding, and compassion can occur.

Whether one-on-one or in groups, the counselor can let the student(s) know that together they are going to see and hear how story characters deal with some of the same issues and concerns that students face. The counselor should pose introductory questions to students before beginning the story, making it clear that these are questions students can think about, but do not necessarily have to answer right away. The counselor should express hope to the child that he or she will be able to solve problems and figure some things out by using what he or she learns.

Note that the questions listed in “Setting the Stage” section of each lesson are warm-ups intended to help students focus on the topic for the upcoming lesson. The questions do not have to be answered at this time. Lengthy discussions can be saved for after the story is read.

### Reading

The stories in the kits are meant to be read aloud to children. Students can also read the books later on their own or read aloud to each other, but initially the teacher or counselor should be the reader. This allows the counselor to gauge how much the student is getting from the story and how he or she is feeling. It also provides a chance to address questions and concerns that the child may have.

### Discussing the Story

The counselor’s role at this stage is to help guide the students in recognizing connections between the experiences of the story characters and experiences in their own lives. During this process, the counselor is an active listener, a guide, and a coach, encouraging the “aha!” moment when a student “gets it” and discovers a connection between his or her own experience and the lesson, or clarifies a puzzling point in the story.

The counselor is also looking for opportunities to explore each attribute and the behavioral and social-emotional issues it addresses. Each attribute section deals with two stories, one from the primary kits and one from the intermediate kits. Even though these stories are geared for particular grade levels, they can be used across grade levels at the counselor's or teacher's discretion. Several of the books showcase many of the attributes, and some have all of them—not just one. Again, students should be aware that these attributes are often related.

### Discussing the Situation

The counselor can now use his or her skills, techniques, and relationship with the student(s) to open the door for further discussion and work on specific problems. At this point, the helping professional decides what direction to pursue. Were the story and/or questions and activities helpful? Does the story need to be explored further?

The counselor can encourage and coach students on how to practice what they learn in a lesson by suggesting they try what worked for a character in the story. For example: “Maybe this would be a good time to be honest like the boy in *A Day's Work*,” or “Maybe it might be helpful to talk to a parent like the brother and sister did in *The Lady in the Box*.”

It may also be time to create an action plan utilizing what was learned from the story, or to branch off in new directions, perhaps with another story from the kit.

### Activities

Sometimes just talking about the attributes is not enough. The activities were developed to help the counselor build a bridge between teaching children about the Heartwood attributes and helping them make connections to their own lives by actually giving them an opportunity to practice these attributes. The counselor is encouraged to look for opportunities to demonstrate the best techniques for how to show, for example, *honesty* or *respect* through role play. The action-oriented homework assignments were designed to allow counselors as well as parents or other caring adults, to give children hints on how to practice the attributes such as being honest or respectful. In the follow-up section, the counselor can have the student share the results of the homework assignments and use them as an additional opportunity to coach, encourage, and mentor the student.



## Courage

Many children face situations in which they become scared or worried. The situation may involve being in a dangerous place or in a time of crisis, as in *The Cello of Mr. O*. It may also be as common as being afraid of thunder or leaving home, as in *Ira Sleeps Over*. Children may be concerned with facing teasing or bullying, and may need to learn how to stand up for themselves, as in *Abiyoyo*. Counselors can use the stories in this section to help children open up about their worries and explore ideas for addressing their concerns.

Questions for the following two stories have been developed to show how courage can be a valuable tool in addressing very difficult dilemmas, such as standing up for oneself, facing fears and challenges, and taking action in difficult situations.

**Courage** is not only mastering fear; it is the ability to face difficulty or risk with integrity and honor.

## Courage: Discussion

### Abiyoyo by Pete Seger

Kit: Grades 1 or 2

Dealing with Bullies

#### Setting the Stage

- Have you ever felt worried or afraid that something bad might happen?
- Has someone ever been mean to you, like a bully?
- What happened?
- What did you do?
- How did it turn out?

#### Reading

- Today we're going to read a story about how one village was faced with a bad situation.
- Read the story aloud.

#### Discussing the Story

- Why are the villagers upset with the boy and his father?
- How is Abiyoyo like a bully?
- What did the boy and his father do that the villagers could not do for themselves?
- What did the villagers do?
- What about the boy and his father?

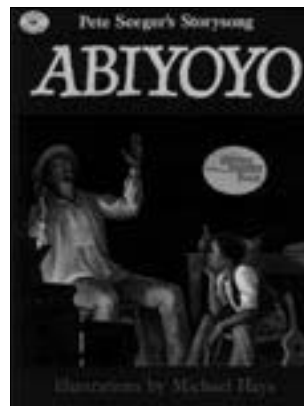
#### Discussing the Situation

- In your situation, what can you do?
- What have you tried? What happened?

##### Options:

- Stand up. Share your thoughts. Say, "No! Stop!" Think about what you have seen others do. Make a joke.
- Get help. A friend, teacher, parent, or counselor could stand up for you and make Abiyoyo stop or go away. Make the bully behavior disappear.
- What will you do the next time you are bullied?

*Remember: Talk to the students about the importance of reporting bullying to a trusted grown-up. Let them know that many grown-ups do not tolerate bullying and are there to help. In situations where the students are already demonstrating the attribute, encourage them to keep doing it. Point it out by saying, "See, you can do this!" or "With a little more work, you can make this happen."*



## Courage: Activities

### Discover

- Draw a picture of yourself or someone your age that depicts something the person fears. Now draw two more pictures of what can happen if the person uses courage.

### Teach coping mechanisms or strategies

#### Becoming

- Have students imagine being a superhero or a classmate who confronts bullies and speaks out for herself or himself. “What would she say and do?” (primary)

#### Internal Dialogue

- Set up two chairs, one for the student and the other for the student’s alter ego. Have the student play both parts, alternating between standing and asking the questions, and sitting and answering them. Have students ask each other questions such as, “What are you afraid of?” Coach the student as needed. (intermediate)

### Assign Homework

- Ask a trusted adult (parent, teacher, or grandparent) to tell the student about a time they had courage to stand up to a bully. (primary and intermediate)
- Observe how other students deal with bullies and report back to the group or counselor. (intermediate)
- Role play with a trusted adult standing up for oneself, expressing personal points of view, or practicing in front of a mirror. (primary and intermediate)
- Make a plan of action for dealing with bullies to share at the next counseling session. (intermediate)

### Follow-up

- Have student share results of homework assignments.
- Together list five situations where students need to have courage to stand up for themselves. Rank them from easy to hard. Imagine these situations on a “courage ladder” and try taking the first step. The bottom rung may be simply expressing your point of view to a trusted friend.