

FI: First of all, I want to say that we're completely fine with you being honest, we're not going to take offence, we're not going to hold it against you if you say anything negative. We really would like you to be honest and tell us what you really think. First thing is really just saying, what was it like taking part in the Narnian Virtues, how did you find it, just overall?

Male Respondent 1: It was okay doing it, but to be honest it was kind of boring, because most of the time we're just doing the same repetitive thing and then just writing a lot of stuff. And there was a lot of talking to other people, it was mainly just writing as well.

FI: What sort of stuff were you writing?

MR1: We were writing letters and writing about virtues and vices and things like that.

FI: Did you feel the same or anyone want to contribute?

MI: Did you find it repetitive as well, did they ask you the same thing too much?

Female Respondent 1: Yeah, because then we did the virtues in year 7 and then we did it again in year 8.

FI: Were they with different books?

FR1: Yeah, so the first one was The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, then we did the Voyage of the Dawn Treader.

FI: Do you guys feel the same? Got a couple of nods going on there.

MI: If you're saying it was repetitive, can you remember, you mentioned you were writing letters a lot, can you remember if there was anything else that you kept doing over and over that made it feel ... ?

MR1: We'd talk about different virtues but then we were, literally every lesson, we were doing a virtue, we didn't do anything different, we didn't do that many vices, we just kept doing virtues all the time.

FI: So you'd write some vices as well then?

MR1: Hmm.

FI: Do you have something to add to that?

Male Respondent 2: No.

MI: I'd really like to know what ... I don't know how to say it without trying to give an answer, but I guess ... let's play it the other way, how would you have improved it if it was repetitive and a bit boring, what could have been changed to improve it, do you think?

Male Respondent 2: Probably be some role play in it, so we could have actually had more fun and probably less writing and more speaking to other people.

FR1: I think you could have just changed the book because we did all the same writing.

FI: What sort of book do you think ... you're the person that reads, was there anything that you would recommend if we were to do a project like this again?

FR1: No, just something a little bit more different, that would be good. I think it'd be a lot better if we just changed the writing, because in year 7 we had to sit and write it but just different books.

FI: Would you still think in the fantasy genre or something a bit different?

FR1: In the same genre but just different books.

FI: Have you got any tips of how you would have liked to have seen it done differently?

Male Respondent 3: The homework book was annoying, we're doing too much work in class and then you have to go home and do that work as well.

FI: Do other people feel ... ?

FR1: I didn't mind the homework, it wasn't that bad.

MI: Is that true of all homework or do you think the Narnian Virtues homework was particularly bad for making you do the same thing again?

MR3: The Narnian Virtues booklet.

MI: It was worse?

FR1: What we were saying, instead of doing like a fantasy book, we could do one that would be more relatable to us instead, so we understand it more.

MI: Do you have any examples of books that we could use instead? It's fine if you can't think of any, but if you do think of some, that would help us.

FR1: I can't think of any at the moment.

FI: Or if any films or anything come into your mind, just let us know later on if you suddenly get inspired. With the homework books, did you feel other people in your family got involved in them?

MR3: Yeah.

FI: In what way, does anyone want to say?

MR3: My mum made me do housework.

MI: That didn't sound like you really wanted to do the housework.

MR3: It's about the homework booklet.

FI: What virtue was she linking that to?

MR3: Hard work.

MI: Was it hard work?

MR3: Yeah.

FI: Did your family get involved?

MR2: I don't know.

MI: If they didn't, it's fine to say no, even if they signed the book to say they did, because we won't tell your teachers. The teachers won't find out anything that you've said in here, so yeah ...

MR2: I didn't get the homework booklet, I was in year 8 [sounds like 00:06:40].

FI: What about you, did you have people at home taking part?

FR1: No, I did it by myself and then I just got my parents to sign it to say I did it.

MR1: For some of them they did, but then for others they didn't have enough time, so they just signed it but then [inaudible 00:07:02].

FI: Is there, it's fine to say no if this is the case, anything that you valued from doing it, was there anything that you found useful from doing it?

MR1: No.

MR2: Millions of virtues so we can use in our paradise or [inaudible 00:07:26].

FI: Do you feel there are any upsides at all?

FR1: It did help us learn more stuff and then we could actually use the virtues in our life if we wanted to, so it did help us with that.

MI: Can we just go back a step to talk about the character passports, since we've already touched on that, that's the homework book? Obviously, some of you have used it, even if it you didn't use it with your parents, how did you find it? Other than, for some, too much work, for others it was about okay, but how did you find doing the character passport?

FR1: I think it was a bit boring because we did the same work at school and then go back home and doing the same type of homework.

MI: Can you think of any examples where you were asked to do the same or similar things at school, at home?

FR1: In school, we had to write different sentences using the virtues, then we had to go home and try to find things to do at home and link them sentences with virtues.

MI: Do you feel like you missed out because you didn't get to take it home? How do you feel about not having the chance to do it?

MR2: I don't know.

FI: That's one thing we're wondering as well, why do you think the school decided to take part in Narnian Virtues, what do you think they were wanting to do by taking part?

MR3: They want us to become better children.

FR1: They want us to help with characters.

MI: Do you agree with that?

MR1: Yeah.

MI: Do you agree that the school should want you to have better characters?

MR1: They should want us to but then if they want us to, they should try and encourage us more and I just get to write loads of stuff because then that's not going to want us to get good characters because we're not going to enjoy it, so we're probably just going to forget it anyway.

MI: How do you think the school, if you think the school should be helping people think about being good characters, how do you think the school should do it instead? Do you have any advice?

FI: Not sure? That's fine, again, if something pops into your head later on, that's fine. We're very keen on hearing advice from young people really, because it's your experience in the school, so we'd love to hear if you had any ideas.

MI: Because otherwise, so what we should have said in the beginning, one of the things that we're going to do is, now you've all done it as part of the research, is look at how we change Narnian Virtues to make it better and that's why we want to know how you all found it, so that in making it better, we're making sure that we're making it better for students as well as making it better for teachers, so if you do have any ideas about we can make it better ...

FI: And we're taking on board what you said already, so that's really helpful.

MI: Can we just come back to when you said you think, it's like you said it's to make you better people, that's the reason the school are doing it, good character. When you were saying that, did you think that was a positive thing or did you think that was a negative thing, that the school were trying to make you a better person?

MR1: It's a positive thing.

FR1: It is positive, but the way they're doing it could be better, I think.

MI: So the aim is positive, the aim is right, but how they're doing it through reading a novel isn't? It hasn't been a helpful way for you or a good way for you?

MR1: No.

MI: Do you two have any opinions on why the school is doing it?

MR2: So it doesn't want us to always have fights and argue, it just wants us to get along with each other.

MI: Why do you think the school want you to just get along with each other? Does anyone have an answer, why do you think the school wants you all to get along?

MR3: Because when you grow up and you get a job, you can't be bad.

MI: So they want you to be ready for getting a job and being in the workplace? Anyone else have any other ideas why the school might want you?

MR2: So if you become a teacher for your future job, you can't be always arguing with the students.

FI: When you were first told you were going to be taking part in the Narnian Virtues, what did you think? Did you have any ideas of what it might be?

FR1: [inaudible 00:12:57] year 7, in year 8 or year 7?

FI: Either, I suppose year 7 was the first time you came across it, wasn't it? Because you probably felt differently at the beginning of each time?

FR1: In year 7, we didn't know what it was, we thought it could have been fun, so we were all kind of excited for it, but then in year 8 when we heard that we were going to be doing it again, we were all kind of annoyed because we'd already done it in year 7, so we just thought that it's just going to be the same thing, so then there's no point of it.

FI: Did you find it to be the same thing?

MR1: It was in some cases and in some places it wasn't, but overall it was kind of the same, because the whole time we've just been looking at virtues and vices, and there's been different activities, but the overall thing is just the same.

MI: Did you feel like there was any progression from the year 7 to year 8 curriculum, like it got harder or more in depth, or did you just feel it was about the same level of challenge?

MR1: Both, the same level of challenge.

MI: Other people? I saw one nod, did you think it was the same level of challenge or did it get more difficult for you?

MR3: It was more difficult in year 8 because in year 7, the teacher used to explain it to us properly.

MI: Did you have a different teacher in year 8?

MR3: Yeah.

MI: Tell us a bit about how your teachers differed in how they taught you in your English?

MR3: She basically did step by step, by step, by step.

FI: Was that the first teacher?

MR3: Yeah.

FI: So then what did the second teacher do?

MR3: Two steps, three steps, two steps.

MI: Can you give us an example, give us an example of how your first teacher did something really well? If it's too long ago that's fine, but if you can remember how they helped.

R: [inaudible 00:14:54].

MR1: What she did was, when we were doing it, she would fully explain it and go through everything, but then [teacher 1], she just reads it out to us and then expects us to already know what we're meant to do, and then she tells us to all be quiet so we can't even talk to anyone else. Then [teacher 2], sometimes she'll let us talk, but then she would explain it so we wouldn't need to talk to the other person about it anyway.

MI: Do you two have anything to share?

MR3: No.

MI: It's always fine to say no, we just want to make sure you have a chance to speak if you want to. You aren't the only people we've been doing this with, we have been talking to parents and teachers and other students in other schools. I don't know if you know, but in total there's been about 11 schools doing Narnian Virtues in the UK, there's about 50 doing it internationally, we're going to about five in the UK that are doing it right now at the moment, talking to them.

But we've also been talking to parents, so some of the things that parents told us last year, from different schools, it wasn't from [school 1], but some of the things parents said in the past was that the curriculum provided an informal opportunity to be able to discuss issues of character. Because you've had this book and you've been, they know that you've been looking at words about virtues, it meant that they talked to their children about virtues in other times, in the car or while they were doing some other activity. Did that kind of thing ever happen to you at home? Did parents or some adult at home that cares for you talk to you about character at other times, can you tell us a little more?

MR1: She always tells me to be good, good things happen to good people.

MI: Do you think that had anything to do with Narnian Virtues or might they have said that anyway?

MR1: Patience, that's a virtue, so you've got to be patient and good stuff will happen.

MI: When they talk to you about patience, do you think that's because of Narnian Virtues or do you think they would talk to you about patience even if you hadn't done it?

MR1: Even if I hadn't done it.

MI: What about anybody else? Do you think you had any conversations that would have been different if you hadn't done Narnian Virtues?

FR1: Before we did it, they [inaudible 00:17:39] like this, but now that we've done the Narnian Virtues, they talk about it a bit more but not that much, only a bit.

FI: Do you think then that parents are important in developing character and talking to you about things like this? Do you think it's something that parents do or are important in this?

MR1: Yeah, because the child copies what the parent does. So if the parent is good, the child will be good.

FI: So role modelling you mean?

FR1: As a child, you probably want to please your parents, so if your parents do one thing, then you're going to think that if you do that then you're going to be pleasing them, but if they do good things, then you'll do good things, then you'll be making them happy.

FI: How do you guys feel about that?

MI: Something else parents told us in the past was that they didn't really need Narnian Virtues because they already talked to their children about their character, what do you think about that?

FR1: That's true, because my parents always tell me stuff and even before we did it, they told me, they were going to tell me about virtues, not as virtues, but to be patient and work hard and stuff like this.

MI: I see a nod there, anybody else agree or disagree? Other students have told us that, they've described showing a greater awareness of ethical issues, just in everyday life, not just in the novel, but they will start to see virtues or places to practice virtues in normal, everyday life. What do you think about that, is that something you'd agree with or not?

MR1: Not for me.

MR3: I didn't understand the question.

MI: Good, thank you, it's important if you tell me if I haven't been clear. For example, some of our students said that they used to get annoyed when people pushed in front of them in the lunch queue, but then once they studied Narnian Virtues for example, they realised why they were getting annoyed, because it was unfair, it was unjust and that they're feeling agree about it is because somebody was showing a lack of justice. So it gave them a way to see virtues and see situations, see things that they were doing in their normal life and thinking about virtues, is that something that's ever happened to you or not?

MR3: No.

MI: No? Did you say yes at the beginning?

R: No.

FI: Sorry, you said no.

MI: Did you learn new words then through doing the virtues?

FR1: Yeah, because at the back of the book there were some synonyms for the words and then we just learned new words from there. One of our homework activities, I think, was we had to do a table, then we had to write out some synonyms of the words.

MI: Last couple of questions are around what the people who made the curriculum thought that you might get out of it and we just want to know whether that's true or not, whether what the people writing it thought was going to happen, actually happened. So, first of all, did you ... the people making the curriculum thought that they would be helping you to develop your character in three ways, they used the words head, heart and hand.

With head, they mean they thought they'd help you learn more about the virtues, you'd learn the words and you knew what they mean. With heart, they thought that you would want to do something about the virtues, you'd want to become more virtuous, you'd want to practice some of those virtues yourselves. With hand, you would actually do it. It's like your knowledge has changed, you've learnt more, also your motivation has changed, you want to do it and then you would actually go out and do it and change. Do you think that this curriculum has helped you in anyway with either your head, your heart or your hands?

FR1: It's helped me with head, but only because [inaudible 00:22:27] and because we've learned more words and then we've learnt more virtues and stuff like that.

MI: Do you think that the heart and the hand part, are things that this curriculum should be helping you with or not?

FR1: I don't think it has to but it can help with this [sounds like 00:22:52] but I think most of us, we already do good and carry out the virtues [inaudible 00:23:00].

FI: Again, you have to say whether I've got this right, are you saying that with the head, it did make you realise more or is that not what you were saying?

FR1: A bit, yeah.

MI: What about the other three, head, heart and hand, do you think it helped you with any three of those?

MR1: Head.

MR3: I learnt what integrity means.

MI: Do you want to show off now and tell us what integrity means?

MR3: Honesty.

MI: Absolutely, honesty is part of integrity, correct. Do you two have any ... ?

FR1: I think it's helped me understand it better.

MI: How has it helped you to understand better?

FR1: Because when I see opportunities in how to use virtues and stuff, it's helped me realise if I went that way, I could probably use it.

MI: It's fine if you can't, but can you think of an example?

FR1: No.

MI: The team who put this together, the reason they did the character passport is also because they thought that parents or adults at home were important in helping their children think about and develop character. What do you think about that?

MR1: It's true.

MI: How is it true?

MR1: Because of what I said before, the children copy their parents.

FR1: I think it is important, they are important in their child's life, but then I don't think, like, in our class, I know for a fact that most of the parents didn't get involved with what the other children are doing, I know that.

FI: So you're saying the other parents didn't take part in the passport, is that what you're saying?

FR1: Hmm.

MI: Do you have any idea why they didn't take part?

FR1: It could be because their children didn't tell them or it could be because they thought that they could do it by themselves or that they didn't really need to do it, or the children didn't explain it to them properly.

MI: If the children had, so you might not have an answer to this, but if the children had explained it to them properly, do you think that parents would want to be involved with this or do you think it'd be difficult to get them involved?

FR1: I think some parents probably would have wanted to be involved and would encourage it, but with some parents, probably just didn't want to be involved at all.

FI: Why do you think that is?

FR1: Maybe they just don't have the time or they think that their child doesn't need to develop good character because they already have good character.

MI: We're at the end of our set questions, is there anything that we haven't asked you about Narnian Virtues that you really think we should know about? It can be good, it can be bad, it can just be a fact, it's not good or bad, anything at all that you haven't had chance to say that you think we should really know about Narnian Virtues before doing it in any other schools?

FR1: Yeah, if you do a curriculum next time, not to do Narnian Virtues, do different ... now we're studying Shakespeare, I think it's a lot better than doing the Narnian Virtues.

FI: You're doing Romeo and Juliet, did you say?

FR1: Yeah.

MI: Do you think something like Romeo and Juliet would also work to look at virtues? Do you think you can see virtues in this?

FR1: Yeah.

MI: What virtues do you think you can see in Romeo and Juliet?

MR3: Love.

MI: When we do this, if we use Romeo and Juliet, do we have to change the spelling of love to be 'lurve'?

FR1: That's the way you said it.

MI: Or 'lurrrve'?

MR3: No, you don't need to.

MI: Okay, so we'll keep the spelling, what other virtues do you think there are in, or the opposite vices, what vices and virtues might be in Romeo and Juliet?

FR1: It's the feuding between the two families.

MR1: And selfishness because Capulet, Juliet's father, wants her to get married to Paris, just for money so he can be more powerful.

FI: This is a very good idea.

MI: We don't really cover loyalty in Narnian Virtues, but loyalty can be an interesting virtue, because the families are very loyal to each other, which is sometimes seen as a virtue, but then they're so loyal that it causes fights and wars, very interesting, we'll definitely take that back.

FI: Any other thing, do you think? Any other books or plays that have popped into your head that might be interesting?

MI: In which case, I guess we'll stop there, we're actually about out of time anyway.

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