

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Leadership Qualities

It's the year 2063 and world is in serious trouble. As prestigious members of the United Nations council that has assumed control, you are Earth's best hope. The decisions you make now will affect humanity forever. The planet has been attacked by an alien race, and all attempts to communicate with these beings have failed. The time has come to take action, but who will lead the attempt? This decision is left in your capable hands. As you search to find the perfect military leader, you need to decide what character traits are most important as you evaluate each candidate. Keep in mind that you will be called upon by the entire population of Earth to defend your choices. Good luck!

All of the following are important leadership qualities, but people possess them in varying levels. Which are most important? Rank them on a one to ten scale with a one indicating the most important quality. First rank them on your own, and then in your groups.

| Quality | Personal | Group | Post-Reading |
|----------------------|----------|-------|--------------|
| Bravery | | | |
| Communication Skills | | | |
| Daring | | | |
| Determination | | | |
| Empathy | | | |
| Integrity | | | |
| Intelligence (IQ) | | | |
| Ingenuity | | | |
| Physical Strength | | | |
| Strategic Ability | | | |

Rationale: After your group has ranked these qualities, appoint a scribe to write your rankings on the board. Together, write a one to two page explanation of your decisions. In this explanation, include a brief description of a person who might fulfill your requirements for a military leader.

Ender's Game - Problematic Situation

Teacher's Guide

Rationale: This problematic situation is designed to initiate student thinking about leadership, a main theme in the book. As students consider the importance of various leadership qualities, they will create a personal mental outline of the ideal leader. Then as they read the novel, they will compare Ender to their mental image and consider Card's reasoning in creating Ender's character the way he did.

Instructions:

Step 1 - Photocopy the handout and give each student a copy. Verbally review the written instructions as a class, and give students 5-7 minutes to fill in the first column of their personal rankings. Be sure to explain that there are no right or wrong answers. The purpose of this activity is rather to cause students to have to defend their thinking.

Step 2 - Put students into small groups of no more than four or five. As a group they will rank these qualities a second time. As they determine how to rank them, instruct them to refer to their personal rankings as a guide to go by. Good group work skills need to be employed here. Each member will have to be willing to make compromises. Each group will have to defend their choices to the class as a whole and write a brief rationale of their decisions. They need to keep this in mind as they work.

Step 3 - After the groups have ranked the qualities, have each group write their conclusions on the board for the rest of the class to see.

Step 4 - Not all the lists will be identical. The groups now need to write a brief persuasive essay explaining their reasoning. This writing will help to solidify their mental pictures of the ideal leader. Also, in having to defend their positions, students will be more likely to take the activity seriously. Additionally, this essay can serve as an assessment for you to see how seriously the students took the assignment and how much thought was put into their responses.

Step 5 - If time allows, discuss as a class the assignment. Point out and discuss any noticeably different ranking the various groups came up with.

Step 6 - Introduce and read *Ender's Game*. As students read, they should evaluate Ender in light of the quality rankings they created. This should provide a topic for discussion throughout the novel. What is Orson Scott Card's idea of the perfect leader? After reading the novel, students should complete the last column of the activity with the opinions Card seems to hold based on the book. How/why are his rankings different than the ones we came up with as a class? Would our rankings change if we did the assignment now? If so, why? What leadership qualities does Ender possess most?