

Collecting is a Passion For What We Love: Why Trading Cards Help Kids

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Collecting is an activity that reinforces what we care about. If you think about the avid lover of dolls, of stamps, of baseball cards, then you'll easily recognize that collectors are passionate about their collection. The time and energy they spend adds to their enjoyment. Displaying and sharing their collection allows them to connect with others about something that matters to them. If you think about collecting something, it is easy to understand the passion that is behind it and built by it.

There's another type of collecting that we all share, as humans. The ongoing way we build our beliefs and memories is by collecting information and experiences. We all are collectors at the mental, emotional, and spiritual level. Our intelligence is measured by our knowledge (collection) of facts. Our maturity reflects our (collection of) experiences. The collections we build, in the form of information we seek to learn and memories we cherish, are where our passion lies.

Kids have a unique challenge. They are immersed in schools and new social situations, facing each with a limited background. They are discovering the world, their place in it, and what they want to be. They are guided by what they like, their inherent talents, and responses to situations in which they are involved. They are uniquely collecting information and experiences.

To kids, finding something they like is a thrill. It is a way to define themselves; to establish identity. Kids love the attention of showing off what they love. This is a way kids share with others; to create connection. This "thing," whether it is physical or not, fuels a growing passion.

Trading cards are simple representations of something the kids enjoy. They are accessible, easy to keep, and easy to show. They promote activity (the finding). They improve knowledge (knowing what is on the cards and which cards are available). They provide an opportunity to set a realistic goal and to achieve it (completing a collection). The cards are not expensive and they have little intrinsic value. However, the quest to find, to obtain, and to keep the cards builds an appreciation and an internal sense of value for the owner.

With character education information included on the cards, the enjoyment of collecting the physical item reinforces the benefit of learning positive character traits. The internal, even subconscious, sense of value in the cards intensifies the impact that the virtues can have. When acquiring the cards requires some action on their part, the kids are more aware that actions are required to develop the skills to apply the virtues. Repetition of the message that virtuous actions create heroic accomplishments deepens learning. And, simply keeping the cards allows the kids to be reminded that positive character traits are worth "holding on to."

Yes, we collect what we are passionate about. The Heroes Club trading cards build a passion about the possibility of life lived with virtue and the incredible things we can accomplish.
