Syllables
dependability

Pronunciation
dih-pen-duh-bill-i-tee

Definition
Being trustworthy and reliable.
(The students voted for Anita to be class president largely because of her dependability.)

Simply put: You can count on me.

Related Terms
Reliable: Worthy of being trusted.
Tried and true: Knowing from experience that someone or something is reliable.

Fundamental Question:
Can people usually count on me?

Students will investigate the idea that three variables – people, promises, and prices – play a role in dependability.

Objectives
Each student will:
1. Participate in a skit-writing activity based on the three variables noted above; and
2. Relate dependability to seemingly unrelated terms.

Before you begin
• Print out one copy of You Can Count on Me for each student; and
• On two index cards write the word dependable and on two index cards write the word undependable, for a total of four cards.

Suggested Sidebars:
Speaking of Dependability (Discussion Idea)
What does the word inconsistency mean? Compare and contrast the traits of inconsistency and dependability.

Taking It to the Next Level
Design a brochure about dependability for younger children.
Procedure

1. Write this equation on the board:

   A relationship between people (e.g., child and parent) 
   + an agreement to complete certain duties (e.g., take care of dog) 
   + the price of keeping a promise (e.g., miss ball game to walk dog) 
   ____________________________ (equals) 
   ?

   Use the Socratic method (see, for instance, www.livewiremedia.com/socmethod) 
   to help the students decipher the equation and to solve the problem. (The answer, of course, is 
   dependability.)

2. Display five or six random items (such as a bag of hamburger rolls, a game board, a sealed envelope, a 
   plastic bag containing three pennies, and a packet of vegetable seeds).

3. Divide the class into four groups. Place the index cards face down on a table. Have a representative 
   from each group select one index card.

   Instruct each group to work as a play-writing committee. The catch is, 1) that the main character must 
   be the epitome of either dependability or undependability according to the index card drawn and 2) that 
   all of the items (see procedure #1) must be used in some way (other than simply set decoration) in the 
   play.

   Remind the committees to consider: title, setting, characters (describing each), summary of play, 
   dialogue, stage directions, costumes and props, and so forth

4. **Follow Up:** Have the students present their skits to the class. This step may be simple (e.g., an informal 
   reading) or more complex (e.g., costumes, memorized lines, set details, and so forth) depending upon 
   your time frame and needs.
Reminder: Dependability means being trustworthy and reliable.

You Can Count On Me

In what ways is a dependable person similar to the following things?

A dependable person is like:

fingers because both can be counted on.

a clock because both

Thanksgiving because both

a deck of cards because both

a dog because both

a star because both

a tree because both

It’s your turn to make up one!

A dependable person is like because both

Today’s Thought: The greatest ability is dependability. — Aphorism; Author Uncertain