



# CHARACTER BUILDING LESSONS

CARL SOMMER

## TIME REMOTE!

### About the Book



Christopher has great dreams of becoming an inventor, but he dislikes anything requiring work. When he discovers that his neighbor Dr. Finkle has invented a time remote, Christopher uses it to avoid schoolwork, wholesome food, and jobs he doesn't like. Sending himself quickly through a life of avoiding problems, right into old age, he finally realizes the misery of an easy life. Discovering a hidden button on his discarded remote, he fortunately gets a chance to start his life over.

In this fascinating and inspiring story, Carl Sommer teaches the value of diligence, self-discipline, and responsibility.

### Main Virtues

**Respect for Others/Kindness/  
Friendship**

#### Other Virtues

Appreciation, Caring, Cheerfulness, Cleanliness, Courage, Diligence, Initiative, Obedience to Parents, Perseverance, Positive Mental Attitude, Responsibility for Others, Self-Respect, Temperance, Trust, and Wellness



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## **Diligence/Learning to Work**

When Christopher heard that the time remote works well going forward, the first thought that came to his mind was, “I wish I had that time remote. I could skip all my homework.”

Here is the root of Christopher’s problem—he doesn’t want to work. To be successful in life, one needs to be willing to work.

## **Self-Discipline and Responsibility**

Dr. Finkle said to Christopher about inventing an airmobile, “If you really want to do that, you’ll need to work hard in school and learn to solve problems.”

Christopher complained, “I hate problems, and going to school is just one big problem!”

Christopher did not want to solve problems and learn. He lacked self-discipline and responsibility. If you want to be successful, you need to learn to take responsibility to get knowledge and to face problems.

## **Listening to Correction**

Dr. Finkle was a kind old inventor. When he heard that Christopher did not want to do his homework, he immediately tried to correct him and give advice on how he could become successful.

Notice how Christopher reacts to Dr. Finkle’s correction. Christopher was not listening. He was dreaming again, “If only I had that time remote.”

Rejecting correction leads to trouble. Always listen to correction and rebuke. You’ll be wise if you do.

## **The Importance of Eating Properly**

When Christopher looked at the food that his mom was cooking, he held his nose and complained, “I don’t like to eat meat and vegetables.”

“But they’re good for you,” explained Mom. “They will make you strong and healthy.”

But Christopher wasn’t listening. Christopher will reap the result of this attitude of not wanting to eat properly. Taking care of our body is important if you desire to live a healthy life.

Be extremely careful about doing things that hurt your body, as smoking, drinking, drugs, and premarital sex. Some of these activities can ruin your entire life. Be wise—take care of your body. It’s the only one you’ll get.

## **False Hopes**

Christopher used his time remote so he could avoid taking his math test. As he went skipping home he said, “Am I ever lucky! This time remote will make me the happiest person in the whole world.”

How many times people are deceived because they think what they are

doing will bring them happiness. Build your life on a sure foundation of obtaining knowledge, not on false hopes of how you can avoid learning.

## **Becoming a Skilled Worker**

Christopher could not find any other job because he had no skills. He had used his time remote so he could have lots of fun playing; now that he is older he has no job skills. Make it your aim in life to become a skilled worker, you'll never regret it.

## **The Law of Sowing and Reaping**

Christopher did not listen to Dr. Finkle, his parents, or his doctor; now he was often sick and always tired. Life was now one big problem. There are consequences when you refuse to listen to correction. You cannot avoid the law of sowing and reaping. What you sow you will reap.

## **The Fruits of Living an Easy Life**

Christopher walked to the lake. He shook the time remote and said, "The day I got this thing was the worst day of my life!

"Just look at me, I've wasted my whole life. I wanted to be an inventor, but I never accomplished one good thing. Trying to live an easy life has brought me nothing but trouble and sorrow."

The fruits of living an easy life lead only to misery. Be wise and prepare for your future.

## **How to Live an Unhappy Life**

Always try to avoid work, such as: homework, cleaning the house, doing the dishes, putting out the garbage, cleaning your room, etc.

Seek only those things that are fun.

Every day spend hours in front of the TV.

Go to bed late and sleep late.

Complain when you have to get up in the morning.

Don't study for your tests.

Don't seek after wisdom.

Never read a book.

Always take the easy classes.

Eat lots of junk food instead of healthy food.

Smoke, drink, and take drugs.

Don't listen to your parents or teachers.

Never listen when corrected.

Never admit when you are wrong.

Don't prepare for your future.

Follow these principles and you'll have a miserable life.

## How to Live a Happy Life

Be willing to work, such as: doing homework, cleaning the house, doing the dishes, putting out the garbage, cleaning up your room, etc.

After work, make time for play and fun.

Watch only good TV programs.

Go to bed early and get your proper rest.

Be happy and ready to work when getting up in the morning.

Study for your tests.

Desire to be wise.

Read good books.

Take classes where you will learn the most.

Avoid junk foods by eating healthy foods.

Don't smoke, drink, or take drugs.

Listen to your parents and teachers.

Listen to correction.

Admit when you are wrong.

Prepare for your future.

Follow these principles and you'll have a happy and fruitful life.

### Questions

1. What did Christopher say as he often gazed out the window?

*Christopher said, "Ohhhhhh! If only I could be outside playing instead of being inside doing all this homework."*

2. Who lived next door to Christopher?

*Next door to Christopher lived an old inventor named Dr. Finkle.*

3. What did Dr. Finkle say he was experimenting with when Christopher visited him?

*Dr. Finkle said, "I'm experimenting with something that speeds up time."*

4. What was Dr. Finkle still trying to do with his time remote?

*Dr. Finkle was still trying to make the time remote go backwards.*

5. A. What did Christopher say he could do if he had the time remote?

*Christopher said, "I could skip doing all my homework!"*

B. Christopher wants to skip doing all his homework. What does this show us about the character of Christopher?

*Christopher's attitude of skipping all his homework shows he is lazy.*

Here is the root of Christopher's problem—he's lazy and doesn't want to work. To be successful in life, one must be willing to work.

6. What did Dr. Finkle say to Christopher after he heard him say he would

use the time remote to skip homework?

*Dr. Finkle said, "This time remote is only for very special occasions. It is not intended to get people out of work or out of trouble."*

7. What did Christopher plan to invent?

*Christopher planned to invent an airmobile.*

8. What would this airmobile do?

*The airmobile would drive like a car and fly like an airplane.*

9. A. What advice did Dr. Finkle give to Christopher about building his airmobile, school, and solving problems?

*Dr. Finkle said, "If you really want to do that, you'll need to work hard in school and learn to solve problems."*

B. Why is it important for Christopher to work hard in school and learn to solve problems in order for him to invent his airmobile?

*Successful inventors must be intelligent and willing to solve problems.*

10. What did Christopher say about going to school and solving problems?

*Christopher said, "I hate problems, and going to school is just one big problem!"*

Christopher didn't want to solve problems and learn.

11. Dr. Finkle said to Christopher, "If you want to become successful, you must face your problems and learn from them. One day when you're flying around in your airmobile, you'll be glad you did." What did Christopher do as Dr. Finkle was correcting him?

*Christopher was not listening. He was dreaming again, "If only I had that time remote."*

Rejecting correction leads to trouble. Always listen to correction and rebuke. Wise people do.

12. What did the kind old doctor often tell his friends about borrowing something when he was gone?

*The kind old doctor of the said,, "If you need to borrow something while I'm gone, just help yourself."*

13. What did Christopher say he should have been studying while examining his time remote in the park?

*Christopher said, "I'm supposed to be studying for the math test this afternoon."*

14. What kind of day did Christopher say it was when he discovered his time remote worked?

*Christopher said, "This is the happiest day of my life!"*

15. What did Christopher do and say when he looked at the food that Mom was cooking?

*Christopher held his nose and complained, "I don't like to eat meat and vegetables."*

16. What did Christopher's mom tell him about eating meat and vegetables?

*Christopher's mom said, "But they're good for you. They will make you strong and healthy."*

17. What did Christopher do to avoid eating the food his mother was cooking for him?

*Christopher went into the living room and secretly dialed thirty minutes into his remote.*

18. As Christopher ate the homemade pie, what did he say about eating?

*Christopher said, "This is great! From now on, I'm eating only what I want."*

Eating that way is a formula for ending up with a sick body. Wise people eat foods that are healthy.

19. What did Christopher do in school because he did not study for his math test?

*Christopher slipped the remote under his desk and dialed in the time for the dismissal bell.*

20. What did Christopher say that his time remote would make him as he went skipping home?

*Christopher said, "This time remote will make me the happiest person in the whole world."*

How many times people are deceived because they think what they are doing will bring them happiness.

21. The next few days and weeks went by fast. Whenever things became hard, Christopher used his time remote. What did Christopher only want to do?

*Christopher only wanted to play.*

22. What was happening to Christopher's problems?

*Christopher's problems were not going away—they were piling up. His room was a mess, and he was failing every class.*

23. What did Christopher do and say as he walked out of the school for the last time?

*Christopher threw his books into the bushes and said with a great big smile, "I'm so glad that my school days are over, and that my problems are gone forever! Now I can get a job and do whatever I want!"*

24. What did Christopher soon discover about his problems after he got his job?

*Christopher soon discovered that he had more problems than before. Eating out was expensive, and he barely made enough money to pay for his apartment and car.*

25. What did Christopher say to himself when his boss complained about the way he was stocking shelves?

*Christopher said to himself, "If he doesn't like the way I work, I'll just find a better job. Besides, I hate this kind of work."*

26. A. What did all the employers tell Christopher when he began searching for a job?

*All the employers told him, "We're sorry. We don't have any work for you."*

B. Why did all the employers say to Christopher, "We're sorry. We don't have any work for you"?

*The employers said they had no work for Christopher because he had no skills.*

Christopher had used his time remote so he could have lots of fun playing; now that he's older he has no job skills. Learn to become a skilled worker.

27. What did Christopher say about night school as the teacher taught?

*Christopher said, "This is going to take lots of hard work."*

28. What did Christopher do after two days of night school?

*After two days Christopher quit school.*

29. What kind of job did Christopher find after dialing three years into his remote?

*Christopher found a job sweeping floors.*

30. How did Christopher finally feel about his new job?

*Christopher hated this job even more than stocking shelves.*

31. What did Christopher say to himself when he noticed that other workers operating machines were making more money than he was?

*Christopher said to himself, "I can do that kind of work. I'll go to the office and ask the manager if I can work on the machines."*

32. What did the manager say when Christopher walked into the office and asked for a job?

*The manager said, "We could use another good worker. But to work on the machines, you'll have to take a math test."*

33. A. What did Christopher say and do when the manager told him he had to take a math test?

*Christopher said, "Never mind." Then he picked up his broom and walked out.*

B. Why did Christopher not want to take a math test?

*Christopher did not want to take a math test because he did not know math.*

34. What did Christopher's doctor advise him because he and his family were often sick?

*The doctor said, "If you and your family would eat right, you would all be much healthier."*

Christopher did not listen to Dr. Finkle, his parents, or his doctor. Now he was often sick and always tired. Life was now one big problem. One reaps what one sows. Be wise and eat properly. Don't drink, smoke, or take drugs, for these actions harm the body.

35. Christopher needed more money, so he searched for a second job. What kind of work did Christopher finally find?

*Christopher finally found a nighttime job sweeping floors.*

36. What did Christopher often say to himself now that life was one Big Problem?

*Christopher often said to himself, "Oh! How I wish I had listened to Dr. Finkle. I could have done so much better. If only I could go back and be in school again...I'd sure do things differently."*

Many people wish they could do things over—but time only goes forward. Be wise and make the most of your time now.

37. What did Christopher say to himself as he daydreamed of the time when he no longer had to work?

*Christopher said to himself, "Then I can do anything I want. Oh how I wish I were old enough so I could retire. Then I know I'd finally be happy!"*

38. What did Christopher do when he realized he could be as old as he liked?

*Christopher jumped up from his chair, and without thinking any further, he quickly dialed in the time on his remote.*



39. When Christopher was old enough to retire:

A. What were his problems?

*Christopher was poor and sick, bored and sad, and had constant pain.*

B. What did he do at home?

*All Christopher did was sit in his easy chair and watch TV.*

40. What did Christopher say about the time remote as he shook it in front of the lake,

*Christopher said, "The day I got this thing was the worst day of my life."*

41. A. What did Christopher say about his life?

*Christopher said, "Just look at me, I've wasted my whole life. I wanted to be an inventor, but I never accomplished one good thing."*

B. Why was Christopher unable to become an inventor?

*Christopher was unable to become an inventor because he was unwilling to study hard and learn to solve problems.*

Christopher always chose the easy way, and he suffered his whole life for his decisions.

42. What did Christopher say about living an easy life?

*Christopher said, "Trying to live an easy life has brought me nothing but trouble and sorrow."*

The fruits of living an easy life lead only to misery.

43. What happened as Christopher tried to throw the time remote into the water?

*The time remote slipped out of his hand and smashed against a rock.*

44. What new thing did Christopher see on his time remote?

*Christopher saw a small, red button.*

45. What did Christopher say when he became young again?

*Christopher jumped up and down and shouted, "Hooray!!! I'm young again! I've got another chance to live my life over again. This is the happiest day of my life!"*

46. What was the reaction of Christopher's parents when he said:

A. "I need to eat my meat and vegetables"?

*Christopher's parents wondered if he was feeling well.*

B. "And after I eat, I'm going to study for a math test and clean up my room"?

Time Remote!

*His dad and mom were in shock. They stared at their son in amazement.*

47. What did Christopher not want anymore?

*Christopher did not want his time remote.*