

# Choosing Responsibility

This lesson focuses on how to choose to be responsible, even when it is hard.

## Caring Sub-Concepts

Perseverance, Kindness

## Lesson Timeframe

30-35 minutes

## Required Materials

❑ Scenarios in the lesson

## Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.



DESIGNATED BY CASEL  
AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM  
FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.

See last page for details.

## Lesson Objective

Students will be able to:

- Understand how their actions have consequences and affect others, even if they do not see it immediately.
- Demonstrate the importance of choosing responsibility, even when it is hard.

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Being responsible is often equated with being perfect. Each one of us will drop the ball at some point. How you choose to handle those moments says a great deal about how you view your responsibilities. Take some time this week to examine your response to natural human error. Be kind to yourself and move forward.

### Tips for Diverse Learners

- This lesson requires small-group discussion. Pre-plan the groups if you know certain learners should (or should not) be together.
- Encourage groups to rotate who speaks for their group to allow most students an opportunity to practice public speaking.



## Share

3 minutes

Review the definition of **responsibility** - see if students can remember what it is: *being reliable to do the things that are expected or required of you.*

Review the definition of **perseverance** - trying our best, even when it gets hard, until we reach our goal.

Invite students to think of ONE responsibility they have in your classroom. On the count of 3, invite students to shout out that responsibility.

*Didn't it feel good to hear all the amazing ways our class shows kindness and responsibility in our room? Thank you to each and every one of you for being personally responsible every day.*



## Inspire

### What does Responsibility Look Like?

10-12 minutes

#### Explain:

We may not think much about it, but each of us makes responsible choices all day, every day! We choose to get up. We choose to get dressed and come to school, even though we might rather sleep in or stay home and play video games! We choose to learn. We choose to be kind to our classmates and teacher.

When we make choices and treat others with kindness and respect we are acting responsibly.

#### Activity:

Divide your whiteboard into 3 categories: Morning, Afternoon, Evening

- How were you able to show responsibility this morning before you came to school?
- How do you show responsibility after lunch in our classroom?
- How do you show responsibility after dinner in your home?

All of these actions demonstrate responsibility. All of us work together, each person doing their part. It is very important to follow through on your responsibilities! When you forget or don't feel like doing something, it can have a huge effect on others!

**Note:** If time allows, discuss how it sometimes gets more difficult to be responsible as the day goes on. We get tired, we are too busy, or we are irritated with yet another responsibility. All of these can be triggers that might make being responsible feel more challenging!



## Empower

10-12 minutes

### What is the Responsible Thing to Do?

Interestingly, sometimes it can be hard to be responsible. Choosing to be responsible requires a conscious effort and might involve admitting that we didn't follow the rules or we made a poor choice initially. The following activity will help students think through how to make responsible decisions, even if it is hard.

#### Instructions:

Have students get into groups of 3-4. You are going to read out one scenario at a time (from the list below) and each group needs to discuss amongst themselves what they would do in that situation that could demonstrate responsibility. After a few minutes of discussion, ask a representative from each group to share what they would do.

**Scenario 1:** You find a \$20 bill in the hallway at school that isn't yours. You feel it is your lucky day because it is your mom's birthday soon and you need money to buy her a gift. You had some money saved up, but last weekend you spent it on a toy that you really wanted so now you don't have enough left for

her gift. This \$20 bill would really help you out! *What is the responsible thing to do?*

**Scenario 2:** You are going on a class field trip today and forgot to get your permission slip signed despite multiple reminders. *What is the responsible thing to do?*

**Scenario 3:** You aren't supposed to have drinks in your locker but you snuck in a juice drink anyway. Then, accidentally, it tipped over and the cap popped off, spilling juice everywhere. *What is the responsible thing to do?*



## Reflect

5-7 minutes

Sometimes it is hard to do the responsible thing, but we should still always choose to be responsible!

Discuss what might happen - or how we would feel - if we choose to be *irresponsible*. Ultimately, even if it is hard to admit we made a mistake or broke a rule, it will feel better to be responsible and make it right rather than take the easy way out and run from responsibility.



## Extension Ideas

- Invite students make up their own scenarios for their homes or extracurricular activities, and to host this same type of discussion at home around the dinner table.



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LEARNING.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>