

# My Space

This foundational lesson in the Respect unit focuses on self-discipline and how responsible actions affect ourselves first and foremost. Depending on when you go through this unit, you may find that school routines need to be reestablished, especially around organization. This lesson focuses on self-discipline related to cubbies or personal areas in the coat/backpack area.

## Caring Sub-Concepts

Self Discipline, Kindness

## Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

## Required Materials

- ☐ Paper folded in half
- ☐ Basic Art Supplies
- ☐ *I Just Forgot* by Mercer Mayer

## 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.



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See last page for details.

## Lesson Objective

Students will be able to:

- Identify ways to show responsibility to themselves
- Practice activities in the classroom that require responsibility to one's self

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Whether you're a first year teacher or a veteran, you owe it to your students to plan. Try sorting your students into groups based on learning style instead of academic level. How does this change your groupings?

### Tips for Diverse Learners

- Allow students to take before and after pictures if they aren't able to draw.
- Draw a simple picture next to common words used in the illustrations: backpack, coat, shoes, etc.
- Allow students to dictate the important parts of their picture to you as needed.
- Assist students to organize their area during the clean up portion of the activity.



## Share

5-10 minutes

### Play: 2 Truths and a Story

**Explain how to play:** The teacher says three things about themselves. Two of them are true and one is a story they are making up, and it is *not* true. The class must vote on which statement is the story. Repeat two more times with different statements. Here is an example:

**RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS**  
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- I visited Hawaii.
- I rode a unicycle.
- I went hunting for dinosaur bones. (story!)

After playing reflect on the game:

- How did it feel to know that some of my words were only stories and not all true?
- Could you tell when I was making something up? How?
- Why should we always tell the truth?
- How can telling stories rather than the truth make it harder for people to trust us?

People want to trust your words. When you tell stories and pretend that they are the truth, it can be hard for others to trust you!



## Inspire

7-10 minutes

### What is Responsibility?

Define the word **responsibility**: *being reliable to do the things that are expected or required of you.* This means people can count on you! You do what you say and you say what you do. Let's practice responsibility by working together to finish these sentences:

When I take out a toy, I \_\_\_\_\_ (put it away).

When I make a mess, I \_\_\_\_\_ (clean it up).

When I borrow something, I \_\_\_\_\_ (return it).

When I break something, I \_\_\_\_\_ (fix it, tell a grown up).

### What is Self-Discipline?

Explain that **self-discipline** is a big word that means *we are responsible for our own behavior.* We pay attention to how we act and how we treat ourselves and others. We can control our emotions. For example, when you get really angry, can you control yourself by taking deep breaths or walking away? If so, you are practicing self-discipline! Self-discipline takes lots of practice, so don't be discouraged if you need to keep trying! Even adults must practice this skill every day. (Provide a personal example, if desired).

**Read:** "I Just Forgot," by Mercer Mayer

**Read Aloud Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtiJXg--D6M> (5 min)

This story is about a little boy that continuously forgets "little things" throughout the day. Sometimes he understands what he is doing is wrong, but other times it doesn't seem like a big deal to him. This gives you plenty of opportunities to talk about self-discipline and responsibility. Review the following parts of the book as a class:

- What will happen when he forgets to water the plants? *Even though he says the plants look fine, they are all wilted. Why might he say they look fine? (He doesn't want to accept responsibility for forgetting, etc.)*
- Is he being honest about not forgetting to feed the goldfish? What does he say to cover up his forgetfulness? *(He didn't look hungry.)*
- What would happen if he forgot his lunch and his mother couldn't bring it to him?

- Was he showing responsibility when he left his muddy boots on?
- Does he use kind words when speaking to his mother about cleaning up his toys? How could he answer her kindly?
- What is the one thing he NEVER forgets?



## Empower

20 minutes

Students will practice self-discipline and responsibility by creating a comparison between a messy, disorganized cubby/personal area and a clean, organized personal space. Note: If you do not have cubbies, choose another location where each student has personal space, such as a coat rack, supply drawer, etc.

Explain that we practice self-discipline and responsibility every single day in class. We start and end each day with responsibility by the way we take care of our cubby (personal space, etc.). Today we are going to create two pictures of our cubbies: one showing a messy/disorganized space and one showing a clean/organized space. When we practice self-discipline and responsibility, our areas reflect that. I, as your teacher, must also practice these skills. I drew two pictures of my desk to show you (optional).

(If modeling) Show your messy/clean pictures and explain how your irresponsible actions led to the messy desk. Go through the details of your clean desk picture, highlighting how you decided to organize things (papers in a pile with a clip on them, pencils in the pencil cup, etc.).

### Instructions:

1. Provide each student with a blank piece of paper folded in half. On the first side have them draw a picture of what their area/cubby looks like at its messiest.
2. After everyone is finished, have them go over to their cubby/personal area and clean it up to the best of their ability. (You can provide assistance as needed.)
3. Bring the class back to their papers and have them draw an illustration of their clean spaces now. Have them label parts of the cubby/space that are important to remember: coat hung up, backpack on hook, shoes lined up, etc. (This will vary based on classroom setup).



## Reflect

5-10 minutes

If time allows, review some of the drawings to highlight how each child chose to organize their personal space. Self-discipline takes practice. We have that opportunity daily with our personal spaces. Let's work together to keep our areas clean and organized. The more we practice, the better we will become!



## Extension Ideas

- Laminate each AFTER picture and hang it up above each person's personal area as a reminder of what their space should look like.

- Practice self-discipline and responsibility weekly by cleaning up your area at the end of each Friday if possible.
- Send home a note with parents and have them repeat this activity with the student's bedroom.



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AND EMOTIONAL  
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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/>