



Responsibility

Hello Parents and Guardians,
 Welcome to Unit 5 of our Kindness in the Classroom curriculum. For the next 6 weeks we will be learning all about RESPONSIBILITY. We will dedicate 30 minutes once a week for our main lesson, with a few 15 minute mini lessons sprinkled throughout our week to help your child go deeper with the concept. We will end the unit with a project that we will all work on together. Since this topic is already known by many of our students this year, we will be diving deeper as we explore the following topics:

GOALS FOR THIS UNIT

- ✓ Build skills of self-discipline
- ✓ Explain the connection between rights and responsibility
- ✓ Use responsible words and actions in social settings
- ✓ Evaluate responsibilities in online spaces and with technology devices

TOPIC	QUESTIONS WE'LL BE EXPLORING	HOW YOU CAN HELP
Responsibility and Self-Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How can we make good, responsible decisions, even when it's hard? ● What does it mean to have self-discipline? ● How do we not blame others for when we do not own up to our responsibilities? 	<p>If your child has a hard time accepting responsibility and staying accountable, brainstorm with your child about how to keep them on track. Does a progress chart help? Written or oral reminders? Setting a timer? Offering a reward? Eventually, making responsible choices should be internally motivating, but your child might need to developing habits around this using external motivators.</p>
Setting Good Boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As kids get older, they will only get more responsibilities which can lead to increased stress. ● How can we help students organize their responsibilities, and set boundaries so they know how much to take on and how much to let go? 	<p>Ask your student what boundaries they have for how much they are able to take on and for the relationships they can and want to have. Are they over-scheduled? Do they have too many commitments or people competing for their attention? Do they know how to say "no thank-you" to something that they cannot manage, and do you allow them to say "no thank-you" when they are burning out?</p>
Food Waste and other Social Responsibilities	<p>Students get an opportunity to evaluate how seemingly small choices (like taking an extra helping at lunch but not eating it) can have a big impact on others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How can we evaluate all our choices - particularly regarding food and food waste - through the lens of responsibility? 	<p>Think about how your family prepares, consumes, re-uses, and wastes food. What changes can you make so that you are maximizing your consumption and creating good food habits for your child?</p>

TRY THIS AT HOME!

Let your child menu plan this week with (or for!) you. Encourage him or her to plan meals that can be prepared in advance or where leftovers can be meaningful parts of another meal. For example - if you are having tacos with rice on Monday, maybe you can have a stir-fry on Tuesday using the leftover rice. Let your child get creative and really think about how to be responsible with your family's food planning and consumption.

We will continue our Kindness in the Classroom curriculum throughout the year. Please join us on this journey using this handout and the at home activity as a way to connect with your child regarding our unit concept. Feel free to contact me with any questions or comments as we move forward.

Sincerely,



Responsabilidad

Hola padres y tutores,
Bienvenidos a la Unidad 5 de nuestra bondad en el plan de estudios. Durante las próximas 6 semanas estaremos aprendiendo todo sobre RESPONSABILIDAD. Dedicaremos 30 minutos una vez a la semana a nuestra lección principal, con algunas mini lecciones de 15 minutos repartidas durante nuestra semana para ayudar a su hijo a profundizar más en el concepto. Terminaremos la unidad con un proyecto en el que todos trabajaremos juntos. Ya que este año ya es conocido por muchos de nuestros estudiantes, profundizaremos más a medida que exploremos los siguientes temas:

OBJETIVOS PARA ESTA UNIDAD

- ✓ Desarrolle habilidades de autodisciplina
- ✓ Explique la conexión entre derechos y responsabilidad
- ✓ Use palabras y acciones responsables en las redes sociales la configuración de
- ✓ Evaluar responsabilidades en los espacios en línea y cond dispositivos de tecnología

TEMA	preguntas vamos a explorar	¿Cómo puede ayudar
la responsabilidad y autodisciplina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ¿Cómo podemos tomar buenas decisiones, responsable, incluso cuando es difícil? • ¿Qué significa tener autodisciplina? • ¿Cómo no culpamos a los demás cuando no asumimos nuestras responsabilidades? 	Si a su hijo le cuesta aceptar la responsabilidad y ser responsable, intercambie ideas con su hijo sobre cómo mantenerlo en el buen camino. ¿Ayuda una tabla de progreso? ¿Recordatorios escritos u orales? Configuración de un temporizador? ¿Ofreciendo una recompensa? Eventualmente, la toma de decisiones responsables debe ser una motivación interna, pero es posible que su hijo necesite desarrollar hábitos en torno a esto utilizando motivadores externos.
Estableciendo buenos límites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A medida que los niños crecen, solo obtendrán más responsabilidades que pueden llevar a un mayor estrés. • ¿Cómo podemos ayudar a los estudiantes a organizar sus responsabilidades y establecer límites para que sepan cuánto deben asumir y cuánto deben dejar de lado? 	Pregúntele a sus alumnos qué límites tienen para cuánto pueden asumir y para las relaciones que pueden y quieren tener. ¿Están sobrecargados? ¿Tienen demasiados compromisos o personas compitiendo por su atención? ¿Saben cómo decir "no gracias" a algo que no pueden manejar, y les permiten decir "no gracias" cuando se están agotando?
Desperdicio de alimentos y otras responsabilidades sociales	<p>Los estudiantes tienen la oportunidad de evaluar cómo las opciones aparentemente pequeñas (como tomar una ayuda adicional en el almuerzo pero no comerlas) pueden tener un gran impacto en los demás.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ¿Cómo podemos evaluar todas nuestras opciones, especialmente en relación con los alimentos y el desperdicio de alimentos, a través de la lente de la responsabilidad? 	Piense en cómo su familia prepara, consume, reutiliza y desperdicia alimentos. ¿Qué cambios puede hacer para maximizar su consumo y crear buenos hábitos alimenticios para su hijo?

¡PRUEBA ESTO EN CASA!

Deje que el menú de su hijo planifique esta semana con usted (o para usted). Anímelo a planear comidas que puedan prepararse por adelantado o donde las sobras puedan ser partes significativas de otra comida. Por ejemplo, si usted come tacos con arroz el lunes, tal vez pueda cocinar un salteado el martes con el arroz sobrante. Permita que su hijo sea creativo y piense realmente cómo ser responsable con la planificación y el consumo de alimentos de su familia.

Continuaremos nuestro currículo de Amabilidad en el aula durante todo el año. Únase a nosotros en este viaje utilizando este folleto y la actividad en el hogar como una forma de conectarse con su hijo con respecto al concepto de nuestra unidad. No dude en contactarme con cualquier pregunta o comentario a medida que avancemos.
Atentamente,



Responsibility

Sub-Concepts Covered: Self-discipline, Kindness

Kindness in the Classroom lessons teach kindness skills through a step-by-step framework of Inspire, Empower, Act, Reflect and Share. Each lesson starts with the 'share' step to reinforce learning from previous lessons. The 'act' piece is woven into the lessons but really takes place in the projects.

This is the fifth unit of the *Kindness in the Classroom* curriculum. You have made it through over 75% of the curriculum - congrats! Students are focusing on expanding responsibility in a variety of settings and this unit dives deeper into what it takes to truly be responsible through the use of self-discipline and establishing healthy boundaries. Although it can be difficult, it is important to allow students to transition towards owning their decisions and the consequences that come with them.

Unit Objective

Students will:

- Increase personal responsibility through words and actions in social settings, both physical and online.
- Evaluate responsibilities in online spaces and with technology devices.
- Explain the connection between freedom and responsibility.
- Analyze responsible food consumption and waste in America.

Student Introduction

Responsibility—this word is not new to any of us at this point. Every single one of you is responsible in some capacity for getting up, getting ready, and getting to school with minimal reminders. You have expectations both at home and at school and often times, your responsibilities may seem more like a burden than a gift. This unit will challenge you to take a second look at this word and how it applies to your life. You might just be surprised to find some benefits within all those responsibilities. We will be focusing on the following:

- Increasing Personal Responsibility
- Evaluating Responsibility from Different Perspectives
- Food Consumption and Waste in America, and What our Responsibility Is



Unit Lessons

Main Lesson Title	Weekly Objectives	Main Lesson Materials	Mini Lessons
Lesson 1 Taking Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explore how to arrive at responsible decisions ● Evaluate how owning up to our responsibilities when we fall short is better than blaming others for our shortcomings 	<input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility Scenario Strips (see lesson)	<u>Small Group-</u> Decisions, Decisions <u>Partners-</u> Making Choices <u>Individual-</u> What am I Responsible For? <u>Technology Focus-</u> How Do We Use Tech Responsibly?
Lesson 2 Rings of Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate healthy boundaries ● Identify responsibilities that fall within intimate, personal, social, and public spatial boundaries 	<input type="checkbox"/> Rings of Responsibility handout	<u>Small Group-</u> Not My Responsibility <u>Partners-</u> It's OK to Say No <u>Individual-</u> My Personal Space <u>Technology Focus-</u> Healthy Boundaries with Technology
Lesson 3 How We See Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate the importance of fulfilling their responsibilities ● Examine responsibility from different perspective 	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper and a writing utensil for the T-chart	<u>Small Group-</u> Do 7th Graders Have Too Much Responsibility? <u>Partners-</u> Evaluating Perspectives <u>Individual-</u> Tree of Responsibility <u>Technology Focus-</u> Insta-Responsibility
Lesson 4 The Nature of Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss food waste in America, in school, and in their families ● Relate responsibility and respect to agriculture ● Identify ways to reduce food waste 	<input type="checkbox"/> No materials are required for this lesson	<u>Small Group-</u> Our Local Producers: Rapid Fire Research <u>Partners-</u> Food Rules <u>Individual-</u> Food Responsibility <u>Technology Focus-</u> Favorite Food Field Trip

Unit Project

Project Title	Project Overview	Materials Required
Investigating Food Waste in Our School	The class will investigate the current process of food procurement, disposal, and waste habits within the school cafeteria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Poster board paper and drawing utensils<input type="checkbox"/> Paper/pen or tablet or phone for interviewing, research, and data collection

Responsibility

This week students will learn about responsibility, how we use self-discipline to fulfill our responsibilities, and make responsible decisions. Students explore the idea of choice and discuss how to avoid blaming when we fall short of our responsibilities.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

Main Lesson

Whole Class Lesson

30 minutes



Taking Responsibility

This lesson introduces the concept of responsibility and self-discipline, and explains how it can be easy to blame others or situations for times when we fall short of our responsibilities. The lesson gives students an opportunity to examine a variety of situations and make decisions about how to respond in a way that reflects blame and in a way that reflects ownership and self-discipline. (See page 3 for lesson details.)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups

15 minutes



Decisions, Decisions

In small groups, let students work through several short decisions where a choice must be made. After the decision, have groups pause to discuss if that is the choice others would have made and why or why not. Discuss the idea that opinions on the responsible choice will differ from student to student. We need to remember to respect the choices of others.

Situation 1: You have been invited to your cousin's birthday party which will be at an indoor trampoline park and will end with pizza and a movie! Your cousin really wants you to come. But, it is the same day as your friend's piano recital and you already said you would go watch him play. You really want to skip the recital and go to the party. What do you do?

Situation 2: You didn't study for your history test but your friend, who took the test early because she will be gone for a family event, says she can tell you exactly what is on the test. What do you do?

Situation 3: You are supposed to read for 30 minutes before you have any screen time. You struggle with reading, though, and don't want to put in that extra time. Your sister never has to read before she gets on her phone or the Xbox. Your mom doesn't get home until 5 and she wouldn't really know if you read or not. She trusts you to do your reading and most days you do. Today you just don't feel like it but you really want to play Minecraft. What do you do?

For Partners
15 minutes



Making Choices

“Life presents you with so many decisions. A lot of times, they’re right in front of your face and they’re really difficult, but we must make them.”
—Brittany Murphy

Discuss a time when you had a difficult choice to make. How did you finally arrive at your decision? How did it feel to make a choice? How did self-discipline help you make your decision?

For Individuals
15 minutes



What am I Responsible For?

Write down a list of things you are responsible for each day at home, at school, and outside of school (in the community, on teams, in groups, at a job, etc.). You might be surprised at how many responsibilities you have. When you start getting overwhelmed by everything you have to do, what are some things you can do to help you remain strong and self-disciplined to get everything done?

You could have students brainstorm these lists independently and then talk through [resiliency strategies](#) as a group. [These videos by Dan Siegel](#) might help prepare you to facilitate this discussion, too.

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



How Do We Use Tech Responsibly?

Large group discussion: Considering how much of our daily lives depend on technology (our computers, iPads, phones, music, TVs, game systems), it can be hard to make good choices about how much we use or depend on technology. First, what are some poor choices we can make with regard to technology and how we use it? What are some good choices we can make to ensure we have a healthy relationship with technology where we are in control of it, and not the other way around?

Taking Responsibility

This lesson introduces the concept of responsibility and self-discipline, and explains how it can be easy to blame others or situations for times when we fall short of our responsibilities. The lesson gives students an opportunity to examine a variety of situations and make decisions about how to respond in a way that reflects blame and in a way that reflects ownership and self-discipline.

Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

- Responsibility Scenario Strips
(see attached)

Standards Map

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

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Explore how to arrive at responsible decisions
- Evaluate how owning up to our responsibilities when we fall short is better than blaming others for our shortcomings

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

As a teacher, you have many responsibilities throughout a school day. You also are responsible to and for a number of people. It can be challenging keeping everyone and everything organized and on track with what needs to be accomplished bell to bell. One way to help ensure you are meeting all of your responsibilities is to make a list of all you are responsible for and what you need in order to fulfill that responsibility. This helps you make plans, set goals, and have realistic expectations with what you can get done in a day. Have you ever actually thought about each daily responsibility, listed it out, and itemized what you need or prioritized what to do first? Try it, if not. You will be surprised at a) how much you are responsible for, and b) how good it feels to be organized. You might also identify things that you can take off your plate. Are you really responsible for “x,” or is that someone else’s job that you have somehow inherited? Maybe there is an opportunity to alleviate some of your responsibilities and get some of your time back.



Share

3-5 minutes

In this unit we are going to talk about responsibility and how to use self-discipline and other skills to make responsible choices. When you think of responsibility, what comes to mind? (Invite student responses.)



Inspire

5-7 minutes

Sometimes responsibility can feel more like a chore or something we have to do, right? And in many ways, that is what it is. RAK defines responsibility as being able to do the things that are expected or required of you. It can sound kind of bossy, right? But, having responsibilities can also be really fun and exciting! As you get older, you will have the opportunity to have all kinds of responsibilities.

What are some responsibilities that you have this year as a 7th grader that you haven't had before (in elementary school)? These could be responsibilities you have here at school or responsibilities you have at home. (Invite student responses.)

Good! These are all really exciting responsibilities. The fact that you are being trusted with more means others view you as capable of doing these very important things.



Empower

15 minutes

NOTE: This activity requires some pre-planning. If electing to distribute the scenarios in the manner suggested, you will need to cut out the scenario strips and tape them to the bottom of student chairs in advance of class.

Now, let's talk a bit about two things: self-discipline and blaming. Self-discipline means that we are able to control what we say and do so that we do not hurt ourselves or others. This applies to responsibility because sometimes we don't want to do what is expected of us (or what we said we would do) and it takes self-discipline to follow through (so we don't hurt others by falling short on our responsibilities). Does anyone have an example of how they have used self-discipline to complete a responsibility? (Invite student responses. If no one volunteers, ask how students got up for school that morning. They probably would have preferred to stay in bed, but they used self-discipline to get out of bed, get ready, and get to school.)

Now, when we fall short on our responsibilities, what is your typical responses? There are a few you might have. 1) You might accept that you fell short and "take responsibility" for it, apologize, and make it right. Or, 2) You might blame someone or something else for why the responsibility was not fulfilled. Has anyone ever done this? Blamed a sibling, a teacher, a parent or guardian, a coach, the other team, or even your busy schedule? (Invite students to raise hands.)

I think we all have both accepted when we have fallen short and blamed someone or something else for when we fall short. We all have responsibilities at home or at school that we probably don't necessarily love having. The key is to remember that we always have a choice. We can choose to accept our responsibilities and to follow through on them (even if we don't love them), or we can choose to blow off our responsibilities and blame others when we do (which often causes more problems for us).

Today we are going to work on using self-discipline to make good, responsible choices.

Everyone, reach under your chair and pull off the strip of paper that is taped there. If your slip says “Blame,” line up on the left side of the room. If it says “Self-Discipline,” line up on the right. Then, silently read the scenario on your paper. If your situation says “Blame,” then think of a way you could blame someone else for the situation. If it says, “Self-discipline,” think of a way you can respond by taking responsibility for the situation. We will start with the Blame side. Whoever has scenario #1, read your scenario and your blame-based response. Then, whoever has #1 on the Self-Discipline side, read your scenario (which is the same as the Blame scenario) and give us your self-disciplined counter response. This will give us a chance to hear two different responses to the same situation.

Go through each scenario. If you have more kids than scenarios, you could write more scenarios or pair people up (two work together on the Blame side and two work on the Self-Discipline side). Or, just pick a handful of volunteers to go through the scenarios while the rest of the class listens. After each scenario, you could take a poll (using a show of hands or classroom clickers if you use those) to see which response students would be more likely to give.



Reflect

5-7 minutes

In your mind, which is easier: blaming or using self-discipline to complete your responsibilities? Sometimes it might feel easier to simply skip out of our responsibility and blame others or situations. What is the trouble with blaming, though? (Invite student responses.)

While it may seem easier to dodge responsibilities, it is actually healthier and more productive to complete our responsibilities and if we fall short, own up and make it right. Use some of the language we discussed today to help you do this!

Responsibility Scenario Strips

These can be done orally if you do not have time or don't want to cut the scenarios out.

Scenario 1:

You have a big math test on Friday, but with music lessons, basketball practice, babysitting jobs, and regular homework, you didn't make any time to study. You take the test and nearly fail it. Your teacher pulls you aside the next day and says she's disappointed in your score and asks what happened. What do you say?

Scenario 2:

You have to do a project for the science fair, but you hate science. It feels like busy work and you don't see the point of doing a project that you'll never use in real life. You put the project off until the last possible moment and then, on the morning of the fair, you forget all your supplies at home. Your teacher releases everyone to the gym to set up their projects before judging starts. What do you do?

Scenario 3:

Every morning your job is to wash the breakfast dishes before school. Your stepdad works the night shift and your mom has to leave early to get your younger siblings to daycare before she goes to work. So, you are left to clean up and get to school on time. This morning you overslept and barely get out the door on time. You were up pretty late playing video games so you were exhausted. You didn't do the dishes and you actually left a bunch of breakfast stuff out on the counter. This is the third time you've done this week. Now you are at school and won't be home until after dinner because you have practice after school and youth group. You can already hear your mom's disappointment. When she asks why you haven't been doing your job, what do you say?

Scenario 4:

Your soccer coach has asked everyone to sell coupon books as a team fundraiser but you are really uncomfortable doing that. You don't like asking people for money and your parents don't want you to sell where they work because they feel it puts people in an awkward situation. They also won't let you wander the neighborhood because they don't think it is safe. So, you haven't sold any, but your teammates have sold most of their books. When your coach asks why you didn't sell anything, what do you say?

Scenario 5:

It's your grandpa's birthday and your mom asks that you call him after school to check in and wish him a happy birthday. You forget. You end up hanging at your friend's house until supper before going home and working on homework and watching TV. When you go to bed that night, your mom asks how grandpa is doing. What do you say?

Responsibility

This week students learn about having healthy boundaries so they can take appropriate steps toward responsibility. Students are reminded that they are not responsible for everything but there are some things for which they are entirely responsible. The aim is to give students a sense of awareness for their personal, social, and public responsibilities and learn how to maintain healthy boundaries for themselves, with others, and even with technology.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

Main Lesson

Whole Class Lesson
30 minutes



Rings of Responsibility

This lesson introduces students to the idea of boundaries and space, and where our responsibilities lie within the various spatial boundaries we share with ourselves and others. (See page 3 for lesson details.)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups
15 minutes



Not My Responsibility

Remember that we don't have to feel responsible for everything. We can only be responsible for what we personally can control. In small groups using a T-chart, map out the things that are always within your control and things that are not. The rest of the day, focus on the things you can control and take responsibility for those choices. For the uncontrollable things, set up healthy boundaries to remind yourself that those things are not necessarily yours to handle today.

Extension idea: Brainstorm some techniques we can use to help calm our bodies and brains down so that we make responsible choices and maintain healthy boundaries when things we don't control happen to us.

For Partners
15 minutes



It's OK to Say No

Sometimes we are in situations where we are asked to do something we aren't comfortable with or know we should not do. If we don't have self-respect and healthy personal boundaries, we might be tempted to be irresponsible and make a poor choice. And sometimes these poor choices are actually good choices. For example, you are asked to babysit but you have to study for your English test that night. You don't want to disappoint the mother who asked you, but it is more responsible to say no to her request. This can be hard, though. With your partner, practice several "No" strategies to help you reject situations that make you compromise your boundaries or that are just not good personal choices for you. Some strategies include:

- Broken record (repeating "no" over and over)
- Changing the subject

- Saying “thank you” for the offer/invitation/opportunity, but it won’t work in my schedule right now
- Using empathy (“I understand you are in the tough situation but I am not able to help right now.”)
- Explain themselves and/or offer an alternative idea (“Loud noises actually make me really uncomfortable, so I wouldn’t be a good friend at the concert because I’ll be pretty stressed out. But, I could join you at the coffee shop afterward!”).

For Individuals
15 minutes



My Personal Space

Hand out the personal space diagram used in the primary lesson. Have students jot down the responsibilities that fall within these boundaries for them personally. Then, have them think/journal about this: How can they maintain healthy boundaries when confronted with someone who is crossing a boundary line or who is being disruptive or irresponsible within social and public spaces? For example, if a friend is constantly hovering around your locker and you need some space, what can you say or do to be respectful yet maintain a healthy personal or intimate boundary? Students can journal about their reflection.

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



Healthy Boundaries with Technology

Large group discussion or journal prompts: How has technology impacted our abilities to maintain healthy boundaries? How does technology prevent us from maintaining healthy boundaries? How can we use self-discipline to enforce healthy boundaries with technology? [e.g., no phones at the dinner table, no Internet after a certain time at night, no TV/game system in the bedroom, etc.] (Refer to the personal space handout and/or information from the primary lesson).

Rings of Responsibility

This lesson introduces students to the idea of boundaries and space, and where our responsibilities lie within the various spatial boundaries we share with ourselves and others.

Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

- ❑ Rings of Responsibility handout
- ❑ Optional Extension:
The Washington Post published an article that explains personal space boundaries for people of different countries; this could be an interesting tech extension or extension for students who need/want more challenge:
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/04/24/how-close-is-too-close-depends-on-where-you-live/?utm_term=.0848e250ce9c

Standards Map

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

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Evaluate healthy boundaries
- Identify responsibilities that fall within intimate, personal, social, and public spatial boundaries

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Sometimes it helps to think about our responsibilities through a variety of lenses: rights vs. responsibilities, personal and professional boundaries, and sources of responsibility. Each one gives us a new perspective about what is a responsibility and what is not. For example, you have a right to a safe, positive work environment. As such, you are responsible for contributing to that safe, positive environment. What is your school's staff culture like? What are teacher relationships like? What is the tenor of the staff break room? Are teachers and administrators on the same page? What responsibilities do you have as part of that community to ensure a safe, positive working environment? What about your personal and professional boundaries at work? If you have students who have personal struggles and, consequently, bring their aggression, sadness, or frustrations to your room, what is your responsibility? Your responsibility is to teach those kids and ensure a classroom environment conducive to learning for all students. It is not your responsibility to "fix" their home situation or personally assess and address their mental or emotional health issues. Set a personal and professional boundary by not taking their issues personally and seek other school professionals or public services to help your students in the way they need to be helped. What about knowing where your responsibilities come from? Do you know why you do what you do? Have you created responsibilities for yourself or were they given to you by someone else? Knowing the source of your responsibilities can help you prioritize them and be more efficient. Take some time today to evaluate your rights and responsibilities, to set some boundaries you need to set, and to understand why you do what you do.



Share

5-7 minutes

In this unit we are talking about responsibility. How many of you, since last week, have had the opportunity to take responsibility for something or make a responsible choice, and *avoided* blaming others or being dishonest about completing what you were asked to do? (Invite students to share if they want.)

Good! Keep working on that! It actually feels good to take responsibility for something, even if it means owning up to something you forgot to do or choose not to do. Not that it feels good to disappoint people, but it feels good to make those situations right.



Inspire

15 minutes

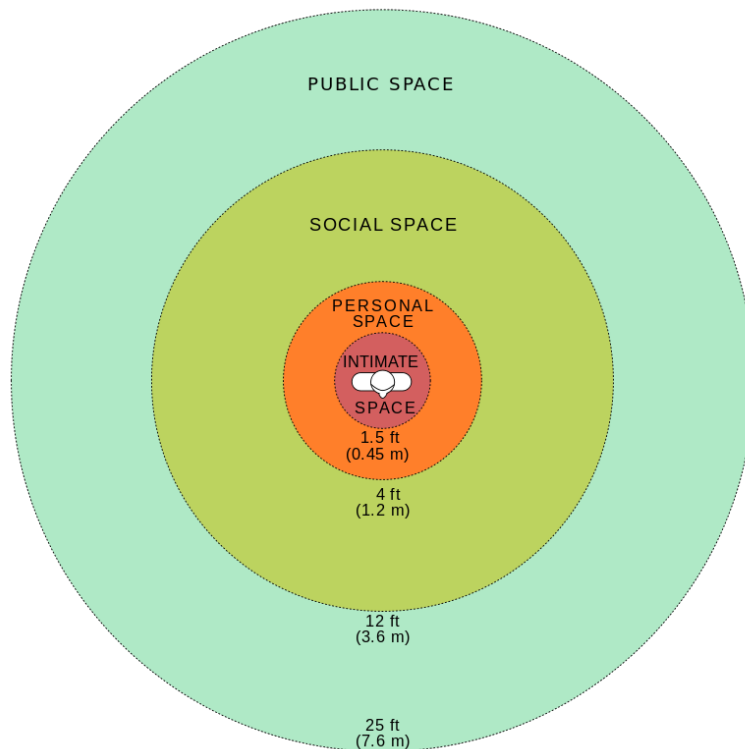
This week we are going to talk about the boundaries of responsibility. Sometimes it feels like we need to be responsible for everyone and everything. As you get older, you will be given more responsibility and it may be hard to know where that line stops. The truth is not everything is your responsibility. As a class, as a school, in your family, there are shared responsibilities. We all pitch in to make things work. And, if you start doing things that are technically the responsibility of someone else, they won't learn to fulfill their part in the group and you will get overwhelmed with too much to do and think about. So, it is important to have good boundaries with people when deciding what is and is not your responsibility.



Empower

20 minutes [Recommendation: Break this into two 10-minute parts; Part 1 for the explanation and Part 2 for the activity. This extends the lesson time, but it may be necessary.]

To help us know where the boundary of responsibility is, it helps to know what our personal boundaries are. Let's look at this image:



(Source: WebHamster, 2009, [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/))

Either project the image on the smart board or draw it on the whiteboard, but students will also need a printout for the final activity, so you could hand this out to students right now, too.

Your intimate space encompasses usually the first 18 inches around you. So, from your body outward of about 1 ½ feet (about 17-18 inches), that is your space. Some people say if you outstretch your arms, anything arms distance and inward is your intimate space. And, the closer to you, the more intimate or private it becomes. You do not have to tolerate people getting in your face, for example, or touching you if you don't want them to. That 1 ½ feet is your responsibility and yours alone. Likewise, someone else's intimate space is theirs. Do not assume someone wants you inside their space without an invitation. It is important to remember that you are not responsible for someone's intimate space. For example, it is not your responsibility to ensure everyone around you is happy, even though it is kind of you to ask how you can help if you see someone is sad and to be a good friend. But, if they choose to stay unhappy or if it is not safe for you to engage with that person, it is not your job to "fix it". Your job is to be responsible for your own intimate space and well-being.

Outside of that intimate space, though, we enter into more shared spaces. About four feet out from the edge of your intimate space is called personal space. This is where you still feel like it is your space but other people will come and go, sitting by you at lunch, passing by you in the hallway, and hanging out with you in class or at home. Sometimes, it can feel like people are in your intimate space (like if they are sitting right by you at lunch, for example) but they are operating within a mindset of more personal or even social space. They don't mean to be too close, but that is just how crowded the lunch table is. Your personal space can still belong largely to you, but remember that your personal space will intersect with other people's personal space, too, so you have to be gracious. What happens inside your personal space, though, is also largely your responsibility. How you treat that person sitting next to you at lunch is your responsibility. They also have a responsibility to be a good lunch seat buddy too.

From 4 feet to 12 feet, this is called social space. This is where you spend time hanging with friends, working with teammates, interacting at school or at home, or even out in smaller community spaces. Here the responsibility is shared by those in the space. Anyone occupying or sharing social space should respect those in that space with them.

From 12 feet to 25 feet, we enter "public space." This is your public restaurants, stores, streets, sidewalks, the school campus at large, and sometimes the classroom. Like social space, we have a responsibility to act appropriately, kindly, and helpfully in these spaces, but we are not personally responsible for everything that happens within those spaces. If the lines are crazy long at the store, for example, that is not our responsibility to fix, though it is our responsibility to wait patiently.

Activity:

I am going to give each of you a handout of these space rings, and then I am going to read aloud various responsibilities we have. I want you to write down that responsibility in the ring where you think it is most appropriate. *Hand out Rings of Responsibility worksheet and read from the following list, giving students time to write in between. They can simply write the number down, too.*

1. Brushing your teeth
2. Turning in your homework on time
3. Being a good friend
4. Following the school rules
5. Practicing your instrument before the concert

6. Saying kind things about yourself
7. Giving others a compliment
8. Working hard on your math
9. Sitting quietly in the library
10. Cleaning up after you eat your lunch
11. Cleaning your room at home
12. Caring for a grandparent
13. Waiting patiently in line at a store
14. Waving at a neighbor
15. Sharing positive things online



Reflect

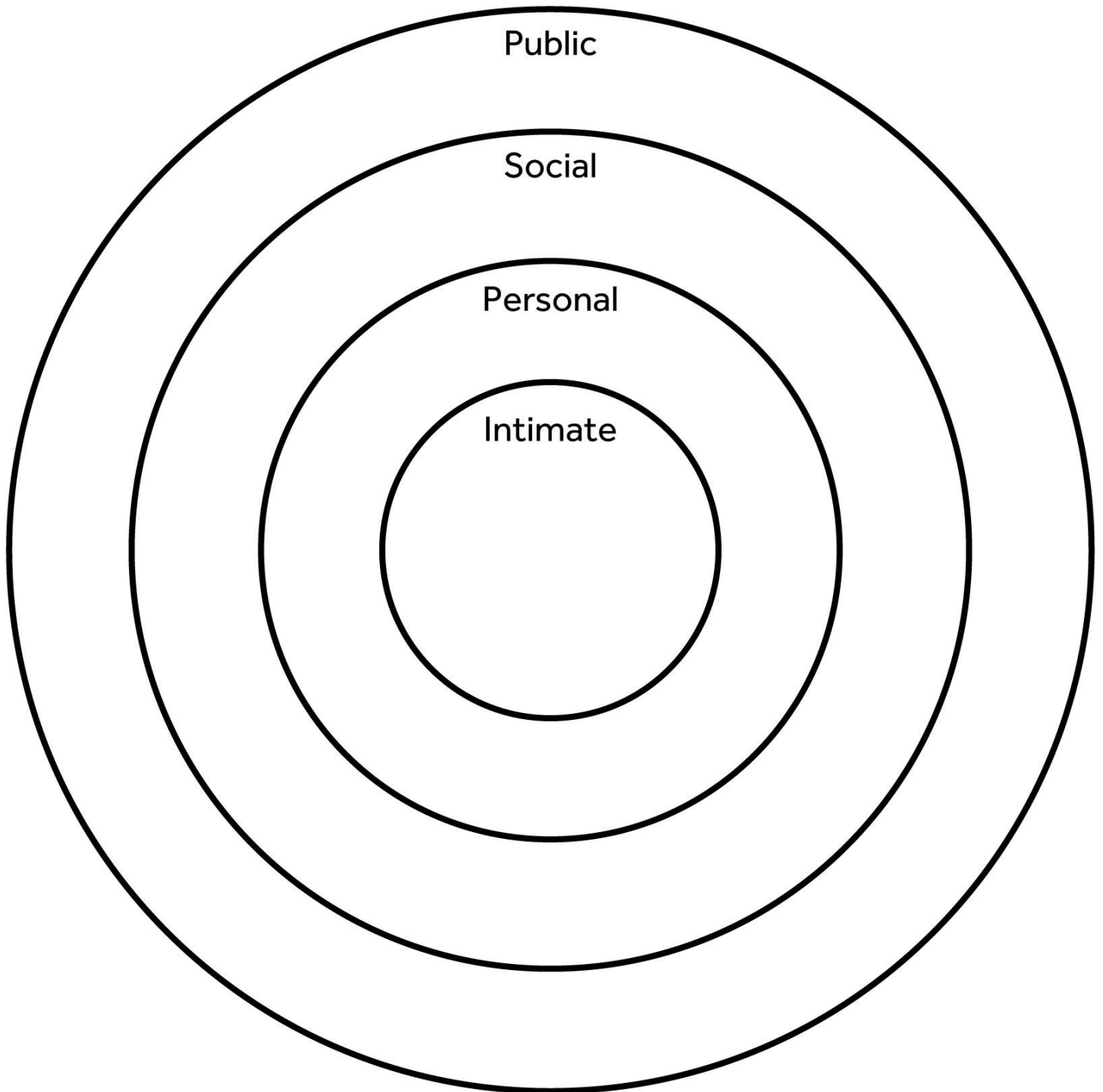
5-7 minutes

Let's see where you placed the things I just listed. Check your answers and if you put something in a different ring than what I read here, let's talk about your ideas. Note that some could be argued for different spaces as indicated below.

1. Brushing your teeth - intimate
2. Turning in your homework on time - social
3. Being a good friend - personal/social
4. Following the school rules - social/public
5. Practicing your horn before the concert - social
6. Saying kind things about yourself - intimate
7. Giving others a compliment - social
8. Working hard on your math - personal
9. Sitting quietly in the library - personal/social
10. Cleaning up after you eat your lunch - personal/social
11. Cleaning your room at home - personal/social
12. Caring for a grandparent - social
13. Waiting patiently in line at a store - public
14. Waving at a neighbor - social/public
15. Sharing positive things online - public

It is important to remember that, while we have a responsibility to be kind, caring, helpful, and respectful in all spaces, some spaces (like our intimate and personal space) are our responsibility alone, just like another person's intimate and personal space is their responsibility. It is important to remember that and to not either give someone else power over your intimate or personal space or to take power over someone else's intimate or personal space. Those are spaces you need to be invited into. Social and public spaces are more fluid, though. Sometimes we'll find things happen that are not our responsibility but sometimes we'll find we can be helpful and show responsibility (like practicing our horn so we can contribute in positive ways at the concert). It's not necessarily our responsibility to ensure the entire band sounds good, but it is our responsibility to make sure we sound good! This can be a hard thing to think about, but spend some time evaluating where your responsibilities are and how you are fulfilling them. Don't take on responsibilities that aren't yours to take and don't give up responsibilities that are yours alone.

Rings of Responsibility



Responsibility

This week students review their personal responsibilities and evaluate the consequences of their choices. They also have an opportunity to complete several visual exercises that help them see how important their responsibilities are and how they observe responsibility in a variety of ways.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

Main Lesson

Whole Class Lesson

30 minutes



How We See Responsibility

This lesson helps students see their responsibilities from a risk/reward perspective and encourages them to think about what actually happens when they don't fulfill their responsibilities. (See page 3 for lesson details.)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups

15 minutes



Do 7th Graders have too Much Responsibility?

Do 7th graders (or kids in general) have too much responsibility these days? Do adults expect too much of kids? Yes or no? Divide the class into two groups to debate this issue. One group should be the 'yes' group and one the 'no'. You can let kids self-select if the groups are even; otherwise, simply divide them evenly. Ask groups to think of specific examples to support their position. Encourage them to use the respectful communication and respectful listening skills they developed during the respect unit.

For Partners

15 minutes



Evaluating Perspectives

Present paired groups with two school-based scenarios from settings such as the classroom, lunchroom, the office, etc. Have students evaluate the situation from two different perspectives; each partner will hold the opposite perspective. For example, one holds the adult's perspective and one holds the kid's; then, they switch. Maybe the scenario is a rowdy, loud classroom (teacher vs. student perspective) or a lunchroom where students left a big mess (custodian vs. students). What are the different responsibilities for both parties in the situations described?

For Individuals
15 minutes



Tree of Responsibility

Think about all of the things you are responsible for. Then, using color-coded sticky notes, write down your responsibilities and put them on the tree branches (requires advanced preparation by the teacher or student helpers). For example, yellow notes represent personal responsibilities, green notes represent school responsibilities, blue notes represent family responsibilities, and pink notes represent community responsibilities. When you are done writing up your responsibilities on your notes, stick them on the tree as leaves. As students do this, the tree will “fill out” and be a good reminder of how many responsibilities we carry each day. Their active engagement in life matters!

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



“Insta” responsibility

On the Instagram worksheet provided, have students draw or cut out from a newspaper or magazine, a picture that represents a responsible choice. Have students caption the image and create a hashtag for it.

How We See Responsibility

This lesson helps students see their responsibilities from a risk/reward perspective and encourages them to think about what actually happens when they don't fulfill their responsibilities.

Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

- ☐ Paper and a writing utensil for the T-chart

Standards Map

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

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Evaluate the importance of fulfilling their responsibilities
- Examine responsibility from different perspectives

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Sometimes the volume of responsibilities that we have can be overwhelming. We can feel like there is too much to do and we don't have enough time. The flip-side, of course, is the honor of our responsibilities. Think about how many parents have entrusted their kids to you. Think about the future world your students will build. You have one of the greatest responsibilities of all in shaping your community, state, country, and world. You have a direct line to the future! What a privilege! Even on the hard days, remember how much power and influence you have through your responsibilities as a teacher. It is also good to take time to remember why you got into teaching in the first place. At that time you likely didn't know how much responsibility you would have. You didn't fully know the long days, long nights, fast weekends, and myriad of student needs, abilities, and interests. So, remind yourself of the best parts of the job. What is your favorite teaching responsibility?



Share

5-7 minutes

This week in our Responsibility unit, we are going to talk about how we see responsibility in our personal lives. I know we have already talked quite a bit about various responsibilities that we have and about how we can take responsibility for ourselves and our spaces, but now we are going to think about the risks and rewards of responsibility.



Inspire

3-5 minutes

Remind students of the definition of responsibility: being able to do the things that are expected or required of you. Ask them to think about the various responsibilities they have at home, school, in their local communities, in their religious communities, in groups/teams they are part of, etc., and have them jot these down for the next 5 minutes or so.



Empower

15 minutes

Now, have students pick their top five responsibilities (either the five most important or the five they like best). Then, using a T-chart, have students map out the “risks” and “rewards” of either fulfilling those responsibilities or not. What is the risk if they choose not to complete a responsibility? What is the reward or positive outcome if they do?

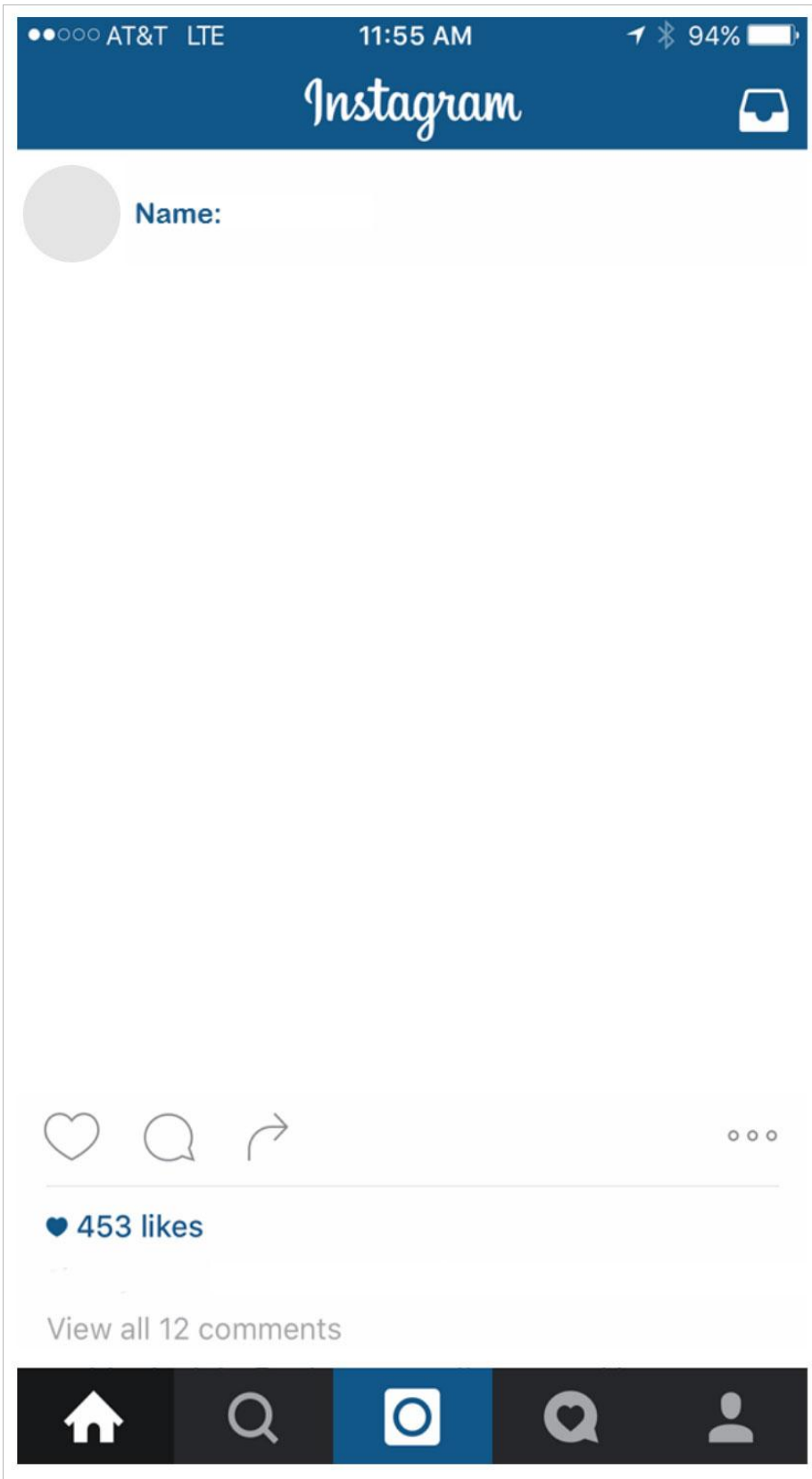


Reflect

5-7 minutes

At the end, ask students to reflect on the risks (or consequences) they just identified and how self-discipline can help them be responsible in those situations (when they might be tempted to skirt a responsibility). Have them share this with the group if they are interested and time allows.

Then, have students pick the responsibility that is hardest for them to fulfill and journal about why it is hard and what they can do to be more self-disciplined to complete it each time they are faced with it.



Source: Landry, on Teachers Pay Teachers: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Instagram-Template-Editable-2427422>

Responsibility

This week students research food responsibility and how food production, consumption, and waste can be done more responsibly. The goal is to make students more aware of the responsibilities associated with growing and producing food to help them be more conscious consumers. The project for this unit pertains to investigating and reducing food waste at school, so this lesson is a perfect segue into that work.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

Main Lesson

Whole Class Lesson

30 minutes



The Nature of Responsibility

In this lesson, students watch a short video that shows the responsibilities of farm families and how they work hard to produce the food we eat. Students have an opportunity to discuss food waste and examine how the concept of hard work, agriculture, and food consumption impacts their idea of responsibility. (See page 2 for lesson details.)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups

15 minutes



Our Local Producers: Rapid Fire Research

Have students do research in small groups (2-3) of local food sources; “local” can be within a 30 mile radius or state-wide and “food sources” can be anything grown or manufactured locally/statewide. Have students pick a food item/source and report back to the class on what they learned. Students should also be aware of what their local area or state is known for producing. After about 10 minutes of research, have students share one new “fun fact” they learned about local food production.

For Partners

15 minutes



Food Rules

What food rules do you have in your home and at school? Are there any? If not, should there be? What are some guidelines you could share either with your family and possibly with school administration that could help promote responsible food consumption?

For Individuals

15 minutes



Food Responsibility

How good are you at finishing your food? Do you regularly throw food away? Do you eat leftovers in your home or does your family throw away a lot of food? What could you change so that you eat more consciously and responsibly, and throw less away?

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



Favorite Food Field Trip

Have students research their favorite food. Where is it made or grown? What is the “carbon footprint” of that food? For example, if you live in New York, but the bananas you love come from Mexico, how many miles does that banana travel to get to your store/home? Is it a responsible choice to buy food that has a large carbon footprint (i.e., takes a lot of gas, energy, air pollution, and food handling to get to your store for purchase)? The Green Eatz “[Food Carbon Footprint](#)” webpage might be useful.

The Nature of Responsibility

In this lesson, students learn a bit about who grows our food, how we get our food, and how we both appreciate and waste our food. The goal is to make students more aware of the responsibilities associated with growing and producing food to help them be more conscious consumers.

Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

- No materials are required for this lesson

Standards Map

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

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Discuss food waste in America, in school, and in their families
- Relate responsibility and respect to agriculture
- Identify ways to reduce food waste

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

For this last lesson in responsibility, consider how you utilize your time and talents at school. Are you responsible with how you spend your time at school? Do you use open periods to plan lessons or grade assignments so you can gain some extra personal time in the evenings or on the weekends? Do you spend time networking with colleagues and planning for student success, or is there more gossip and rumor-spreading than productive, healthy relationship- and strategy-building? How about your abilities? Do you use them to their fullest potential or are you feeling maxed out and ready to coast into the end of the year? Do you pursue meaningful professional learning opportunities or just skim through arbitrary readings and lessons (when assigned).

When you have an opportunity to be wholly responsible with your time and talent, to do what is expected or required of you, take it. It will energize you for the next task. You will feel good if you have used your time wisely, if you have used your abilities to their fullest. You will be motivated to be better, to continue learning, to share insight, and to build a better school. Modeling this type of responsibility is good for your students, too. Everyone gets tired by the end of the year; it takes self-discipline and perseverance to press on to the end. You can be a leader in this area and so can your students. Press on!



Share

5-7 minutes

This week we will talk about our responsibilities toward the environment and our consumerism, meaning how much we buy and use and how much we waste.



Inspire

15 minutes

Think about it: How often do you think about the earth and the food it produces? If we didn't have grocery stores, where would you get your food? (Invite student responses.) Do you know any local farmers or have access to farmers' markets? (Invite student responses.)



Empower

15 minutes

For this lesson, we are going to watch the Random Acts of Kindness video about responsibility in the context of the farming culture.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYbXqBMfWag> (Run time: 6:44)

After Video Discussion Questions (for large or small group discussion, oral or written):

- What reactions do you have to the idea that we waste $\frac{1}{3}$ of our food in the U.S.? (This means, as an example, if you go out to a restaurant and order three hamburgers, you will only eat two and will choose to throw one away.)
- Do you notice food waste here at school or at your house?
- What are some things you can do to reduce food waste?
- How does being aware of food waste show respect to farmers and their families?
- How do you define responsibility now that you have seen this video?



Reflect

5-7 minutes

As we go throughout the rest of this week, we are going to talk about food; how we consume food, how we think about food, and what we know about the people who make our food. It's likely that most of us haven't thought about this much at all, and that is okay! We are going to change that, though! When you think about how important food is to us, you start to realize how important the people who grow and produce and ship and store and sell the food are to us, too. Unless we are growing all of our own food (which very few of us do today), we are very dependent on the skill, passion, land, business, and generosity of others. Food is actually a really beautiful, human connection we have with each other. So, tonight, if you see a lot of food left over after supper, think about how you might use that food tomorrow or the day after. Can you re-use that food so it doesn't become waste? I may ask you tomorrow, so take some mental notes about how the rest of your food experiences go today! Let's get creative in how we use food and let's remember to appreciate the food we have!