

Respect

In the third week of this unit, we focus on self-image and self-esteem. This is an important topic for everyone, but especially for students at this age and at this point in their school experience. The lessons this week explore how we respect ourselves through how we think about and care for ourselves, and how we build each other up, not tear each other down.

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



Self-Image and Self-Esteem

This lesson discusses self-esteem and self-image, both of which are tied to mindset and respect, particularly self-respect. Students will talk about what influences our self-esteem and self-image and what we can do to improve our self-esteem and self-image. There is also an art extension activity if time and interest allow for it. (See page 3 for lesson details.)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups
15 minutes



The Messages We Send

For this mini-lesson, students will play a game that helps them see how the words we say to ourselves and others can either enhance or harm our self-respect and how we think about ourselves. See “The Messages We Send” activity handout below for details.

For Partners
15 minutes



This Person Is...

Loosely pair students up so that each person has someone to write about. Then, explain that they need to write down the name of the person they are writing about on a slip of paper. Next, they should write a statement starting with “This person is...” and then list some things that positively describe the person they were assigned. Encourage students to think of things that describe a unique ability, hobby, talent, or something that makes them stand out in a good way. They need to be specific because you will read the statements after you have collected them all to see if the class can guess who is being described. So, generic statements like, “This person is nice and helpful,” won’t be very useful. Something better might be, “This person works hard in math, plays the trumpet really well, and is the leader of the Math Masters club.” The more specific, the better! When you have collected the statements, mix them up but also look through them for appropriate language and descriptors. Then read the statements and see if the class can guess who is being described.

For Individuals
15 minutes



Notable Quotables: Respect

Select one or more of the following quotes and put them on the board. Ask students to journal about one of them, answering the questions below:

“Wanting to be someone else is a waste of the person you are.”

–Marilyn Monroe, Actress

“There is overwhelming evidence that the higher the level of self-esteem, the more likely one will be to treat others with respect, kindness, and generosity.”

–Nathaniel Branden, Psychologist

“A moment of self-compassion can change your entire day. A string of such moments can change the course of your life.”

–Christopher Germer, Psychologist

“If compassion does not include yourself, it is incomplete.”

–Jack Kornfield, Author

- What does the quote mean to you?
- How does it relate to respect and self-esteem?
- Do you agree with the quote? Why or why not?

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



Spreading a Positive Word

Large group discussion: How can we use technology to spread respect and kindness, and to improve our self-esteem and the self-esteem of others?

Self-Image and Self-Esteem

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Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

☐ Computer/Projector/or Whiteboard

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:

- Differentiate self-image and self-esteem.
- Explore how self-image and self-esteem are connected to mindset and self-respect.
- Evaluate what influences self-image and self-esteem.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Ultimately, how we show respect for ourselves and others is up to us. But, our ability to do this can be influenced by many things, including culture, policy, the media, and our own biases about who we are and what we respect. This week, take time to notice what is influencing your ability to respect yourself and others, and then ask yourself, “Is this true?” and “Who is behind this message?” If you are reading a school policy about respect, then likely it is true and written with everyone’s best interest in mind. Plus, the source behind the message - the staff, administration, school board, and/or school families - is a reliable authority. But, if the messages you are receiving influence how you view and respect yourself or others are from the media or personal biases, ask yourself if they are true and where they came from. You may discover something false that is negatively impacting your ability to show respect. If that is the case, hit the reset button and evaluate how you can improve your ability to ignore the noise and instead give and receive respect.



Share

5-7 minutes

Over the last two weeks, we have talked about growth mindsets and fixed mindsets. How does having either a growth mindset or a fixed mindset tie into how we respect ourselves? (Invite student responses.)

Good! Now, where do you think our ability to have a growth mindset comes from? (Invite student responses.)

What about a fixed mindset? Where does that come from? (Invite student responses.)



Inspire

3-5 minutes

Part of our mindset, either fixed or growth, comes from who we believe we are. We all have a mental picture of who we are, how we look, what we're good at, and what our weaknesses might be. We develop this picture over time, starting when we're very young. Another word for this is **self-image**. Our self-image is based on interactions we have with other people; how we react to our life experiences can contribute to our self-esteem. **Self-esteem** is about how much we value, love, and accept ourselves. People with healthy self-esteem feel good about themselves, appreciate their worth, and take pride in their abilities, skills, and accomplishments. They have high amounts of self-compassion and don't beat themselves up for things they aren't good at or when things go wrong. They often have a growth mindset.

People with low self-esteem may feel as if no one will like them or accept them or that they aren't good at things. This often leads to having a fixed mindset.

We all experience problems with self-esteem at times in our lives. The good news is that, because everyone's self-image changes over time, self-esteem is not fixed for life. So if you feel that your self-esteem isn't all it could be, you can work on it! You can have a growth mindset not only about learning but also about how you love and care for yourself!



Empower

15 minutes

Discuss the following with the class. This discussion can be done as a large group, in smaller groups, or individually and then discussed in the larger group:

1. Who or what do you think has influenced how you feel about yourself?
2. What do you think are some things that can hurt people's self-image or self-esteem? (Possible answers: Criticism from others or self, unrealistic expectations, trying to do things perfectly, beating yourself up over mistakes, etc.)
3. What do you think are some ways to improve self-esteem? (Possible answers: Think positive thoughts, try to do something well rather than be perfect, view mistakes as learning opportunities, try new things, recognize what you can change and what you can't, set goals, take pride in your opinions and ideas, exercise, and have fun.)
4. How does mindset affect self-esteem?

As students respond to question 3 above, write their responses on poster paper, which will be used in 'Spreading a Positive Word' final unit project.

Optional Art Extension: Self-Portrait

We are going to make a self-portrait collage using these magazines and art supplies. Think about the strengths that you wrote about in the last activity and some words that you used to describe yourself on the inside. How do you see yourself or how would you like to be? You can create anything that you

want using these materials or drawing your portrait. Provide magazines or art materials. You also may want to introduce the project on one day and encourage students to bring in materials from home to include in their self-portrait. Allow time for students to create their collage. When they finish, have students share their self-portrait with one other person, in small groups or with the class.



Reflect

5-7 minutes

Self-image and self-esteem are linked. As one goes up, often the other does too. We can be a positive influence on others' self-image through kind words and actions. Encouraging others to feel good about themselves is a way we can spread kindness. Encouraging ourselves is also a way to spread kindness through self-care. This leads us to a growth mindset, too, which improves how we think about, talk to, and perceive ourselves.

Have students share their self-portraits or hang them around the room, if they did the art extension.

The Messages We Send

Today we are going to talk about what can happen when we don't take care of ourselves and believe in who we are. I want you to think of four things that people say that make other people feel bad and write one statement on each piece of paper. These do not have to be things that people have said to you or about you, although they can be if you want. Do not include any curse words or derogatory language. Hand each student a blank piece of paper and tell the students to rip the paper into four squares of roughly equal size. Collect the pieces of paper and mix them up (do a quick preview to ensure all of the phrases are appropriate for school).

Divide the class into teams of four or five. Use masking tape to make a line about 12 feet away from a wall. Or you can put two pieces of masking tape on the floor 12 feet away from each other if that is easier. You could also do this activity outside, if you want more space. Have teams line up single file behind the masking tape facing the wall.

Round 1:

One person on each team walks at normal speed (not running) to the wall, touches it, walks back, and then tags the next person on their team. Continue this until each team member has gone. Keep track of each team's finishing time.

Round 2:

Pass out one piece of paper with the negative statements to each person. Explain that for this round, they will once again walk up to the wall and back, but they will have to put the piece of paper under one foot and drag it along with them as they walk. When they reach the wall, they can pick up the paper, carry it back, and tag the next person. The next person goes and does the same thing until each team member has had a turn. Keep track of each team's finishing time.

Round 3:

Pass out another piece of paper so that they now have two pieces of paper. This time they will have to walk to the wall with two pieces of paper and then carry the papers back to the starting line in their hands. Each team member will have a turn. Record their times and compare with the previous round.

Rounds 4 and 5:

Give them another piece of paper. They will have to slide these pieces of paper along the floor with their hands in addition to sliding their other papers under their feet. Once they touch the wall, they can stand up and carry their papers back and tag their team member. Record the team's time for these rounds as well.

After the activity, discuss the following questions:

- How hard was each round?
- What happened to the times for each team as we kept adding papers?
- How can this activity be compared to what happens to people when they allow negative, untrue comments to impact how they feel about themselves (our self-respect)?
- Do you think you can control what others say or do? Why or why not?
- Do you think you can control how you feel about what they say? Why or why not?
- Do you think you can control how you feel about yourself?
- What are some ways that you can believe positive things about yourself?