

What is my Respons(ibility)?

This lesson helps students recognize the relationship between response and responsibility, and gives them opportunities to determine appropriate levels of response in different situations. Students evaluate the influence they have on others and think about ways to be a positive influence in their school, family, and community.

Kindness Sub-Concept(s)

Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

25-30 minutes

Required Materials

- ❑ “What is my Respons(ibility)” worksheet (see below)

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:

- Determine appropriate and responsible responses to various situations.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

The root word for responsibility is “responsus” which is Latin for “to respond”. How do you respond to others throughout your day? This week, reframe things that might normally generate a frustrated or negative response (even simple things like getting caught at a red light or spilling something). Choose to respond with kindness, both internally and externally.

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Let your students work individually, in small groups, or as the whole class, depending on your population.
- Pair students intentionally. If you know there are some students who are naturally more responsible than others, this could potentially be an opportunity for peer-mentoring.



Share

3-5 minutes

Invite students to share who or what (things or experiences) influenced their ability to make responsible decisions this past week.

Now, invite students to share how they positively influenced someone else in the last week. Consider, especially, how they might have positively influenced younger students in the school. How have the 5th graders been leaders at school this week?



Inspire

5-7 minutes

Being a good influence on others means we are making good decisions and acting responsibly. When you look at the word responsibility, you'll see that another word is hidden inside it: response.

Discuss:

When we think about what our responsibilities are, we are thinking about what our responses should be. For example:

- It is your **responsibility** to do your homework, so when your teacher gives you an assignment, you **respond** by doing the work by the deadline.
- It is your **responsibility** to get to school on time, so when your alarm goes off, you **respond** by getting up and getting ready.
- It is our **responsibility** to bring all of your gear to sports practice, so when you know you have practice tomorrow, you **respond** by putting all of your gear in a bag by the door so you don't forget.

Invite students to think of their own **responsibility/respond** combination and ask a few students to share theirs.

With every responsibility, you have an invitation to respond to it.



Empower

10-15 minutes

We are going to work through various situations now and decide what our responsibility is and how we should respond. It is important that we think not just about what we should or want to do but also how that decision will impact others later. As we get older, our responsibility for our choices, words, and actions grows. It is important to start thinking about those things now!

Pass out the "What is My Respons(ibility)?" worksheets. Students can work alone or in small groups—or you can work through this worksheet as a large group.



Reflect

5 minutes

Take time for groups to return to the large group (if students worked individually or in small groups) and share their thoughts on the "What is my Respons(ibility)?" worksheet.

**Note the differences in responses: discussing what is a reasonable, responsible response for one person may not be reasonable or responsible for another. In all responses, students can always seek the help of a trusted adult and they should not feel pressure to "fix" everything or risk their own health and safety for others.*

Remind students that just as we are influenced by others, we can influence others as well. We can influence others through acts of kindness to people, to property, and to the environment. We can influence others at home and at

school, and we can influence family, friends, teachers, and the community by doing kind and responsible things even if they aren't easy things to do.



Extension Ideas

- You could use the worksheet in large group role-play situations.
- You could ask students to write their own scenarios to discuss as a group or to give to other groups to solve.
- You could devise a similar worksheet with at-home situations for kids to do at home with their parents.

To gauge understanding of the material, choose from either the evaluation or reflection questions as discussion, writing, or journal prompts. Consider providing additional time for deeper evaluation and reflection as needed.

Evaluation Questions

- Why does doing acts of kindness influence others?
- How can you continue or start to be a positive influence in the classroom, at home, and in your neighborhood?
- How can acts of kindness show respect for others?

Reflection Questions

- What kinds of things do you think we can influence others to do?
- What does it feel like to perform an act of kindness?
- Do you think it's important to ask someone if they'd like your help before you help them? What is the respectful thing to do?



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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/>

What is your Respons(ibility)?

For each situation, write out what you think your responsibility is and then write out how you would respond to the situation. Remember that your responsibility might not be to do anything directly, but instead get the help of a trusted adult or report the situation to someone else.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS
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Situation	What is your Responsibility?	What is your Response?
EXAMPLE: You are standing at the school crosswalk and the school crossing guard is not there. It's a very busy morning and there are many cars going past. You know to wait and look both ways, but the two first-grade students ahead of you are joking around and not paying any attention.	Your responsibility is to keep yourself safe and remind others to be safe, too.	<p>Tell the younger students to be careful and pay attention, and remind them to look both ways before crossing.</p> <p>You can also report to the school office that there is no crossing guard outside and that kids are not acting safely when they cross the road.</p>
You are sitting in the school commons with your friends. One of them is taking pictures of the new kid sitting by herself at the next table and using a photo app to edit them so she looks funny. Your friend shows everyone at your table the new picture and they all laugh.		
You are in the convenience store with your mom and you noticed another kid, about your age, put a pack of gum in his pocket.		
You are working on a group project at school and you are the only one doing any work. Your group mates are messing around, doodling in their notebooks, and talking about their weekend plans.		
You are walking to soccer practice and see a bunch of garbage in the ditch. You don't have any gloves or garbage bags and there isn't a trash can anywhere nearby.		