

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)

Self-Discipline

Lesson Timeframe

25-30 minutes

Required Materials

- ☐ “What is my Respons(ibility)” worksheet

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:

- Think about how to positively influence others.
- Determine appropriate and responsible reactions to various situations.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Every person on earth has a personal carbon footprint that they leave as they experience the world. You are responsible for your effect on the environment. The best way to truly accept this is to evaluate this effect. How much water do you use each day? Are you conscious about the electricity usage in your home? Are you part of a recycling or composting program? Most of us are aware of these simple ways to lighten our impact. However, this week’s challenge is to identify unique ways to decrease your carbon footprint at school. Are there ways to reduce your waste? How does your school handle recycling? Your kind actions set a terrific example for the students in your class!

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

In our last lesson, we talked about who or what influences us. What are some people or things or experiences that influence our ability to make responsible decisions for ourselves?

Invite student responses.

Does anyone have an experience they want to share that has happened already today where they made a responsible choice based on the influence of someone else? Remember that we might make a responsible choice based on the positive influence or negative influence of someone or something. For example, if we notice a student acting out on the school bus and disrupting the driver and getting into trouble, that negative influence might prompt us to respond because we do not like that bad behavior and we don't want to cause disruption or get into trouble.



Inspire

5-7 minutes

Now, have you ever thought about the influence that you have on others? As 5th graders, you have been told to be a good example for the younger grades, right? Just like others can influence us, we can influence other people. This is actually a really big responsibility and one that we must take seriously!

What are some ways that we might influence students in younger grades in our school - both positive and negative?

Let students brainstorm ways they influence others at school and write their ideas on the whiteboard or type/project their answers on the smartboard.

In similar ways, we can influence our family. You might feel like your parents have influence over you and you do not have any influence over them, but that isn't true. How might you positively influence your friends and family?

Let students brainstorm ways they influence others at school and write their ideas on the whiteboard or type/project their answers on the smartboard.

We also impact or influence the world and community around us! In what ways do our actions and decisions impact the world or our local community?

Let students brainstorm ways they influence others at school and write their ideas on the whiteboard or type/project their answers on the smartboard.



Empower

10-15 minutes

As we have just discussed, there are many ways that we influence others and in any situation, we should ask ourselves, “What is my responsibility here?” When you look at the word responsibility, you’ll see that another word is hidden inside it: response. When we think about what our responsibilities are, we are thinking about what our responses should be. Sometimes it is our responsibility to step up and be a good example; we should respond by helping or doing or speaking up. Sometimes it’s our responsibility to step back and get a trusted adult to help us (which also sets a good example); we should respond by letting someone else do the helping or doing or speaking up. Response and responsibility go hand-in-hand.

We are going to work through various situations now and decide what our responsibility is and what impact or influence that decision might have on others. 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.

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.

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?



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.



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AND EMOTIONAL
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)?

Situation	What is your respons(ibility)?
<p>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.</p>	
<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.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	