

The Ladder of Responsibility

This foundational lesson in the Respect unit focuses on how self-discipline and responsibility occur on a daily basis within our everyday routines. Students will create ladders of responsibility to highlight the different types of tasks they are responsible for throughout their day.

Kindness Concept(s)

Responsibility, Self-Discipline, Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

Required Materials

- Ladder Handout (see below)
- Basic Art Supplies

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:

- Explain the difference between responsible and irresponsible actions.
- Create a responsibility ladder that highlights personal responsibilities.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

As a teacher you are responsible for the safety and education of dozens of children. How do you prepare for school each day? Every teacher is required to provide some type of lesson plans as proof of planning. Effective planning goes much further than this. Mapping out a unit based on the number of in class days coupled with allotted time constraints can completely change the original lesson. Oftentimes our planning gets shorter and shorter the longer we have been teaching. However, each year we receive a completely new set of students. This week, set aside some extra time to evaluate your current class. What special needs do they have (both strengths and weaknesses) that require a different approach than past years? If this is your first year teaching, try categorizing your students by learning style rather than academic level. You may begin to appreciate each student a bit more, which ultimately leads to a teacher that responds with kindness rather than frustration during this trying time of the year!

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Allow students to draw their responsibilities if writing is a struggle.
- Illustrate the final product by drawing a ladder on the whiteboard and adding your own personal responsibilities to each rung.
- Allow students to write in their native language and work with a peer to translate if needed.



Share

3-5 minutes

Last unit we focused on Integrity and using honest words in every situation. How can we use integrity when:

- *Your parents leave a plate of fresh bread on the counter. You are hungry.*
- *Your teacher says you can take candy from the jar. There are two pieces stuck together.*

Both of these situations not only require integrity, but also responsibility for your actions.



Inspire

What is Responsibility?

10-12 minutes

Explain that responsibility is when you can be relied on to do the things that are expected or required of you. You do what you say and you say what you do. Others can rely on and trust you with both the little things as well as the big things in life.

What is Self-Discipline?

5-7 minutes

Explain that self-discipline means we are responsible for our own behavior.

We pay attention to how we act and how we treat both ourselves and others. We can and should control our emotions. For example, when you get really frustrated, 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.

As a group, brainstorm ways each person demonstrates self-discipline in class each day.



Empower

20 minutes

Explain that students will create their own “Ladder of Responsibility” which will highlight all the different ways they are personally responsible both at school and home.

As a class, discuss common responsibilities that we all have: getting ready for school, keeping our rooms clean, etc. Don’t spend too much time on this or students will run out of “Personal” responsibilities that they think of independently. The goal is to get their minds focused and headed in the right direction.

- Draw a ladder on the board. Write responsibility on the left side of the ladder, perpendicular to the rungs. On each rung, write one personal responsibility you have as a teacher. If desired, you can increase the seriousness and importance of each responsibility as you head to the top of the ladder. As an example, your bottom rung may say, “Grade papers,” and your top rung may say, “Showing up daily”.
- After you write each responsibility, discuss with the class what would happen if you did NOT follow through. Example: If I did not show up every day you would not have a teacher and would not be able to learn! One option could be to erase the rung each time you don’t complete your responsibility. The ladder will no longer work when the rungs are missing!
- Pass out the ladder template below and have each student label it with the word RESPONSIBILITY on the side like in the Teacher example.
- Allow 10 minutes for students to add personal responsibilities to each rung. If needed, students can draw their answers as an alternative. Encourage them to decorate their ladder as time allows.



Reflect

5 minutes

After the activity is completed, ask for volunteers to share their responsibility ladders. As a class, discuss the consequences if one of the responsibilities was not completed as promised.

Every person in our class has important personal responsibilities they must complete everyday. Sometimes we don’t feel like what we have to do is very important or necessary. However, if we all stopped being responsible, our class would be a messy, disorganized, unkind place without any teacher! When we are kind and responsible, our class can run smooth and everyone has an opportunity to learn and grow.



Extension Ideas

- Complete the ladder with the lowest level responsibilities on the bottom (I hang up my coat) and the highest level responsibilities on the top (I use kind words and safe actions with others).
- At Home Extension: Make a second copy of the Responsibility Ladder worksheet and send it home. Have students repeat this activity with a loved one at home. Read the answers aloud as a class and compare answers.

RAK Notebook Prompt (See RAK Notebook Project in the Respect unit for more details):

- Collect small twigs from outside and create a responsibility ladder in your notebook.
- Write the word RESPONSIBILITY above your ladder.
- On a separate piece of paper, write out 4 personal responsibilities you have.
- Cut them out and glue them onto each rung.



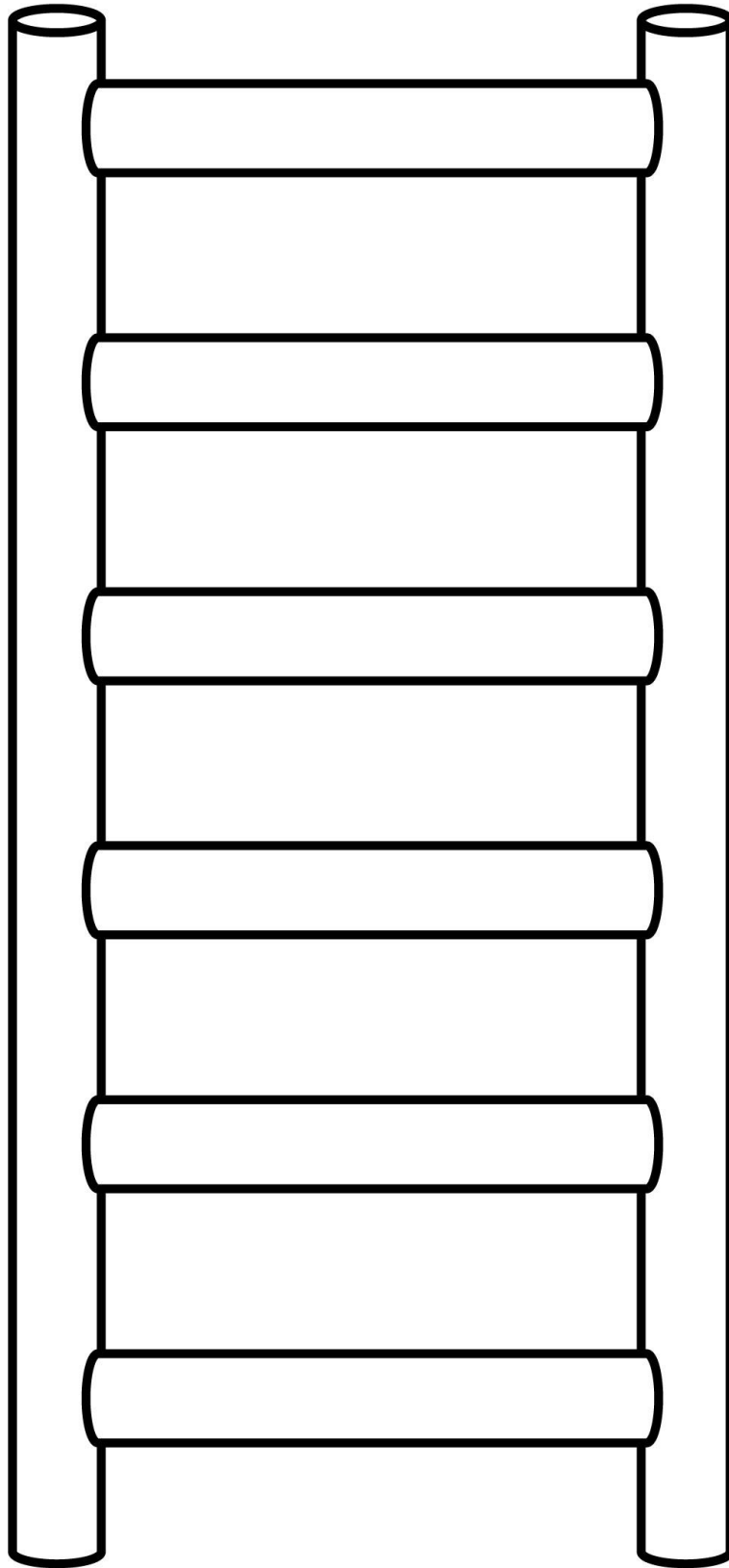
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AND EMOTIONAL
LEARNING.

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/>

Responsibility Ladder



RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS
FOUNDATION®