

Lesson 26

Responsibility: A Key to Success

TEACHER PREPARATION

KEY CONCEPTS

Teaching students to be responsible will help them to be successful in school and in life.

Students need to learn to take responsibility for their choices and actions.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. understand why becoming a responsible person will help them be successful in school and in life.
2. understand part of becoming responsible is to accept the consequences of their choices and actions.

KEY TERMS

Amends: compensation for a loss, damage or injury of any kind.

Responsibility: reliable, dependable, accountable, being able to make right choices.

Self-discipline: training oneself, usually for improvement.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

One of the highest goals we have as teachers is to guide our children into becoming responsible students and adults. We want to teach our students to:

- be dependable so people know they can count on them.
- do their work well.
- keep their promises.
- follow through on their commitments.
- do everything to the best of their ability.
- be accountable.
- accept credit when they do things right and acknowledge their mistakes.
- be a contributing member of their family, community and society.

We realize teaching responsibility takes time and teamwork. That is why it is important for teachers to begin teaching responsibility in the early years of a child's education and build on it each year. It works best when parents, administrators and teachers work together to encourage and reinforce responsibility in our students.

MATERIALS/PREPARATION

1. In **Discovering the Lesson** for **younger elementary students**, you will need a moose stuffed animal or a picture of a moose. If a moose stuffed animal or moose picture is not available, you can use any animal. For the **older elementary students**, you will need to prepare the Responsibility Cards. These are described in more detail in the **Discover** section.
2. For **Applying the Lesson**, you will need a large piece of paper for each student and pens, pencils, markers or crayons.
3. For **Going Deeper**, prepare one slip of paper for each student. On each paper, write down one talent/ability. For instance: writing, singing, athletic ability, dancing, storytelling, teaching, being a leader, working with animals, etc. You can add other talents/abilities. You should put the same talent/ability on several slips of paper.

LESSON

BEGINNING THE LESSON

[Say to the students:] **Our friends Hector, Dugan and Trish have been through some difficult times. They have encountered several obstacles to their dreams - *DreamBreakers*. In order to overcome those obstacles, they had to draw on the character traits they had learned and developed - *DreamMakers*. Let's see what happens when the Librarian gives them a gift they will need in order to learn about another important *DreamMaker*.**

READINESS (5 minutes)

[Read to the students:] **Chapter 26 — A Gift from the Librarian**

The Map of Wonders was going through a change of seasons. Summer was turning into fall; light snow dusted the mountains to the west; a flock of magnificently colored birds was migrating south; and the giant forest by the sea floor was covered in every possible shade of

orange, gold and red.

“Just look at this place!” exclaimed Trish. “I can’t remember ever having such an amazing time.”

“I wonder what’s next?” said Hector.

A ripple washed up on the edge of the table by them and then another. The lapping sound of the water was taken up by the deeper voice of the ocean, and then the land itself began to shake with a power that seem to move all over the Map of Wonders.

“Perhaps the library has a few more lessons to teach. You are always learning a lot in school in the fall,” teased the Librarian.

“What happened to having time off?” asked Dugan, pretending to be upset.

“I have something for each of you that may help,” encouraged the Librarian.

“What is it?” asked Trish.

“Something that will allow you to take portions of the wisdom you have gleaned from the library with you,” said the Librarian

“You mean like a magic potion that helps us remember things when we drink it?” exclaimed Dugan.

“Or a magic wand that can write messages in the air?” offered Hector.

“Oh, much better than that!” exclaimed the Librarian. “I happen to have them right here in my pocket!”

“Hurry up and show us!” pleaded Dugan. “I can’t wait to see what is better than a magic wand!”

“As you wish,” said the Librarian. “I have your library cards right here, complete with photo IDs.”

“Huh,” said Hector, trying to hide his disappointment and not doing a very good job of it. “That’s, ah, very considerate. Thank you.”

“You’re welcome,” beamed the Librarian. “Do you remember the books you chose when you first entered the library?”

“Yes!” thought Trish. “I think mine was about a girl named Star! She was an orphan who became a queen.”

“And I had found a book about a hero who was thrown into a lions’ den,” added Hector.

“My book was about a boy who killed a giant and had to run away from the king he had just saved,” remembered Dugan.

“Each of your books teaches an important quality of a

DreamMaker. But the library cards themselves come with an important lesson of their own,” said the Librarian as she handed each of them their own special library card.

“It just looks like a stiff piece of paper with my photo on it,” said Dugan. “What kind of lesson could it possibly contain?”

“Responsibility,” announced the Librarian. “When you use this card you are taking on a sacred trust! You are promising to return the book in the same condition you received it by the date agreed upon. But beyond that, you are stating your intention to actually read what is there and in so doing, let it touch you.”

EXPLORE (15 minutes)

[Say to the students:] It sounds like Hector, Trish and Dugan are about to learn more about responsibility. The Librarian gave them the gift of a library card and told them they were responsible for reading the books they checked out of the library and returning them in good condition. They have many fun adventures ahead of them through the pages of books! What do you think the word responsibility means? [Write the word “responsibility” on the board and as the students share their answers, you can write them under the word. You may hear answers such as being accountable for what they do and for their actions and behaviors; doing the right thing at the right time so others can trust and depend on them.]

“What are ways you can show responsibility?” *[Write the answers from the students on the board. You may hear ideas like this:*

- *completing homework and chores on time without being told.*
- *following through on commitments, even when you don’t feel like it.*
- *accepting responsibility for your mistakes and learning from them.*
- *not making excuses or blaming others.*
- *taking care of your things and those of other people.*
- *returning things if you borrow them.*
- *finding out what needs to be done and doing it without being asked.*
- *making wise choices like choosing to eat healthy foods.*
- *always doing your very best.*

It is also important for students to consider the cause and effect of choices. This understanding will lend itself to responsible thinking. Share these sentences with the class. Add your own scenarios to fit your grade level. The

point is to make students think about consequences before they take action. We want them to consider a responsible response to their actions.]

[Say to the students:] I am going to read you the beginning of some sentences. I would like you to raise your hand and finish the sentence with a responsible outcome. I will ask for several outcomes for each sentence.

1. If you step in a puddle ...
2. If mom oversleeps ...
3. If you forget your lunch ...
4. If you do not study for a test ...
5. If you hit someone ...
6. If you eat too much candy ...
7. If you forget to feed the dog ...
8. If you don't return the toy you borrowed ...
9. If you stay up late on a school night ...
10. If you steal something ...

DISCOVER (15-20 minutes)



For Younger Elementary Students – Mr. “No Excuse” Moose

[Have a stuffed moose or a picture of a moose. To help students understand the importance of accepting responsibility and following through, introduce them to your friend – Mr. “No Excuse” Moose. Say to the

students:] This is Mr. “No Excuse” Moose – Mr. Moose shows responsibility by doing what is expected of him. He does not blame others or make excuses. People can count on Mr. Moose to get the job done. [Role play with the students different ways Mr. Moose would respond to a situation. For example:] “It’s time for Mr. Moose to take out the trash. Does he say, ‘I’m too tired or ask someone else?’ No, Mr. Moose does not make excuses ... he takes the trash out and gets the job done! He is ‘Mr. No Excuse Moose!’”

[Continue asking individual students how Mr. Moose would responsibly answer in these situations: making his bed, picking up his toys, feeding his

pet, going to bed when he is told, returning something he borrowed or doing his homework. Please add situations fitting the age of your students. At the end of each scenario, invite the class to say, "He is 'Mr. No Excuse Moose!'"]

For Older Elementary Student – The Responsibility Game

[Divide the class into groups of four to five students. Each group has a leader who holds the responsibility cards. One person chooses a card and reads it to the group. The card poses a situation in which the students in the group must give the most responsible answer. The group will choose the best answer together. The student with the best answer gets to write down a letter in the word RESPONSIBLE. The goal is to spell out the whole word first. Each student takes a turn choosing the card, reading the situation and guiding the group to choose the most responsible answer. The first group to spell the word RESPONSIBLE raises their hands and should be recognized. They get to share their answers with the class.]

[The responsibility situation cards need to be made ahead of time. Each group will need a set of responsibility cards. Here are some examples of situations to write on the cards:]

- 1. You broke the wheel off your brother's new toy. What should you do?**
- 2. Your friend asks you to play and you haven't finished your homework yet. What should you do?**
- 3. You are playing a really fun game at your friend's house and his mom says it is time to stop and get ready for supper. What should you do?**
- 4. You promised your mother or father you would clean up your room, but you just don't feel like it. What should you do?**
- 5. It is time to go to bed and you just remembered your book report is due. What should you do?**
- 6. Your mom is not feeling well and could really use some extra help around the house. What should you do?**
- 7. You forgot to bring your homework home from school, including the book you need to study for tomorrow's test. What should you do?**

8. You and a friend are planning to finish a science project ahead of schedule, but another friend wants you to play basketball. What should you do?

[These are a few suggestions. You will need to add more for the game. Please make them appropriate for the age and culture of your students.]

APPLY (25 minutes)

Activity 1: Responsibility Chart

[Give each student a sheet of paper and pencil/pen. Say to the students:]
Fold the paper into four squares, or quadrants. At the top of the paper, write “Responsibilities.” In the top left square, write “At Home.” In the top right square, write “At School.” In the bottom left square, write “To Myself. In the bottom right square, write “To the Environment.” Now, fill in some of your responsibilities for each square. [You can write the words for each square on the board for *younger elementary students* to copy. They could draw pictures or cut pictures out of magazines to represent their responsibilities.] It is fine to share your ideas with your neighbors.

Activity 2: Classroom Jobs

[As a class, decide on various jobs to be done each day or week in your classroom. Set up a chart listing the responsibilities and the student who will do them each week.] **Some responsibilities might be:**

1. **Paper monitor**
2. **Line leader**
3. **Window monitor**

SHARE (5 minutes)

When you are finished with your responsibility chart, I would like for each of you to share one responsible choice you are going to make in each area of your life. [Some examples could be:

At Home: brush teeth, make bed, feed pet, empty trash

At School: turn in homework, keep desk clean, be respectful

To Myself: get enough sleep, eat good food, exercise

To the Environment: use less paper, recycle, pick up trash, water plants]

ENDING THE LESSON

[Say to the students:] **Becoming responsible is important to you as a student and will increase in importance as you become an adult. People need to know you are dependable and will do what you have promised. It takes hard work and self-discipline. Being known as a responsible person will give you opportunities to be successful in school and life.**

GOING DEEPER (optional)

[Say to the students:] **Jesus liked to use parables when he was teaching. A parable is a short story that teaches a lesson. One time, he was talking to his friends and told them a story about a rich man who was going on a long trip and decided to trust some of his servants with his money while he was gone. He gave one man five bags of silver, another man two bags of silver and a third man, one bag of silver. The servant with five bags invested the money and earned five more bags; likewise the servant with the two bags earned two more bags of silver. But the servant with one bag of silver was worried about losing it, so he buried it in the ground. When the rich man returned, he asked the servants to tell him how they had used his money. He was very pleased with the servants who had used the money well and made more money. He told them, “Well done, you have been faithful in handling this small amount so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together” (Matthew 25:21, New Living Translation).**

When the rich man heard the servant with one bag of silver tell him he was afraid he would lose it, so he buried the silver in the ground, he was not happy! The rich man said, “Take the money from this servant and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away” (Matthew 25:28-29, New Living Translation).

What lesson do you think Jesus was trying to teach his friends? *[He wanted them to realize even though we do not all have the same gifts and talents, we are to be responsible with what we do have and use it well. This story is not just about money. It is also about using our abilities and talents well.]*

*[Pass out the slips of paper on which you have written talents. Each student should have a paper with a talent written on it. Some suggested talents are listed in the **Materials/Preparation** section.]*

[Say to the students:] All of you have a piece of paper on which I have written a talent or ability. You are to pretend this is your talent and/or ability. I want you to get up and find the others who have the same talent or ability on their paper as you. [Give them time to get in “talent groups.”] In your groups, I want you to brainstorm together about how you can use your talent to make the world a better place. What is your responsibility in using your talent? [Allow time for each group to discuss and share their ideas.] Now, turn your paper over. On the other side, write down one talent or ability you know you have. Think about your strengths. What can you do well? After you write it down, please Think/Pair/Share your thoughts with your neighbor.

PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

Our lesson this week was on responsibilities at school, to oneself, to the environment and at home.

Questions you might ask your child:

1. What is a responsibility you have at school that is easy for you? What is one that is difficult to remember or do?
2. What is a responsibility you have to yourself that is easy for you? What is one that is difficult to remember or do?
3. What is a responsibility to the environment that is easy for you? What is one that is difficult to remember or do?
4. What is a responsibility you have at home that is easy for you? What is one that is difficult to remember or do?

Parents, share about responsibilities you had growing up. How did they help prepare you for your adult life?

As children grow, they are given more responsibilities and more privileges. In fact, some parents give each of their children one new responsibility and one new privilege as birthday presents each birthday. For example, a seven-year-old child might be given the new responsibility to make up his or her bed. A new privilege might be to stay up 30 minutes longer at night. Parents can watch to see how responsible the child is with his or her new responsibility and new privilege and discuss progress as well as setbacks.

