

BEING RESPONSIBLE



STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Students will interact with others to explore ideas and concepts, communicate meaning, and develop logical interpretations through conversations, building upon the ideas of others to clearly express one's own views while respecting diverse perspectives. Students will reflect throughout the inquiry process to broaden understanding and guide actions, individually and collaboratively.
- Students will recognize that everyone has responsibilities.
- Students will understand that decisions and choices have consequences.

Objectives

Students will recognize the behaviors of a responsible student and the importance of responsibility.

Students will be able to identify actions that would result in negative consequences.

Students will be able to verbally explain an appropriate way to accept responsibility for their actions and/or respond to a consequence that is blamed on them.

Students will be able to explain what could happen if no consequences were attributed to inappropriate behaviors.

Materials Needed

- “The Ant and the Grasshopper: An Aesop Fable” found at the back of this lesson (“Starter”)
- Board or chart paper and markers (“I Do”)

Starter (10 minutes)

Ask the class, “Do you ever feel like you have a lot of rules that you have to follow? Do you feel like you are told a lot of the time that you need to do certain things?” Read aloud Aesop’s fable *The Ant and the Grasshopper*. (See “*The Ant and the Grasshopper: An Aesop Fable*” educator resource for the text.) Following the reading, ask students to share their reactions to the story. Prompt a discussion by asking questions such as, “Have you ever been like the ant? Like the grasshopper? How did you feel?” Tell students they are fortunate that they do not have to work to prepare all the food they will need for the winter. However, they do have important tasks for which they need to take responsibility.

Teacher Presented Knowledge/I Do (10 minutes)

Say, “As a class, we are going to come up with steps that we can follow to help us take responsibility for our actions and accept our consequences.” With help from the students, create steps on a chart. Guide students to think of the following steps:

1. Tell the truth.
2. Apologize to those hurt by your actions (*write a letter, clean up a mess*).
3. Accept the consequence without excuses, getting mad, talking back, or blaming others.
4. Reflect on what you learned. (*Will I do this again? What could I have done differently?*)
5. Move on—everyone makes mistakes.
6. Don’t let it ruin your day!

Guided Student Practice / We Do (15 minutes)

Once the steps have been created, model to the class how you would follow the steps. Then, give students a chance to practice the steps by providing them with a scenario. Say, “You have been told several times to stop talking to your neighbor. You were also told that the next time you were caught talking, you would have to walk a few laps at recess. I just caught you talking again. What can you do to accept responsibility?”

Student Independent Practice/You Do (30 minutes)

Students can act out scenarios from school, home, and the community where they take responsibility for their actions and accept consequences appropriately. You can provide students with scenarios and consequences, or the students can come up with their own.

Closure (5 minutes)

Review with students the importance of taking responsibility for our actions and accepting the consequences of our actions and decisions. Encourage the students to practice these steps.

Student Assessment

1. What does it mean to be responsible?
2. What are some responsibilities of students your age?
3. How can you show responsibility at home and at school?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Art Extension

Have students create short comics depicting someone demonstrating responsibility.

Drama Extension

Have students create and present brief skits following the format of “The Ant and the Grasshopper.” The skits could show behaviors of careless students as compared to responsible students.

ELA Extension

Students can analyze and document the various responsibilities they have for themselves, their family, and their community. Students can work solo or in pairs to fill out the “Circles of Responsibility” activity sheet.

Literature Extension

Read *The Emperor’s Egg*, by Martin Jenkins, and ask students to listen for ways that penguin parents show responsibility in the story. Following the reading, share examples of how penguin parents show responsibility (*for example, females lay eggs, males keep the eggs warm and dry for two months in the winter, females feed and fatten up during the winter in order to provide food for their young, males feed the chicks and keep the chicks warm until the females return*). Record examples on an anchor chart.

Music Extension

Have students bring in songs where time is the main theme. Have students compare the lyrics and consider why time was so important to the writer of each song. The class can create a playlist of its favorites, or students can make up lyrics of their own about time.

Social Studies Extension

Have students identify jobs within the community and the responsibilities of each job.

THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER: AN AESOP FABLE

In a field one summer's day, a Grasshopper was hopping about, chirping and singing to its heart's content. An Ant passed by, bearing along with great toil an ear of corn he was taking to the nest.

"Why not come and chat with me," said the Grasshopper, "instead of toiling and moiling in that way?"

"I am helping to lay up food for the winter," said the Ant, "and recommend you do the same."

"Why bother about winter?" said the Grasshopper. "We have got plenty of food at present." But the Ant went on its way and continued its toil.

When the winter came, the Grasshopper had no food and found itself dying of hunger—while it saw the ants distributing every day corn and grain from the stores they had collected in the summer. Then the Grasshopper knew: it is best to prepare for days of need.



CIRCLES OF RESPONSIBILITY

