



## Character Word for September: Responsibility

### Project BCS Social Skill: Listening

#### Definitions

Elementary: Being accountable in actions and words

Secondary: Having a sense of duty to fulfill tasks with reliability and dependability

#### Related Words or Phrases

trustworthy dependable mission liability  
accountable reliable job mature

#### How to be a Responsible Person!

- ◆ When you agree to do something, do it. If you let people down, they'll stop believing you. When you follow through on your commitment, people take you seriously.
- ◆ Answer for your own actions. Don't make excuses or blame others for what you do. When you take responsibility for your actions you are saying, "I am the one who's in charge of my life."
- ◆ Take care of your own matters. Don't rely on adults to remind you when you're supposed to be somewhere or what you're supposed to bring. You take the responsibility.
- ◆ Be trustworthy. If somebody trusts you to borrow or take care of something, take care of it. If somebody tells you something in confidence, keep it to yourself. It's important for people to know they can count on you.
- ◆ Always use your head. Think things through and use good judgment. When you use your head, you make better choices. That shows your parents can trust you.
- ◆ Don't put things off. When you have a job to do, do it. Doing things on time helps you take control of your life and shows that you can manage your own affairs.

Responsible people:

**R- Requirements**

meet the requirements they are given.

**E- Expectations**

always set high expectations and goals.

**S- Supervision**

do what is right even if no one is looking.

**P- Parents**

respect their parents and do what they ask.

**O- Others**

realize that their responsibilities affect others.

**N- Never**

never choose friends who want them to be irresponsible.

**S- Self-disciplined**

are self-disciplined to make responsibility a daily habit.

**I- independence**

increase independence as they become more responsible.

**B- Bullying**

know that bullying someone is never responsible.

**I- involved**

are involved in the community.

**L- Liability**

accept liability for their actions.

**I- Initiative**

initiate creative solutions for problems.

**T- Trustworthy**

are trustworthy: they treat the property of others as they would their own.

**Y- YOU!**

are like you! Your integrity defines who you are!



## Subject Level Lesson Plans

### Language Arts:

- ◆ To get students to "own" their behavior, have them create and decorate journals in which they write about their week's behavior and how they handled problems that came up. Every few days review a handful of journals and write suggestions and encouraging comments. At the end of the week, allow kids to take their journals home to share with their parents.
- ◆ Make an anagram out of the letters in the word responsibility.
- ◆ In small groups, direct students to make an ABC book of responsible acts and illustrate each page. (Examples: A—Always keep your promises, B—on time, C—complete your homework on time)

### Health:

- ◆ You are what you eat. Review the Food Pyramid ([www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)) and have students create healthy menus for a day that reflects responsible food choices.

### Math:

- ◆ Draw a circle and use graphing, multiplication and division skills to divide it into 24 equal divisions representing the hours in each day. Have students list the number of hours they spend eating, sleeping, in school, being transported, exercising, doing chores, studying, watching T.V., working, and playing (or hanging out) with friends. Identify each activity with a different color, and ask them to color the wheel to reflect their time choices. Have each person evaluate their wheel and identify the areas in which more responsible choices could be made.

### Science:

- ◆ Study seeds and plant growth. Plant a seed and nurture it to full growth. Make a chart listing all of the actions needed care for the plant. Discuss how plants respond in relationship to the amount of time and care they receive. Relate this to other responsibilities in life.
- ◆ Discuss the responsibility a scientist has to the local, national and global community. Choose a scientist and identify their responsibilities. Debate the topic: "\_\_\_\_\_ was a responsible scientist."

### Social Science:

- ◆ Review the Constitution of the United States and the rights and responsibilities written into the law of the land. Create a Venn diagram to compare these responsibilities to their responsibilities at home and school.
- ◆ Have students create three wishes for their community and the world and write them on paper cut-outs in the shape of a star. Below each, write what each person could do to help make that wish come true. Hang the stars from the ceiling or display on a bulletin board.
- ◆ Pick a famous person who showed responsibility. Have a "Who Am I" contest adding clues daily.

### Art:

- ◆ Create a poster that illustrates a "responsible student." Label the reasons the student is responsible. For example, "I use my hands to help others."



## Reading List



### Elementary:

- Annie's Plan by Jeanne Kraus. Teaches personal responsibility and discipline. If Everybody Did It by Jo Ann Stover. Teaches responsibility and self-control.
- Lucy Goosey Takes Responsibility by Katherine Ciriello Clark. Teaches accountability and responsibility.
- Mine! By Kevin Luthardt. Teaches fairness, sharing and taking responsibility. The Hard-Times Jar by Ethel Footman Smothers. Teaches trustworthiness and taking responsibility. Three Pebbles and a Song by Eileen Spinelli. Teaches responsibility, accountability and teamwork.
- Tops and Bottoms by Janet Stevens. Teaches fairness, responsibility, and work ethic.
- Winston Churchill: One Bear's Battle Against Global Warming by Jean Davies Okimoto. Teaches citizenship, conservation and responsibility.
- The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis. Teaches responsibility and trust.

### Secondary:

- The Yearling by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. A young boy living in the backwoods of Florida must decide the fate of a pet deer.
- Kid stories by Jim Delisle. Profiles of twenty real children and the responsible things they did, great and small.
- Learn about Responsibility from the Life of Colin Powell by Jeanne Strazzaboxco. This book teaches the value of responsibility by taking examples from the life of General Colin Powell.
- 50 Simple Things That Kids Can Do To Save the Earth by The Earthworks Group. This book gives opportunities for kids to show responsibility by saving the environment.
- Behind the Attic Wall by Sylvia Cassedy. This book tells a story about an or-phan girl who learns responsibility through learning to love and be loved.
- Bearstone by Will Hobbs. This book tells the story of an elderly rancher who teaches responsibility to a troubled Indian boy. His caring ways help the boy to become a responsible man.
- Homecoming by Cynthia Voight. Thirteen year old Dicey cares for her siblings as they search for a home after being abandoned by their mother.
- Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte. A classic tale of the love of Heathcliff and Catherine and the responsibilities they felt.
- The Good Earth by Pearl Buck. This book shows the responsibilities created by flood, drought, pestilence and revolution.
- The Stranger by Albert Camus. A murder mystery to solve.

# Parent Power

Make your expectations clear. Expect children to take responsibility. Remember that it is difficult for them to take responsibility if you do not give it to them. If they know that you will continue to remind them to do something, they are likely to leave this responsibility to you. They may wait until you either do it or you lose your temper. Either way you are holding onto the responsibility of seeing that it is done. Instead try stating your expectations clearly and providing an appropriate consequence after asking the first time. Be on the lookout for opportunities to reinforce character in daily situations. Play the what would you do if ... game. Talk about situations they may encounter. Make sure your behavior is what you want your child to emulate.

## **Lack of Responsibility Has Consequences!**

Because of the nail, the shoe was lost.

Because of the shoe, the horse was lost.

Because of the horse, the rider was lost.

Because of the rider, the battle was lost.

Because of the battle, the kingdom was lost.

And all because of a horseshoe nail. ~George Herbert

This little poem (that has a historic relationship) shows the consequences of not following through with daily responsibilities.



Discuss what responsibilities students think that parents have toward their children. Do those responsibilities change as children get older?

- ◆ Organize your notebook or folder by subject area, and decide how you will keep track of each subject's materials.
- ◆ Tell students "How to Be Responsible and Feel Great". Ask them to think of examples for each of the six responsible behaviors; have them brainstorm ways of handling irresponsible people. Responsible people: do what they agree to do; answer for their own actions; take care of their own matters; are trustworthy; always use their head; don't put things off.
- ◆ For one week, keep a daily record of all responsibilities. Include social commitments, homework, chores, etc.

At the end of the week have students grade themselves on how well they carried out their responsibilities.

- ◆ Ask students to write a one-page paper on, "What does it mean when someone is described as a 'responsible' person."
- ◆ Place students in groups of four to five; have groups list ways an individual being responsible or irresponsible might affect his/her self-esteem.
- ◆ Make a pattern of a flower with 8 petals. In the center of the flower have students write, "I am responsible". On each petal have the students write something they are responsible for



# QUOTES

"We are made wise not by the recollection of our past, but by the responsibility for our future."  
George Bernard Shaw

"I must do something' always solves more problems than 'something must be done.' "  
~ Author Unknown

"If you mess up, 'fess up."  
~ Author Unknown

"Freedom is the will to be responsible to ourselves."  
~ Friedrich Nietzsche

"You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today."  
~Abraham Lincoln

"You can delegate authority, but not responsibility."  
~Stephen W. Comiskey

"When you blame others you give up your power to change."  
Author Unknown

"Nothing strengthens the judgment and quickens the conscience like individual responsibility."  
~ Elizabeth Cady Stanton

"Responsibility educates."  
Wendell Phillips

## Websites and Resources:

<http://www.polkfl.net/staff/resources/documents/keystocharacter/January2010.pdf>

<http://www.polkfl.net/staff/resources/documents/keystocharacter/January2011.pdf>

<http://www.polkfl.net/staff/resources/documents/keystocharacter/January2012.pdf>

[www.goodcharacter.com](http://www.goodcharacter.com)

[www.charactereducation.com](http://www.charactereducation.com)

[www.sitesforteachers.com](http://www.sitesforteachers.com)

