

Choosing Respect

This is the first unit of the school year. As with any school year, starting by laying the foundation of respect is vital before the class can move on to any other concept. In this first lesson, the focus is on choosing respect and better understanding the three levels of respect: self-respect, respect for others, and respect for our space. This activity uses a kinesthetic approach to help students apply their learning.

Respect Sub-Concept(s)

Self-care, Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

Required Materials

- Playdough
- 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.



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AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM
FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.
See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Identify the three levels of respect exercised each day at school.
- Demonstrate concrete methods for practicing self-respect, respect for others, and respect within the school.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

It is extremely important to be kind to yourself as a teacher before you can expect to share that same level of respect within your classroom. How do you practice self-respect personally? Fueling your body, ensuring proper sleep, and carving out some quiet time each day are all terrific options to be kind to you in preparation for your classroom each day.

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Draw simple pictures next to words that show Self-Respect to help English Language Learners connect better during the discussion.
- Allow children with speech/language delays to use hand gestures and facial expressions to convey Respect to Others during the introduction activity.
- Pair students up during the School Walk Through activity to encourage community observations.



Share

3-5 minutes

Have the students gather in your circle time or community area.

Ask them to share about something they did on their own this morning to get ready for the first day of school.



Inspire

3 levels of Respect

10-12 minutes

Explain that the first thing we must establish in our special classroom is Respect. Respect allows us to learn, enjoy our time together, and feel safe in our classroom. Since today is our first day, we will learn about Respect before we do anything else. That way each of us can show kindness to ourselves, others, and our school every single day. We define Respect as treating people, places, and things with kindness.

Explain the 3 levels of Respect for our classroom. Make sure you allow time for the students to identify examples if desired.

- Self-Respect: Respect starts with yourself! Being kind and respectful to your body and mind will help you feel happy and be ready to show that same level of respect toward others when you come to school. (Eat breakfast, clean clothes, plenty of sleep, etc.)
- Respect for Others: Think about how you treat others. When you respect them and show them kindness, they enjoy your company and want to spend more time with you! (Kind words/gestures, no bullying, help others, respect boundaries, etc.)
- Respect for Our School: Your behavior in our school can also show respect. The way you treat our space, the things we use each day, and even our balls during recess can all demonstrate kindness for our community. (Keep school clean, kindness with school materials, obeying hallway rules, etc.)

This framework can be used as the backbone of your classroom rules if desired.



Empower

20 minutes

Students will dig deeper within each level of respect by completing three activities. You may want to start a list highlighting answers from each area to create your classroom rules.

- 1) Self-Respect: Give each child a ball of playdough. Have them create an example of one way they can be kind to themselves by showing Self-Respect. Allow time for each student to share their model if desired. They can also whisper what they made in your ear and you can share it with the rest of the class. Examples might include a toothbrush to show they brushed their teeth, a bed for making their bed, etc.
- 2) Respect for Others: Have your class form two lines facing each other. Make sure you as the teacher are included in one of the lines. Model how to introduce yourself and ask how others are doing. (See tips for diverse learners as well). Focus on common pleasantries such as:
 - Hello, My name is _____.
 - What is your name?
 - How are you doing today?

- I am doing well, thank you.

3) Respect for Our School: Explain that our class is going to go on a silent scavenger hunt. We will be looking for ways to show respect to public areas and materials in our school through our kindness. As you are walking out for morning recess, encourage the students to use their eyes and ears only (no talking) to observe different ways they could show respect for the school. (Some examples might be picking up garbage, picking up playground toys, etc.) This can be repeated on the walk back from recess to reinforce the concept. You may also take a different route back to class to extend this activity. Don't forget to review their answers after you get back to class! If desired, have them draw a picture of one way to show respect within their school.



Reflect

5 minutes

When the class returns, take time to review the 3 levels of respect. Draw a picture of a face (Self-Respect), 2 people (Respect for Others) and a School (Respect for School). Next to each picture, gather ideas from the class on concrete ways to demonstrate each level of respect through kind actions.

- If time allows, you can act these ideas out as mini skits as they are identified. One way to accomplish this is at your end of day community meeting/circle time. You might say, "Who can show me what being kind to our neighbor might look like? Within our school? Etc."



Extension Ideas

This lesson can easily be extended throughout the entire first week of school to establish your classroom rules and expectations. Here are some ways to continue the conversation.

- During the Self-Respect section, talk about the importance of coming prepared for school, taking care of your belongings, and bringing a coat/hat during the cooler days.
- During the Respect for Others section, introduce your quiet area/corner if you have one. Go over the expectations within this area and the rules for accessing it.
- During the Respect for School section, introduce any school wide programs that might tie into this topic. Drawing connections both in the classroom and on a grander scale is very helpful for this age!



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AS A RECOMMENDED
PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL
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/>

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