

Respect

This week we will explore what it means to respect others and how showing respect outwardly can have a positive effect inwardly.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

Main Lesson

Whole Class Lesson
30 minutes



R.E.S.P.E.C.T. - The Respect Effect

This lesson introduces students to the brain and body's physical response to respect, which is to be happier, more productive, more creative, and more collaborative. Students also learn the effect of disrespect on the body, which causes us to feel anxious, angry, sad, etc. Students brainstorm a "Top 10" list for how they will show respect to others in the classroom. (See *page 2 for lesson details.*)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups
15 minutes



Showing Respect in Grade 6!

In small groups, discuss how 6th graders show respect for one another and how they do not. Write down five action items your group can do to improve the respect among all 6th grade students at school.

For Partners
15 minutes



What I Respect about YOU!

Partner up and have students write or share three things they respect about the other person.

For Individuals
15 minutes



Respecting Others: Intentional Respect

Ask yourself, "How can I show more respect to others?" Identify three people you interact with daily and at least one thing you can do to show more respect to that person. Try it immediately and journal about their reaction.

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



The Respect Emoji

If you could design an emoji that represents respect, what would it look like? Draw it out and share with the whole class at the end of the allotted drawing time.

R.E.S.P.E.C.T. - The Respect Effect

This lesson introduces students to the brain and body's physical response to respect, which is to be happier, more productive, more creative, and more collaborative. Students also learn the effect of disrespect on the body, which causes us to feel anxious, angry, sad, etc. Students brainstorm a "Top 10" list for how they will show respect to others in the classroom.

Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

- Brain diagram that can be projected on a smartboard or printed (can roughly draw the diagram, too)
- Whiteboard and markers for brainstorming
- Poster paper and markers for transferring the Top 10 from the whiteboard to a poster
- Learn more about the Respect Effect (including some ideas for how to improve respect in groups) here:
<https://paulmeshanko.com/10-simple-things-you-can-do-and-not-do-to-practice-civility-respect-inclusion-at-work/>

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, International Society for Technology in Education Standards, when applicable, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Evaluate the "Respect Effect" and how showing respect or being in a respectful environment has a positive personal effect.
- Brainstorm ways to show respect to others.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Respect in the classroom begins with you. Hopefully you have taken some time to work on your ability to first respect yourself. Students will have a hard time respecting themselves if they don't see self-respect modeled for them. Remember how strong and good and valuable you are! Own that! This week, also evaluate how well you respect others. This may seem like a "no brainer" to teachers, as we love our students and what we do! But, we all get tired, we all experience burn-out, and we all have students who challenge us. This is especially true as these middle school-aged kids start pushing some boundaries and experience some strong physical, mental, and emotional changes. In these times especially remember that everyone deserves respect even if it doesn't feel like they have earned it. This doesn't mean we forgo classroom management or discipline strategies but we can approach every situation with respect and kindness. Some things to consider this week: How do you listen to your students (and to your colleagues, for that matter)? Do you listen to *hear* or listen to *respond*? How is your patience tank? Pretty full or running on fumes? Do you have parents who make it hard to want to show respect to them or to their students? When you feel challenged, tired, frustrated, or even sad, and struggle to respond in a kind and respectful way, remember that you are OKAY. Things will be okay. You can reinsert a measure of respect in a variety of ways: use active listening strategies, take five deep breaths before responding to a situation, use I-statements rather than you-statements, lower your voice and take a gentle approach to a challenging situation, or, call in backup (if you have a PLC group or teacher-partner and need a breather, ask for help!). You can grow in your ability to show respect for others, and if you fail, acknowledge it, apologize, and move on. Tomorrow is a new day.

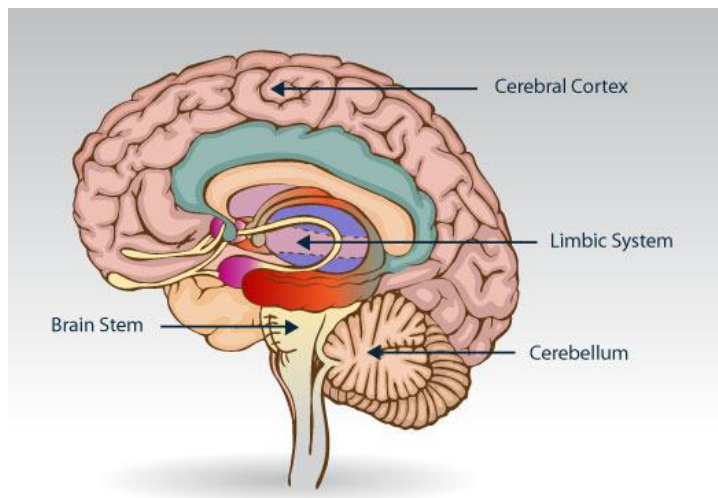


Share

5-7 minutes

Last week we talked about ways to show respect for ourselves. This week we are going to talk about how we can show respect for others and why this is going to be a very important part of our class this year. The reason why it is going to be important is because having an environment where everyone feels equally respected creates an environment that is happier, that is free from negative stress, and that helps us learn and interact better. How many of you would love to be in a place where people were happy, not stressed out, and learning and having fun? (Wait for student response.) Me too! I want to be in that place, too. So, today, we are going to talk a bit about the effects of showing respect to others can have on our own brains which translates to how we think and respond and interact.

To start, let's look at the brain: (Show the image below or another image of the brain that you have. Projecting on a smartboard is ideal, but a rudimentary drawing on the whiteboard or print outs would work, too.)



Source: <http://app.imcreator.com/static/FAAC356ED213474C9BBECA6FF5F06384/the-brain>

The Cerebral Cortex is known as the **thinking brain**. This is the part of our brains that help us make good choices; it helps us reason and rationalize. This is what makes us human. We can actually understand what is going on around us and make decisions and determinations about our situation.

The Limbic System is known as the **emotional brain**. This is the “fight, flight, or freeze” part of the brain. This is the part of the brain that *reacts* to stimuli vs. *responds* in a logical, rational way. The emotional brain is what triggers when we are scared, anxious, angry, or excited. The emotional brain is often in charge when we are faced with having to do something new or unfamiliar - or if we feel like someone is mad at us or not including us - or if something really exciting happens and we are running on adrenaline. In these situations, the emotional brain actually *takes over* the thinking brain. In fact, our emotional brain is in charge of our thinking *most* of the time.



Inspire

15 minutes

So, what does our brain's functionality have to do with respect? Well, let's talk about that. A researcher named Paul Meshanko has studied the brain and how it contributes to our need for respect (from ourselves and from others) and how we feel when we show respect to others.

Meshanko says that when we are shown disrespect (maybe someone ignores you or doesn't include you or is flat out rude to you), our thinking brain shuts down and our emotional brain fires up. We instantly feel angry, sad, defensive, or vengeful (as in, we want to get back at the person who is being disrespectful). When this happens, our bodies release a hormone called cortisol that keeps us in this state of heightened anxiety and awareness. What else do you think happens to our physical bodies (not just our brains) because of this extra cortisol in our systems? What happens to your body when you feel anxious or upset? (Invite student responses. Answers should include the following: my stomach hurts, my head hurts, I cry, I feel sick, I can't focus, I only think about the person and how he/she treated me, etc.)

And, Meshanko says it can take the body up to four hours to get rid of all that extra cortisol! So, when we feel disrespected, we are mentally and emotionally and physically at our worst for a long time! Who wants to feel like that?! Or, who wants to make someone else feel that way? Not me!



Empower

15 minutes

There are ways we can train our thinking brain to respond first (before our emotional brain), but today, we are going to talk more about how we can set up our classroom environment so that it is one of mutual respect so we aren't ever putting each other in this state of anxiety and discomfort. Meshanko says when people are in respectful environments, they are more productive, happier, better at working in teams, and more creative! This is called the Respect Effect. Now that is the type of classroom I want to be in!

So, we are going to take just a few minutes to brainstorm our Top 10 ways that we will show respect to others to increase the respect effect in this classroom. These can be really simple. In fact, I'll start: 1. We listen to everyone. (Invite students to call out their ideas. Begin each one with "We" to reinforce this is a group effort and group expectation.)



Reflect

5-7 minutes

Review the Top 10 and have the class read them out loud together. Transfer the list to a piece of poster paper and display in a prominent place in the room. If there's time and you have students who are artistic or need something to do, have those students create the poster.