



SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

By Jodi Wardlow

Lesson Overview

This lesson introduces students to the concepts of responsibility and citizenship. Students will understand responsibility is something they choose to do or choose not to do, and that responsibility has consequences. Students learn to connect their responsibilities with their role as a citizen of our school, our classroom, their family, and the community. Key vocabulary that will be used throughout the course of the school year to reinforce citizenship in the classroom and in our community is introduced. Students will learn key vocabulary through mentor text(s)—published books by various authors—collaborative conversations, and direct instruction.

Suggested Grade Level

K–2

Estimated Time to Complete

Two to four class periods of 30 minutes, then reviewed throughout the school year. Additional activities to reinforce the concepts may be necessary. This will lengthen the completion time.

Lesson Objectives

Students will

- describe the characteristics of a responsible citizen;
- apply the concept of responsibility into their everyday settings, with their families, peers, and teachers;
- be able to define responsibility and citizenship;
- identify examples of responsibility and explain why being responsible is important;
- identify benefits and costs (advantages and disadvantages) of responsibility.

Materials Needed

Civics picture book with responsibility content such as *City Green* by Dyanne Disalvo-ryan, *The Zookeeper Learns Responsibility* (along with the activity book if available) by the Center for Civic Education, *The Berenstain Bears' Trouble at School* by Jan and Stan Berenstain, or *Horton Hatches the Egg* by Dr. Seuss

Before the Lesson

- Define key vocabulary: responsibility, citizen, and community

Lesson Procedures

1. Students gather together in a designated meeting space. Share the title of the story you have chosen. Ask the students to predict the content. Read the story. Discuss key elements such as the main idea, the problem, and the solution. If using the activity book, see questions on pages 4–7 to aid in the discussion. At this time, students may begin to make connections to the story.
2. Review the story. Using chart paper, label three sheets with the key terms *responsibility*, *citizen*, and *community*. Divide students into three heterogeneous groups. The groups will work together to brainstorm examples of the key vocabulary. Students can illustrate, dictate, or write examples of responsibility, citizen, and community. Post the anchor charts for student to reference during any future activities associated with this topic.
3. Use a turn-and-talk or think-pair-share strategy to engage students in a peer retelling of the original story. Review the anchor charts. At this time, an extension activity can be completed to assess or solidify the learning of the key concepts. For example, the activities in the *Foundations of Democracy, Responsibility* activity book, Lesson 1, pages 1–15 are both informative and helpful to check for understanding.

Common Core State Standards

The Meaning of Citizenship

Students will explain the meaning of citizenship in their classroom, school, family, and community and why it is important.

Speaking and Listening

Students will participate in collaborative conversations with peers and adults in small and larger groups.