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!
**Suggested 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.


*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.

*Kidstories* 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 Strazzabosco. 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 Cassidy.* This book tells a story about an orphan 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.

**Websites**

www.hotchalk.com—free teacher lesson plans and organizational tools

www.dosomething.org—great ideas for service learning projects

www.learningtogive.org—free lesson plans

www.bu.edu/education/caec/files/middleschoollesson.htm—middle school Language Arts unit centered around the *Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*

www.worldofteaching.com/powerpoints/english/responsibility.ppt.—Free PowerPoint that incorporates the story “The Wolf and the Crane” by Aesop

**Spotlight on Schools**

As our Middle Schools taught safety on December 17 responsibility was the center of each lesson. Personal safety requires personal responsibility to make choices that promote health and create a safe environment. Newspapers over the Christmas break had several stories of fires from space heaters and kerosene heaters - some resulting in fatalities. How many fires were not started and perhaps lives saved because of the safety reminders given to the students? Thanks to all for a job well done.
**Subject Level Lesson Plans**

**Language Arts:** Discuss the meaning of responsibility using the information on page one of this document or by reading the book Strega Nona or Strega Nona’s Magic Lesson by Tomie dePaola. Contrast the different responsible work ethics of Strega Nona and Big Anthony. Brainstorm and list (or draw) on the board different situations in which the students need to show responsibility (for example, cleaning their room, listening in class, sharing a toy, setting the table, waiting patiently in line, etc.). Make sure the student recognizes that responsibility includes helping, making good choices, completing tasks and being a good “citizen.” Have each student fold a paper in fourths and unfold it to make four sections in which to draw. Tell the students to draw themselves acting responsibly in four different situations. Encourage the students to label or write a sentence describing each picture.  

(source: www.learningtogive.org)

**Math:** Give students the following scenario. “Playing baseball with his friends in the yard, Sam broke a neighbor’s window and dented their new car. To be responsible, Sam needs to apologize and pay for the damages. The window will cost $75 to repair and the car will cost $375. Sam gets $5 per week allowance for doing chores at home. Sometimes he can rake leaves for a neighbor and earn $10. He thought of creating a dog walking business at $3.00 per walk.” Divide the class into groups and direct each group to create a plan to pay for the damages. In their plans, students should include how to earn the money, show their calculations, and develop a timeframe. After the groups present their plans to the class, allow the class to vote and select the best plan of action. You can change the numbers or computation requirements to reinforce age appropriate math skills.

**Science:** Discuss the fact that personal responsibility for the environment includes recycling, water conservation, cleaning the air, and protecting our wilderness and wildlife. In small groups direct students to discuss and create a list of the things they and their families can do in each area (place cans and boxes in a recycling bin, not smoking, good car repair to eliminate fuel emissions, don’t litter, conserve water use, etc.). As groups share their ideas with the whole class, create a word splash on the board around the words “Environmental Responsibility.” Students could then create a flip book to record their ideas. (source: hotchalk.com)

**Social Studies:** Every freedom entails a responsibility. For instance, one of your rights is to a good, free education. Your responsibility for this right is to do your homework; respect the administration; take good care of the buildings, grounds and supplies; study; and behave in a manner that doesn’t take a freedom away from someone else. Brainstorm additional rights and responsibilities that students have at home and in the community (review the list in the Code of Student Conduct if needed). Give students precut pieces of tag board 2 inches by 5 inches and allow students to create a bookmark writing rights on one side and responsibilities on the other. They can be decorated and laminated. (source: hotchalk.com—Paula Hrbacek)

**P.E.:** Emphasize how personal responsibility contributes to the overall success of the group or team. If one person skips practice, it can weaken the performance of everyone. Ignoring safety rules can endanger others as well as yourself.

**Art:** Direct students to design a t-shirt or make a poster that explains how to be a responsible pet owner.

**Music:** Create a six line jingle that encourages student responsibility and sing it for a kindergarten class.
**FCAT WRITES!**

**Primary:**
Write three sentences that describe responsibilities that you have at home.
Describe what we can do to stay healthy (eat healthy food, exercise, wash hands often, etc.) and meet our responsibility to take care of our bodies.
Write a note to your parents to convince them that you are responsible enough to have a pet.
Think about ways you could be more responsible. Write a goal in each area and a plan of action that would make it easier to meet that goal.
Write a journal article that describes what would happen if you did not feed your pet for one week.
Write a letter to convince a friend that littering is not responsible.

**Secondary:**
Think about responsibility as a priority for success in a job. Pretend that you own a pet store. Write a job advertisement for two new employees listing their responsibilities.
Describe a time when you were irresponsible and had to make an apology.
Write a journal article to discuss your friend’s level of responsibility. You canceled plans to skate with another friend to help him with his car. He never showed up or called ruining your afternoon.
Write a letter to convince your wealthy aunt that you used her $200 birthday gift responsibly.
Describe what you consider responsible use of a cell phone. Think about the relationships between courtesy, responsibility and safety.
Write a blog explaining responsible actions you could take if friends lie about other friends on facebook.

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**Responsible Celebrations! - A True Story**

Hi Friends! I would like to share an incident with you. Just as Christmas is celebrated by Christians, "Diwali" is celebrated by Hindus. On that day people wear new dresses, eat sweets, and set off firecrackers. A little girl of 10 in my neighborhood is a good friend. Every year she celebrates Diwali in a grand manner, buying at least two boxes of firecrackers and two new dresses in order to have a grand feast on that day.

Last year I was amazed to see her. She was in a simple dress playing with her younger brother without setting off any firecrackers. I asked her the reason. She said that she saw a documentary film on the making of firecrackers in her school which explained the process of making them, the child labor involved in the industry, their sufferings, their lack of education, and the pollution created by firecrackers. After seeing that film, she made up her mind not to buy firecrackers any more. She felt sad for those working children. She said that she too has the responsibility of caring for the environment and she decided to stop using firecrackers; instead, she would donate the money to the needy, which she did. The most impressive thing is that she convinced her parents to donate the money. Yeah! Now I believe in the existence of angels!

Posted to www.helpothers.org by Malli 5-19-09
Teaching responsibility to our children in an ongoing effort from birth to adulthood. As infants we do everything for them, then gradually allow them to learn to do simple things. They are building habits that control how they handle responsibility and communicate their needs, wants and desires to the rest of the family. It is sometimes difficult to look at the long-term goal that would make them independent, able to function on their own, manage a job, home, family and make responsible decisions during the many stages of their development. It can become especially challenging when they become a young teen. Here are some tips that have proven effective in communicating with children and teens to help them to become more responsible:

Brainstorm solutions and allow your child or teen to solve their own problems as much as possible. If parents become totally controlling, the child or teen may never be able to make their own decisions or become rebellious to the point parents have no influence.

Teach your child or young teen to set long term goals. Make sure they have the resources and encouragement needed to reach those goals.

Use the term “agreement” when chores are assigned or schedules developed. Nagging, criticizing or getting emotional accomplishes little and just makes the child or teen angry and defensive. When you simply remind them that they agreed to do a chore by a certain time, they will usually be more cooperative. Make sure your agreements are made together and in advance of expectations.

Remember that you and your child or teen do not always have the same priorities. They probably do not care as much about a clean house as you do.

Five problem solving steps work with setting guidelines: Define the problem specifically, identify why it is important and how you each feel about it. Brainstorm for solutions that are reasonable and acceptable to each then try out the solution to make sure it works. Have a review time set to discuss the situation and decide together if the solution you agreed upon is working. Following this process teaches the child and teen to think out problems and puts them well on their way to responsible adulthood.

Sources: “Parenting Young Teens”, Iowa State University, June 2010 and “Parent Connection: Teaching Responsibility”, Pre-K Smarties

Athletes who show responsibility:
- win with dignity and loose with dignity. There is no display of anger; they do not make excuses.
- make a 100% effort to do their best.
- avoid alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and risky behaviors.
- support and encourage other team members to develop a positive team morale.
- use self-control.
- respect their teammates and coaches.

Thoughtful discussions:
- One coach said, “Winning isn’t everything… it is the only thing.” Does this quote encourage responsible sportsmanship?
- John Wooden, legendary UCLA basketball coach said, “You cannot attain and maintain physical condition unless you are morally and mentally conditioned. I tell my players that our team’s condition depends on two factors—how hard they work on the floor during practice and how well they behave between practices.” Does this quote encourage responsible sportsmanship?
ACTIVITIES

Students can create coupons for special tasks to do at home.

Use play money to teach responsible budgeting. If you use a classroom jobs program, students can earn money through classroom jobs and apply it to a pretend budget of necessary expenses such as food, clothing, shelter, gifts, etc. Discuss the difference between needs and wants.

Create a paper clock that shows the student’s scheduled time to get ready for school. Include tasks such as getting up, eating breakfast, making their bed, etc. This has been helpful to habitually tardy students.

Adopt elderly friends at a retirement home and make cards, visits or collect items for a gift basket to be delivered.

Provide materials for small groups to make an assembly line to create a finished product.

Source: http://www.scholastic.com

Bulletin Boards

Give each student a cut-out key on which they will write a word or phrase that represents a responsible action they believe will lead to success. Splash the keys on a bulletin board around the caption: “Responsibility—a Key to Success.”

Create a bulletin board that uses student work. Under the caption “We Know What Responsibility Means” post student responses to the statement, “Being responsible means.” They can write paragraphs, sentences or make drawings. Use colorful construction paper or cutouts as a background for each piece of work. (source — ehow.com)

Around the caption “New Opportunities in 2011!” splash cut outs of scrolls or celebration hats on which students have written a pledge to be responsible in 2011 and how they plan to accomplish it. Discuss the fact that whether 2011 is a happy year for everyone in the class, family and community greatly depends on everyone meeting their responsibilities.

Make a “graffiti” bulletin board. Place the title “Responsibility Is…” in the center and allow the students to add their thoughts or pictures that they collect around it.

Sunshine State Standards

PreK-2
HE.A.1.1 - The student comprehends concepts related to health promotion.
HE.B.1.1 - The student knows health-enhancing behaviors and how to reduce health risks.
HE.B.3.1 - The student knows how to use effective interpersonal communication skills that enhance health.

Grades 3-5
HE.B.1.2 - The student knows health-enhancing behaviors
HE.B.3.2 - The student analyzes the influence of culture, media, technology and other factors on health.

Grades 6-9
HE.A.1.3 - The student comprehends concepts related to health promotion.
HE.A.2.3 - The student knows how to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services.
HE.B.3.3 - The student knows how to use effective interpersonal skills that enhance health.

Grades 9-12
HE.B.1.4 - The student knows health enhancing behaviors and how to reduce health risks.
HE.B.2.4 - The student analyzes the influence of culture, media technology, and other factors on health.
HE.B.3.4 - The student knows how to use effective communication skills that enhance health.

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

Edmund Burke

Be Responsible!
Week 1

“I must do something’ always solves more problems than ‘something must be done.’”
~ Author Unknown

“First we make our habits, then our habits make us.”
~ Charles C. Noble

“Nobody ever did or ever will escape the consequences of his choices.”
~ Alfred A. Montapert

“Our duty is to preserve what the past has had to say for itself, and to say for ourselves what shall be true for the future.”
~ John Ruskin

“When you blame others you give up your power to change.”
~ Author Unknown

Week 2

“We need to restore the full meaning of that old word, duty. It is the other side of rights.”
~ Pearl Buck

“If you mess up, ‘fess up.”
~ Author Unknown

“You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. That is something you can have charge of.”
~ Jim Rohn

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

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

Week 3

“It is easy to dodge our responsibilities, but we cannot dodge the consequences of dodging our responsibilities.”
~ Josiah Charles Stamp

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

“When the government accepts responsibility for the people, then people no longer take responsibility for themselves.”
~ George Pataki

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

“Most of us can read the writing on the wall; we just assume it’s addressed to someone else.”
~ Ivern Ball

Week 4

“It is the responsibility of leadership to provide opportunity and the responsibility of individuals to contribute.”
~ William Pollard

“I am free because I know that I alone am morally responsible for everything I do.”
~ Robert A. Heinlein

“The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant.”
~ Max De Pree

“Action springs not from thought, but from a readiness for responsibility.”
~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer

“Be the change you want to see in the world.”
~ Mahatma Gandhi

How Can We Teach Responsibility?

Make responsibility an item of discussion regularly in the classroom. The quotations listed in the Quotes Section of the Keys to Character can be the basis of many discussions on responsibility. Discuss current events related to responsibility, and the many accidents that occur due to irresponsibility (for example: cell phone use while driving, substance abuse, not using seat belts, forgetting to lock a door or turn off the stove or a space heater, etc.). Political debates can be held to evaluate the level of responsibility of our elected leaders and the responsibility we as citizens have to stay involved in our government even after we vote. Another way to teach responsibility is to give responsibility. Organize a service project to provide students an opportunity to give back to the community and be responsible citizens.

A classroom jobs project is also a great tool to use. There are many tasks in the classroom that students can do at any grade level. It gives them ownership of the classroom and makes everyone feel important and needed. It is ideal to have one job for each student, however, if you have a large class you can develop a rotation schedule. There are many factors to consider if you set up a classroom job project. First, your own personal comfort level with what you trust the student to do. Second, the maturity level and cooperative spirit of your students. The project can always be adjusted monthly as you observe the level of responsibility of the students changing. Design a program unique to your students and classroom content. Most students at all ages are enthusiastic about helping. Be sure to talk to them in advance about the project to build excitement. Let them know that they will be building a work ethic and can be “fired” from the job if they are irresponsible. Make sure that you allow them to change jobs often (perhaps monthly) and include a reward system. Some responsibilities that you might want to include are:

- Paper Monitor (returns papers to students)
- Librarian (in charge of resource materials)
- Plant Technician (waters plants)
- Teacher’s Assistant (helps teacher at any time)
- Sanitation Technician (reports areas that need to be cleaned)
- Table Captain or Row Monitor (makes sure everyone at their table or in their row understands instructions)
- Energy Technician (turns off the lights when the class leaves the room)
Two Smart Kids

Once upon a time there were two incredibly intelligent and capable boys. Their wonderful talents were obvious from an early age, and they easily outdid everyone around. They had always known they were special, and they harbored inside them a desire that, in the future, everyone would come to admit how exceptional they were. They each developed in a different way. The first used all his talent and intelligence to have a successful career and show everyone his superiority. He took part in all kinds of competitions, visited all the most important people and places, and was great at making friends in high places. Even when still very young, no one doubted that some day he would be the wisest and most important person in the land.

The second boy, equally aware of his own capabilities, never stopped feeling a heavy responsibility. He would do almost any task better than those around him, and he would feel obliged to help them. This didn't leave him enough time to follow his own dreams of greatness. He was always busy looking for ways to more effectively help others. As a result, he was a much-loved and well-known person, but only in his own small circle. Destiny was such that a great disaster struck that land, spreading problems and misery far and wide. The first of those brilliant young men had never come across anything like this, but his brilliant ideas worked successfully throughout the land, and they managed to slightly improve the situation. But the second young man was so used to solving all kinds of problems, and had such useful know-how in certain subjects, that the disaster hardly affected the people in his region at all. His admirable methods were then adopted across the land, and the fame of this good and wise man spread even more than had that of the first young man. Indeed, he was soon elected governor of the whole nation.

The first young man then understood that the greatest fame and wisdom is that which is born from the very things we do in life, from the impact they have on others, and from the need to improve ourselves every day. He never again took part in competitions or vain shows, and from then on, whenever he traveled, he took his books along with him ready to lend a hand to everyone.

By Pedro Pablo Socristan—http://freestories for kids.com

The Carpenter

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the house-building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife and enjoy his extended family. He would miss the paycheck, but he needed to retire. They could get by.

The contractor was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favor. The carpenter said yes, but in time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career.

When the carpenter finished his work the employer came to inspect the house. He handed the front-door key to the carpenter. "This is your house," he said, "my gift to you." The carpenter was shocked!! What a shame!! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so much differently.

So it is with us. We build our lives, a day at a time, often putting less than our best into the building. Then with a shock we realize we have to live in the house we have built. If we could do it over, we would do it much differently. But we cannot go back. You are the carpenter. Each day you hammer a nail, place a board or erect a wall. "Life is a do-it-yourself project" someone has said. Your attitudes and the choices you make today, build the "house" you live in tomorrow. Build it wisely!!

Work like you don’t need the money.
Love as though you have never been hurt.
Dance as though no one is watching you.
Sing as though no one can hear you.

Source: http://www.nursefriendley.com