

# Ladder of Responsibility

This foundational lesson in the Respect unit focuses on how perseverance and responsibility occur on a daily basis within our everyday routines. Students will create ladders of responsibility to highlight the different types of tasks they are responsible for throughout their day.

## Caring Sub-Concepts

Perseverance, Kindness

## Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

## Required Materials

- Ladder Handout (see below)
- 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.

## Lesson Objective

Students will be able to:

- Explain the difference between responsible and irresponsible actions.
- Create a responsibility ladder that highlights personal responsibilities.

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Whether you're a first year teacher or a veteran, you owe it to your students to plan. Try sorting your students into groups based on learning style instead of academic level. How does this change your groupings?

### Tips for Diverse Learners

- Allow students to draw their responsibilities if writing is a struggle.
- Illustrate the final product by drawing a ladder on the whiteboard and adding your own personal responsibilities to each rung.
- Allow students to write in their native language and work with a peer to translate if needed.

## Share



3-5 minutes

Open with the definition of responsibility. According to the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation, **responsibility** means *being reliable to do what the things that are expected or required of you.*

### Ask:

- What are some of your responsibilities as third graders in our classroom? (What do teachers expect or require 3rd graders to do?)

This unit also talks about perseverance. **Perseverance** means we try our best, even when it gets hard, until we reach our goal.

**Ask:**

- What is something hard you have done that took perseverance to get through?
- How did it feel to try your best and reach your goal?

## Inspire



To prepare for the Empower activity, you are going to model the “ladder of responsibility” concept.

**Explain:**

*Now, let's think about how our responsibilities work together like a ladder. Each one is an important step that helps us persevere when things get tough and helps us show kindness to others. If we don't have all the rungs of our ladder, we can't reach our highest potential.*

**Instructions:**

- Draw a ladder on the board. Write responsibility on the left side of the ladder, perpendicular to the rungs.
- On each rung, write one personal responsibility you have as a teacher. If desired, you can increase the seriousness and importance of each responsibility as you head to the top of the ladder. As an example, your bottom rung may say, “Grade papers,” and your top rung may say, “Showing up daily ready to do my best”.
- After you write each responsibility, discuss with the class what would happen if you did NOT follow through. Example: If I did not show up every day you would not have a teacher and would not be able to learn! One option could be to erase the rung each time you don't complete your responsibility. The ladder will no longer work when the rungs are missing!

## Empower



20 minutes

Explain that students will create their own “Ladder of Responsibility” which will highlight all the different ways they are personally responsible both at school and home.

**Instructions:**

- Pass out the ladder template below and have each student label it with the word RESPONSIBILITY on the side like in the Teacher example.
- Allow 10 minutes for students to add personal responsibilities to each rung. If needed, students can draw their answers as an alternative. Encourage them to decorate their ladder as time allows.



## Reflect

5-7 minutes

After the activity is completed, ask for volunteers to share their responsibility ladders. As a class, discuss the consequences if one of the responsibilities was not completed as promised.

*Every person in our class has important personal responsibilities they must complete everyday. Sometimes we don't feel like what we have to do is very important or necessary. However, if we all stopped being responsible, our class would be messy, disorganized, and unkind. When we are kind and responsible, our class can run smoothly and everyone has an opportunity to learn and grow.*



## Extension Ideas

- Complete the ladder with the lowest level responsibilities on the bottom (I hang up my coat) and the highest level responsibilities on the top (I use kind words and safe actions with others).
- At Home Extension: Make a second copy of the Responsibility Ladder worksheet and send it home. Have students repeat this activity with a loved one at home. Read the answers aloud as a class and compare answers.



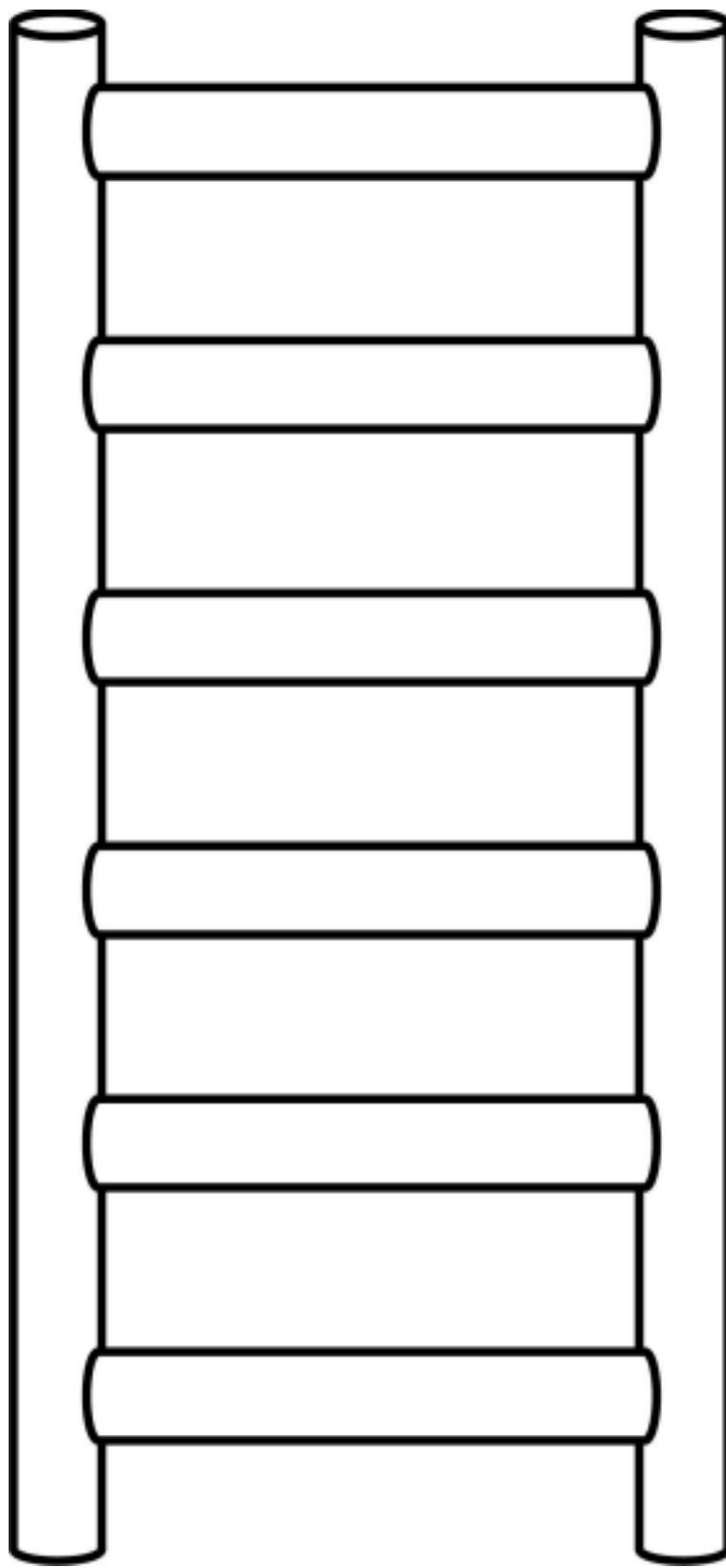
DESIGNATED BY CASEL  
AS A RECOMMENDED  
PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL  
AND EMOTIONAL  
LEARNING.

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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