

# How Big is Your Hula Hoop?

Through teaching students about boundaries, we teach them not only to respect others but to preserve their own personal space and comfort level, which in turn leads to more self-assuredness.

## Respect Sub-Concept(s)

Self-Care, Kindness

## Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

## Required Materials

- 2 sets of 3 different sized hula hoops (from P.E. department if possible)
- Personal Space Reflection page
- “Harrison P. Spader, Personal Space Invader,” by Christianne C. Jones Read aloud link:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALIS3bArrxU>

## 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.



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

## Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Explain what personal boundaries are and how they are different for everyone.
- Establish a comfort level regarding personal boundaries for oneself and a respectful way to convey this to others.

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Write a positive affirmation on the board today to remind everyone (including yourself!) that you are a valuable member of the class.

### Tips for Diverse Learners

- Use circular swimming floatations around one's waist instead of hula hoops for children with physical limitations.
- Draw simple pictures to accompany the more difficult vocabulary words including “Boundary” and “Personal Space”.

## Share

5-7 minutes

Have the students gather in your circle time or community area. Review the definition of **Respect**: *Treating people, places, and things with kindness*.

### Ask:

- What are some ways we can show respect for ourselves at school?
- What is one way we can show respect for our friends and teachers at school?
- What is one way we can respect the things in our classroom like our desks, our supplies, our books, etc.?



## Inspire

### What is a boundary?

7-10 minutes

Explain that respect starts with ourselves.

It is important to let others know how you want to be treated. One way to do this is by talking about boundaries. When we understand where our boundaries are, we can show respect more easily. Explain that a boundary shows where something stops. It gives an item or area its shape. We can use this same idea for boundaries in our classroom and school.

**Ask** the following questions to guide a discussion on boundaries:

- *Where does our classroom start? (front door)*
- *How far are we allowed to go on the playground?*
- *Can we run into the street?*
- *Where does our Block Area/Circle Time/etc. end? How do we know this?*

These are all boundaries! When we show kindness and respect for others, we are respecting personal boundaries.

### Overview of Personal Boundaries

7-10 minutes

Explain that the focus today is on Personal Boundaries. Everyone has an invisible bubble around them. This is your “personal space”. It is the space around you that no one can enter without your permission. For example, if someone wants to give you a hug or a high five, they need to ask permission. Some people need more personal space than others. They feel uncomfortable when friends get too close. They have a larger “personal space”. Other people really enjoy being very close to others and feel confused when friends are not close enough. They have a smaller “personal space”.

**Read:** “Harrison P. Spader, Personal Space Invader,” by Christianne C. Jones  
**Read Aloud Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALIS3bArrxU> (3.5 min)



## Empower

3-5 minutes

Using the book as a springboard, students will use different sizes of hula hoops to better understand personal space and identify a level that feels comfortable for themselves.

### Instructions:

**RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS**  
FOUNDATION®

- Place three different sized hula hoops on the ground. You will need two sets of each size.
- Explain that it is important to know your own personal spaces. One easy way to visualize what you are comfortable with is to “try on” different sizes of personal spaces.
- Demonstrate how to select a hula hoop and “try out” the personal space by talking to a neighbor.
- Make sure to try on all three hula hoops and explain why 2 didn’t work and 1 did. “This is too close for me; I don’t feel comfortable. This is much too far away; I am struggling to hear you clearly.”
- Have students come up in pairs and select hula hoops that work best for them. Make sure they check their comfort level by talking to each other.
- Repeat until every student has identified their personal space within the classroom.

As students come up and try on different hula hoops, ask periodic questions such as:

- How does respecting personal space show kindness to others?
- How can you respectfully let someone know they are in your personal space?

It may be helpful to demonstrate this. Emphasize how to respectfully invite someone into your personal space OR on the flipside, how to kindly let someone know they are too close.

## Reflect



10 minutes

Using the reflection page below, have each student identify which hula hoop worked best to show their personal space within the classroom. Have them color the ring that corresponds with the size of the hula hoop they selected.

For example, the outer ring would represent the largest hula hoop and the center ring would represent the smallest hula hoop. Allow each student to share their reflection page with the class.

You may wish to hang up these papers to refer to them when future conflicts over personal space arise.



## Extension Ideas

- Personal space can differ across settings. You can easily extend this lesson into an entire unit on boundaries with people in general including strangers, community helpers, acquaintances, friends, and family. One terrific idea can be found here: <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/teaching-kids-about-personal-space-with-help-from-daniel-tiger>
- Add an at home portion to see what personal boundaries your siblings and parents might have.

- Discuss different times of day: When are you more accepting of others to enter your personal space? (mornings, recess, story time, etc.)
- Add the personal space rings to the front of each child's desk as a reminder of their personal space comfort level..

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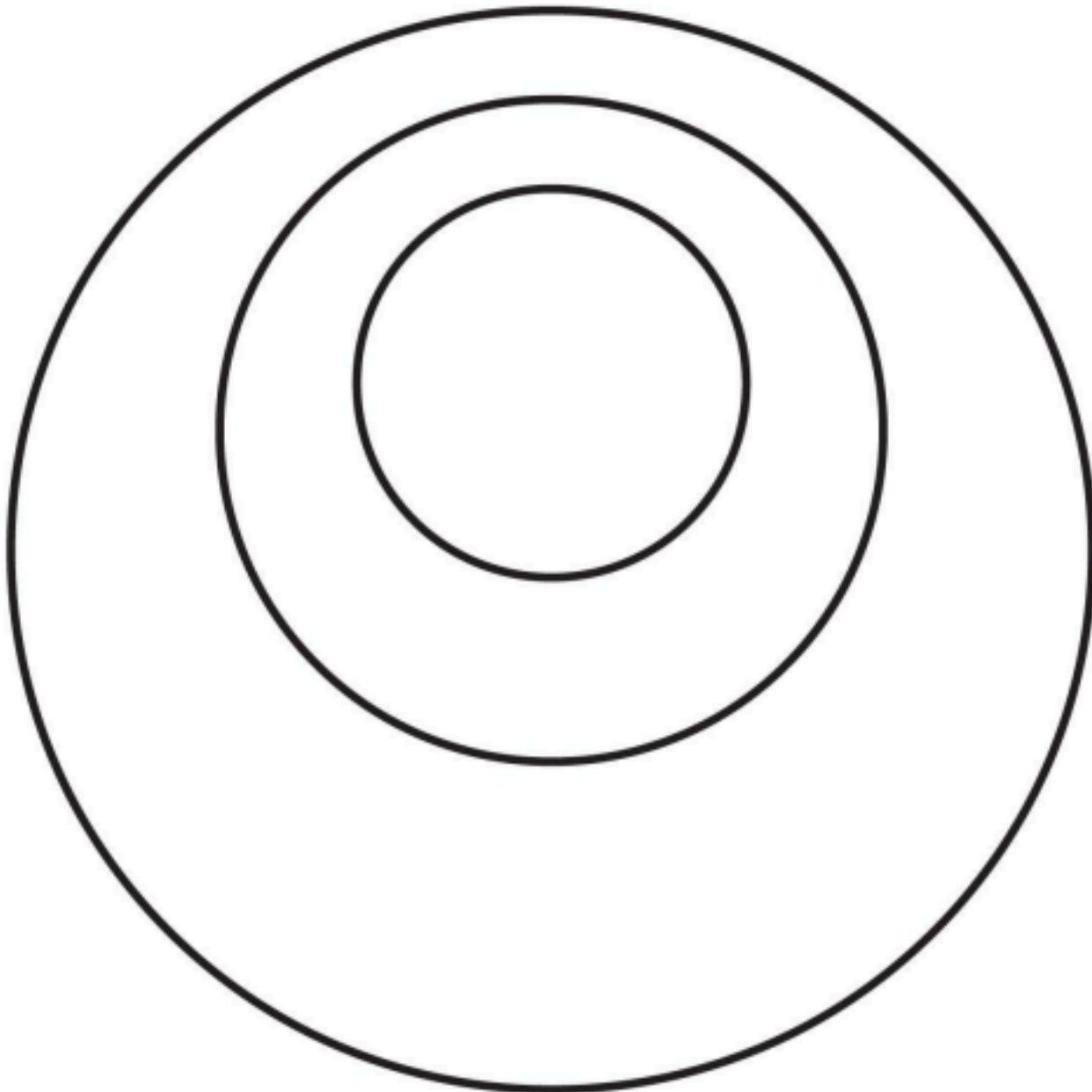


The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

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/>

## Personal Space Reflection Page



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