



PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY



Core Messages: Personal Responsibility



TEACHER NOTES - This strategy serves multiple purposes:

- Gets students (and teacher!) up and moving for much-needed brain breaks
- Provides opportunities for student leadership outside the academic arena
- Provides opportunities for supporting others in a leadership role



DURATION: 3 minutes (daily or more often)

GOALS: [Teacher and Student Goals](#)

MATERIALS: Loud timer



MAIN POINTS: Introducing student-led Cardio 60 (5 minutes)

- Set minimal basic safety parameters, the fewer the better. Most students will be aware and mindful of the environment, so introducing far-out possibilities of what wouldn't be acceptable is more likely to plant seeds than to actually avert danger.
- Model the first few times, to set both the tone of how to lead and the expectations for participants. The class could generate a list of possible movement ideas that the leader might choose from.



GUIDING LANGUAGE

It's really healthy for our brains and our bodies to take short, energizing breaks. To be able to do this regularly, we make some agreements. When we're the leader, we'll choose exercises that everyone can do safely. When we're the participants, we'll give our best effort, so we can all enjoy these brain breaks!

At first I'll be the leader; then each of you will get to take a turn on other days. Whoever is the leader gets to choose what our activity will be. It might be something to get us pumped up. It might be something that helps us relax and refocus.

Let's brainstorm a list of things we could easily do in our room in one minute's time, to get energized and revitalized for work. Record ideas from students. These may include jogging in place, jumping jacks, leading the group 'train style' around the perimeter of the room, and so forth.



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Let's also list some ideas of relaxing, calming activities we could do for 60 seconds. Record ideas from students. These may include deep breathing, stretching side to side, and so forth.

What will make this work easily for us, so we can do it regularly, is for the whole group to stop together when the timer goes off. So listen carefully for this sound. Demonstrate the timer sound and/or attention signal. Let's try right now! Stand up and follow what I do...

Set the timer for one minute. Lead a series of short aerobic exercises that everyone in the class can easily accomplish. When the timer goes off, commend the group and have them return to their seats. Complete the "fast feedback" and then have them begin working right away to establish that pattern.



MAIN POINT: Fast feedback (2 minutes)

To reinforce appreciation for leadership, establish a pattern of the leader receiving three quick pieces of feedback.



GUIDING LANGUAGE

Every time we do this Cardio 60 break and I hope that's often! the leader will get to call on two people for fast feedback. Think about an appreciation for the way I led the group and about the activity itself. Then the leader will give a quick appreciation to the group for something that made it easy or fun to lead.



TEACHER NOTE

It doesn't matter whether each of the feedback categories is addressed. These are suggestions to get ideas flowing, but the goal is quick, positive feedback. When you are modeling, choose specific, replicable aspects when you compliment the group. Examples: "It really helped that people looked right at me when I was talking." "It was fun for me because I saw people smiling and laughing!" "I appreciated that people were following my directions right away."



MAIN POINT: Ready for student-led Cardio 60 (3 minutes)

When you have led the group several times and feel that your students are ready, call a Cardio 60 and select one student to lead the rest of the group in a timed minute of aerobic activity of their own choice. They might sustain the same movement the whole time or change it up, until the timer goes off. They may combine energetic movement with stretching or deep breathing. The beauty lies in the versatility and ownership this strategy provides, along with the physical and emotional benefits of moving our bodies!



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EXTENSIONS

To honor students' comfort level, vary the method of choosing leaders. You may want to start by choosing someone whose hand is up. If you use a random luck method like pulling a name, consider offering the option of going solo or choosing a partner.

Consider making "Reading the Room" one of your classroom jobs. The Room Reader, drawing on their Social Awareness skills, is responsible for noticing when the group needs a quick break. They give you a pre-arranged signal, and you respond silently that the signal has been received. As soon after as possible, call for a Brain Break.

Over time, vary the options available for student leaders to choose from. Consider including a group song, a few moments of quiet breathing, or a few moments of "free chatting" during which students stand up, stretch, and make connections of their own choosing. A well-practiced attention signal (and a timer are important tools for making these breaks fast and satisfying.



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Teacher: Personal Responsibility Goals

Personal Responsibility: A child's tendency to be careful and reliable in her/his actions and in contributing to group efforts.

My students are able to:

- Engage other students through a leadership role
- I am aware of my individual students' abilities to:
- Notice and name their strengths when they are leading the group
- Notice and name their challenges when they are leading the group
- Notice and name their strengths when others are leading the group
- Notice and name their challenges when others are leading the group

The environment I create supports my students' growth related to:

- Developing confidence in acting as a leader
- Supporting their peers who are growing their leadership skills
- Participating in active, fun experiences in a responsible way
- Providing many and varied opportunities for students to show leadership

Student: Personal Responsibility goals and demonstrated behaviors

Students will:

- Act as leader in a responsible manner
- Act responsibly when other students are leading
- Offer encouragement and support to others

DESSA SELF-MANAGEMENT INDICATORS

(Highlighted indicators are directly addressed in this lesson.)

I can:

Remember important information
Handle my belongings with care
Serve an important role at home or school
Encourage positive behavior in others
Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events
Do routine tasks or chores without being reminded
Act as a leader in a peer group
Get things done in a timely fashion
Show care when doing a project or school work
Follow rules



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Attention Signal



MAIN POINTS

- A well-practiced and consistently implemented attention signal is essential in group learning situations. Whether adults or students, any gathering of engaged participants is going to be deeply immersed in meaningful, task-oriented conversations during which the you will need to get their attention.
- While there are many versions of attention signals (flashing the lights, clapping, raising or lowering your voice), one that has been most consistently effective is to raise your hand in the air and wait for everyone else in the room to raise their own hand and be silent before you proceed with directions or information.
- This signal works well because it engages participants in a multi-sensory experience. There will be kinesthetic engagement (raising their own hands) and visual (seeing others raise their hands) and auditory (hearing the noise level drop) cues. It also reinforces two social-emotional/DESSA constructs: Self-Management and Social Awareness.



GUIDING LANGUAGE

There will be many times when you are working together and talking to one another, and I'll need to be able to get your attention. When you see me raise my hand, you'll have two jobs. One is to raise your hand too. That gives others around you a visual cue that they should quietly look my way. The other is to stop talking! That will help the room quickly become silent, so you can hear the next direction or announcement.

As we get used to using this attention signal, you'll notice that you're building on two SEL skills. One is Self-Management, as you regulate yourself to do those two jobs of raising your hand and becoming silent. The other SEL skill you'll be building is Social Awareness, as you cue in on what others around you are doing. If we help each other by following these two steps, we'll soon be able to get in and out of lively conversations seamlessly.



TEACHER/FACILITATOR TIPS

- Cultivate patience, realizing that it's a positive signal of deep engagement for participants to be so caught up in their academic dialogue that they are reluctant to stop, or don't immediately notice your silently raised hand.
- Hold an inner and outer attitude of goodwill as the group settles into complete silence before you begin talking. If you consistently wait for complete silence, the group learns your expectation and will become quiet more quickly over time. If you begin to talk while some participants are still talking, they will believe that it's okay for some people to continue conversing, and are much less likely to meet your stated expectation for the Attention Signal. (It's not necessary that every hand goes up, but is necessary that all are quiet.)
- Refrain from restating your expectations or from singling out participants with requests that they become quiet. Let your silent raised hand be the only signal they have to attend to, and soon it will become the only signal they need!



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Core Messages:



TEACHER NOTES

Helping students identify and understand specific skills they can focus on to develop Personal Responsibility supports their growth and confidence. When students need to relax, refocus or recoup a steady emotional state, listening to the “Cool and Calm: Personal Responsibility” recording can provide that opportunity.

Once students are confident about using the recording independently, they can be encouraged to help visitors and new classmates become familiar with it.



DURATION: 5 minutes (individual use)

GOALS: [Teacher/Student Goals](#)

MATERIALS:

Cool and Calm: Personal Responsibility [recording v1](#) [recording v2](#)

- Optional: Paper copy of [student script](#)
- Optional: Blank paper with crayons and/or colored pencils

PRE-TEACHING

This is a beneficial exercise for the class as a whole, so experiencing this first all together or in small groups can make the experience even more accessible when individual students go to a quiet area, put on headphones, and listen to the recording.



MAIN POINT: Introducing Cool and Calm: Personal Responsibility recording (3 minutes)

- Introduce the purpose of this activity. Include both the process (highlighting the benefits of a short, relaxing focusing activity) and the content (pointing out that the text of the recording is based on the DESSA Personal Responsibility skills).



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GUIDING LANGUAGE

When we are upset or excited and want to calm ourselves, or when we are tired and want to rejuvenate, it can be helpful to take a few minutes to sit quietly and listen to a relaxing recording. It's also helpful to have a peaceful way to remind ourselves about the Personal Responsibility skills that we're all working to strengthen.

We're going to listen this first time together as a group. Then we'll add this recording to (explain location and procedure for student use in your setting).

Choose (or invite students to choose) whether to listen "to the girl or to the man this time." If you'd like, you may draw while you're listening.



MAIN POINT: Experiencing Cool and Calm: Personal Responsibility (5 minutes)



GUIDING LANGUAGE

[Personal Responsibility Recording Script](#)

REFLECTION AND CLOSURE: For group experience



MAIN POINT (2 minutes)

When the recording ends, invite a short, private reflection, followed by sharing from the group using [Quick Pick](#).



GUIDING LANGUAGE

Take a moment to think about what we just listened to. What ideas really stood out for you? What was important for you, that you want to remember? Give students a moment to think and then invite students to share.



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EXTENSION



Individual Student Use Introduction

Sit in a way that's comfortable and also that helps you feel grounded. You may want to be in a chair with your feet on the ground or sitting with your back against a wall. You may wish to close your eyes to help you listen more fully, or you might want to rest your eyes on a spot on the floor or a wall, to help you focus. There's no particular way you need to sit, as long as you are comfortable and can relax and concentrate on the words you'll be hearing. If you want, you can draw while you're listening.

This activity works well as a stand-alone experience. If you are debriefing privately with a student who listened on their own, consider having a printed copy of the script as a basis for the conversation. Invite the student to point out skills within the text that they would like to pay attention to growing. Make an action plan for how you can support their interest.



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Core Messages: Personal Responsibility Script

I am responsible for my actions and my belongings.

I am the one who gets things done for me!

When I feel settled, I feel more capable.

I can strengthen my core by taking a moment to center myself...

*First, I notice my feet and legs—how they feel and what position they're in.
Next, I notice my hands and arms. How they feel, where they are.
Then, I find my spine, shoulders, neck and head.
I breathe deeply and let the feeling expand throughout my body.
When I exhale, I can feel the power of my core self,
the strong, calm part of me that is always there.*

*I think ahead about my schoolwork and other activities,
so I will have the time and materials I need.*

*I take time to make a plan before I start working.
Sometimes I try to do the thing that's hardest for me first,
so I can get it done and feel a sense of accomplishment.*

*If I have a big job to do,
I break it down into smaller parts so I can
make progress on it every day until it's done.*

*I stay focused so I can be proud of the quality of my work,
and get it done on time.
I want to do my best, even when it takes extra effort.*

*I follow a routine,
to help me get my work done without reminders.
I make a plan for myself and then I follow through on it.
I am responsible—I can do it!*

*I know that the rules and guidelines are here to keep us safe,
and to create an environment
where we can all make the best use of our time to learn.*



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*I do my best to follow the rules,
and if I give others a reminder,
it's in a respectful, helpful way.*

*When we are working together,
I can act as a leader by helping others stay focused on our task
by being a good example.*

*I can show leadership
by making sure everyone is included.
I can show leadership by listening carefully to others,
to help make sure everyone's ideas are heard.*

When someone else is leading, I support them the best I can.

*I look for ways that I can help out at home and at school.
When I say I'll do something, I make sure I get it done.
It makes a difference when we each
contribute our time and effort
to benefit our group.*

*I keep track of the information I need,
and of things that are important to me,
by choosing a place where I will keep them,
and then always putting them back when I'm done using them.*

*I do a 'Look Back' before I leave someplace,
to make sure I have all my belongings.*

*I do a 'Look Back' when I'm done working or playing someplace,
to make sure that I've cleaned up after myself.*

I am responsible for my actions and my belongings.

I am the one who gets things done for me!



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Quick Pick Strategy

“Quick pick” is a strategy to engage participants in calling on one another. It’s particularly effective during sharing times, group discussions and when the teacher/facilitator is publicly recording on the board or a chart (writing responses to brainstorming; webbing ideas from the group, and so forth).



AMONG THE MANY BENEFITS OF THE QUICK PICK STRATEGY ARE:

- Shared responsibility for the flow of group discussions
- Building a bond among participants as they use one another’s names to call on each other in a welcoming and respectful way
- Providing an alternative to “teacher/facilitator choice” for who speaks when
- Promoting healthy risk-taking and leadership opportunities



GUIDING LANGUAGE:

During our discussion (or sharing time), you’ll be calling on one another. When you have something you’d like to contribute, please raise your hand. The person who shared last will call on the next speaker. Remember to give everyone a chance before calling on anyone for a second time.

Please be sure to use one another’s names when calling on each other. If someone raises their hand and you’re not sure of their name, it’s fine to go ahead and call on them and ask to be reminded of their name.

Also, it’s nice to say “Thank you” to the person who called on you to speak.

I’ll start...

Give a topic of discussion or sharing. Ask who would like to contribute. Model calling on someone by using their name, making eye contact, and using a friendly, welcoming tone of voice.