



# PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY



## Helping Each Other Grow



### TEACHER NOTES

Dr. Martin Seligman writes about “learned optimism,” underscoring the field of research that supports the power of optimistic thinking in developing resiliency, enhancing health, and increasing achievement. It’s encouraging to realize that as educators, we can intentionally help our students build a more proactive, positive approach to dealing with the adversities that will come their way.



**DURATION:** 45 minutes

**PREPARATION:** Teacher/Facilitator and Participant/Student

### MATERIALS:

- [Personal Responsibility Graphic Organizer](#) for each student/participant
- Posterboard for final product (one piece for each group)
- Art materials (markers, crayons, sentence strips, colored paper)
- [Exit Ticket](#)



**MAIN POINTS:** The value of acting responsibly (2 minutes)

- Describe the value of demonstrating and modeling responsible behaviors in our classroom.
- Remind students/participants of the fluid nature of skill building: With support, practice, and encouragement, we can all learn and grow in any positive behavior we wish to develop.



### GUIDING LANGUAGE

*Being a responsible person is much more than just knowing the rules and following them. Being responsible means contributing our best effort to help ourselves and others have as smooth and pleasant an experience as possible as we work together.*

*Every one of us has skills that come more easily to us than others, because we’ve practiced them many, many times, maybe without even being aware that’s what we were doing. Today we’re going to think together about things each of us already does well, and then make a plan for how we can contribute to helping others practice and grow these skills. You’ll be working in small groups to make posters for our space, encouraging others and sharing your strategies.*





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**MAIN POINT:** Identifying school-related responsible behaviors (4 minutes)

On the board, record examples of responsible behaviors that contribute to personal and group success. Leave space for student/participant names under each heading.

Examples:

- Following through on morning/opening routine
- Being prepared with my materials for work sessions
- Taking care of my supplies and belongings
- Cleaning up at the end of group work
- Doing my class job(s) without reminders
- Getting my work done on time
- Remembering important things (homework, lunch, permission slips)
- Focusing during work time



## GUIDING LANGUAGE

*There are so many ways each person in our class steps up and shows responsibility throughout the day. Let's make a list of some of the times during our day together when we practice being responsible for ourselves and to our whole group.*

Guide the discussion until all eight categories are listed on the board. Leave room below each heading for student/participant names.



**MAIN POINT:** Identifying school-related responsible behaviors (4 minutes)

- Have students/participants privately reflect on the categories, and then rank themselves in order of their biggest strength to their biggest challenge.
- Have students/participants work in small groups, determined by their self-selected strongest area, to create a group poster of strategies they recommend to help other students/participants become more successful with these responsibilities.



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## GUIDING LANGUAGE

*In a moment, using your handout, you're going to put these jobs in order for yourself, starting with the things you're already doing well, and moving down to the jobs that are not yet easy for you to do without reminders.*

*First, we will all take some silent, private think time. Think about our time together, and picture yourself doing each of these jobs. Which ones bring up warm, positive feelings because you're already proud of how well you do them? Which ones bring up some anxious feelings because they are things you don't feel completely successful with yet?*

Pause for 1 minute of silent thinking time.

*On your handout, put a 1 next to the job that you're most successful at doing most of the time. Pause. And a 2 next to the one you feel next most confident about. Pause. You can make some notes about strategies you use to help you do each job well, so you'll be ready to share with your small group.*

Pause.

*As I read each heading, if that was your number one category, please raise your hand.*

Record student/participant names beneath each heading. For each category without any names, ask for a show of hands from those who had it as their number two category. Some categories may not have any names. Those are areas to work on together as a group, at another time.

*When we move to our small groups, your task will be to listen to one another describe specific things you think about or do that help you be successful at the responsibility you chose. When talking in your group, help each other to make sure that everyone's voice is heard and that all of the ideas get recorded. Coaching language like: "Tell us more about that..." and "What would we see you saying or doing..." may come in handy for this!*

*Once everyone's ideas have been collected, work together to create a poster that you'll share with the class, so we can learn from one another and all get better at acting responsibly without reminders.*

*Time to Check for Understanding... turn to a partner near you and explain what is supposed to happen in your small group. Pause. Who would be willing to restate for us what the job of the small group is?*

*Okay, we're ready to break up into our strengths groups. You'll have about 20 minutes for your discussion and to create your poster. Each person should physically add something to your group poster, and also be sure you all sign it.*



**MAIN POINT:** Small group work (15 minutes)

Students/participants listen to, record, and illustrate all of their effective strategies for accomplishing the listed responsible behaviors.



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## GUIDING LANGUAGE

Give students 15 minutes to work in their small groups.

After 12 minutes, give your attention signal and wait for complete silence to give the next direction.

*In about three minutes, you'll be sharing your ideas with the class. Decide together as a group how you'd like to do that. Will you have one representative who shares all of the ideas? Will everyone talk? We welcome creative ways to get your information across! Each group will have about two minutes to share.*

*Be sure everyone in your group signs your poster, so we can remember who is willing to help out with modeling and support for each of these areas.*



## MAIN POINT: Group share (12 minutes)

Each small group presents their specific strategies for what helps them be successful in their strength area. Listeners pay special attention to the categories that they previously self-identified as challenging areas.



## GUIDING LANGUAGE

As you listen to each group present, pay special attention to the categories that might be most challenging for you. Watch for ideas that you think you want to try out in the upcoming week, as you pay special attention to strengthening the skills that will make the job easier for you on a regular basis.



## MAIN POINTS: Reflection and exit ticket (3 minutes)

- Have students/participants reflect on one of the categories they identified for themselves as challenging and choose one specific action or strategy from the group share they'll commit to trying in the upcoming week.
- Collect exit tickets for review before returning them for student/participant use. Build in partner check-ins several times throughout the next week, when each student/participant can briefly meet with an intention partner to gauge progress.



## GUIDING LANGUAGE

*As you fill out your exit ticket, think about the strategy you are interested in trying. I'll be assigning intention partners and returning these tickets to you tomorrow. When we do our private check-ins, it will be another chance to practice supporting each other to do our best.*



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**MAIN POINT:** Closure (3 minutes)

Remind students/participants that we can always grow our skills and that it is valuable to support one another.

**GUIDING LANGUAGE**

We can all get better and better at anything we put our minds to. Each of the suggestions that contributed today really works for the person who said it, so maybe it will work for some of us, too. As we continue to work together, we will use our posters to remind ourselves of specific ways to build our culture of responsible classroom citizens.

**EXTENSION: ADDITIONAL SHARING STRATEGIES**

- Refer to the strategies posters as proactive reminders to the group when engaging in the related tasks.
- Make copies of individual exit tickets for use in your private conversations with particular students/participants, to encourage and support them toward growth in areas you think will be particularly helpful for them and/or for the climate of the group.



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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/participants are able to:

- Reflect on personal strengths and challenges related to classroom expectations
- Offer suggestions and support to others based on their own personal strengths
- Actively work toward increasing their level of personal responsibility at school

### I am aware of my individual students'/participants' abilities to:

- Demonstrate personal responsibility in many ways, including group expectations
- Contribute to building and sustaining positive classroom climate

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

- Developing their abilities to notice and name ways in which they demonstrate personal responsibility
- Developing their abilities to demonstrate responsible behaviors without reminders

### Student/Participant: Personal Responsibility goals and demonstrated behaviors

#### Students/Participants will:

- Students will reflect on their own strategies for demonstrating personal responsibility (I can describe things I do well that contribute to our classroom running smoothly.)
- Students will show leadership by supporting others in developing these skills (I can support my classmates by modeling responsible behaviors.)

### 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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## Intention Partner Graphic Organizer



### TEACHER NOTE

Students may benefit from using this graphic organizer while preparing for, and meeting with, their Intention Partner until the process becomes familiar practice.

### INTENTION PARTNERS GUIDELINES

- Decide who will share first while their Intention Partner listens.
- Swap roles and the first speaker becomes the listener, so both partners are heard.

### AN INTENTION PARTNER:

- Listens to you describe a skill you are intentionally working on developing.  
Example: Today I am paying attention to staying positive about myself and others, instead of not saying anything at all, or of saying putdowns or things I mean to be funny, but really might hurt someone's feelings or be disrespectful about myself.
- Notices the efforts you're making.  
During this lesson / class period, please see if you notice me being successful at this.
- Listens as you reflect on how you did today.  
I give myself a (1 to 4) for effort because \_\_\_\_\_.  
I earned a (1 to 4) toward accomplishing my goal. Here are two or three examples of what I said or did today that are evidence for that rating.
- Gives respectful feedback.  
Did you hear or see anything connected to my personal goal today that you think it would be helpful to share with me?

## Intention Partner Graphic Organizer

### Before the work session

Today I am being intentional about developing the skill of:

I am going to work on that by:

### After the work session

I think I earned a (rating one to five) ([link to student self reflection rubric lesson](#)) because:

### Next time, I will try:

Do you have any feedback for me?  
Thank you for supporting me and helping me be accountable to myself!



## Self Reflection: Personal Responsibility

- ( ) Following through on morning / opening routine
- ( ) Being prepared with my materials for work sessions
- ( ) Taking care of my supplies and belongings
- ( ) Cleaning up at the end of group work
- ( ) Doing my class job(s) without reminders
- ( ) Getting my work done on time
- ( ) Remembering important things (homework, lunch, permission slips)
- ( ) Focusing during work time
- ( ) \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Ideas I can share that help me be successful with my top strength/s:

**EXIT TICKET    Personal Responsibility: Helping Each Other Grow    EXIT TICKET**

My name:	Today's date:
My check-in partner:	Check-in date:
<p>I will be paying attention to getting stronger at</p> <p>( ) Following through on our morning routine</p> <p>( ) Being prepared with my materials for work sessions</p> <p>( ) Taking care of my supplies and belongings</p> <p>( ) Cleaning up at the end of group work</p> <p>( ) Doing my class job(s) without reminders</p>	<p>The strategy I am going to try:</p>
<p>( ) is checking in with me about:</p>	

**EXIT TICKET    Personal Responsibility: Helping Each Other Grow    EXIT TICKET**

My name:	Today's date:
My check-in partner:	Check-in date:
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<p>( ) is checking in with me about:</p>	



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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 are going to be deeply immersed in meaningful, task oriented conversations during which the facilitator will need to get their attention.
- While there are many versions of attention signals (flashing the lights, clapping, raising or lowering facilitator's voice), one that has been most consistently effective is for the facilitator to raise his/her hand in the air, and wait for everyone voice in the room to be silent before proceeding with directions or information.
- This signal works well because it engages participants in a multi-sensory experience. There will be kinesthetic engagement (raising own hand), and visual (other's hands being raised) and auditory (the noise level in the room drops) cues. It also reinforces two Social and 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 become 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.
- Cultivate patience, and hold an inner and outer attitude of good will 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 be reinforced that it's okay for some people to continuing 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.)
- Cultivate patience – 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!