

# Knowing and Respecting Ourselves

This lesson allows students to process the concept of respect on a personal level by establishing a short set of rules to help govern how they treat their minds, bodies, and hearts everyday, both at home and at school.

## Respect Sub-Concept(s)

Self-care, Kindness

## Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

## Required Materials

- Student journals (if this is not part of your curriculum, any notebook paper would work) for self-respect ideas
- Paper (preferably sturdy card stock) for self-respect rules
- Writing utensils - can be markers if encouraging students to draw or decorate their work
- Tape

## 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.



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AS A RECOMMENDED  
PROGRAM  
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EMOTIONAL LEARNING.**  
See last page for details.



## Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Define respect and self-respect.
- Develop a set of personal rules around self-respect.

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

It is extremely important to be kind to yourself as a teacher before you can expect to share that same level of respect within your classroom. How do you practice self-respect personally? Fueling your body, ensuring proper sleep, and carving out some quiet time each day are all terrific options to be kind to yourself in preparation for your classroom each day.

### Tips for Diverse Learners

- Encourage students to draw their ideas if they have limited writing skills.
- Do not force all students to share their ideas if they are uncomfortable.
- You can pair students up or put them in small groups if students struggle with thinking of self-respect ideas and rules on their own.
- Use computers (if available) for students to create their list of rules to promote typing practice and customization.

## Share

3-5 minutes

*We are going to start off this year with a unit on Respect. I know you have heard this term before. Can someone share their definition of the word respect?* Invite student responses; put key terms on the board.

*How do you know that someone is showing you respect?* Invite responses; take notes on the board.

*How do you, in turn, show someone respect?* Invite responses; note the similarities between how students observe respect and how they give respect.

When you are respected by someone else, how does it make you feel?  
Invite student responses.



## Inspire

5-7 minutes

*For this unit, we are going to look at respect in several ways. We will look at how we respect others, and how we respect what we have and where we go. We will also talk about what it means to have respectful conversations and how to listen to others with respect. We are going to start, though, by talking about what it means to respect ourselves.*

*Self-respect is one of the most powerful forms of respect and kindness. Why do you think this is? \*Invite student responses; remind students that it is difficult to be respectful and kind to others if we are not first respectful and kind to ourselves. We cannot give away what we do not possess.*

*I want everyone to open their journals [if applicable; if not, take out a piece of paper] and write down these three words:*

MIND  
BODY  
HEART

*Behind each of these words, write or draw at least three ways you respect and are kind to your mind, to your body, and to your heart. Let me give some examples to get your ideas moving:*

*MIND - I go to school so I can learn more each day!  
BODY - I eat healthy food so I stay strong and grow.  
HEART - I help others which makes me feel good.*

Give students 3-5 minutes to write/draw.



## Empower

7-10 minutes

*Normally we begin each school year writing down or learning classroom rules. One of those rules is to respect others and the classroom. What I want you to do now, though, is to write down three to five personal rules for this year for self-respect. What are three to five things you will do for yourself or think about yourself that will help remind you to always treat yourself with kindness and respect?*

*Take your time and do a nice job writing clearly or drawing a picture to represent your self-respect rules. I want you to tape these either inside your journal, inside or on top of your desk, or in your locker space (cubby); anywhere you can be reminded every day about the ways you will take care of yourself this year. You can use the ideas you just generated in your journals/pieces of paper to help get you started.*

Hand out firm cardstock if possible to encourage the life of the paper (so it isn't easily ripped); consider laminating if a cost-free option is available in your school.



## Reflect

5 minutes

Invite students to share one of their rules of self-respect.

Remind students that in order to respect others, they must first respect themselves. You will be watching them throughout the year to ensure they are following their own rules and taking care of their minds, bodies, and hearts.



## Extension Ideas

- In School: Consider using observation of self-respect as part of future morning meetings or exit tickets; draw attention to students who are following their rules and making good choices around self-respect. Praise students for taking care of themselves.

Copy each of their rules before students put them in their special place so you can help them be accountable for what they identified at the beginning of the school year. This could be a great way to track progress in this area! You can insert their “rules” sheet in their student folders and use them as talking points at fall conferences.

- At Home: Put a copy of each student’s self-respect rules in his/her file to share with parents at the fall conferences or send a copy home with students to share with parents; these rules should be followed at home as well as at school. Send the accompanying “Respect Unit” parent letter to introduce the unit and overview all the forthcoming lessons so parents can reinforce the messages at home.



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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.

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