

GIVING AND EARNING RESPECT



AGENDA

- Starter
- R-E-S-P-E-C-T
- What's Best about Me
- Tested
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will define “respect.”

Students will identify the importance of self-respect.

Students will demonstrate parameters of respect.

Students will identify and evaluate qualities that justify self-respect.

Materials Needed

- A physical or online dictionary (Part I)

Starter (3 minutes)

Begin class today by writing “R-E-S-P-E-C-T” on the board and ask students to brainstorm a list of people they deem worthy of their respect. Engage students in a brief discussion of why the people on this list deserve their respect.

On the board, write “Who is worthy of respect, and why are they worthy of it?” Explain that students will be able to answer this question by the end of the lesson.

Part I R-E-S-P-E-C-T (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students define “respect” and identify qualities that justify respect.

1. Students develop a definition of “respect.”

Elicit from students a definition of “respect.” Write the definition on the board.

At the same time, have a volunteer look up the definition of “respect” in a dictionary. Challenge the class to consider the dictionary definition in light of their own definition and to make adjustments as they see fit.

2. Students draw conclusions about respect.

Guide students to draw conclusions about who deserves respect and why. Direct students to the definition on the board or interactive projection device and ask them if they notice “wealthy” or “successful” listed anywhere.

Ask students to draw a conclusion about this observation. Engage students in a discussion about moving beyond external qualities, such as wealth or success, to determine who is worthy of respect. For example, write the name “Steven Spielberg” (or another well-known person’s name) on the board. Brainstorm the qualities that helped him achieve his wealth and his success: talent, hard work, and perseverance. Contrast this by mentioning someone who has achieved wealth or fame via corruption, dishonesty, or exploitation.

Conclude that the qualities beneath the surface are the ones that determine the people who earn our respect. Have students look at the names of the people they wrote down earlier and ask them if, according to their definition, those people still deserve their respect. Encourage students to explain their responses and challenge them to add more names to the list. Point out that students probably know many people who could be added to their lists.

Part II What's Best about Me (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify the importance of self-respect.

1. Students define “self-respect.”

Have students recap qualities worthy of respect and write them on the board. Ask if, based on these qualities, they would add their own names to the list. Students may suggest that this would be bragging. Point out that each student has special qualities, just like the people they listed; these qualities make them worthy of respect, as well.

2. Students identify and discuss incidents in which qualities that deserve respect are evident.

Ask students to consider the respectable qualities they have discussed thus far and instruct them to list a few of those qualities that apply to themselves. Ask them to think about a time when they demonstrated one of those qualities.

Divide students into pairs. Have each student describe the time they thought of to their partner. If necessary, prompt students with the following examples:

- Standing up for a friend
- Getting a job
- Studying hard to pass a difficult exam

As students speak, have their partners take notes describing the tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language of the speakers. Have partners switch roles so that each student has a chance to describe their best moment.

Now, ask students to briefly describe a negative moment or one that they would be happy to forget. Again, as students speak, have their partners take notes on the tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language of the speakers.

3. Students analyze behavior and identify the need for self-respect.

Have students report on what they noticed about their partner's behavior. Ask students if they noticed a difference in their partner's tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language between when they described the positive event and when they described the negative event. Most students are likely to report that the partner's tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language were far more cheerful and confident when describing a pride-filled moment than when describing one of embarrassment.

Conclude that, when we respect ourselves, we send out signals of confidence, such as a lively tone of voice, good eye contact, laughter, or an upright posture. When a person displays self-confidence, they become a magnet to others. Self-confidence—the expression of self-respect—empowers us by drawing others' attention to our best qualities.

Part III Tested (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students learn that the qualities from which they derive their self-respect will be tested throughout their lives.

1. Students role-play different scenarios that test their best qualities.

Explain to students that recognizing their own best qualities not only fosters self-respect, but is also an essential part of being an effective person. Being responsible, honest, and fair-minded, for example, benefits those around us. Tell students that they will often have these qualities tested; therefore, they must know the extent to which they are willing to compromise these traits.

Divide the class into three groups. Have each group discuss one of the following scenarios and act it out for the class:

- You're a responsible person. You have final exams that demand many hours of concentrated study time. It's the night before the first final, and a neighbor for whom you babysit regularly has asked you to sit for her infant while she handles a family emergency. You know that the baby will demand a good amount of your time. What do you do?
- You pride yourself on your honesty, and your best friend has asked for your opinion about their romantic partner. The relationship has just started, so you haven't spent a lot of time with this new person, but your initial impressions are negative. This person seems self-centered and inconsiderate toward your friend. Do you tell your friend the truth about how you feel? What do you do?
- You're a fair-minded person, but it's hard to maintain your objectivity about your best friend when they are accused of shoplifting something from the local drugstore. Your friend has a history of theft and witnesses claim to have seen the crime, but your friend has assured you that the past is the past. Do you think your friend did it? What do you say to your friend?

When students are finished performing, explain that throughout our lives, the qualities of character from which we derive our self-respect are frequently pushed to the limit, compromised, or put to the test. Point out that each of these conflicts is open-ended and is likely to have a different resolution, depending on the person who resolves it. Encourage discussion and debate about students' approaches to each situation. Ask students to think about the following question: How far can you push the boundaries of your own best qualities and still maintain your self-respect?

2. Students apply what they have learned.

Ask students to consider the qualities discussed in Part II of this lesson and have them list other qualities in themselves that are worthy of self-respect. Briefly discuss and evaluate the importance of these qualities in their daily lives, distinguishing surface values from attributes that are worthy of respect.

Have students write a journal entry describing their lives three years from now. Have them invent and describe a future incident in which a respectable quality empowers them.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Have students brainstorm several examples of situations in which having self-respect could help them. Elicit from students the following key points that were taught in this lesson:

- Respect for ourselves and others is very important.
- To build self-respect, focus on what's best about you.
- Self-respect shines through as self-confidence; self-confident people draw others to them in a positive way.
- Our best qualities can often be pushed to the limit by certain life situations. It is important to be able to identify those situations and to be able to cope with them.

Student Assessment

1. What do you think it means to respect someone?
2. Name a person you respect. Why do you respect this person?
3. There is an expression that says, "If you don't respect yourself, you can't respect anyone else." What does this mean to you?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“As within, so without.” –Hermesianax, Greek poet

Have students read and discuss the meaning of the quote. Discuss how our level of self-respect can affect how we interact with others and how we deal with difficult situations.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students create a collage or concept map of people they respect (e.g., family, friends, famous people).

Have students share their collages with the class or hang them on the walls.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about a time when someone blatantly disrespected them. Ask, “How did you handle it? What would you do differently? What would you do the same? Did it affect your self-confidence?”

Discuss how being disrespected impacts a person’s self-confidence. Have students brainstorm ways to cope with feeling disrespected.

Using Technology

Have students create songs about respect.

Encourage students to perform the song for the class, print the lyrics of the song and have the class sing it, or record the song and play it for the class.

Homework

Have students write a letter to or interview someone they respect.

Discuss what the students hope to learn from those they respect. Ask students to identify the personal qualities that they have developed as a result of modeling themselves after people they respect.

Additional Resources

Read aloud *Blubber* by Judy Blume.

Discuss with students how Blubber's classmates put her down. Discuss how they showed a lack of respect for her. Brainstorm ways that Blubber's classmates should have behaved.