Why Do I Have to Be Responsible?

Supporting Questions

1. What does responsibility look like?
2. What are my responsibilities at home and at school?
3. What would happen if I weren’t responsible?
### Kindergarten Civic Ideals and Practices Inquiry

#### Why Do I Have to Be Responsible?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New York State Social Studies Framework</th>
<th>K.4: Children and adults have rights and responsibilities at home, at school, in the classroom, and in the community.</th>
<th>Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence</th>
<th>Comparison and Contextualization</th>
<th>Civic Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staging the Question</td>
<td>Watch a clip from the PBS Kids video <em>Responsibilities</em> and participate in a discussion unpacking the meaning of the word.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Supporting Question 1

**Understand**

What does responsibility look like?

**Formative Performance Task**

Draw a picture of themselves acting responsibly and describe the picture to a partner.

**Featured Sources**

**Source A:** Image bank: Acting responsibly

#### Supporting Question 2

**Understand**

What are my responsibilities at home and at school?

**Formative Performance Task**

Construct a class T-chart showing home based and school-based responsibilities.

**Featured Sources**

**Source A:** Teacher-located books on responsibility

#### Supporting Question 3

**Assess**

What would happen if I weren’t responsible?

**Formative Performance Task**

Create a two-panel comic describing what would happen in school or at home if we did not carry out our responsibilities.

**Featured Sources**

**Source A:** Image bank: Responsibility scenarios

#### Summative Performance Task

**ARGUMENT** Why do I have to be responsible? Construct an argument supported by evidence that addresses how you can be a better member of your family and class by being responsible.

#### Taking Informed Action

**ACT** Demonstrate responsibility by selecting a class community-service project to undertake.
Overview

Inquiry Description

This inquiry is an exploration into the concept of responsibility, beginning within the home and then expanding to school and the community. In examining the idea that we all have important responsibilities, students should consider the question of what could happen if they choose to act irresponsibly. Through interaction with the formative performance tasks and featured sources, students build their knowledge and understanding such that they should be able to develop an argument that answers the compelling question “Why do I have to be responsible?”

This inquiry embeds the Taking Informed Action sequence throughout. The understand element is developed through Supporting Questions 1 and 2 while the assess element is represented in Supporting Question 3. The act piece, the selection of a class community-service project, can be done in addition to, or as a substitute for, the Summative Performance Task.

In addition to the Key Idea expressed earlier, this inquiry reflects the following Conceptual Understandings:

- (K.4a) Children have basic universal rights or protections as members of a family, school, community, nation, and the world.
- (K.4b) Children can be responsible members of a family or classroom and can perform important duties to promote the safety and general welfare of the group.

NOTE: This inquiry is expected to take three to five 30-minute class periods. The inquiry time frame could expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experiences (i.e., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiries to meet the needs and interests of their particular students. Resources can also be modified as necessary to meet individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans for students with disabilities.

Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question “Why do I have to be responsible?” students work through a series of supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources in order to construct an argument with evidence and counterevidence from a variety of sources.

Staging the Compelling Question

To launch this inquiry, teachers should introduce the word “responsibility” and engage students in a class discussion to unpack the meaning of the word. After establishing its meaning, teachers can help students make a connection between responsibilities and jobs: What responsibilities does a bus driver have? A teacher? A school
principal? This activity draws upon students' understandings that adults have clear responsibilities and helps establish the idea that students have responsibilities as well.

**Supporting Question 1**

The first supporting question—“What does responsibility look like?”—asks students to explore the idea of responsibility and how we know it when we see it. The featured source is an image bank demonstrating responsible behavior in three settings: at home, in school, and in the community. After discussing and naming the action occurring in each image, students complete the first formative performance task, in which they draw a picture of themselves acting responsibly and share that picture with a partner.

**Supporting Question 2**

The second supporting question—“What are my responsibilities at home and at school?”—examines the concept of responsibility more specifically in the context of the family and the school community. In the second formative performance task, students create a T-chart that lists the responsibilities or duties they are responsible for performing at home and within the classroom. Students can then discuss how performing those responsibilities helps the family or classroom operate better. The featured source is generated by teacher and their students as they gather books on acting responsibly from their classroom, school, or local libraries.

**Supporting Question 3**

The final supporting question—“What would happen if I weren’t responsible?”—asks students to explore the implications of not being responsible. This question suggests that acting responsibly is not a given, but rather is a choice to be made. The featured source is an image bank depicting scenarios that ask what responsible actions might ensue. After discussing the scenarios in the featured source, students engage in the formative performance task by creating a two-panel comic depicting what would happen if they were not responsible at home or at school. On one side, they draw a problem; on the other, they draw the result of the problem if they do not act responsibly in that situation.

**Summative Performance Task**

At this point in the inquiry students have come to understand their responsibilities at home and at school and have questioned the implications of not behaving responsibly. Students should be able to demonstrate their understanding and their ability to use evidence from multiple sources to construct an evidence-based argument.
responding to the compelling question “Why do I have to be responsible?” That argument could take the form of drawings that students display in a gallery walk.

Student arguments will likely vary, but could include any of the following:

- I have to be responsible because it is the right thing to do.
- I have to be responsible because it helps other people.
- If I am responsible, then things get done.
- I don’t have to be responsible for everything, but I can be for some things.
- I can be responsible now, but I’ll be more responsible when I am grown up.

This inquiry embeds Taking Informed Action into the formative and summative performance tasks. In the first and second formative performance tasks, students understand what they can do to demonstrate responsibility. In the third formative performance task, students assess what could happen if they do not demonstrate responsibility. To act, students select a service project in which they can demonstrate responsibility by promoting the greater good of their local community. Projects will vary but should be relevant to their local community and could include collecting donations for a local shelter, making holiday cards for kids in a local shelter, or cleaning up a local park.
Supporting Question 1

**Featured Source**

**Source A:** Image bank: Acting responsibly

Image 1: Responsibility at home.

iStock/ © monkeybusinessimages.
Image 2: Responsibility at school.
iStock/ © Christopher Futcher.

Image 3: Responsibility in the community.
iStock/©Wavebreakmedia.
Supporting Question 2

| Featured Source | Source A: Teacher-located books on responsibility |

Teachers select books from their classroom, school, or local library on acting responsibly.

Possible titles:


Supporting Question 3

| Featured Source | Source A: Image bank: Responsibility scenarios |

Scenario 1: Trash is the floor: What might be some responsible things to do?  
iStock/© Michael Sick.

Scenario 2: A classmate is upset. What might be some responsible things to do?  
©iStock/© julieshaies.
Scenario 3: Your room is a mess. What might be some responsible things to do?
©Alamy/© adam korzeniewski.