What are My Rights? What are My Responsibilities?

Prepared By:
Christina Andersen
Rapid City Area School District
Robbinsdale Elementary School
Rapid City, SD

Developed for
Legislative Education for Greater Inquiry and Study (LEGIS)
Chiesman Center for Democracy, Inc.
1641 Deadwood Ave.
Rapid City, SD 57702
www.chiesman.org
2009
The contents of the K – 12 LEGIS LESSONS were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education (Grant No. 84.304c – LEGIS: Legislative Education for Greater Inquiry and Study). However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. (EDGAR: 34 CFR)
Lesson Title: What are my rights? What are my responsibilities?
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Grade Level: 1st and 2nd  
Time Required: Six 20-30 minute sessions

Lesson in Unit:  
1st Lesson 2 of 2 in Unit: Citizen Rights and Responsibilities  
Lesson 2 of 2 in Unit: Founding Documents and Primary Sources  
2nd Lesson 1 of 1 in Unit: Citizen Rights and Responsibilities  
Lesson 3 of 3 in Unit: Founding Documents and Primary Sources

I. Essential Questions:  
What is a right? 
What is a responsibility? 
What are my rights and responsibilities as a citizen of different communities? 
What is the relationship between rights and responsibilities?

II. South Dakota Grade Level Content Standards  
Indicator 2: Analyze the constitutional rights and responsibilities of United States citizens.

1.C.2.1. Students are able to list rules in different groups for different situations.  
1.C.2.2. Students are able to identify the attributes of good citizenship.

Indicator 1: Analyze forms and purposes of government in relationship to the needs of citizens and societies including the impact of historical events, ideals, and documents.

2.C.1.1. Students are able to explain the difference between rules and laws.

III. Assessment Strategies  
1. “Super Citizen” Poster  
2. “My Rights” Collage  
3. Observation Checklist during discussions (Checklist attached)  
4. Participates in classroom discussions and activities

IV. Learning Objectives  
1. The students will understand that citizens have rights and responsibilities.  
2. The students will understand the relationship between rights and responsibilities.  
3. The students will understand what a right is?  
4. The students will understand what responsibilities they have as citizens?

V. Necessary Materials/Technology:  
1. Chart Paper: 4-8 pieces
3. Horton Hears a Who or Horton Hatches an Egg and Yertle the Turtle… all books by Dr. Seuss.
5. “If I were in Charge of the World” poem by Judith Viorst and poem worksheet included in lesson plan (optional: enrichment activity)

VI. Background Information:
Students need to have some understanding of what a community is.
NOTE: This lesson would be a great lesson to use as a precursor to teaching about rules/laws.

VII. Detailed Lesson Description

Day 1:
1. Place the word “community” on chart paper. Ask the children what the word means to them. List their ideas on the chart paper. Explain that a community can be very small (ex: a school) or very large (ex: the United States). List the different types of communities. Explain that people who live in communities are called citizens and they have certain rights and responsibilities. For example, a citizen of the classroom is responsible to come to school every day and follow school and classroom rules. Explain that, as citizens of a community, they should be proud to comply with the responsibilities that come along with that….they should want to follow the rules and do things to make their community better!
2. Read either the book Horton Hears a Who or Horton Hatches an Egg, both by Dr. Seuss. In both books Horton takes on a specific responsibility. Discuss that while others laughed at Horton and made it difficult for him, he continued to be true to his responsibilities. Explain that, just like Horton, we need to be willing to except our responsibilities as citizens. Explain to them that as citizens of a school community, a classroom community, your city and of your country we have certain responsibilities.
3. Place the word “School Citizen” on chart paper. Together, come up with the responsibilities of a school citizen and list them on the chart paper.
4. Do the same with the words “Classroom Citizen”. Together come up with the responsibilities of a classroom citizen and list them on chart paper.
5. Discuss the similarities and differences between the two lists.

Day 2:
1. Review the responsibilities listed as “school citizen” and “classroom citizen” from the previous lesson. Explain that we are also citizens of our community/city and have certain responsibilities that we must follow. On chart paper labeled “Community Citizen” list some of the responsibilities of
being a citizen of the community. As an extension, you may also want to do this activity listing the responsibilities of a US Citizen.

2. Read the book *Yertle the Turtle*, by Dr. Seuss, to the students. Talk about the word “rights”. Discuss the rights of Yertle the Turtle in the book. Explain that just like we have responsibilities, we also have rights as citizens of our school, classroom, community, country, etc. Discuss some of the rights of being a school, classroom, and community citizen. List those rights on the charts from Day One (See possible format example below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Citizen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsibilities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Day 3:
Review the responsibility/rights charts that you made with the students. Ensure that the students understand the concept of rights and responsibilities with a T-Chart. Do this as an interactive writing activity. Focus on spelling or letter/sounds. For example, while creating the chart, the students can help listen for the beginning sounds writing them. Older students can stretch the words and the teacher can let them write the words on the chart.

The T-Chart may look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rights</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Freedom of Speech (Right to free speech)</td>
<td>*Obey traffic laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Freedom of Religion (Right to choose religion)</td>
<td>*Do your job well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Go where you want to go</td>
<td>*Using appropriate language shows respect to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Choose your job</td>
<td>*Do not litter or ruin other people’s property.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Day 4:
1. Introduce the United States Bill of Rights to the students (A large poster can be purchased through the Liberty Bell Museum online, at: [www.libertybellmuseum.com](http://www.libertybellmuseum.com), or you can go to the Charters of Freedom

2. Go over the purpose of the Bill of Rights and some of the Amendments (1, 5, 6, etc.). Make sure that the students understand what a freedom is and that a freedom is a right. List some of the major items the Bill of Rights offer us...Freedom of speech, Freedom of religion, Right to a jury, etc.

3. Read over the Rights and Responsibilities chart that you made as a class. Tell them to think about the rights and responsibilities of a student as they create a Classroom Bill of Rights. Remind them that the Bill of Rights was to protect the rights of the people and to think about what rights they want to protect. On chart labeled “Classroom Bill of Rights”, list their ideas then identify ones they feel are the most important. Create a final Bill of Rights poster. Post the Bill of Rights in the room and explain that these are their rights/freedoms while they are in this classroom. (The example below is the Classroom Bill of Rights that first grade students created.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room 3’s Classroom Bill of Rights</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right #1: All students have the right to learn in a quiet classroom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Right #2: All students have the right to be safe when at school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right #3: All students have the right to learn as much as possible.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Day 5:
1. Review “responsibility” by reading over the “Classroom Citizen” and “School Citizen” rights and responsibilities chart. Discuss what made Horton such a responsible elephant.

2. Review the Classroom Bill of Rights you created. For each right, discuss the student’s responsibility to ensure that right.

3. By each right, list the responsibilities needed to ensure those rights. (See the following example).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room 3’s Classroom Bill of Rights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right #1: All students have the right to learn in a quiet classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility: Work quietly; Raise your hand and wait to be called on. Listen quietly to those who are talking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right #2: All students have the right to be safe when at school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility: Keep my hands and feet to myself. Say and do nice things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right #3: All students have the right to learn as much as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility: Listen quietly to the teacher(s). Follow directions; Work quietly; Finish all my work to the best of my ability.</td>
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Day 6: Assessment Day
Have them create a “Super Citizen” wanted poster, by imagining the type of citizen they want to have in their community. How would the person act? What qualities should that person have? Hang the posters in the classroom and review the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Use these posters to assess their understanding of what a responsible citizen is. Assess their understanding of a
“right” by having them create a collage of rights that they have as a student/community member. Create this collage by drawing pictures of different rights, writing words/sentences to describe rights, and/or putting magazine pictures that show examples of rights.

VIII. Enrichment

Center Activity: Using a copy of the Classroom Bill of Rights/Responsibility chart, have them write consequences to go with those rights/responsibilities or have them draw pictures of consequences for not being responsible.

Read the poem “If I were in charge of the World” by Judith Viorst. Tell the students to think about a responsible citizenship and then retell the poem (Poem worksheet attached). As a class, fill in the new words. For example, the 2nd stanza may sound like:

“If I were in charge of the world
There’d be no violence,
kind people, and
lots of helpful hands.”

IX. Bibliography/Resources

1. Lesson Plan adapted from a citizenship lesson plan by Betsy Barton, 3rd grade, Providence Elementary School, Chesterfield County Public Schools.
5. “If I were in Charge of the World” Poem by Judith Viorst.
6. Dr. Seuss books: Horton Hatches an Egg, Horton Hears a Who, and Yertle the Turtle.

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## Observation Checklist: Rights and Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT NAME</th>
<th>Demonstrates understanding of what a “right” is.</th>
<th>Demonstrates understanding of what their responsibilities are in different communities.</th>
<th>Knows what a good citizen looks and sounds like.</th>
<th>Participates in class discussions and activities.</th>
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If I Were In Charge of the World
Adapted from poem by Judith Viorst

If I were in charge of the world
I'd cancel ___________________,
__________________________, and also ____________________.

If I were in charge of the world
There'd be ________________________,
______________________________, and
______________________________.

If I were in charge of the world
You wouldn't have ________________.
You wouldn't have ________________.
You wouldn't have ________________.
Or ________________________________.
You wouldn't even have ________________.

If I were in charge of the world
A __________________________ would be a vegetable
All ________________________,
And a person who sometimes forgot _______________
And sometimes forgot to ________________________,
Would still be allowed to be
In charge of the world.

Adapted from poem by Judith Viorst

Retold by: ______________________