Teaching Point: School Rules: Being a Good Citizen at School

Subject Area: Character Education

Grade Level: 3-5

Relevant Standards:

CDC National Health Education Standards, Grades 3-5

1.5.3 Describe ways in which safe and healthy school and community environments can promote personal health.

2.5.4 Describe how the school and community can support personal health practices and behaviors.

4.5.3 Demonstrate nonviolent strategies to manage or resolve conflict.

5.5.5 Choose a healthy option when making a decision.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to...

- Identify five characteristics of a good school citizen
- Name three things a student can do to be a good school citizen
- Explain why it is important for citizens of a community to show each other respect
- Describe a person with good character
- Make a connection between the success of a community and the behavior of its citizens
Materials:

- Teacher’s Resource Book and video
- chart paper
- The 5 Pillars of Being a Good Citizen at School student handout per student (see page 35 for template)
- optional: index card per student (see “Adaptation for students with special needs”) (see page 17)
- 2 copies of the pre-/post-test per student (see page 25 for template)
- 2 copies of the assessment rubric (see page 27 for template)
- Extension Activity 1 What Would a Good Citizen Do worksheet per student (see page 28 - 31 for template)

Advance Preparation:

- Give the pretest and fill in the pre-assessment rubric. Use the data to help you differentiate the lesson for your students.
- Make the chart below:

The 5 Pillars of Being a Good School Citizen

**Pillar #1:** Show respect for all members of the school community and their personal property.

**Pillar #2:** Show respect for school property.

**Pillar #3:** Follow the rules.

**Pillar #4:** Show good character by being honest, responsible, and dependable, having courage, and listening to others.

**Pillar #5:** Give back to the community.
**LESSON PLAN**

**Vocabulary:**
- benefit
- character
- citizen
- citizenship
- community
- courage
- dependable
- disrespectful
- disrupt
- facilities
- graffiti
- litter
- mindful
- overcome
- pillar
- possessions
- property
- qualities
- resource
- respect
- responsible
- volunteering

**Procedure:**

1. **MOTIVATION**
   - Talk about your classroom rules and point out the rules chart if you have one. Ask students why classes have rules.
     — Possible responses include: to keep kids safe so everyone can learn, to make things fair so everyone gets a turn, to help everyone get along so everyone gets respect, and so the teacher doesn’t always have to tell you what to do.
   - Now discuss the *school* rules and ask students why schools have rules.
     — Possible responses include the responses above as well as: so all the classes in the school have the same rules so everyone knows what is expected, and so the principal doesn’t always have to tell everyone what to do.
   - Explain that rules help people be good citizens of their community. Be sure that students understand that a community is a group of people who have something in common or who work together for a common goal, and that citizens are its members.

2. **INTRODUCE VOCABULARY**

   Introduce the lesson vocabulary to the class.

**Adaptation for English Language Learners:**

Teach English Language Learners the vocabulary words ahead of time, if possible. As you introduce each word, say it, write it, give a simple definition and familiar synonym, and use it in a sentence. Then have students say their own version of the sentence by repeating one part and changing another. For example, if you say “My friend is *dependable* because she is always there for me when I need help,” a student can echo with “My friend is *dependable* because she always keeps my secrets safe.” Repeat this exercise with related forms of the vocabulary words, such as *depend*, *depended*, and *depending*. Reinforce the vocabulary throughout the lesson by using the words frequently and reviewing their definitions as needed.
3. **SHOW THE VIDEO**
   - Tell students that they will watch a video to learn what being a good citizen is all about.

4. **DISCUSSION**
   - At the end of each dramatic scene in the video, the program’s host asks viewers questions about what happened in the scene and then a graphic that says *PAUSE FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION* appears on the screen. At this time, pause the video and engage students in a class discussion using the host’s questions as a guide.

**Adaptation for gifted students:**

Ask the following discussion questions to encourage deeper thinking:

- What are some things you have seen your classmates do that show good character?
- What are some things our class can do to give back to the school community?
- Think of a character from the video who did not act like a good citizen. What could he or she do differently next time to demonstrate good citizenship?
- What are some reasons why a student might not act like a good citizen at school?
  - Possible responses: they don’t realize how their actions are affecting the community; they think people will like them better if they misbehave; they are too upset to do the right thing at the time; they want attention; they have a disability that makes it difficult to manage their bodies or emotions
- How can you help someone in your community be a better citizen?
5. ACTIVITY

- Present the following scenario to the class:
  During snack, Jeremy accidentally spilled a bottle of juice on the floor. Kira slipped and bumped her elbow on a desk, and now she is crying. Jamar is angry because the juice spilled on his brand new sneakers. The teacher has just stepped out to get the nurse from his office next door.

- Post the 5 Pillars of Being a Good School Citizen chart (see page 14 for “Advance Preparation”) where students can see it, and give each student a copy of the 5 Pillars of Being a Good Citizen student handout. Ask students to pretend the scenario just happened in their classroom and think about what they could do as a good citizen to help out. Write a few ideas on the board. Some examples are: get paper towels to clean the spill; console Kira; help Jamar clean his sneakers; sit calmly at your desk to allow others to move around safely and prevent more problems from happening. Allow a few minutes for students to come up with ideas and then have each student share what he or she would do. It is okay for a few students to have duplicate ideas, but try to encourage each student to think of a different way of helping.

  **Teacher Note:** If you plan to extend the activity over two days, this is a good breaking point.

- Have the class role-play the scenario (without actually spilling any liquids) so that each student can demonstrate how he or she would help. You can choose students to play Jeremy, Kira, and Jamar, or have students from another class join you to play those roles.

6. WRAP UP & ASSESSMENT

- Reflect on the role-playing activity with the class. Discuss examples you saw of good citizenship.

- Give students the post-test and use their scores to help you fill out the post-assessment rubric.
**HOMEWORK**

Extension Activity 1, What Would a Good Citizen Do?, can be given as a homework assignment. Give each student a copy of the worksheet (see page 28 - 31 for template) and read the directions to the class. Tell students that there is no one right answer and encourage them to think of a few things a good citizen might do in each situation before they choose one to write down. Read the first item on the worksheet aloud and have students share a few ideas. Be sure to answer any questions students have about the assignment. Give students an opportunity to share their responses the next day so that they can see the many different ways in which a student can be a good citizen at school.
EXTENSION ACTIVITY 1:  
WHAT WOULD A GOOD CITIZEN DO?

Interdisciplinary Connection—WRITING

Give out the What Would a Good Citizen Do? worksheets (see page 28 - 31 for template) and explain the directions: read each scenario and write what you think a good citizen would do to help. Tell students that there are many different ways for a good citizen to be helpful in any given situation and remind them of the many different ways they helped out during the role-playing activity. Encourage students to think of a few different things a good citizen could do in each situation before writing one down. When everyone is finished, spend a few minutes having students share their responses with the class.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY 2:  
MAKE A PAMPHLET

Interdisciplinary Connection—EXPOSITORY NONFICTION WRITING

This activity gives students the opportunity to pass along their knowledge about being a good school citizen to other students by making pamphlets. Give out the pamphlet templates (see page 20 for “Advance Preparation”) and read through them with your students. Explain that a pamphlet is a handout that contains summarized information about something, and that it allows people to learn basic information about a topic very quickly. Then show a couple of sample pamphlets you brought in (see page 20 for “Advance Preparation”).

Have students make up an appropriate title and write it on the cover page. Then tell students to fill out the rest of the pamphlet by writing one of the five pillars of good citizenship on each page along with an example and an illustration. Once completed, the pamphlets can be put in the office as handouts for visitors, given to a class one grade below, or kept in the classroom for next year’s students.

Adaptation for gifted students:

If your students have advanced design skills, let them create their own layouts. Give them a blank piece of heavyweight paper instead of a pamphlet template.
EXTENSION ACTIVITY 2:
MAKE A PAMPHLET CONTINUED

Advance Preparation:

- Make a double-sided pamphlet for each student by photocopying the front and back pamphlet templates (see pages 32 and 33 for templates) onto one piece of heavyweight paper. Place each page back-side up so you cannot see the title lines. Fold the page into thirds, bringing the right side in first and then the left side in over it. When assembled, your pamphlet should look like this:

- Bring in a few pamphlets as examples for the class. Good options include restaurant menus, pamphlets from local businesses like dog groomers, and tooth whitening brochures from your dentist’s office.
EXTENSION ACTIVITY 3: WRITE & PERFORM A SONG

Interdisciplinary connections—MUSIC/POETRY
In this activity, students will work in groups of four to write and perform songs about being a good citizen at school. The songs can be instructional and teach about how to be a good citizen, they can be descriptive and relay what good citizenship looks like, or they can be reflective and comment on the benefits of good citizenship. Each group can write and perform the song together, or group members can divide up the work and choose different jobs based on their skills and interests. Possible jobs include singer, lyricist, cover artist, musical director, and accompanist (who can play an instrument he or she is learning in school). If any groups have trouble making up a melody, they can use a familiar tune or write a rap instead. Have each group give their song a title and perform it for the class.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY 4: GOOD CITIZEN POSTER

Interdisciplinary connections—VISUAL ARTS
This project helps students deepen their understanding of what it means to be a good school citizen by making posters to put up around the school. Students can work independently, with a partner, or in small groups. Each poster should be about one pillar of good citizenship and have an illustration as well as the message “Be a good school citizen” written on it. Students may want to write an additional message, such as “A good school citizen shows respect for school property,” or “Pick up your trash.” Make sure that at least one poster is made for each of the five pillars. Show students the sample posters (see “Advance Preparation”) before you begin the activity.

Advance Preparation:

- Gather a large piece of poster board and markers for each student, pair, or group.
- Make enlarged copies or transparencies of the sample posters on the next page, or show them on your smartboard:
EXTENSION ACTIVITY 4: GOOD CITIZEN POSTER continued

Don’t leave a shred . . . Pick up your trash instead!

Be a good citizen!

If you find a wallet, turn it in! That’s how to be a good citizen!

Good school citizens show respect for other people’s property.
EXTENSION ACTIVITY 5: GOOD CITIZEN AWARDS

Interdisciplinary Connection—SPEAKING AND LISTENING

In this activity, students get to apply what they learned about good citizenship by making and presenting Good Citizen Awards. Post The 5 Pillars of Being a Good School Citizen chart from the lesson (see Lesson plan) on the board and ask students for an example that demonstrates each pillar, such as:

PILLAR #1:
A good school citizen shows respect for all school community members and their property.
— holding the door for others
— bringing a thermos someone accidentally left in the cafeteria to the lost and found

PILLAR #2:
A good school citizen shows respect for school property.
— picking up garbage, even if someone else made the mess
— putting the caps back on glue sticks and markers

PILLAR #3:
A good school citizen follows the rules.
— being quiet in the library
— raising your hand to speak

PILLAR #4:
A good school citizen shows good character.
— listening when someone else is speaking
— admitting mistakes

PILLAR #5:
A good school citizen gives back to the community.
— volunteering to help at school events like a bake sale
— helping a younger student tie his shoes
EXTENSION ACTIVITY 5: GOOD CITIZEN AWARDS continued

Tell students that it is important to acknowledge the good things that members of our community do. Give out the award pages (see “Advance Preparation”). Then have each student pick a name out of a hat (see “Advance Preparation”) and make a Good Citizen Award for that person. Show students where to write the name of the person they picked, their own name, and the date. Tell students to think of a reason why the person has earned an award or an example of something the person has done to demonstrate good citizenship. Have them write it on the lines after the word for.

Teacher Note: Some students may find it difficult to think of something to write about a classmate, especially if they are not friends with the person. If a student is really stuck, help him or her come up with an idea quickly to prevent the person he or she picked from finding out and feeling insulted. Point out a few things you have noticed the person do that show good citizenship and then let the student choose one of your suggestions.

Hold a class award ceremony! Have each student present his or her award and give a reason why the person earned it or an example of how the person demonstrated good citizenship.

Advance Preparation:

- Write each student’s name on a strip of paper and place it in a hat or similar container.
- Make a copy of the good citizen award page for each student (see page 34 for template).
- Optional: Bring in props for the class award ceremony such as a toy microphone or camera for the “paparazzi.”

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Adaptation for gifted students:

If you anticipate your students having trouble coming up with their own reasons for giving the award or examples of how their person has demonstrated good citizenship, fill in the for section on each page ahead of time. Write in broad reasons or examples of good citizenship that you have discussed with the class, such as “helping a friend in need.” It is okay to write the same thing on multiple award pages because students can be more specific when they present the awards. After each student picks a name from the hat, have him or her choose an award page and write in the rest of the information.