

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

Teacher Resource

WHAT IS RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING?

Thinking about all options and outcomes to make the best choice.

BENCHMARKS

- ✓ **HE.912.R.2.2** Analyze different perspectives to inform **responsible decision-making**.
- ✓ **HE.912.R.4.1** Analyze the importance of character and grit to achieve successful outcomes.
- ✓ **HE.912.R.4.2** Generate and apply alternative solutions when solving problems or resolving conflict.

PURPOSE

- These interactive activities will help your students practice **responsible decision-making** to analyze different perspectives and apply alternative solutions when solving conflict. Share the suggested introduction with your students, choose one or more of the activities below, and conclude with the suggested wrap-up. Feel free to modify or revisit activities throughout the week to continue reinforcing **responsible decision-making**.



Suggested Introduction:

“Today, we are going to demonstrate **responsible decision-making** by analyzing different perspectives and proposing solutions to various conflicts. **Responsible decision-making** is a key skill that supports personal growth and long-term success. It requires us to think deliberately, understand potential consequences of our choices and respect the viewpoints of others. By strengthening this characteristic, we are taking accountability for our actions and responding to challenges with integrity and confidence.”



Activities to Build Responsible Decision-Making:

1 Weighing Responsibility in Loans

Teach students how financial responsibility applies to loans and interest by comparing different loan options. Give students a handout with two loan options (e.g., Loan A: 6% interest, 2-year term; Loan B: 12% interest, 1-year term). Ask students, “If you borrow \$1,000 today, how much will you ultimately pay back for the loan?” Discuss **responsible** borrowing (understanding interest rates and long-term costs).

Students calculate total repayment for each option:

- P = Principal amount borrowed
- i = Interest rate
- N = Term of the loan, in years
- F = Total amount paid

Create an equation based on the standard equation, $F = P(1 + i)^N$:

- Loan A: $F = 1000(1 + 0.06)^2$
- Loan B: $F = 1000(1 + 0.12)^1$

Solve the inside of the parentheses first, apply the number of years (N) and then find the total amount paid at the end of the designated number of years (F). In this example, you should be left with:

- Loan A: $F = 1000(1.1236)$
- Loan B: $F = 1000(1.2544)$

After solving, discuss with students which of the loans is the most **responsible** choice to make in the long term and what factors should be considered before taking out a loan. Include factors that can affect the time in which a loan can be paid (e.g., paying during the grace period, the “snowball” effect).

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GRADES
9–12



Activities to Build Responsible Decision-Making (Continued):

2 Justice in Action Analysis

Have students analyze how the Supreme Court applies **responsible decision-making** when making rulings (e.g., outcome of individuals involved, societal impact, ethical considerations). Start by discussing the role of the Supreme Court in interpreting laws and ensuring justice (e.g., “What factors should justices consider when making a decision?”). Next, introduce a landmark Supreme Court case to students and analyze the legal precedents and arguments from both sides of the case. Before sharing the Supreme Court decision, encourage students to consider all the different decisions that could be made, and the impact each decision would have on individuals, government and society. Share what decision the Supreme Court made and reflect with students how this decision demonstrated responsibility and justice. Have students write a reflection on how they can demonstrate **responsible decision-making** as they prepare for college and beyond.

Example Supreme Court cases include:

- Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857)
- Miranda v. Arizona (1966)
- Brown v. Board of Education (1954)
- Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978)

3 Think Like a Character Reflection

Analyze how characters’ decisions impact the plot by relating literary choices to real-life **responsible decision-making**. Read a short excerpt from a book on the B.E.S.T. English Language Arts Booklist (e.g., *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare, *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck) where a character makes a key decision. Students will then complete a “Decision Reflection” worksheet, answering the following:

- How did the character’s decision reflect his or her values and motivations? Use textual evidence and character analysis to support your response.
- How did the character’s decision influence the overall narrative and contribute to both intended and unintended consequences?
- What were the short-term and long-term consequences of this decision?
- If you were in this situation, what decisions would you make and how might this change the story?



Suggested Wrap-Up:

“You’ve been learning about and demonstrating **responsible decision-making** the last several years. As you move beyond high school, how can you apply these strategies in the future in your everyday life? The more you practice **responsible decision-making**, the better you will become at handling conflict, understanding the perspectives of others and communicating the best outcome for everyone.”

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Decision Reflection



Read a short excerpt from a book on the B.E.S.T. English Language Arts Booklist. Choose a character who makes a key decision and answer the following questions.

How did the character's decision reflect his or her values and motivations? Use text evidence and character analysis to support your response.

How did the character's decision influence the overall narrative and contribute to both intended and unintended consequences?

What were the short-term and long-term consequences of this decision?

If you were in this situation, what decisions would you make and how might this change the story?

This is a supplemental document to support the 9-12 Responsible Decision-Making Teacher Resource.