

# RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

## Teacher Resource

### WHAT IS RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING?

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

### BENCHMARKS

- ✓ **HE.68.R.2.2** Demonstrate **responsible decision-making** that considers multiple perspectives.
- ✓ **HE.68.R.4.1** Analyze possible solutions to a problem to determine the best outcome for oneself and others.

### PURPOSE

- These interactive activities will help your students implement the characteristic of **responsible decision-making** in more complex situations and how to think about all options and outcomes to make the best choice. 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 use **responsible decision-making** to analyze and determine the possible solutions in various situations. **Responsible decision-making** means thinking about all options and outcomes to make the best choice. What if there are multiple perspectives and more than one solution? For example, imagine you are playing a game with your friends, and two friends decide they both want to be the leader. One friend may suggest he is the best option because he knows the rules best, while the other may suggest she is the best option because she has played the game more often. This situation has different perspectives because both friends have valid reasons for wanting to lead. When we use our **responsible decision-making** skills, we could determine a possible solution of taking turns leading, letting someone else decide or working together as co-leaders. It’s important to listen to each side and find a fair way to solve the problem. When you use your **responsible decision-making** skills, you are considering those around you and building good character.”



### Activities to Build Responsible Decision-Making:

#### 1 Democracy in Action: Making Responsible Civic Choices

Teach students how **responsible decision-making** applies to citizenship and help them understand the impact of voting and civic participation. Begin by asking students what makes someone a **responsible** citizen. Discuss how civic decisions (e.g., voting, following rules, speaking up for what is right) can affect our community. Present a scenario: “Your town is voting on whether to build a new park. While some say it will improve the community, others say it costs too much. What should you do?” Have students discuss in pairs to determine the most **responsible decision** in this scenario. Have each pair share their answer with the class for discussion on the impact different decisions would have on the community. Ask students why it is important to make informed, **responsible**, civic decisions. Have students reflect on one civic action they can take responsibly (e.g., staying informed, volunteering).

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### Activities to Build Responsible Decision-Making (Continued):

#### 2 Character Decisions: Responsible or Not?

Read a short excerpt from *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen from the B.E.S.T. English Language Arts Booklist that portrays the character (Brian) making a wise, **responsible decision** and analyze the outcome. Have students then think about what the outcomes would have been if Brian's decisions had been impulsive and irresponsible. Have students complete a "Decisions in *Hatchet*" worksheet.

**Example questions could include:**

- What was the decision?
- Was it **responsible** or irresponsible? How?
- What were the outcomes?

Discuss with the class how Brian's decisions can relate to real-life situations. Have students explain how they can practice **responsible decision-making** and resiliency when making tough decisions.

#### 3 Budgeting for Real Life

Teach students how **responsible** financial choices impact daily life. Use math to budget for needs (e.g., food, water, clothing) versus wants (e.g., luxury items, video games). Ask students how they would use \$100 over the course of one month. Discuss **responsible** and irresponsible spending. Provide students with a budget sheet for them to allocate their \$100 responsibly and discuss the choices they made.

**Discussion questions may include:**

- Who saved money?
- Who overspent?
- What will happen next month if you overspent?

Encourage students to reflect on how budgeting responsibly in real life prevents overspending, ensures needs are met first and reduces stress. Have students share how they will incorporate financial literacy in their **decision-making**.



### Suggested Wrap-Up:

"You all did a great job analyzing different perspectives and determining the best solution using your **responsible decision-making** skills! The more you practice this skill, the better you will become at understanding the perspectives of others and communicating the best outcome in complex situations."

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Decisions in *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen



After reading a short excerpt from *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen, complete the responsible decisions chart below.

**Responsible Decision  
Example:**

**Irresponsible Decision  
Example:**

**Outcome:**

**Outcome:**

What are ways that you can practice responsible decision-making and resiliency when making decisions or encountering challenges?

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*This is a supplemental document to support the 6-8 Responsible Decision-Making Teacher Resource.*

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