



Character Development: Respect & Responsibility

for Pre-K and Kindergarten

Starfall Character Development is a supplementary program to implement throughout the school year in order to foster positive social interactions and create a warm and welcoming learning environment.



This module is an excerpt from the Starfall Character Development Program.

If you have questions or comments, please contact us.

Email: helpdesk@starfall.com **Phone:** 1-888-857-8990 or 303-417-6414 **Fax:** 1-800-943-6666 or 303-417-6434



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Starfall Education Foundation P.O. Box 359, Boulder, CO 80306 U.S.A.

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Special thanks to Pamela Ferguson and Stephanie Riess, primary authors of this program.

Respect & Responsibility

Respecting Self and Others, Respecting Differences, Respecting the Environment, Rules and Consequences

When children are able to treat others with respect and respond positively, they are more likely to succeed in school. The activities and lessons in the Respect & Responsibility module were formulated to help the children develop respect for themselves and others, respect and celebrate differences in others, respect the environments of their classroom, school, and planet, create their own classroom rules, and explore the consequences of not following these rules.

Responsibility is developed by the children's participation in daily routines, classroom jobs, caring for classroom materials and their own belongings, and by recognizing and becoming accountable for their words and actions. This is sometimes easier said than done since young children's brains are still developing, often making it difficult for them to control their emotions. In addition, children frequently lack the proper vocabulary to articulate what they are feeling. Of course, the most effective way to teach children respect and responsibility is for adults to model it.

An essential part of developing respect and responsibility in young children is teaching them that when we make mistakes, we take responsibility for them and say we are sorry. Doing so not only shows that we care about the people we disrespected, but that we also take responsibility for our mistakes. Frequently point out your own mistakes, and apologize for them when appropriate. You might even make extra mistakes on purpose to provide the children with additional examples!

Young children are quick to notice when people around them or in print look differently from those they are more familiar with, whether it is their style of dress, skin tone, or body type, etc. The lessons in this module acknowledge that we are not all the same, and they are meant to take advantage of the children's curiosity to teach them to appreciate diversity and respect differences in others.

Book Suggestions

- *Accept and Value Each Person* by Cheri J. Meiners
- *Everyone Matters: A First Look at Respect for Others* by Pat Thomas
- *Know and Follow Rules* by Cheri J. Meiners
- *Respect and Take Care of Things* by Cheri J. Meiners
- *We're Different, We're the Same* by Bobbi Kates
- *Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox

Starfall Books & Media

- *The Gingerbread Boy* as told by Brandi Chase
- Emotions Poster
- Writing & Observation Journals

Starfall Online Activities

- *Starfall.com*: I'm Reading, Fiction, "It's Earth Day, Dear Dragon"
- *Starfall.com*: The Talking Library, Fiction, "The Gingerbread Boy"
- *Starfall.com*: The Talking Library, Nonfiction, "I Am Your Flag"
- *Starfall.com*: The Talking Library, Nonfiction, "Backpack Bear Learns the Rules"
- *Starfall.com*: Holidays, "Every Day is Earth Day"

Lessons

Classroom Ownership (Jobs)

Materials

- Responsibility or Job Chart
- Name cards

**Social/Emotional
Development**

*Recognizes and accepts
responsibilities*

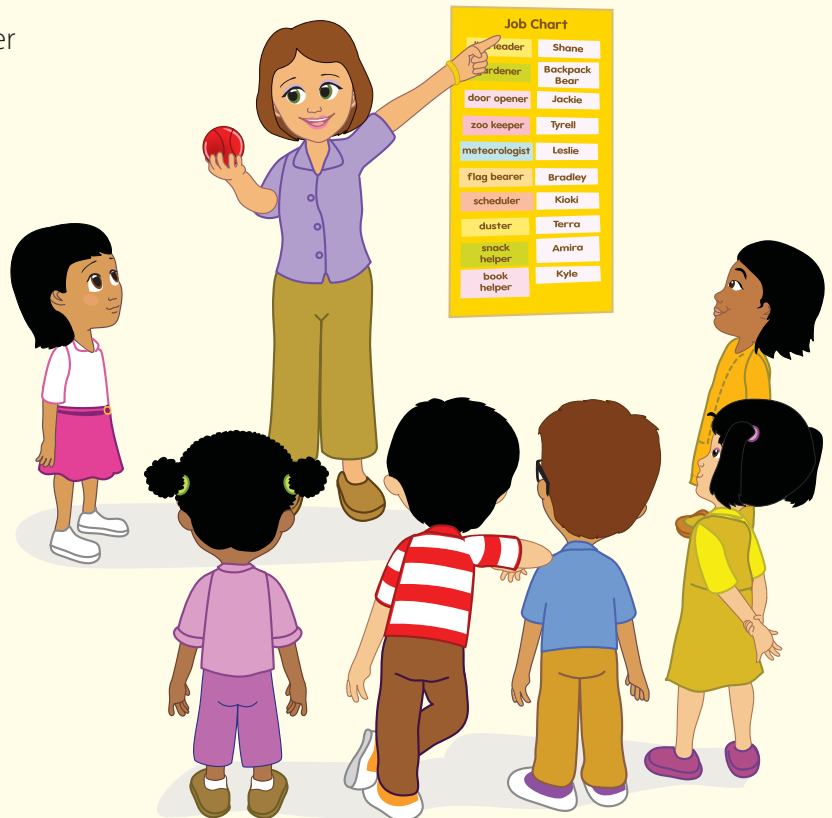
Young children need to learn the importance of caring for their classroom. Create a job for each child in your class. One job may even be assigned to two children to share. At the beginning of the year, assign jobs to ensure that the children are able to experience all of the different responsibilities. As children become more adept, they can mentor their peers. You may wish to have children change jobs by the week or by the day.

As the year progresses, children choose their own jobs. Randomly flash children's name cards. When their names are revealed, the children choose jobs. Children may be disappointed when the job they would like is taken by a classmate. Help them realize that the jobs change frequently and that sooner or later they will get the job they would like.

Create a job chart and a procedure that works best for you.

Suggested Job Titles:

- Soap Manager (waterless soap dispensers, if allowed)
- Gardener (water plants)
- Electrician (light helper)
- Equipment Manager
- Schedule Manager
- Chair Manager
- Floor Manager
- Zoo Keepers
- Door Holder
- Greeter
- Duster
- Librarian
- Line Leader
- Meteorologist
- Snack Helpers
- Area Managers
- Calendar Helper
- Classroom Book Helper
- Flag Bearer(s) (state and US flag)



Class Rules (Lesson for early in the school year)

Materials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chart paper, marker
<input type="checkbox"/>	Emotions Poster

Explain to the children that rules help us make good choices and keep us safe and happy. Discuss times children and adults need to follow rules and the consequences of not following them. Stress that safety rules should always be followed in the classroom as well as on the playground.

Assist the children in understanding consequences of not following rules by playing "What If?" Ask the following questions and others specific to your class, and the children discuss.

- What if we never clean up toys when we finish playing?
- What if everyone runs around the room really fast and we knock each other down?
- What if everyone throws food on the floor at snack time?
- What if everyone in our class takes a toy home in his or her pocket every day?
- What if everyone talks at the same time?

Indicate the chart paper and explain that you will write a list of class rules so everyone will remember them. Repeat the "What If?" questions and assist the children to create rules that will prevent each situation. (Example: What if we never clean up toys when we finish playing? Rule suggestion: Always clean up when we finish playing.)

Indicate the Emotions Poster and explain that when we follow rules we feel *peaceful*. A volunteer identifies the picture that shows the *peaceful* emotion.

Discuss how else you might feel when you follow the rules, and indicate those emotions on the poster. The children then discuss how they feel when they do something wrong and indicate those emotions on the poster.

Print the class rules on chart paper, and take digital photos of children following the rules to attach.



Health, Safety & Environment

Consistently follows basic safety rules independently

Identifies consequences of not following safety rules

Social/Emotional Development

Begins to understand that actions have consequences

Engages in agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion)

Recognizes and accepts responsibilities

The Gingerbread Boy

Materials

- The Gingerbread Boy* as told by Brandi Chase

Health, Safety, & Environment

Identifies consequences of not following safety rules

Social/Emotional Development

Begins to understand that actions have consequences

Recognizes and identifies feelings and emotions of characters in stories or real life situations

Read *The Gingerbread Boy*, pausing on page 17.

The children discuss answers to the following questions:

- What do you think happens next to the Gingerbread Boy?
- Was it safe for the Gingerbread Boy to run away? Why? Why not?
- Would it be safe for you to leave your house or school without an adult? Why? Why not?

Go back to the beginning of the story and picture-walk through the book. The children look for and identify when and where they see the Old Woman in the illustrations. Again, pause at page 17.

The children discuss answers to the following questions:

- Why do you think the Old Woman followed the Gingerbread Boy?
- How do you think the Old Woman felt when she realized the Gingerbread Boy ran away?

Remind the children how they predicted the story would end. Begin reading on page 17 and finish the story. Discuss the fact that when we make a choice like the Gingerbread Boy, there are consequences. Consequences mean that something happens because of a choice.

The children discuss answers to the following questions:

- What might have happened if the Old Woman had not been watching the Gingerbread Boy? (The fox might have eaten the Gingerbread Boy.)
- How do you think the Gingerbread Boy felt when the fox tricked him to get on his back?
- Have you ever felt afraid? When?
- When the Old Woman and the Gingerbread Boy got home, what do you think they talked about?

Explain that when you are young it's not safe to leave your house alone. The children share why they think it is not safe.



Alike and Different

Display both rainbows and the children take turns to describe them. Discuss which rainbow they like better and volunteers explain why.

Ask the children if they would like to look up into the sky and see a blank rainbow or a colorful rainbow. Repeat for the bag of red crayons versus the box of multicolored crayons. The children discuss whether they would rather color a picture with just a red crayon or with many different colored crayons.

Explain that the more colors we have, the better the rainbow looks. Discuss how this is like people who are different. What if everyone looked the same? Talked the same? Played the same? It's okay to be different. It makes for a more colorful world and a more beautiful place to live!

Materials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rainbow outline, colored in
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rainbow outline, not colored
<input type="checkbox"/>	Box of multicolored crayons
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bag of red crayons

Social/Emotional Development

Demonstrates understanding and acceptance of similarities and differences in others

Takes the perspective of others and responds appropriately



Say "Please" and "Thank You"

Review your classroom rules and explain how following rules helps make a classroom a safe and peaceful place to learn. Elicit rules not already on the list that you would like to include, and add them.

Introduce *Sing-Along Volume 1*, Track 34, "Teddy Bear says, 'Thank You.'" The children assist in creating simple actions to accompany the song. Play the song again and the children pretend they are 'Teddy Bear' as they sing the song and perform the actions as the song plays.

Discuss the following questions:

- Did you hear some of our rules in Teddy Bear's song?
- What rules did Teddy Bear follow?
- Did Teddy Bear have good manners?

Create situations for children to practice saying "please" and "thank you" such as:

- Ask a child to find a block and bring it back to you. When the child returns, say: Thank you, (child's name)! Repeat, asking different children to collect objects from the classroom. Thank them by name each time.
- Partner the children to take turns asking each other to find objects using the word "please" and thanking each other by name when the object is presented.

Challenge the children to always remember to say "please" and "thank you" like Teddy Bear.

Materials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Starfall.com: Sing-Along Volume 1, "Teddy Bear says, 'Thank You'"
<input type="checkbox"/>	Class rules, marker

Teddy Bear says, "Thank You"

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Say "Thank you"
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Say "Please" too

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Share your ball
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Be nice to all

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Raise your hand
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Quietly stand

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Walk, don't run
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Have some fun!

Social/Emotional Development

Engages in agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion)

Expresses common courtesy and respects the rights of others (Says please, thank you, helps a friend, shares, etc.)



**Social/Emotional
Development**

Engages independently in simple social problem solving including offering potential solutions and reflecting on the appropriateness of the solution

Expresses concern for the needs of others

Responds appropriately to bullying, teasing, or unkind behavior

Takes the perspective of others and responds appropriately

**Social/Emotional
Development**

Demonstrates understanding and acceptance of similarities and differences in others

Engages in and maintains positive relationships and interactions with trusted adults and children such as cooperating, compromising and turn-taking

Responds to or uses words to demonstrate knowledge of personal information (e.g., hair, color, age, gender or size)

Respect Cards

Place all of the index cards in a basket. Volunteers take turns selecting cards. Read the situation and ask the children to stand if the situation shows respect or to sit if it doesn't. Discuss each situation. For those that do NOT show respect, ask children what a respectful way to act would be.

Suggestions:

- Let anyone who wants to play a game with you.
- The teacher is reading a story and children are crawling around during the story.
- I want to play with a toy but someone else wants it. I give the toy to that person.
- I share my picture and someone laughs at it.
- I am running in a race and someone calls me a name.
- I am having trouble putting a puzzle together and someone offers to help me.
- I ask a classmate to be my friend and they say they don't want to be my friend.
- I'm walking in line and someone pushes me.
- No one wants to play with me, then someone comes up and asks me to play with them.

Materials

- Create index cards with suggested situations printed on them
- Basket to hold index cards

Diversity Sheet

Fill several plastic spray bottles with different colors of tempera paint that have been diluted with water. The children use the bottles to spray paint on a white bed sheet. They watch as the colors run and blend together to create a beautiful design.

Discuss the different colors and what happened when they mixed together. The children take turns to describe personal characteristics such as eye color, hair color, short, tall, etc. Lead the children in a conversation about how the colors are like people, because people have skin that may be different colors, but they blend together in work and play to make the world a wonderful place!

Optional: This activity may be moved outside.

Materials

- Several plastic spray bottles filled with water
- Diluted tempera paint
- White bed sheet

Different Eggs

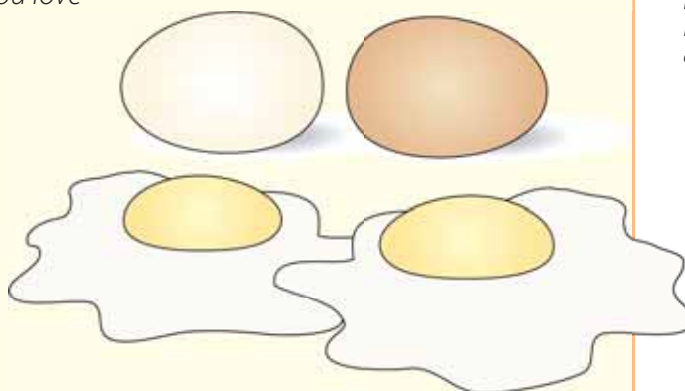
Indicate the white and brown eggs. Volunteers describe the eggs, noting how they are alike and how they are different.

Children assist to crack open the eggs into a large bowl. Stir the eggs together and ask the children if they can tell which of the eggs in the bowl came from which shell. Discuss the fact that even though the eggs may be different on the outside, all of the eggs are the same on the inside. Lead the children in a discussion to help them realize that even though their classmates may be different on the outside (hair color, eye color, tall, short, etc.), they are alike on the inside.

Use questions such as, *How many of you like to play outside? How many of you like to eat ice cream? How many of you love your parents and grandparents?*

Consider having scrambled eggs for snack.

Materials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 dozen white eggs
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 dozen brown eggs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Large bowl



Social/Emotional Development

Demonstrates understanding and acceptance of similarities and differences in others

Engages in agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion)

Responds to or uses words to demonstrate knowledge of personal information (e.g., hair, color, age, gender or size)

Coffee Filter Planet Earth

The children flatten coffee filters on paper plates. They use blue and green markers to color the coffee filters to represent planet Earth, using the globe as a reference.

The children spray the colored filters a time or two with water, and watch as the colors flow. Allow the filters to dry.

Engage the children in a discussion about ways they can care for the earth. Challenge them to reduce, reuse, and recycle, both in the classroom and at home.

Materials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Blue and green washable markers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Coffee filter and paper plate for each child
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spray bottle of water
<input type="checkbox"/>	Globe



Approaches to Learning

Attends to tasks for brief periods of time

Health, Safety, & Environment

Understands the use of natural resources and demonstrates environmental awareness and responsibility (e.g., reduce, reuse, recycle)

Be Kind to the Earth
(Two-day plan - use after discussing conservation)

Approaches to Learning

Attends to tasks for brief periods of time

Health, Safety & Environment

Understands the use of natural resources and demonstrates environmental awareness and responsibility (e.g., reduce, reuse, recycle)

Day 1

View *Starfall.com*: Holidays, "Every Day Is Earth Day" and I'm Reading, Fiction, "It's Earth Day, Dear Dragon" and Review how and why it is important to take good care of the planet we all live on, Earth. Volunteers share activities they have participated in to help care for the planet such as picking up litter, reusing objects, recycling, and so on.

Explain that as a reminder to always take care of our planet, the children will create a "Be Kind to the Earth" bulletin board. Then anyone who enters their classroom will be reminded to do his or her part to help.

Each child dips his or her hand in either green or blue finger paint and places it on the circle as you discuss Earth's various landforms. When the paint has dried, cut out the circle and mount it on your bulletin board. Label the board, "Be Kind to the Earth."

Discuss conservation measures as a way of being kind to Earth and various ways the children can help. Use a reduce, reuse, recycle policy in your classroom, and challenge the children to educate their families about ways everyone can take part in caring for our planet.

Day 2

Review the discussion of ways we can be kind to the Earth. Distribute Writing & Observation Journals, pencils, and crayons.

The children illustrate and write a way they can be kind to the Earth. Partner the children to share their journal entries. On your signal, the children find new partners, and they share with their new partners. Continue as time allows in order for the children to each share with multiple partners.

Materials

- Starfall.com*: I'm Reading, Fiction, "It's Earth Day, Dear Dragon"
- Starfall.com*: Holidays, "Every Day Is Earth Day"
- Poster board with a large circle drawn on it
- Green and blue finger paint
- Writing & Observation Journals
- Pencils, crayons



Litter Bags

The children decorate white lunch bags with stickers and markers or crayons. They take the bags outside and collect litter to help keep the environment clean.

Discuss why it is harmful to the environment for people to litter. Dispose of the litter appropriately and the children take their bags home to use with their families. Challenge them to continue to educate their families about the importance of keeping the environment clean, and teach them ways they can do so.

Materials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	White lunch bag for each child
<input type="checkbox"/>	Markers, crayons, stickers



Social/Emotional Development

Engages in agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion)

Persists at individual planned experiences, caregiver-directed experiences and planned group activities

Health, Safety & Environment

Understands the use of natural resources and demonstrates environmental awareness and responsibility (e.g., reduce, reuse, recycle)

Social/Emotional Development

Demonstrates willingness to be flexible if routines must change

Engages independently in simple social problem solving including offering potential solutions and reflecting on the appropriateness of the solution

Persists at individual planned experiences, caregiver-directed experiences and planned group activities

Leprechaun Activity (3 Day Plan)

Day 1

A week prior to St. Patrick’s Day, begin discussing leprechauns and how mischievous they are!

Three days before St. Patrick’s Day, mess up the classroom before the children arrive. Suggestions include making little “footprints” with tempera paint on the tables, placing toys on the floor and books all over the classroom, etc. As the children arrive, discuss their ideas about how the classroom got messed up like this. Lead them to conclude that leprechauns must have been there and discuss ways they can tell.

Indicate a sheet of chart paper. Explain that the children will write a note to the leprechauns explaining that this is the children’s classroom, and it is disrespectful for leprechauns to come into the classroom, play, and not clean up. Volunteers may also give suggestions regarding how to clean up after they finish playing. The children work together to clean up the classroom.

Day 2

The leprechauns mess up the classroom again! As a class, the children write a letter specifically asking them to stop messing up their classroom. They work together to clean up the classroom again.

Day 3

Bring a treat, such as shamrock cookies, along with an apology note from the leprechauns for the children to discover. Read the note to the children explaining that the leprechauns are very sorry they were disrespectful and messed up the classroom. They want to apologize and say they are sorry by leaving a special treat for the children.

Discuss the lesson the children taught the leprechauns, and the children enjoy the special treat.

Materials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chart paper, marker
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apology note from the leprechauns
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cookies or other treats

**Health, Safety &
Environment**

*Consistently follows
basic safety rules
independently*

*Identifies consequences
of not following
safety rules*

"Safe or Unsafe" Game

Play the game "Safe or Unsafe." Discuss the following scenarios and create additional situations of your own. The children respond either "Safe" or "Unsafe" depending on the situation. If the situation is unsafe, select volunteers to demonstrate a safe outcome.

- My friend and I are walking outside and it's time to cross the street. We just cross the street without looking. (safe or unsafe?)
- I am working on an art project and need the scissors. I get up and get the scissors and then run back to finish my art project. (safe or unsafe?)
- I'm outside on the playground and someone is swinging. I look and then carefully walk around the swing but not in front of it. (safe or unsafe?)
- I am angry, but I don't hit anyone, I use my words! (safe or unsafe?)

Review the importance of following safety rules and consequences that may result if the safety rules are not followed.

Materials

None

**Health, Safety &
Environment**

*Consistently follows
basic safety rules
independently*

*Identifies consequences
of not following
safety rules*

Following Traffic Rules

Display the photos of traffic lights, traffic signs, and crosswalks and discuss how following traffic rules shows that we are making good choices. Volunteers identify traffic rules they know such as crossing at the crosswalk, stopping at a red light and stop sign and wearing seat belts. Explain that it's part of our responsibility to follow the rules so we keep ourselves and others safe.

Set up a road and crosswalk with signs and lights in the classroom. The children take turns being drivers, pedestrians, and police officers. Give directions such as, "Drive to the store to get some marshmallows" and so on.

Police officers can ask to see drivers' licenses and write them tickets if they don't follow the safety rules! Discuss some of the things that might happen if we do NOT follow the safety rules.

Materials

Photos of traffic lights, traffic signs, and crosswalks



Whose Job Is It?

Prior to the children's arrival "mess up" the classroom. Place chairs in wrong places, toys all over the floor, pencils and markers everywhere, and so on, in order to create a real mess! Leave an area of the classroom clear in which to gather the children, and place several books there. As the children arrive, explain that since the room is a mess, they should sit in the cleared area and read books as the others arrive.

When all of the children have arrived, discuss what is wrong with the classroom and tell them you are not sure why. Volunteers share what they think caused the mess.

Discuss with the children what should be done and whose responsibility it is to put things away and clean up the classroom. Lead the children to understand that it is everyone's responsibility to help clean up since this is the children's classroom. The children work together, with your assistance, to clean the room.

Materials
 Messed up classroom
Social/Emotional Development

Demonstrates willingness to be flexible if routines must change

Persists at individual planned experiences, caregiver-directed experiences and planned group activities

"Dragon Says"

Lead a game of "Dragon Says." See suggested directions and add others as needed.

Dragon says:

- Everyone with brown hair stand up.
- Everyone who has or had a dog as a pet, put your hand on your head.
- Everyone who goes to this school stand up and turn around.
- Everyone who can speak Spanish put your hand on top of your head.
- Everyone who likes pizza kneel.

At the end of the game, gather the children in a circle. Ask volunteers to share one way all of the children in the class are alike. Each child then shares a way that they might be different from another classmate such as, *I speak English and Juan speaks Spanish and English. I have black hair and Susan has red hair.* The children should understand that there is no right or wrong way to be. We have many similar qualities, but we are all unique in many ways.

Materials
 Dragon
Social/Emotional Development

Demonstrates understanding and acceptance of similarities and differences in others

Persists at individual planned experiences, caregiver-directed experiences and planned group activities

Responds to or uses words to demonstrate knowledge of personal information (e.g., hair, color, age, gender or size)

