

***Student Workshop***  
**Responsible  
Me**  
**Grades K-2**

health  
character  
respect  
drugs  
career  
harassment  
violence  
bullying  
responsibility  
alcohol  
conflict  
anger

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program running time: approximately 18 minutes

We highly recommend that teachers preview programs before  
showing them in the classroom.

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## Why Should Children View this Program?

Children in the primary grades have been exposed to relatively few situations in which they need to act responsibly. For this reason, the concept of responsibility—and the need for it—is often difficult for young children to understand. Student Workshop: Responsible Me! will help children grasp the meaning of responsibility and to recognize the importance of being a responsible person. The program helps children understand that there are many different types of behavior that work together to create a responsible person, and that failure to act responsibly can often cause problems, not only for themselves but for friends, family members, classmates—virtually all the people in their lives. By identifying with the characters and familiar situations, and by having an opportunity to discuss each situation that is presented, children will be better able to understand the whole concept of responsibility, the importance of taking their responsibilities seriously, and the desirability of becoming a person who can be “counted on.”

## Learning Objectives

Children will:

- Recognize what responsible and irresponsible behavior is.
- Understand the kinds of problems that can arise from irresponsible behavior.
- Recognize that they have responsibilities to others as well as to themselves.
- Learn how to make decisions when they are not sure of the responsible thing to do.

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## Program Content

- The host, a toy shop owner, discusses the various aspects of responsibility with the help of his assistant, a puppet named Mort.
- Realistic vignettes portray children having to carry out a particular responsibility.
- After each of the four parts of the program, viewers are given the opportunity to discuss what they have just seen.

## Preview Questions

- What is your idea of a responsible person?
- Do you have any responsibilities? What are they? Who are the people you are responsible to?

# VIEWING THE PROGRAM

## Part One

Holly owns a toy store; her assistant is a puppet named Mortimer. Holly, with Mort's help, introduces vignettes that illustrate the meaning of responsible behavior.

– Jed is responsible for getting himself ready for school each morning and getting to the kitchen in time for breakfast. Jed proudly shows his mother how well he can do all these things by himself. He feels good about himself, and his mother is proud of him.

– Carmen comes into the toy store with her father. She has to buy a game for her friend Ellen to replace the one that she borrowed and didn't take care of. Carmen sees a toy on the shelf that she wants very badly, but when she asks her father if she can buy it, he reminds her that she promised to replace Ellen's game that day. Carmen realizes her responsibility, buys the game and gives it to Ellen. Carmen feels good about herself because she knows she did the right thing. The program pauses here for discussion and completion of the activity sheets.

## Part Two

Kelly is going to the movies with her friend Jill and Jill's mother. She is having some ice cream while she waits for them to pick her up. Her mother reminds her to put the ice cream back in the freezer, and then leaves the room. Jill forgets about the ice cream and it melts all over the table. Jill arrives just as Kelly notices the melted ice cream. Kelly says she has to clean it up, but Jill tells her they don't have time. Kelly's mother comes into the room and sees the mess. She tells Kelly she will clean it up this time so Kelly won't have to miss the movie.

Danny has made plans with his friend Jesse to work on a cub scout project that has to be finished today. Danny's father tells him he is going to the store, but will be back by 2 o'clock to drive him to Jesse's house. After Danny's father leaves, his grandfather arrives and asks Danny if he'd like to go to the zoo. Danny gets very excited about going to the zoo with his grandfather, but then he remembers his responsibility to Jesse and the project they have to finish. Danny doesn't know what to do.

# VIEWING THE PROGRAM

Tisa's mother has just made a batch of Tisa's favorite cookies. She tells Tisa she can have only one cookie, because she needs at least 12 for the school bake sale tomorrow. Tisa has one cookie, and really wants another one. She counts the cookies and sees that there are 13 left. Tisa doesn't know what to do. Her mother said she could only have one cookie, but there is one extra. What's the responsible thing to do? The program pauses here for discussion and completion of the activity sheets.

## Part Three

Darryl is browsing in the toy store when he accidentally knocks a pile of baseballs onto the floor. Darryl looks around, realizes that no one has seen him and is tempted to sneak away. But he changes his mind, goes up to Holly and tells him what he's done. Darryl apologizes and Holly is very pleased that Darryl was responsible enough to own up to what he did. They pick up the baseballs together.

Chloe's parents go out and leave her with her older brother Ben. Chloe is angry because Ben sends her to her room to do her homework. On the way to her room she sees her father's computer and decides to try using it. The screen goes blank and Chloe, alarmed, pulls the plug out of the wall and then puts it back again. She hurries out of the room. When her parents come home, her father goes in to use the computer and sees that it was not turned off properly and he can't find the report he was working on. He blames Ben for fooling around with the computer, but Ben denies it. Chloe is in her room and can hear her father scolding her brother. She feels very guilty and doesn't know what to do. The program pauses here for discussion and completion of the activity sheets.

## Part Four

Tony has a real problem when it comes to being responsible. He forgets his homework. He forgets his lunch. He forgets to bring in his permission slip for the class trip. Ms. Barker, his teacher, offers to help him learn to be more responsible. She gives him Post-It notes so he can write reminders to himself about things he has to do. She gives him a folder to put his homework in as soon as he finishes it. Then she and Tony discuss other things he can do to become more responsible. The program ends here. Activity sheets are provided for follow up work.

# QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

## Part One

- What are some different meanings for the word “responsible”?
- What different responsibilities did Mort, Jed, and Carmen have?
- Why do you think they all felt good about themselves?
- Do you think that being responsible is easy or hard? Why?

## Part Two

- In what way was Kelly not being responsible? What would you have done if you were Kelly? Why do you think her mother offered to help her out?
- What hard decision did Danny have to make?
- What would you have done if you were Danny?
- What do you think was the responsible thing for Tisa to do? What would you have done?

## Part Three

- Have you ever let someone else get blamed for something you did? How did it make you feel?
- Did Darryl have to tell Holly about the baseballs? Why do you think he did?
- How would Darryl have felt if he hadn’t said anything?
- What would be the responsible thing for Chloe to do?

## Part Four

- What were some of the ways in which Tony wasn’t responsible?
- How did this cause problems for Tony?
- Is there anything you need help with in order to be more responsible?
- Who can you ask to help you?



# SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

## **Art; Creative Expression**

Have children create their own “Mort” hand puppets out of old socks, scraps of sewing materials, construction paper, glue, etc. Children can use the puppets to role play situations from the program, or make up their own situations and apply some of the tips they learned in the program.

## **Creative Expression; Music**

Work with children to write more verses for the R-E-S-P-O-N-S-I-B-L-E song, or help them compose an original song about responsibility. Each child might contribute a different line or verse; the verses can then be set to music. Any musical instrument available in the classroom can be used to help the children “compose” their tune.

## **Creative Expression; Movement**

Choose one of the vignettes from the program, or let children make their own choices. Invite students to “act out” their own versions of the story, using their own words, movements, facial expressions, etc.

## **Language Arts; Art**

Ask students to think of different things they can do to show that they can be responsible. Put all the ideas together in a book and title it, “You Can Count On Me.” Write one suggestion on each page and have children draw or cut out pictures to illustrate each suggestion.

## **Communication**

Invite children to tell about their own real experiences related to deciding on the responsible thing to do. Have each child tell what the problem was and how he or she resolved it. How did he or she feel afterward?

## **Art; Self-Esteem**

Have children design and wear their own Responsible Me Badge using the page at the end of the Activity Sheets.

# SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

## Language Arts

Start your own classroom responsibility patrol. Each day, assign a child to act as the responsibility recorder. Have this child look for at least one sign of responsible behavior, then have him or her describe it to the rest of the class at the end of the day.

## Language Arts

You probably have a chart of classroom chores, and assign chores to students. At the end of each day, have children put a check next to their chore if they have completed it. At the end of the week have children report on how they have carried out the responsibilities.

## Language Arts

Discuss with children what a slogan is. Ask children to make up slogans that have to do with being responsible. Write the slogans on individual strips of paper and post them all around the room.

## Language Arts

Help children understand about adjectives. Then ask them to contribute adjectives that they would use to describe a responsible person. Make a list of these words. Help the class assemble a picture dictionary about responsibility by writing each word on a sheet of paper, illustrating it with drawings or cutouts, and assembling all the pages to form a book.

## Language Arts

Write the following expressions on the board:

Own up

Count on

Follow through


Keep your word

Discuss the meaning of each expression. Then ask children to make up sentences using these expressions. Write the sentences on the board.


# BULLETIN BOARD STARTERS




Provide children with old magazines and have them find and cut out pictures of people who are carrying out some kind of responsibility (e.g. walking the dog, washing the dishes, going to work, doing homework, etc.). Make a collage of all the pictures on a large sheet of poster board around the words “Everyone Has Responsibilities.” Display the poster on a bulletin board.




Take pictures of each child in the class carrying out various responsibilities (e.g. cleaning the chalkboard, feeding the class pet, handing in homework, etc.). Tack the pictures to the bulletin board under the heading “Our Responsibilities.” Have the children write their names under their pictures.




Invite children to write or dictate stories about someone in a book, in a movie, or on TV who has acted in a responsible way. Invite children to illustrate their stories.



Title a bulletin board “Rules for Responsibility.” Invite children to think of rules that would help people act more responsibly toward each other. Write each rule on a strip of oaktag and tack it to the bulletin board.



Ask children to think of a time when they got into trouble for not acting responsibly. Have children write or dictate a few sentences about what happened. Display these short stories on the bulletin board.



In connection with Activity Sheet # 9 on page 42, display the children’s finished “Sorry” cards on the bulletin board.

# SEND-HOME PAGE

Dear Family Member,

Your child viewed a program called Student Workshop: Responsible Me!

Here are some points about responsibility that your child learned in the program.

- There are many ways to be responsible, including doing what you're supposed to do, following through, keeping your word, taking care of others' property, and owning up when you do something irresponsible.
- When you behave responsibly, others know they can count on you.
- It is not always easy to decide what is the responsible thing to do.
- Not acting responsibly can cause problems for yourself and for others.

To reinforce what your child has learned, help him or her be aware of each instance in which he or she is acting responsibly. You might say, "I noticed how neat your room looks today. It's very responsible of you to take such good care of your things." Or, "It's wonderful that I can count on you to do your homework without being told. You're really becoming very responsible!" Remind your child that when people act responsibly, it helps everyone around them.

- Discuss with your child any areas in which he or she has not been acting responsibly. Try to work on ways to solve the problem. For example, if your child keeps forgetting things, help him or her get into the habit of writing notes and leaving them about as reminders.
- If your child seems to be having trouble deciding on what would be the responsible thing to do, sit down with your child and discuss all the important points of the situation. Help your child see that he or she should act as responsibly toward others as he would like others to act toward him.

Books to read with your child:

Henry and the Paper Route by Beverly Cleary,  
Arthur's Computer Disaster by Marc T. Brown and  
Pedrito's Day by Luis Galay.



# K-1 TAKE HOME BOOK

Cut and staple the pages to make a book.  
Then draw pictures to go with the words.

(1)	(2)
Ellen promised to read to her little sister.	Her friends asked her to play ball.
(3)	(4)
"Not today," Ellen said.	"I promised to read to my sister!"

# SCRIPT

Cut and staple the pages to make a book.  
Then draw pictures to go with the words.

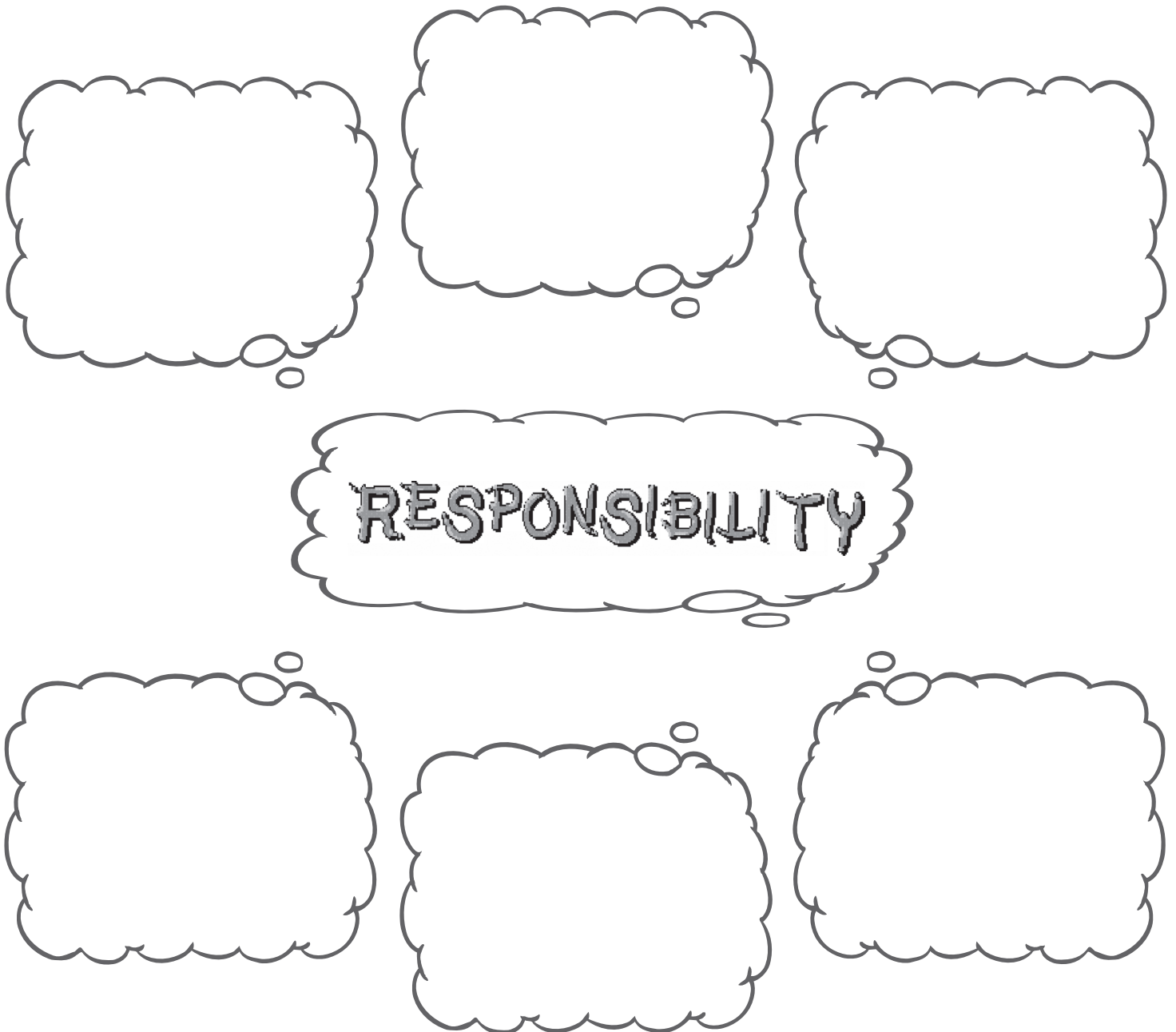
(1)          It was Sam's job to water the plant.	(2)          He didn't take his job seriously.
(3)          The plant dried up and lost its leaves.	(4)          No one knew what happened.
(5)          But Sam took responsibility. "I'm sorry," he said.	(6)          "I keep forgetting to water it."

# THOUGHT BUBBLE

Handout #1

Part 1: Being Responsible

Think about what you already know about responsibility. Fill in all your thoughts around the thought bubble below. After you watch Part 1 of the video, go back and make any changes necessary so that your thought bubble is accurate.



# MY RESPONSIBILITIES

Handout #2

Part 1: Being Responsible

What responsibilities do you have at home? Make a list of your responsibilities.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

—

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_



Are there any responsibilities that you don't like? Draw a picture of yourself doing this chore.

A large, empty rounded rectangle with a thick black border, intended for a drawing.

What if you don't want to be responsible? What then?

\_\_\_\_\_



# MEET MY ASSISTANT

Handout #3

Part 1: Being Responsible

Holly had a puppet named Mort who helped him out in the toy store. Imagine that you have a puppet who helps you.



Draw a picture of your puppet. Write your puppet's name under your picture.

**My assistant's name is:** \_\_\_\_\_

What are some of the ways that your puppet could help you?

---

---

---

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# RESPONSIBLE ME

Handout #4  
Part 1: Being Responsible



In each box, draw a picture and write something you do that shows responsibility.

I am responsible at home.

I am responsible at school.

I am responsible with my friends.

I am responsible in my neighborhood.

# FILL IN THE BLANKS

Handout #5

Part 2: Doing the Right Thing

Write a word from the box in each blank so the sentence makes sense.

- 1 Responsible people always keep their \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 And they take \_\_\_\_\_ of their things.
- 3 Mort's \_\_\_\_\_ was to help keep the store clean.
- 4 Kelly forgot to \_\_\_\_\_ up after herself.
- 5 She was afraid she was going to \_\_\_\_\_ the movie.
- 6 Danny and Jesse had to finish a cub scout \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 But Danny really wanted to go to the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 Tisa loved the \_\_\_\_\_ her mom made.
- 9 It was hard for her to \_\_\_\_\_ just one.
- 10 It's not always easy to be \_\_\_\_\_.

## Word Box

job

clean

project

zoo

eat

word

care

miss

cookies

responsible

# BECAUSE... WHY?

Handout #6

Part 2: Doing the Right Thing

Put a check in front of the best answer to each question.

1. The ice cream melted all over the table because



- \_\_\_a. it was lunch time.
- \_\_\_b. Kelly was going to the movies with her friend.
- \_\_\_c. Kelly forgot to put it back in the freezer.

2. Tisa's mother said she could have only one cookie because



- \_\_\_a. she was saving the cookies for the school bake sale.
- \_\_\_b. she knew Tisa didn't like chocolate chip cookies.
- \_\_\_c. she was punishing Tisa for not being responsible.

3. Danny couldn't decide whether to go to the zoo with his grandfather because



- \_\_\_a. he didn't think the zoo was open that day.
- \_\_\_b. he was supposed to work on his cub scout project.
- \_\_\_c. he wanted to play with his trains instead.

4. Somebody stepped on Mort's lunch because



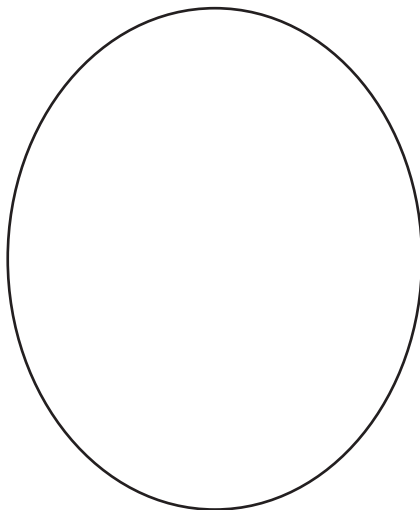
- \_\_\_a. he didn't keep the shelves dusted.
- \_\_\_b. he forgot what Holly told him to do.
- \_\_\_c. he left his lunch bag on the floor.

# FACES

Handout #7

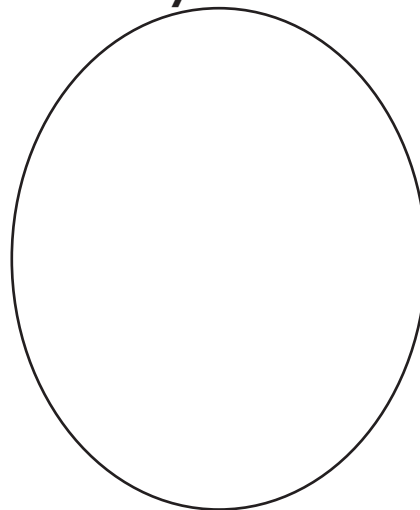
Part 2: Doing the Right Thing

**Mort's Face**



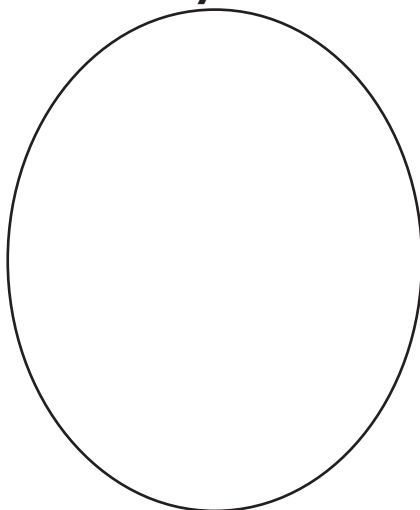
Mort was unhappy when his sandwich got squashed.  
Draw a picture of Mort's face.

**Kelly's Face**



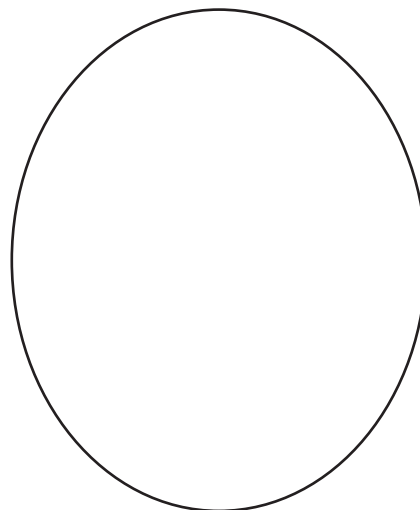
Kelly was worried about being late for the movie.  
Draw a picture of Kelly's face.

**Danny's Face**



Danny was excited about going to the zoo.  
Draw a picture of Danny's face.

**Tisa's Face**



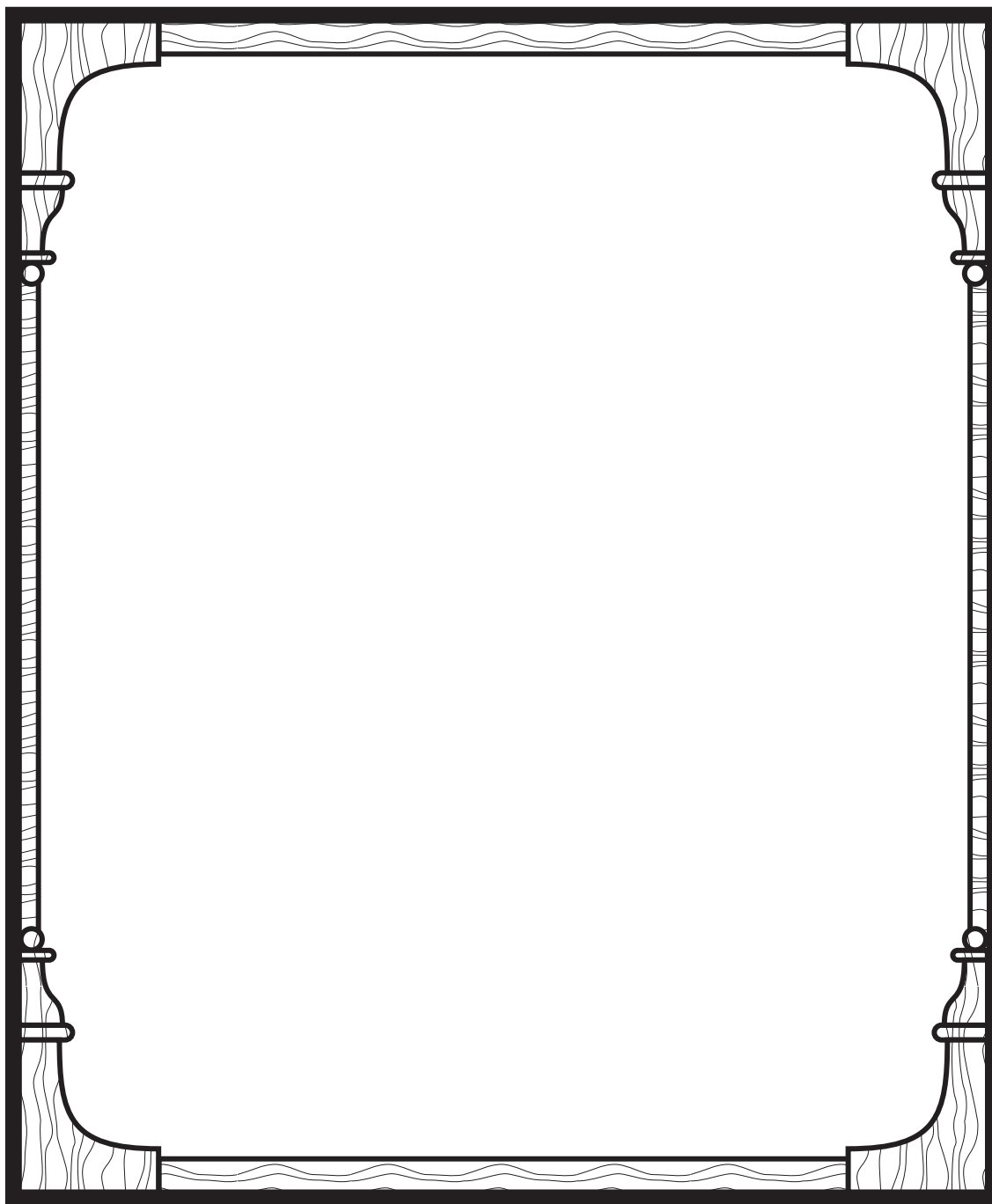
Tisa couldn't wait to have a nice, warm chocolate chip cookie.  
Draw a picture of Tisa's face.

# FRAME IT

Handout #8

Part 2: Doing the Right Thing

Think about a time you didn't act in a responsible way.  
Draw a picture about it. On the back of this page, write  
about what happened.



# MAKE A CARD

Handout #9

Part 3: Taking Responsibility

Chloe could have made a card to let her brother know she was sorry for getting him in trouble. In the boxes below, make a card for Chloe to give to Ben. Decorate Box 2. Then cut out the boxes and fold on the dotted line to make a card. Write Chloe's message on the inside.

**Box 1**

**Box 2**

# RESPONSIBILITY PUZZLE

Handout #10  
Part 3: Taking Responsibility

In the puzzle below, find as many of the words from the box as you can.

BLAME	EXPECT	FEEL
CHORE	FORGET	REPORT
COUNT	GUILTY	SORRY
DECIDE	OWN	WORD

M	R	E	P	O	R	T	E	F
C	H	O	R	E	I	M	G	O
C	O	U	N	T	A	E	U	R
E	P	I	Q	L	D	S	I	G
W	X	A	B	I	P	O	L	E
O	C	P	C	G	J	R	T	T
R	J	E	E	O	E	R	Y	Z
D	D	S	J	C	W	Y	L	A
F	E	E	L	L	T	N	B	I



# WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

Handout #11  
Part 3: Taking Responsibility

Read each story. Then put a check in front of the responsible thing to do.

1. Edna left her skates on the steps. Her father tripped over them. Boy, was he mad!

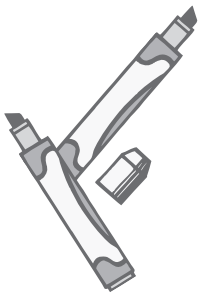
Edna took responsibility by



- ☐ blaming her little brother for leaving the skates on the steps.
- ☐ telling her dad she didn't know how they got there.
- ☐ saying she was sorry for not putting her skates away.

2. Tanya borrowed Mario's colored markers. When she gave them back, two of them were broken.

Tanya took responsibility by



- ☐ telling Mario she would buy him a new set.
- ☐ saying she would never borrow anything from Mario again.
- ☐ saying the markers were broken when Mario gave them to her.

3. Eric accidentally knocked over the dog's water dish. There was water all over the floor.

Eric took responsibility by



- ☐ going to his room and pretending he doesn't know about the water.
- ☐ mopping up the water and filling the dish again.
- ☐ telling his mom the dog knocked over the water dish.

# OWNING UP

Handout #12  
Part 3: Taking Responsibility

Write what you think “owning up” means.

---

---

---

What kinds of things should you own up to?  
Write three things below.

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---

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Draw a picture of yourself owning up to something.

# BIG WORDS, SMALL WORDS

Handout #13  
Part 4: Learning to be Responsible

How many smaller words can you make out of the letters in “Responsibility?” Write them on the lines below.

## RESPONSIBILITY

3-letter words

4-letter words

5-letter words

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

# WHAT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY SCORE?

Handout #14

Part 4: Learning to be Responsible

Read the questions. Then write your answer on the lines by using the following numbers:

**4 - Always**  
**3 - Usually**  
**2 - Sometimes**  
**1 - Never**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Do I put my things away without being told?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do I own up when I know I did something wrong?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do I follow through on something once I've started it?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Am I extra careful with things that don't belong to me?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do I always keep my word to others?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do I do all the chores I'm supposed to do at home?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do I get ready for school on time every morning?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do I hand in my homework assignments on time?

**=** \_\_\_\_\_

Now add up your score \_\_\_\_\_ .

If your score is 8 to 10, you're not responsible at all!

If your score is 11 to 16, there's hope for you!

If your score is 17 to 24, you're pretty responsible.

If your score is 25 to 32, give yourself a pat on the back!

# RESPONSIBLE YOU!

Handout #15

Part 4: Learning to be Responsible

Do you need help to become more responsible? Think of one thing you need help with. Write it here:



I am not responsible enough when it comes to:

---

---

Think of the ideas that were given in the video. Then think of 5 things you can do to help yourself become more responsible. Write them on the lines below.



I can try to solve the problem by:

1

---

2

---

3

---

4

---

5

---

# RESPONSIBLE MEANS...

Handout #16  
Part 4: Learning to be Responsible



Draw a red line under every sentence that tells what “responsible” means.

## Responsible means:

- 1** Borrowing things and forgetting to give them back.
- 2** Knowing what is expected of you—and doing it.
- 3** Following through with something once you have started it.
- 4** Keeping your word.
- 5** Walking away from a job before you’ve finished it.
- 6** Letting someone else take the blame for your mistake.
- 7** Taking care of other people’s property.
- 8** Watching TV at the same time every day.
- 9** Owning up when you do something wrong.
- 10** Remembering to hand in your homework on time.



Now write a sentence of your own that tells what responsibility means to you:

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# R-E-S-P-O-N-S-I-B-L-E

Handout #17  
Part 4: Learning to  
be Responsible

Here are the letters that spell the word responsible. Write the words from the box after the right letter.

run	end	pan	ear	see	or	sun
let	bake	erase	is	note	over	pat
rabbit	sat	summer	bead	ink	look	save
eye	paper	elephant	name	ice	boat	ever
lemon						

R

E

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E

On the back of this sheet write one or more sentences using the words from the box, and the word *responsible*. You may also use other words like; the, and, a, etc.

Here is a badge for you to color. Then you can cut it out when you have finished all of the activity sheets.





# SUGGESTED READING

## Books for Educators and Parents

Adams, Patricia and Jean Marzollo. *The Helping Hands Handbook*. Random House, 1992. Subtitled “A guidebook for kids who want to help people, animals, and the world we live in,” describes more than 100 projects kids can do to get involved.

Barry, Vincent. *The Dog Ate My Homework: Personal Responsibility, How We Avoid It and What to Do About It*. Andrews McMeel Publishing, 1998. Says the author, when we constantly look to put blame on another person, or a place or situation, we are giving up the only real power we have—the power to take responsibility for our lives.

Branden, Nathaniel. *Taking Responsibility: Self-Reliance and the Accountable Life*. Fireside, 1997. Why people need to take responsibility for themselves.

Cline, Foster, M.D. and Jim Fay. *Parenting With Love and Logic: Teaching Children Responsibility*. Navpress, 1990. Argues that kids learn the best lessons when they’re given a task and allowed to make their own choices—and fail—while the cost of failure is still small.

Cline, Foster, M.D. and Jim Fay. *Didn’t I Tell You to Take Out the Trash? Techniques for Getting Kids to Do Chores Without Hassles*. Love and Logic Press, 1996.

Covey, Stephen R. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families*. Golden Books, 1997. Seven principles that can help any family move from a problem-solving to a creative mind-set.

# SUGGESTED READING

Crary, Elizabeth. *Pick Up Your Socks and Other Skills Growing Children Need*. Parenting Press, 1990. Teaching tools and insights that parents can use to help children learn responsibility. Questions about discipline, household chores, homework and independent living skills are answered through examples and exercises. Includes a job chart listing the average ages parents can expect children to do household chores.

Ellis, Elizabeth M., Ph.D. *Raising a Responsible Child: How Parents Can Avoid Overindulgent Behavior and Nurture Healthy Children*. Birch Lane Press, 1995. How to teach a child to be more self-sufficient and independent, no matter what his or her maturity level.

Eyre, Linda with Richard Eyre. *Teaching Your Child Responsibility*. Fireside, 1994. How to develop and nurture responsibility in children by teaching responsibility for actions, possessions, choices and younger siblings.

Hammond, Meryll. *One World, One Earth: Educating Children for Social Responsibility*. New Society Publishers, 1993.

Novellii, Joan and Beth Chayet. *The Kids Care Book: 50 Class Projects that Help Kids Help Others*. Scholastic, 1991. A good sourcebook of ideas for helping kids get involved in helping others.

Petersen, Evelyn. *Growing Responsible Kids (Seeds for Success Series)*. Totline Books, 1997. How to grow responsible kids by teaching life skills in small, simple steps while they are still young.

Pittman, Frank. *Grow Up: How Taking Responsibility Can Make You a Happy Adult*. Golden Books, 1998. How taking responsibility and working hard can ensure happiness.

# SUGGESTED READING

Popkin, Michael. *Active Parenting: Teaching Cooperation, Courage, and Responsibility*. Harper & Row, 1987. Presents theories and methods for “democratic parenting” to help parents examine their parenting styles and practices.

Rich, Dorothy. *Megaskills: In School and In Life—The Best Gift You Can Give Your Child*. Houghton Mifflin, 1992. A guide to instilling confidence, motivation, responsibility, initiative and other values.

Riehecky, Janet. *The Child’s World of Responsibility*. Child’s World, 1997. Offers suggestions young children can use to show responsibility: feed the cat, put candy wrappers in the trash can, go to bed without fussing.

Schulman, Michael and Eva Mekler. *Bringing Up a Moral Child: A New Approach for Teaching Your Child to Be Kind, Just, and Responsible*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1985. A guide for parents and educators.

## Books for Children

Berenstain, Stan with Jan Berenstain. *The Berenstain Bears and the Blame Game*. Random House, 1997. Shows kids that when a problem occurs, there’s always enough blame to go around, and what really matters is to find a way to solve it.

Brown, Marc Tolon. *Arthur’s Computer Disaster*. Little, Brown, 1997. Arthur’s use of his mother’s computer without permission leads to a lesson in taking responsibility for one’s actions.

Canning, Shelagh. *Responsibility: Annie Shows Off! (Adventures from the Book of Virtue, No. 4)* Simon Spotlight, 1996. Instead of delivering cakes for her mother as she was supposed to, Annie races Zack and wrecks her bicycle. Her animal friends help her to learn about acting responsibly by telling her the story of Daedalus and Icarus and the consequences of reckless behavior.

# SUGGESTED READING

Carlson, Nancy. *Arnie and the Stolen Markers*. Puffin Books, 1989. Arnie absolutely “has to have” a super-duper set of magic markers, but he’s spent all his allowance on candy.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Harriet and the Garden*. Puffin Books, 1985. After trampling her neighbor’s prize dahlias in an effort to catch a fly ball, Harriet runs home to avoid being caught.

Cleary, Beverly. *Henry and the Paper Route*. William Morrow & Co., 1962. By demonstrating responsibility, Henry proves he is ready to have a paper route of his own.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Henry and the Clubhouse*. William Morrow & Co., 1962. In an amusing sequel, Henry learns several more lessons about responsibility.

Clifford, Eth. *Family for Sale*. Houghton Mifflin, 1996. Four siblings left in the care of their 17-year-old sister for two weeks learn what it means to be responsible for a family’s needs and wants by taking turns being in charge.

Drescher, Joan Elizabeth. *I’m in Charge*. Little, Brown, 1981. Temporarily in charge of his house, a small boy weathers several calamities.

Garay, Luis. *Pedrito’s Day*. Orchard Books, 1997. By earning back the money he carelessly lost, Pedrito proves to his mother that he is finally responsible enough for a bicycle.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. *The Girl Who Knew It All*. Delacorte Press, 1979. Tracy hides her reading deficiencies by showing off and playing tricks. But when she finally admits she needs help, she takes responsibility for improving her own reading skills.

Graeber, Charlotte Towner. *Fudge*. Pocket Books, 1989. Chad’s parents agree to let him have the puppy Fudge as long as he takes care of her.

# SUGGESTED READING

Hass, Dorothy F. *Tink in a Tangle*. Albert Whitman & Co., 1984. Tink stops blaming her troubles on her red hair and starts accepting responsibility for her behavior.

Havill, Juanita. *Jamaica's Find*. Sandpiper, 1987. Instead of turning over to Lost and Found the cuddly but well-worn stuffed dog she finds in the park, Jamaica takes it home.

Hermes, Patricia. *Who Will Take Care of Me?* Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983. Mark's love for and sense of responsibility toward his retarded brother makes this a sensitive and suspenseful story.

Hess, Judy. *Butch and the Rooster*. Focus Publishing Co., 1997. A wise dog teaches a rooster to appreciate his job on a farm.

Honeycutt, Natalie. *The All-New Jonah Twist*. Bradbury Press, 1986. Successful at last in his attempts to prove he can be responsible, Jonah discovers the nature and rewards of responsibility.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Best-Laid Plans of Jonah Twist*. Bradbury, 1988.

Hurwitz, Joanna. *Class Clown*. William Morrow, 1987.

Lowe, Patricia Tracey. *The Runt*. Caedmon Press, 1984. His neglect having led to an animal's death, Angus first denies, but then accepts responsibility.

Mattingly, Christabel Rosemary. *Duck Boy*. Atheneum, 1986. Adam finds that one of the rewards of accepting responsibility is that he has earned the respect of his older brother and sister.

Pickford, Susan T. *It's Up to You, Griffin!* Tidewater Publishers, 1993. Happy because Mother Nature has asked him to help her by announcing the arrival of spring, Griffin the Groundhog overcomes his initial fear and accepts this great responsibility.

# SUGGESTED READING

Reuter, Margaret. *You Can Depend On Me*. Children's Press, 1980. Dan has good intentions, but little follow-through, until a welcome responsibility enables him to show he can be depended on.

Steiner, Barbara Annette. *Oliver Dibbs to the Rescue!* Four Winds Press, 1985. Oliver's concern for endangered animals spurs him to take responsibility for saving some local species.

Spinelli, Jerry. *Fourth-Grade Rats*. Scholastic, 1991. Suds Morton is faced with an ethical dilemma: now that he's in the fourth grade, should he live up to the nickname kids in this grade are given and act like a rat?

Sargent, Dave. *Best Friends*. Ozark Publishing, 1996. A teenager's lack of responsibility in giving attention and love to his dog causes the animal to suffer great loneliness.

Wright, Mary. *Full House Stephanie Twin Troubles*. Minstrel Books, 1995. Stephanie has her hands full juggling two important responsibilities at the same time.

# SUGGESTED READING

## **Related Materials from Sunburst Visual Media, a division of Global Video, LLC**

### **Parent & Child Companion Set**

Raising Responsible Children

45-minute program for parents and teachers

I Can Be Responsible!

30-minute program for Grades K-3

Yes, I Can! Building Self-Confidence

17-minute program for Grades K-2

Let Me Choose! Making Decisions

13-minute program for Grades K-2

I Can Do It: Taking Responsibility

11-minute program for Grades 2-4

# SCRIPT

## Music Video

“Responsible” is such a big word  
But it’s what you have to be  
To let people know they can count on you  
To show you can do things without being told  
To see a job through, to own up when you’re wrong  
Then everyone will see...  
You’re R-E-S-P-O-N-S-I-B-L-E

## Student Workshop: Responsible Me!

### Host:

Responsible! What a big word! Do you know what it means? If you’re confused, don’t feel bad. We’re going to help you figure it out. Let me introduce myself. I’m Holly. And this is Mortimer, my assistant. Mort here knows all about being responsible, don’t you, Mort?

### Mort:

I certainly do. I’m a very responsible person, er, puppet.

### Host:

Tell us what you think responsible means.

### Mort:

Well, it means doing what you’re supposed to do when you’re supposed to do it. And speaking of being responsible, I better get back to dusting the shelves.

### Host:

Wait a minute, Mort, you can stop dusting for a while. I told our friends out there we’d talk to them about responsibility. Oh, look there’s Jed. He’s a perfect example of someone who knows what being responsible means.



# SCRIPT

**Mort:**

That's right! He told us all about it.

**Host:**

Every school morning Jed is responsible for getting himself dressed, getting his teeth brushed and his face washed and getting to the kitchen on time for breakfast.

**Mother:**

Ready for breakfast?

**Jed:**

Almost.

**Mother:**

Did you brush your teeth?

**Jed:**

Yup.

**Mother:**

And wash your hands and face?

**Jed:**

Yup, just like I said I would.

**Mother:**

Mornings are sure a lot easier now that you've taken over those jobs.

**Jed:**

Yeah! And now I have more time to eat more breakfast!

**Mother:**

Wait till you see what I've got for you.

# SCRIPT

**Host:**

Hey, Jed.

**Jed:**

Hi, Holly.

**Host:**

How are your morning chores coming? You still responsible for getting yourself ready for school?

**Jed:**

Yeah, now me and my mom don't get into big fights in the morning, 'cause I never miss the bus.

**Host:**

Bet it makes you feel proud to take care of yourself like that.

**Jed:**

It does. And you know what?

**Host:**

What?

**Jed:**

I'm doing such a good job, my mom bought me this toy.

**Host:**

See, Mort? Jed knows what he's supposed to do and he does it. That's being responsible. And being responsible makes him feel great!

**Mort:**

I know all about that, 'cause I feel proud when I take care of the shelves. And I make sure I do the whole job, because that's another thing about being responsible, you have to follow through.

# SCRIPT

**Host:**

Speaking of taking care of things, there's Carmen. Remember what happened with her last month?

**Mort:**

Oh yeah, she came in to buy a new toy for her friend Ellen

**Host:**

Hello, Carmen. Are you getting one of these? Lucky you. All the kids love this game.

**Carmen:**

It's not for me. It's for my friend Ellen. I borrowed hers and I didn't put it away when I finished playing with it.

**Host:**

And what happened?

**Carmen:**

My dog chewed some of the pieces.

**Host:**

That's too bad.

**Carmen:**

Guess I didn't take good care of it.

**Host:**

So you're getting her a new one.

**Carmen:**

Yup, I saved up for it myself.

Daddy, look at this. I want this sooooo bad and it's on sale. Can I get this now?

# SCRIPT

**Father:**

What about Ellen's game?

**Carmen:**

I'll get it when I save up more money.

**Father:**

But didn't you tell her you'd give her the game today.

**Carmen:**

Yeah, okay.

• • • •

**Carmen:**

Here's your new game.

**Ellen:**

Thanks.

**Host:**

I bet Ellen was happy when you gave her the game.

**Carmen:**

Yes. Me, too. My dad was right.

**Host:**

Well, being responsible does mean taking care of others people's property and keeping your word.

**Carmen:**

I learned something else, too.

**Host:**

What's that?

# SCRIPT

**Carmen:**

To keep things away from my dog!

**Host:**

So now, have you figured out what “being responsible” means? Are you a responsible person? Stop the program here and talk about it. Then do the “Being Responsible” worksheets.

• • • •

## Part Two: Doing the Responsible Thing

**Host:**

Hi! Mort and I were just talking about what responsibility and being responsible mean.

**Mort:**

I think it's keeping your word and doing what you're supposed to do. Like me, keeping the shelves dusted and the games neat.

**Host:**

And taking care of your things.

**Mort:**

Sometimes I'm not so good about that, like when I leave my lunch on the floor and it gets stepped on.

**Host:**

That's right. You're also responsible for keeping the store room clean, but I'm always finding your empty lunch bags on the floor. That's not being responsible. Speaking of leaving your lunch around, let's look at what happened to Kelly when she didn't clean up after herself. Not being responsible for cleaning up almost made her miss a really good time.

# SCRIPT

Kelly was going to the movies with her friend Jill and Jill's mother. They were picking her up right after lunch.

**Mom:**

There. That's done. Kelly, I'll be upstairs. Call me when Jill gets here. Oh, and don't forget to put the ice cream back in the freezer, otherwise it'll all melt.

**Kelly:**

Sure, Mom.

**Jill:**

Hi. Are you ready?

**Kelly:**

Just about.

**Jill:**

Good, 'cause we have to rush if we're going to make the movie.

**Kelly:**

Oh no! I forgot to put the ice cream away.

**Jill:**

My mom's honking. We don't have time for you to clean it up.

**Kelly:**

But I can't just leave it.

**Mom:**

Was that Jill's mother I heard? Kelly, you didn't put the ice cream away.

**Kelly:**

I'm sorry. But we're gonna miss the movie.

# SCRIPT

**Mom:**

Go on, I'll clean it up, this time

**Kelly:**

Next time I'll be more responsible, I promise. Thanks, Mom.

**Mom:**

Kelly was lucky that her mom was there, so she didn't have to miss the movie.

**Host:**

That's right, and she didn't have to decide what to do. Whether to stay, clean up the mess and miss the movie, or just leave it. But Danny didn't have such an easy choice.

**Dad:**

Mom said you're going over to Jesse's today at 2:30 to work on your cub scout project.

**Danny:**

Oh, yeah.

**Dad:**

When's that due?

**Danny:**

For the meeting Monday. We need to finish today.

**Dad:**

Okay. I'm going to the store. But I'll be back by 2:00. Make sure you're ready, because I have a doctor's appointment right after that.

**Grandpa:**

Hi, Danny.

# SCRIPT

**Danny:**

Grandpa! I didn't know you we're coming over.

**Grandpa:**

I just decided to. It's such a nice day, I thought we could go to the zoo. How about that?

**Danny:**

Wow!

**Grandpa:**

And I get the feeling that on the way back, I'm going to want some pizza! Put your toys away and I'll call your mother and tell her where we're going.

**Danny:**

What time is it?

**Grandpa:**

About 1:30? Why? Is there something else you're supposed to do?

**Host:**

Danny has to make a decision. What's the responsible thing to do?

**Mort:**

If he doesn't go to Jesse's, they won't get their project done.

**Host:**

But he really wants to go to the zoo with his grandfather.

**Mort:**

That's a toughie! I hate having to make decisions like that. I have enough trouble deciding what to have for breakfast.



# SCRIPT

**Host:**

I'm glad you mentioned breakfast, because here's another story about making a decision and responsibility.

**Mort:**

And breakfast?

**Host:**

Well, not breakfast, but it does have to do with food. It's about Tisa. Tisa just loves chocolate chip cookies. She can't get enough of them. She especially likes the ones her mother bakes. All chocolatey and gooey.

**Tisa:**

Can I have one?

**Mom:**

Let them cool, then you can have one... ONE. I want to make sure we have enough for tomorrow. I need at least 12 for the school bake sale.

**Tisa:**

Okay.

**Mom:**

And I'm putting you in charge of watching them. You know what will happen if your brother and his friends see those. They'll all be gone.

**Host:**

So Tisa had one. It was so good. She really wanted another one. But she was responsible for making sure no one took any. She counted how many cookies were left. There were 13!

**Tisa:**

Mom said to have one... but she also said she needed 12 cookies for tomorrow. I'm responsible for seeing that no one takes any. But there are 13 here!

# SCRIPT

**Mort:**

All these decisions! And chocolate chip cookies!

**Host:**

Let's ask our viewers what they think. Danny and Tisa have decisions to make. Should Tisa take another cookie? There would be enough left, but her mother put her in charge of watching them and said to take only one. And what about Danny? Should Danny go to the zoo with his grandfather or go to Jesse's? What about his project? What about his father? He's coming back to get him. What's the responsible thing to do? Talk about it. Then do the "Doing the Responsible Thing" worksheets.

...

## Part Three: Taking Responsibility

**Host:**

We've talked about a lot of different kinds of responsibility.

**Mort:**

You're right. There's being responsible by doing what's expected of you...

**Host:**

and being responsible when you use other people's property...

**Mort:**

and being responsible by keeping your word...

**Host:**

Now let's talk about another kind of responsibility, taking responsibility for what you do.

# SCRIPT

**Mort:**

You mean like when I tried to stack all the boxes on the shelf and they all fell down and there was this huge, incredible mess and I said, “It wasn’t ME! I didn’t do it!”

**Host:**

Something like that. That’s NOT taking responsibility for what you do.

**Mort:**

Don’t some people call that “Owning Up.”

**Host:**

That’s right. And sometimes all it takes to own up is to say, “Oops, I made a mistake. Sorry.”

**Mort:**

Or, “It was an accident.” I guess that’s what I should have done. Isn’t that what happened in the store last week with Darryl?

**Host:**

You’re right. I forgot about that. Darryl was looking through the box of baseball cards and he accidentally knocked over the whole pile of baseballs. It was such a mess. But no one saw him and no one knew.

**Darryl:**

Holly, I’m sorry, but I bumped into something and I knocked over all the baseballs. I’m real sorry, but it was an accident.

**Host:**

Good for you to say you did it. Come on, let’s pick up the stuff together.

**Mort:**

And you know what I heard Darryl tell his friend? He was glad he said something, ‘cause otherwise he would have felt guilty every time he came in the store.

# SCRIPT

**Host:**

That's another example of how doing the responsible thing makes you feel good about yourself. Let's show our viewers another story about owning up and taking responsibility for what you do.

**Host:**

Mr. and Mrs. Bradford went out one night. They left Chloe home with her older brother Ben. They were both supposed to finish their homework before watching television.

**Ben:**

Did you finish your homework yet?

**Chloe:**

I'll do it later.

**Ben:**

Now. You know the rule.

**Chloe:**

Did you finish yours?

**Ben:**

Yes. Go up to your room and do it. I'm not getting in trouble 'cause you won't do what you're supposed to.

**Chloe:**

I hate him. He's so bossy "Do your homework. I'm not getting in trouble because of you."

**Chloe:**

Oh, no. What was that?! I better get out of here.

# SCRIPT

**Father:**

Still doing homework?

**Chloe:**

Yeah, I had a lot to do.

**Father:**

Me, too. I have to finish a report. I better get at it.

**Father:**

Ben, get in here. Were you messing with the computer?

**Ben:**

No. Why?

**Father:**

Why? Because there was a message on the screen that the computer wasn't turned off correctly.

**Ben:**

It wasn't me.

**Father:**

And I can't find the report I was working on.

**Ben:**

It wasn't me, I promise!

**Father:**

Then it must have been one of your friends. Were you guys playing games?

**Ben:**

No.

# SCRIPT

**Father:**

Were you messing around on the Internet?

**Ben:**

No.

**Father:**

Well, you must have been doing something you shouldn't have done. Where's my report?

**Ben:**

I'm telling you. It wasn't me!

**Mort:**

Should Chloe let her brother take the blame or should she take responsibility for what she did?

**Host:**

Let's ask our viewers. What would you do if you were Chloe? Stop the tape and talk about that. Then you can do the "Taking Responsibility" worksheets.

## Part Four: Learning to Be Responsible

**Host:**

Everybody knows that sometimes it's hard to be responsible, even when you want to be.

**Mort:**

Yeah, it's not like you do things on purpose, sometimes you just forget. Like me. When I first started working here Holly made me responsible for turning off all the lights at the end of the day. But I kept forgetting.

# SCRIPT

**Host:**

That's right. And it got to be expensive. All those electricity bills.

**Mort:**

But I liked being responsible for the lights and I didn't want to give up the job. So you know what we did? Holly got me a big sign and he put it where I hang my coat. Now when I put on my coat at the end of the day, I see these gigantic big letters. MORT: DON'T FORGET THE LIGHTS. Works like a charm.

**Host:**

Well, here's a story about someone else who has a problem meeting his responsibilities. Let's see what he can do about that.

**Ms. Barker:**

Where's your homework Tony?

**Tony:**

Uhm... uhm... I forgot it.

**Ms. Barker:**

Tony, where's your lunch?

**Tony:**

I must have left it on the bus.

**Ms. Barker:**

Here. take this. It's from the emergency lunch fund. But we're starting to run out.

**Tony:**

Thanks.

**Ms. Barker:**

I hope everyone remembered the permission slip for our class trip. You have to have it in order to go. Please leave them on my desk on your way to the gym.

# SCRIPT

**Ms. Barker:**

Can't find your slip?

**Tony:**

No.

**Ms. Barker:**

Tony, I think we're starting to have a real problem. Seems like you're becoming very irresponsible.

**Tony:**

I know, I just forget things. I don't do it on purpose.

**Ms. Barker:**

I'm sure you don't. So let's see if we can find some things that you can do that will help you be more responsible.

**Ms. Barker:**

Here's a start. In fact, I bought them just for situations like this I call them "remember notes." Here's what you do. Whenever you have to remember something important, like bringing in your permission slip, something special like that, I want you to write it on one of these and stick it someplace where you'll be sure to see it. Where would that be?

**Tony:**

I could put it on my backpack.

**Ms. Barker:**

Well, it might fall off there. What's your favorite thing that you bring to school? Something that you look at every night at home?

**Tony:**

Well I always check my pencil case, 'cause that's where I put my snack money.



# SCRIPT

**Ms. Barker:**

Good, so that's where you can stick your "remember notes"... Now what about your homework?

**Tony:**

And my lunch.

**Ms. Barker:**

Right. Let's start with your homework. Here's a special folder. How about if we draw on it "Tony's Official Homework Folder." Now, as soon as you finish your homework, I want you to put it right in this special folder. And then put the folder right in your backpack.

**Tony:**

Thanks.

**Ms. Barker:**

You can color it later.

**Tony:**

Cool!

**Ms. Barker:**

Well, I hope that helps.

**Tony:**

What about my lunch?

**Ms. Barker:**

Maybe your mom could put it right on top of your jacket so you'll see it when you leave the house.

**Tony:**

Oh, she does that. I just forget it on the bus!

# SCRIPT

**Host:**

So, Tony and Ms. Barker kept talking and thinking about different things that Tony could do so he would become more responsible.

**Host:**

Do you have any ideas? Stop the tape here and talk about it.

**Mort:**

I have a few.

**Host:**

Sorry, we don't have time. We have to close up now. We have to go, but you can still do the "Learning About Responsibility" worksheets. Say good-bye, Mort.

**Mort:**

Good bye, Mort.

## The End