

Sample lesson from  
"I Think: Government – The Constitution"  
Correlates to Common Core Standards!!



## Who's Responsible?

### Springboard:

Students should complete "The Greater Good."

**Objective:** The student will consider the civil responsibilities that go hand-in-hand with living in a democracy.

### Materials:

The Greater Good (Springboard handout)  
What Would YOU Do? (handout)  
Your Turn (handout)  
Reflecting on Responsibility (handout)

Vocabulary  
development is  
always an emphasis!

### Terms to know:

**civic responsibility** - citizens being personally accountable to and for their community

### Procedure:

- After reviewing the Springboard, explain that *in this lesson, the student(s) will examine the important responsibilities that come with living in a democracy.*
- Distribute "What Would YOU Do?" and have the student(s) take the survey.
- Distribute "Your Turn" and have the student(s) create their own character-based scenarios individually, in pairs, or small groups.
- **For group instruction** have each pair or group present their character-based questions to the rest of the group and invite the student(s) to share what they would do. **For individualized instruction** the student and parent/teacher can answer the questions.
- Distribute "Reflecting on Responsibility" and have the student(s) answer the questions independently.
- Then have them share and discuss their responses to this and previous handouts. (*Answers will vary though students should understand that responsible citizens in a democracy must be involved.*)

Easy-to-follow teacher instructions  
and important points of emphasis!

# The Greater Good

Daily warm-ups introduce students to the topic of the lesson.

*In order for a democracy to be successful, citizens must take their responsibilities as seriously as they do their rights. Since democratic government is “of the people, by the people, and for the people,” citizens must contribute to their community, speak up for injustice, participate in their government, and be personally responsible for their own actions.*

In your own words, explain what you think the statement above means:

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Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

Students asked their opinion, but also required to justify their answers!

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To what extent do you think America is a “successful democracy,” based on this description? Explain your ideas.

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# What Would YOU Do?



**DIRECTIONS:** Answer the questions, briefly explaining each decision.

You live in a multi-story apartment building and are awakened in the night by the sound of glass breaking and a woman screaming “Help!” from the apartment below. What would you do?

- A. Ignore the noise and go back to sleep.
- B. Run down and knock on the woman’s door.
- C. Immediately jump out of bed and call 911.
- D. See if the noise stops and later call the police.

Content is linked to real-life scenarios! Make your lessons relevant to their lives!

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While walking down the street, you see a wallet lying on the ground. What do you do?

- A. Ignore it, because it isn’t your problem or concern.
- B. Without looking at the contents, turn it in to the police.
- C. Look inside for an ID, and call the person who owns it.
- D. Take it, and use the credit cards to go on a shopping spree.

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A bully in your neighborhood has been harassing and threatening people for years. You witness some friends who have decided to “give him some of his own medicine” by beating him up. The next day the police come to your door to investigate the beating. What do you do?

- A. Deny that you know or saw anything.
- B. Pretend you are not home to avoid involvement.
- C. Tell the truth without naming your friends.
- D. Explain everything you know and saw to the police.

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The government is involved in a war you strongly disagree with. As a member of the Army Reserves, you may be called up for duty. What do you do?

- A. Shoot yourself in the leg so you will be unable to serve.
- B. Refuse to serve and get a lawyer to defend you in court.
- C. Leave the country so you cannot be reached for service.
- D. Report for service if you are called, because it’s your duty.

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You work for a huge drug company and discover that one of the drugs your company sells causes cancer in lab rats. When you tell your immediate supervisor, you are warned to keep the information to yourself. What do you do?

- A. You comply with your superior’s orders and say nothing.
  - B. You secretly leak the story to a local television reporter.
  - C. You don’t worry, since the drug may not even cause cancer in humans.
  - D. You try to talk the company owners into taking the drug off the market.
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# Your Turn

InspirEd lessons always “take it to the next level” by requiring students to synthesize what they’ve learned!

**DIRECTIONS:** Considering what you believe to be the civic responsibilities of Americans, create three “What Would You Do?” scenarios requiring “responsible” actions or decisions.

QUESTION #1: \_\_\_\_\_

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- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

QUESTION #2: \_\_\_\_\_

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- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

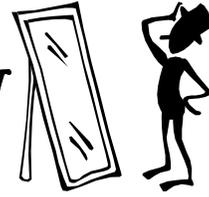
QUESTION #3: \_\_\_\_\_

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- A.
- B.
- C.

# Reflecting on Responsibility



1. Which question was the easiest to answer? Why?
2. Which question was the most difficult to answer? Why?
3. Do you think it is important to get involved in your community? Why or why not?
4. Do you think most people agree about what is "right?" Explain.
5. Why do people sometimes choose NOT to do what they know is right?
6. Explain what you think is meant by "the greater good"? How do you think we can promote the greater good in a democracy?
7. Why do you think civic responsibilities are important in a democracy?

Reflective, open-ended questions allow less-able students to participate and advanced students to "stretch" their minds!