

# The Golden Rule (Grades K-5)



## **Character Education Objective:**

- Students will discuss how their actions impact others.

## **Content Objective:**

- Students will create a definition of respect in the classroom.

## **Language Objective:**

- Students will share out ideas about what respect looks and sounds like.

## **Purpose:**

Students have hundreds of interactions throughout the school day with the expectation that they treat each other with respect. But what is respect when interacting with others? An easy answer is the standard of the Golden Rule. This lesson will help students define what the Golden Rule looks and sounds like in the classroom. It will also help reinforce the impact of the Golden Rule and what happens when we don't abide by it.

## Lesson

- Ask students if anyone has heard of the golden rule and allow students to define what it means. Clarify that the golden rule is easiest summarized as “treat others how you would like to be treated.” (2 mins)
  - As a large group, help the students define what the golden rule looks and sounds like to help operationalize the respect pillar. Make two columns on chart paper or a white board labeled “Looks Like” and “Sounds Like”. Encourage the students to share out ideas about what the golden rule looks and sounds like in the school. If they need help coming up with ideas, encourage them to think about the golden rule in the classroom, hallways, during specials, on the playground, etc. (5 mins)
  - Pepper Activity (13 mins) Before the activity, prepare the materials. Each small group will need one bowl of water, one package of pepper, one package of sugar and small piece from a bar of soap.
1. Explain that you are going to do a little experiment about how your actions impact others. The pepper is going to represent all the people we come into contact throughout the day.
  2. Break the students up into small groups and have them pour the pepper in the bowl of water. Ask students to close their eyes and think of time someone has said or done something hurtful to them. Then ask them to think of a time they may have said or done something hurtful to someone else. Tell them that the soap is going to represent all of those negative, mean and nasty comments and actions.
  3. Ask them to dip the piece of soap into the bowl. The pepper will move to the outside. Ask them to discuss in their group what happens to our relationships with those people (the pepper) when we say or do those negative things (the soap).

4. Bring them back together and ask them now to close their eyes and think of a time someone has been kind to them. Then ask them to think of a time they have been kind to someone else. This time, they will use sugar as a representation of these kind words and actions.
5. Ask the students to pour the sugar in the middle of the bowl. The pepper will move to the middle of the bowl and mix with the sugar. Ask them to discuss why people (the pepper) want to be around you (the sugar) when your actions and words are kind.
6. As a large group discuss the following prompts: It's easy to say you will be the sugar and follow the Golden Rule, but there are times that make it difficult to be kind. What are some examples of times that it is hard to treat others how we want to be treated? We all make mistakes and sometimes we are the soap and push the pepper away. What can you do if you have a soap moment?

## **Family Connection**

Give a brief overview of the Golden Rule and the pepper experiment you did in the classroom.

Give the following prompts to discuss as a family:

- What does the Golden Rule look and sound like in our house?
- What are some examples of the Golden Rule you have seen in our family?
- How can we practice the Golden Rule better in our house?
- Are there opportunities from the website: <https://www.coffeecupsandcrayons.com/100-acts-kindness-kids/> that we can do to spread more sugar moments to the pepper we meet in life?

Learn more about character education.