

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Course: Golden Rule

Level: Elementary



Objective: Students will be able to identify the proper use of the Golden Rule.

Course Intent: Students will be introduced to the Golden Rule and provided with scenarios where they must identify the treatment they wish to give or receive and build the skills to give that treatment to other students, regardless of the outcome.



Applications & Benefits:

Learning to treat others with respect will reduce disruptive behavior, create an inclusive class culture, and reduce instances of bullying.

Course Snapshot

This course incorporates the following lessons.

LESSONS	ACTIVITY	TIME REQUIRED	RESOURCES & MATERIALS NEEDED
#1 What Is The Golden Rule?	Whole Group Discussion	15 - 20 minutes	- Lesson definitions - Chart paper
#2 How Do You Want to be Treated? Connecting Our Emotions	Whole Group Discussion	10 – 15 minutes	- Lesson information - Previously made class chart (or create a new one)
#3 What the Golden Rule is Not	Group Discussion	15 – 20 minutes	Lesson information



Lesson Rationale:

You can model this behavior in students by praising their positive attributes. For example, praise a student for being forgiving after someone shows support for another student who might be struggling or making mistakes. Compliment a student for being patient if they wait until you are finished talking before asking a question. Naming the specific behavior you would like to reinforce helps the students identify which behavior is being positively rewarded.

Points to Cover:

- Students should act without the expectation of receiving the same kindness in return. If it is conditional, then it is not in the spirit of the golden rule.
- Students should not behave in a way that they would like to return if they are ignoring a person's specific needs. For example, if Mike is going to Anna's birthday party, he should not get Anna the truck he wants for his birthday. He should get Anna the doll on her Wishlist.



Introductory

Lesson #1:

What is the
Golden Rule?

What to Know Before You Begin

Definitions

The Golden Rule is to treat others the way that you would like to be treated without the expectation of receiving the same kindness back from them.

For example, it bothers you when people read aloud next to you instead of reading the book silently in their head. So, when you're reading a book, you will read it silently in your head, instead of reading aloud and bothering the person next to you. Don't treat people the way they treat you, treat them the way you would want to be treated.

Activity

Begin by asking students to think about how they want to be treated. Do they want to be called names, yelled at, or ignored? Or do they want to be included in play, called by their names, and spoke to softly? On chart paper, create a class list showing all the ways they want to be treated. Ask your class what they think the Golden Rule means. Create a class definition based on their answers and write it down. You will reference that definition at the end of each lesson and change it as the class' understanding of the Golden Rule changes.

After that definition is created, read the examples of the Golden Rule below and ask students to explain in their own words what they mean.

Examples of the Golden Rule

"Don't hurt others with what hurts you."

"What you yourself hate, do to no other person."

"Do to others as you would have them do to you."

"Live in harmony, for we are all related."

"Treat others as you would like to be treated."

"Do as you will, as long as you harm no one."

Exercise

Ask students how the Golden Rule has been used in their lives. Have you heard it from a parent or a friend? What would living according to the Golden rule look like to you? You can ask students to respond to this as a journal prompt or discuss it as a group.



Lesson #2:

How Do You Want to be Treated? Connecting Our Emotions

What to Know Before You Begin

Connect Emotions to the Topic

It is disappointing when people don't give us the same consideration that we give them. It can lead to feelings of betrayal, anger, hurt, and frustration. However, we cannot act based on our hurt feelings. We learn to practice the Golden Rule because we can empathize and understand how someone else might be feeling. We ask ourselves, "Would I want to feel that way?"

We must consider the situation and feelings of others and have empathy for them. For example, if Alex and Felix both want a new video game for their birthday, and Alex bought Felix a video game for his birthday, while Felix bought Alex a Hot Wheels car for his birthday, Alex might be disappointed. However, what Alex does not know is that Felix saved his allowance for two weeks to buy him that Hot Wheels car and could not afford to buy Alex a video game. When Alex realizes that his friend bought him the best gift he possibly could, he realizes that Felix was also practicing the Golden Rule.

Activity

As a class, discuss the following questions. Understanding how we feel in certain situations will help remind us to practice treating others how we want to be treated in similar situations.

- How do you feel when someone is talking while you are trying to read?
- How do you feel when your friends don't ask before they use your things?
- How do you feel when your friends do ask before borrowing your things?
- How do you feel when someone calls you a name?
- How do you feel when someone tries to tell you what to do?
- How do you feel when someone shares their snack with you?
- How do you feel when your friend invites you over to play?
- How do you feel when someone new sits with you at lunch?
- How do you feel when someone draws on your artwork?

Revisit the class list you made of expectations on how they want to be treated (see Lesson 1). Add to the list if needed and hang the list where the entire class can see them. If a student acts in a way that is different than those expectations, point them back to the poster and remind them of how they wish to be treated.



Lesson #3: What the Golden Rule is Not

What to Know Before You Begin

What the Golden Rule is not

Although difficult to understand for children, practicing the Golden Rule and treating others how you want to be treated doesn't mean that others will always do the same. The Golden Rule involves your actions only, not the actions of others. We can't expect others to practice using the Golden Rule or use the Golden Rule while expecting something in return. We follow the Golden Rule because we believe it is the right thing to do.

For example, Sarah shares her lunch with Max because he forgot his lunch at home. Sarah forgets her lunch the next day and wants Max to share his lunch with her. Max doesn't share, and Sarah is mad that he did not share his lunch with her since Sarah shared her lunch with him yesterday.

Sarah should not share her lunch with the expectation that Max will share his lunch with her the next time. It would be a nice thing for Max to do, but he does not have to share his lunch with Sarah. His mom bought the lunch for him, not Sarah. The proper use of the Golden Rule is for Sarah to share her lunch and not expect anything at all in return. Although Sarah wants Max to share his lunch, she can't expect him to.

Activity

Share the lesson information with students to reinforce that we practice the Golden Rule because we think it's the right thing to do, not because we want something in return.

Ask the students, have you ever shared a toy with someone because you wanted them to share theirs with you? Would you still share with them if you knew they would not share their toy with you? How does this violate the spirit of the Golden Rule?

Start a class discussion about how the Golden Rule is not about self-interest, but the interest of the other person. How can they honor the spirit of the Golden Rule in their life?



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Quick Quiz

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1. What is the Golden Rule?

- ☆☆ A.) Treating others with kindness so that they will treat you with kindness
- ☆☆ B.) Treating others how you want to be treated
- ☆☆ C.) Sharing your toys and expecting others to always share with you
- ☆☆ D.) All of the above

2. Kamala and Elizabeth like sitting at lunch together. One day, Kamala forgets her lunch. How can Elizabeth respond by following the Golden Rule?

- A.) Elizabeth can teach Kamala to not forget her lunch.
- B.) Elizabeth can tell Kamala is not appropriate for people to ever share food or anything else.
- C.) Elizabeth can give Kamala a hug and say, "That stinks you forgot your lunch."
- D.) Elizabeth can share her lunch with Kamala because she would want Kamala to share with her if she forgot her lunch.

3. It bothers Jessie when people watch TV in the same room with the volume up when she is trying to read. Jessie is watching TV, and her brother is in the same room trying to read. What should Jessie do?

- ☆☆ A.) Turn the volume up because that is how her brother treats her.
 - ☆☆ B.) Turn the volume down and be respectful of her brother because that is how she wants people to respect her.
 - ☆☆ C.) Do nothing, because the TV is loud, but it's not that loud.
 - ☆☆ D.) Convince her brother that reading is boring, and he should watch TV with her instead.
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Teacher Feedback

Please provide insights on any adjustments made regarding the actual use of the content above.
Feel free to share your thoughts, suggestions, constructive criticism.
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