

Responsibility Guidebook

Eighth grade is often the last grade in middle school before heading into high school. Even if it isn't (if your school includes 9th grade as part of the middle school), there are a lot of responsibilities that 8th graders have that they did not have when they were younger. For this project, have your students create a guidebook for incoming 8th graders (or, more broadly, it could be for incoming middle-schoolers) to help them navigate the responsibilities of 8th graders or of middle-schoolers in general.

Responsibility Sub-Concepts

Self-discipline, Kindness

Project Timeframe

1-2 weeks, broken up as needed by class schedule

Required Materials

- Brainstorming paper
- White drawing or printer paper
- Art/drawing supplies
- Newspapers/magazines - if students want to cut out pictures or make a collage to represent their topic.

Standards Map

This project aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, International Society for Technology in Education Standards, when applicable, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

Include in the book the following topics (modify, if desired, depending on if you are going to make an 8th-grade guidebook or a middle school guidebook):

- What will be expected of them and how can they best fulfill these expectations?
- What are some self-discipline strategies they can use to be successful?
- What are some organization, time management, or homework strategies that help them be more responsible with your academic work?
- What are some social/relationship strategies that will help them be a more responsible friend and member of the school community?
- What do you do when your responsibilities are in conflict with one another?
- What do you wish you had known coming into 8th grade/middle school?

PART 1 (Week 1)

In Week 1/ Part 1, have students get into groups, one group per book topic (you can add to or modify the topic list presented in the introduction section). Have students begin brainstorming the tips, strategies, and other guidance they wish to share about this topic with incoming 8th graders. When students are done brainstorming, review their lists and give them guidance with regard to anything that should be added, removed, or considered for further development. Sometimes groups might brainstorm ideas that are better suited to another group's topic. Encourage them to share their ideas with each other. The brainstorming can happen in a variety of ways; if there are large sticky notes left from Lesson 4, you could make use of those for this brainstorming session.

If groups have their approved ideas done early, they can begin Part 2, which is composing their section of the book.

Part 2 (Week 2)

Now it is time to put all of the information together. Each topic will be its own “chapter”. Groups can compose and design their chapter however they want, but explain that you want the guidebook to be very easy to navigate, read, and understand. They should use lists, visuals, headings/titles, and other graphics that make the topic interesting and easy to follow. If you have a computer teacher or a digital media teacher, this could be a good opportunity for some cross-curricular activities. Students can get help with layout and design and compose their chapters during computer. If computers are not going to be used, students can write and hand-design/illustrate their chapter.

Have students assign roles or jobs within their group with regard to writing and designing. It would also be wise for groups to assign a copy editor to proofread the text before it goes to final copy (either printed or written in ink).

When all the chapters are written, collect and compile them into a 3-ring binder or some other folder that can be left in the room and shared with next year’s 8th graders or incoming middle-schoolers.