



Responsible Decision-Making Desk Pets

Volume 5 | Gr. K-3

Time: About 1 month total

Days 1-3: 30 minutes per day for 3 days

Days 4-25: 5-10 minutes per day every few days

Day 26: 30 minutes



Materials list

- Responsible Decision-Making Desk Pet Kit ([NE40144](#))
- World map
- Desk Pet Adoption Application reproducible (p. 3)
- My Responsibilities reproducible (p. 4)

Social-emotional skills

- Self-management
- Responsible decision-making

Objective

To encourage good classroom behaviors and help students recognize the importance of responsible decision-making and self-management

Day 1

Introduce the concept of responsibility (30 minutes)

1. Start a conversation about what it means to be responsible for someone or something else. Ask students about what they observe of adult responsibilities. Prompt with the following questions:
 - Do the adults you know go to work?
 - Do you have pets at home? What do they need daily?
 - What do the members of your family do for you? Cook food? Take you to the doctor? Bring you to school?
 - What are your family members responsible for in your community (obeying traffic laws, helping others, etc.)?
 - Why do your family members do these things?
2. Then ask students what they are responsible for. Prompt with the following questions:
 - Are you responsible for getting yourself ready for school in the morning?
 - If you have pets, do you help take care of them?
 - Are you responsible for getting your homework done?
 - What chores are you responsible for?
 - Are you responsible for waking up on time? Getting ready on time?
 - What are you responsible for in the community (throwing away garbage instead of littering, etc.)?
 - What does responsible behavior toward others look like in your home? At school? In the community?
 - Why do you do these things?
3. Reproduce the My Responsibilities chart on p. 3 and have each student list what they are responsible for at home, at school, with themselves, and in the community. Then, let them decorate the chart.

Day 3

Pet adoption day! (30 minutes)

1. Tell students that they can gain points for making responsible decisions and earn awards for their pets. As a class, make a list of the responsible actions and good behaviors that students can earn points for. Display your Responsible Behavior Tracking Chart and your list of good behaviors in your classroom as a visual reminder for students.
2. Present students with their new pets. Each student should also receive a plastic desk pet dome from your kit to keep their pet in. Be sure to label domes with the student's name.
3. Each student should receive a mini award from your kit when they reach the point levels on your tracking chart. You may wish to provide extra incentives when the entire class has reached each level, for example:
 - a. Pet Good Behavior Award: Decorate your classroom door for the whole school to see!
 - b. Pet Kindness Award: Watch a movie for 15 minutes.
 - c. Pet Bookworm Award: Host a reading party where everyone dresses up as their favorite book character.
 - d. Clean Pet Award: Host a bubble-blowing event on your playground.
 - e. Pet Play Date Award: Unlock an extra 15-minute recess.
 - f. Pet Birthday Card: Have a classroom birthday party for the pets!
 - g. Pet Graduation Certificate: Throw a graduation party!
4. Each kit also comes with four mini erasers for each student. Each Friday, give all students who are participating a mini eraser as a motivator.



Day 2

Introduce the desk pets (30 minutes)

1. Have a pet parade with the desk pets in your kit. Talk about each animal, where they are from on the map, the kinds of habitats they live in, and what each animal's needs are.
2. Then have students complete the Desk Pet Adoption Application (p. 4) by writing or dictating.

Day 4–25

Pet health check-in (5–10 minutes every few days to touch back on responsibility and classroom expectations)

1. Discuss the following questions:
 - How does it feel to make responsible decisions?
 - What was fun about caring for your pet?
 - Have there been difficulties? Why?
 - What have you noticed about our classroom?
 - What are we doing well as a class?
 - What could we do better as a class?
 - What is one thing you want to work on for yourself?

Day 26

Pet graduation ceremony (30 minutes)

1. At the end of the month, host a desk pet graduation ceremony and party for your students. Then allow students to take their desk pets home. Continue your behavior management program throughout the year by allowing students to earn additional desk pets and rewards.

My Responsibilities

Name: _____

Date: _____

At Home

At School

For Myself

For My Community

Pet Adoption Application



General Rules

My desk pet will only come out of its home during recess or when my teacher allows it.

I will respect other classmates' pets.

I will earn points for my pet with my responsible behaviors.

I will clean up my desk and return my desk pet to its home at the end of each day.

Name: _____

Date: _____

My top three pet choices for my desk pet are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

The reason I would like a _____ is because _____

_____.

I know they are from _____ and need _____

_____ in the wild.

I promise to take care of my desk pet and show I am responsible by _____

_____.

I will work to earn points for my pet to keep them happy and healthy.