

## Can I? Rights vs. Responsibilities

**Time Needed:** One Class Period

**Materials Needed:**

Student worksheets  
PowerPoint presentation

**Copy Instructions:**

Guided Notes (double-sided, class set)  
Worksheets (double-sided, class set)

**Learning Objectives.** Students will be able to:

- Create a list of classroom expectations and differentiate between rights and responsibilities in the classroom
- Identify key rights and responsibilities held by U.S. citizens
- Explore the conflict between some rights and responsibilities (i.e. freedom of speech and public safety)
- Create a Bill of Rights and list of responsibilities they think are important for a fictional country

### STEP BY STEP

- DISTRIBUTE** the "Can I?" Packet.
- ANTICIPATE** the lesson by asking the following question: "If I said that you had the right to do something or the responsibility to do something, is there a difference?" Record their answers in a visible place (board or transparency) and have them record their answers in their packet.
- RUN** the "Can I?" PowerPoint. Guide students as they work through their note sheet along with the PowerPoint.
- REVIEW** instructions for the "Can I?" Worksheet.
- ASSIGN** the "Can I?" Worksheet and give students 10 minutes, working with a partner if appropriate, to complete this activity.
- REVIEW** student responses on the worksheets as a whole class check for understanding.

# Can I?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

What are your rights? What are your responsibilities? What is the difference?

Today we're going to explore rights and responsibilities...

## RIGHTS

**Definition:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Categories of Rights (and examples!):

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Do students and adults have the same rights?  YES or  NO

Does this seem fair to you?  YES or  NO

Give ONE reason that it might be important for students to have limited rights:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Your Rights.** Pick your favorite right from the list above. Write it on the line, then fill in the blanks and check the correct boxes below...

\_\_\_\_\_ is a  Personal Right.  
 Political Right.

This right or freedom  impacts participation in the political process.  
 impacts people's private lives.

This right or freedom is important to me because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Categories of Responsibilities (and examples!):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Do students have responsibilities?  YES or  NO

List four responsibilities from the lists above that you have as a student:

- 1.
- 3.

- 2.
- 4.

### OVERLAP

Is voting a RIGHT?

- YES
- NO

Is voting a RESPONSIBILITY?

- YES
- NO

Do RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES overlap?

- YES
- NO

### CONFLICT

If you yelled "FIRE!" in a crowded movie theater, you would be...  
...exercising the right to

\_\_\_\_\_

...breaking your responsibility to

Which do you think is more important in this situation?

- Right
- Responsibility

# Can I?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



You are the founder of a new country named...

Create a flag for your country:

Write a motto or short phrase for your country:

Now you must sort the responsibilities and rights below into the correct categories, so that your citizens know exactly what their privileges and duties are! Fill in the last line on each scroll with a right and responsibility that you think is important!

Assembly

Religion

Stay Informed

Tolerate Others

Petition

Movement

Get an Education

Obey Laws

Pay Taxes

Own Property

## Rights

1. Freedom of \_\_\_\_\_
2. Freedom of \_\_\_\_\_
3. Right to \_\_\_\_\_
4. Right to \_\_\_\_\_
5. Right to \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

## Responsibilities

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# Can I?



Being the leader of a new country is a big job,  
but you seem to be doing a pretty good job!  
Here is a letter from your subjects about their rights and responsibilities.  
Use your notes from the PowerPoint to fill in the blanks below...

To Our Dear Leader:

We are writing you today to express our gratitude to you for always protecting our \_\_\_\_\_.

We greatly appreciate your understand of our \_\_\_\_\_ rights, allowing us to live our lives  
the way we want to. Similarly, you have done a most excellent job letting us participate in the political  
process by practicing our \_\_\_\_\_ rights.

We promise, as faithful \_\_\_\_\_, or members of your nation, that we will do our  
best to fulfill our \_\_\_\_\_ even when they \_\_\_\_\_  
with our rights. Both our \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
are of the utmost importance to us! It will be even easier to observe them when they  
\_\_\_\_\_ with our rights.

Most Sincerely,

Your Rightful & Responsible Citizens



**You make the call.** Tell me which right applies to each situation:



1. You drew a picture of your town's mayor as an evil wizard. Which right applies?

Freedom of Speech

or

Right to Assemble

2. You want to go visit your grandma and grandpa in another state. Which right applies?

Freedom of Religion

or

Freedom of Movement

3. You are a reporter and have a true story about a local politician. Which right applies?

Freedom of the Press

or

Right to Petition

4. You want to get your friends together to talk about a hot issue. Which right applies?

Right to Assemble

or

Right to Petition

What are your rights? What are your responsibilities? What is the difference?

Today we're going to explore rights and responsibilities...

## RIGHTS

**Definition:** Things that you are allowed to do because of nature or because of law.

### Categories of Rights (and examples!):

Personal Rights	Political Rights
1. Freedom of Speech	1. Right to Assemble
2. Freedom from Discrimination	2. Freedom of the Press
3. Right to Own Property	3. Right to Equal Protection Under the Law
4. Freedom of Religion	4. Freedom to Petition
5. Freedom of Movement	5. Right to Vote

Do students and adults have the same rights?  YES or  NO

Does this seem fair to you?  YES or  NO

Give ONE reason that it might be important for students to have limited rights:

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**Your Rights.** Pick your favorite right from the list above. Write it on the line, then fill in the blanks and check the correct boxes below...

\_\_\_\_\_ is a  Personal Right.  
 Political Right.

This right or freedom  impacts participation in the political process.  
 impacts people's private lives.

This right or freedom is important to me because \_\_\_\_\_



# RESPONSIBILITIES

**Definition:** The expectation that you will take care of certain things or perform duties.

## Categories of Responsibilities (and examples!):



### Personal Duties

1. Jury Duty
2. Pay Taxes
3. Obey Laws
4. Register for Selective Service
5. Get an Education

### Social Responsibilities

1. Stay Informed
2. Tolerate Others
3. Protect Public Safety
4. Register to Vote
5. Speak Your Mind

Do students have responsibilities?  YES or  NO

List four responsibilities from the lists above that you have as a student:

- |                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| 1. Respecting Authority | 2. |
| 3.                      | 4. |

### OVERLAP

Is voting a RIGHT?

- YES  
 NO

Is voting a RESPONSIBILITY?

- YES  
 NO

Do RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES overlap?

- YES  
 NO

### CONFLICT

If you yelled "FIRE!" in a crowded movie theater, you would be...

...exercising the right to  
Free Speech

...breaking your responsibility to  
Protect the Public Safety

Which do you think is more important in this situation?

- Right  
 Responsibility



Being the leader of a new country is a big job,  
but you seem to be doing a pretty good job!  
Here is a letter from your subjects about their rights and responsibilities.  
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We greatly appreciate your understand of our personal rights, allowing us to live our lives the way we want to. Similarly, you have done a most excellent job letting us participate in the political process by practicing our political rights.

We promise, as faithful citizens, or members of your nation, that we will do our best to fulfill our responsibilities even when they conflict with our rights. Both our personal duties and social responsibilities are of the utmost importance to us! It will be even easier to observe them when they overlap with our rights.

Most Sincerely,

Your Rightful & Responsible Citizens



**You make the call.** Tell me which right applies to each situation:



1. You drew a picture of your town's mayor as an evil wizard. Which right applies?

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2. You want to go visit your grandma and grandpa in another state. Which right applies?

Freedom of Religion or  Freedom of Movement

3. You are a reporter and have a true story about a local politician. Which right applies?

Freedom of the Press or  Right to Petition

4. You want to get your friends together to talk about a hot issue. Which right applies?

Right to Assemble or  Right to Petition