

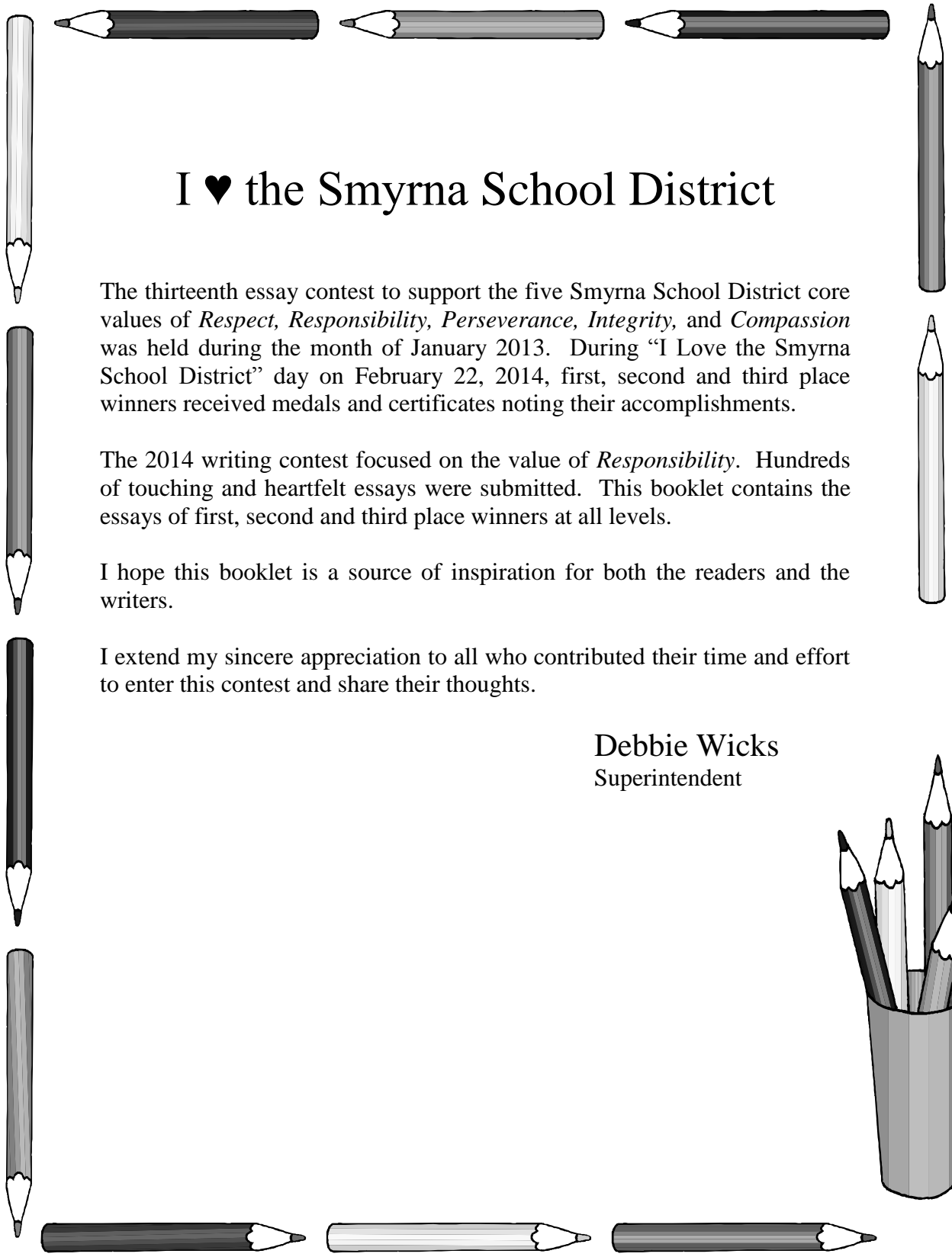


Smyrna School District

Essay Contest

2014

Student Winners



# I ♥ the Smyrna School District

The thirteenth essay contest to support the five Smyrna School District core values of *Respect, Responsibility, Perseverance, Integrity, and Compassion* was held during the month of January 2013. During “I Love the Smyrna School District” day on February 22, 2014, first, second and third place winners received medals and certificates noting their accomplishments.

The 2014 writing contest focused on the value of *Responsibility*. Hundreds of touching and heartfelt essays were submitted. This booklet contains the essays of first, second and third place winners at all levels.

I hope this booklet is a source of inspiration for both the readers and the writers.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all who contributed their time and effort to enter this contest and share their thoughts.

Debbie Wicks  
Superintendent

For the thirteenth annual “I Love the Smyrna School District” essay contest, students were asked to write about *Responsibility*, a core district value. Contest rules and writing prompt were disseminated to students (via their teachers) in December 2013. June Wicks, district reading coordinator, prepared the prompt and assisted with coordinating the essay contest. Jamie Cox, Smyrna School District Curriculum Office secretary, completed the typing and formatting of the publication and assisted with the layout and editing of the publication. Alexander “Sandy” Shalk, Ed.D. conducted the contest and edited the final publication. District teachers encouraged their students to write and helped select essays. Appreciation is extended to all for their time and effort in making this publication possible.

## ESSAY CONTEST

Contestants are asked to write a maximum 500-word essay on the following topic:

**Responsibility** – means being reliable and following through on commitments. This includes being responsible for your actions as a family member, teacher, student and citizen. You can demonstrate your responsibility through service to others and self-control.

**Community Responsibility** - As a part of the community, you're responsible for treating others as you want to be treated, for participating in community activities and decisions, and for being an active, contributing citizen. An activity like picking up trash to keep the community clean shows you are responsible.

Your school is having a writing contest. Use the writing prompt and questions below to help you craft a writing piece for the contest.

People often help each other. **Tell a true story** about a time when one person helped another, or when a group of people worked together to provide someone help.

**STUDENT WINNERS:** First (gold), second (silver), and third (bronze) place winners are selected at each grade level (K-12) in each building. Winners receive medals and certificates noting their accomplishments. All winners were recognized during the “I Love the Smyrna School District” day (February 22, 2014).

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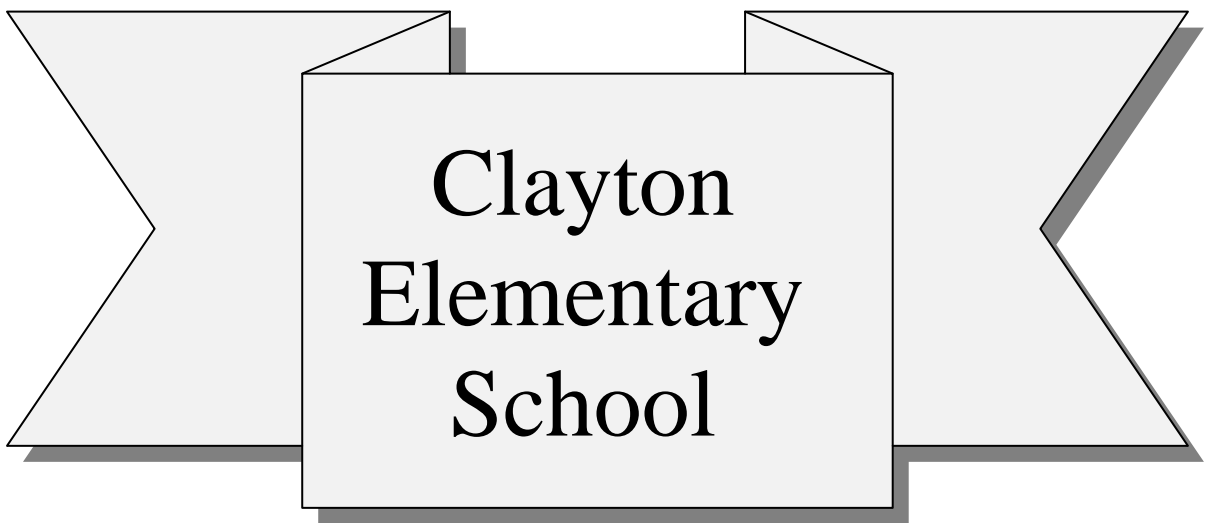
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*Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4*

I am responsible for cleaning my room. I pick up my clothes on the floor. I feel great when my room is clean.

Carmen Williams  
First Place, Kindergarten

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I am responsible my sister. I take care of her when my mom is gone. I do the dishes. I make my bed.

Madisyn Lewis  
Second Place, Kindergarten

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I am responsible for my two dogs. I teach my dogs to do tricks. I feel good when I take care of my dogs.

Callyn Fletcher  
Third Place, Kindergarten

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I think it would not be responsible to have a penguin as a class pet, because penguins live in Antarctica. They would rather be in the oceans catching fish. They eat fish so we would have to go fishing. It would rather be with other penguins. It would be swimming with his friends. We would have to make it cold. Penguins don't even live in Delaware. The penguin would be lonely. That is why a class penguin is a bad class pet.

Brooke Berge  
First Place, Grade 1

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We should have a pet penguin in the classroom. They would be cute to look at. They would be fun to take care of. We can learn what they eat. We can learn to care for a penguin. They make me happy. I would be responsible for it and feed it food like fish. I would give it water and I would take it outside in the snow and help it feel better and take care of it.

Jada Jones  
Second Place, Grade 1

\*\*\*\*\*

I think it would not be responsible to have a penguin as a class pet, because penguins need to be in Antarctica. There they can slide on their belly with their other friends. That's why I think it would not be a good class pet.



Jenna Spencer  
Third Place, Grade 1

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Responsibility is being reliable and following through with commitments. My mom is responsible for my family. First, my mom makes lunch and dinner for our family. When she cooks it is delicious. Next, my mom cleans my room. She rearranges my furniture and she moved my bed, toy bin, and my bookcase. My mom makes my bed. Then my mom feeds my dog. She plays with my dog with a toy bone or a duck. She also walks my dog for about twenty-nine minutes. Also, my mom makes sure I'm safe always. She makes sure I'm not bullied. Then my mom takes care of my mom-mom. She makes sure she's not feeling bad. Finally, my mom makes us happy. When I get mad or sad, my mom has a trick to make me laugh! My mom loves me so much. I love my mom.

Mackenzie Langton  
First Place, Grade 2

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Do you know what responsibility is? Responsibility is when you do something that someone trusted you with. Responsibility looks like being on time, doing your work, and taking care of yourself. For example, in "Arthur's Pet Business" Arthur was responsible and cleaned the cages. Responsibility is important because it helps people and the Earth. A world without responsibility would be really messy, and dirty. I am responsible for my dog. When I was responsible I took care of my dog by walking him, feeding him, giving him water, playing with him, cleaning his cage, and brushing him. What are you responsible for?

Alina Bartlett  
Second Place, Grade 2

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Responsibility means being reliable and following through on commitments. Do you want to know how I am responsible? I clean the sinks and toilets. Sometimes I take out the dogs. I also feed the dogs. I clean my room. For me, it is not that fun, but my mom tells me I'm responsible. On school days, I pack my book bag and get dressed all by myself. I chose my outfit every day. I like being responsible. Being responsible makes me feel like a grown up.

Sydnee Holt  
Third Place, Grade 2

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Ruff! Ruff! Do you want that cute puppy for a pet? Whoa, Whoa, Whoa! You can't walk in there and buy the puppy. You need to learn about responsibility first. Responsibility is being reliable and following through on commitments. This includes being responsible for your

actions, providing service for others, and showing self-control. It is very important for a pet owner to be responsible.

According to the article “Can dogs teach kids responsibility” by Terri Kay, 58% of pet owners say that their pets teach kids responsibility. That’s a lot! Even though older kids can help more, young kids don’t have to feel left out. Young kids can help you dry the dog’s supper dish after you wash it. Also, they can alert you when the dog’s water bowl needs to be refilled. The older kids can: help feed the dog, help put the dog’s toys away at the end of the day, train the dog, walk the dog, and exercise the dog as well. The article states that kids who take care of dogs learn what it feels like to have a living creature rely on them and that teaches kids responsibility in a way little else can. Now, according to the article “Pets: Pet responsibilities” even though having a pet totally rocks it’s a big responsibility – actually it’s a gigantic responsibility! Having a pet means the life and well-being of another living thing in our hands. Of course, the biggest responsibility is love. Our pets plan to love us forever. Before you get a pet, you need to think about several questions like: How much time do you spend away from your house? Do you already have a ton of chores to do? Are you able to do all of those things and still take care of a pet? Can you afford a pet? If you are than that’s great! You are ready to be a responsible pet owner!

Now that you know all of the responsibilities you need to know about taking care of a dog. Think about it, can you take care of a pet and still do your everyday things? If you can then awesome! If you can’t then you are not ready for a pet just yet. Don’t be sad! Just think about it. When you are ready, let me know!

Jordan Myrick  
First Place, Grade 3

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Did you ever want a pet? It all starts with responsibility. But do you even know what responsibility is? Responsibility is being reliable and following through on commitments. This includes being responsible for your actions, providing service for others and showing self-control. I think you have to be responsible for a pet for many reasons. For example, walk them, feed them, and give them love.

After reading the article “Can Dogs Teach Kids Responsibility” I learned 58% of pet owners say their pets help teach their kids to be responsible. Kids of all ages can help with the animal. For example, little kids can help you dry the dog’s supper dish after you wash it. Also they can alert you when the dog’s water bowl needs to be refilled. Older kids can help feed the dog, help you put the dog’s toys away, and exercise the dog. The article states that kids who take care of dogs learn what it feels like to have a living creature rely on them and that little else can. Also caring for a dog creates a sense of empathy and a respect for life. It teaches commitment and consistency and it builds self-confidence.

After reading the article “Pet Responsibilities” I learned the biggest responsibility of all is love. Even though having a pet “can rock,” it’s a big responsibility. You have to make compromises and sacrifices. For example, if you do extra activities after school like OM or baseball you will have to make compromises. You have to make sure you are home in time to walk and feed the

dog. The article states that having a pet takes lots of time, money, and energy. You have to buy food, supplies, health care, licensing, boarding or pet sitting when you go away and can't bring your pet, and lots of other reasons.

In the end, I feel that it is very important that a pet owner is responsible. So if you think you are ready for a pet think to yourself, "do you have everything you need?" If you do, you are ready and remember have fun with your pet!

Faith Hewes  
Second Place, Grade 3

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Do you want to be an AWESOME pet owner? It all starts with responsibility. Do you know what responsibility is? Responsibility is being dependable and trustworthy. In order to be a pet owner, you must show responsibility because a lot of pets depend on us. For example, they depend on us to feed them, wash them, exercise them, and love them.

According to the article "Can Dogs Teach Kids Responsibility?" by Terry Kaye 58% of pet owners say that dogs can teach kids responsibility. That's a huge number. You need to know how to be a responsible pet owner before you can get a pet. What can little kids do? Well, little kids can alert you when the food bowl needs to be refilled and help brush the dog. What can older kids do to help out? Well older kids can help a lot more than the youngsters. For example, the older kids can help exercise the dog and train the dog. The article states that kids who take care of a dog learn what it feels like to have a living creature rely on them, and that teaches responsibility. On top of that, the second article "Pet Responsibility" says that you might think having a pet can be the COOLEST, but you still have responsibilities for them. For example, you need to supply them with food and water. Then you're sacrificing time, energy, and love for them. Now you have the vet bill on the other hand which sometimes is very expensive. See you have lots to do with pets.

Now that you know how to be a responsible pet owner do you think you're ready for a pet? Answer these questions in your head.

- Do you already have H.W?
- Do you already have chores?
- How much time do you have out of your house?
- Can you do your stuff and take care of a pet?

If not you're not ready, that's ok. Maybe later on you will be able to get a pet.

Jade Hendricks  
Third Place, Grade 3

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Responsibility is a big thing in our world. Without it we couldn't live. Responsibility is doing what's right for you and your community. Many things show responsibility. Cleaning your

room, taking out the trash, or even taking care of a household pet. Many people also show responsibility, but I think one type of people show the most responsibility. If they weren't there, you wouldn't even be alive now. These people are parents: not just my parents, but every parent in the whole world. Some parents may treat their children better than others, but even so, parents keep their children alive. Here are some ways why parents are the most responsible people in the world.

Parents help take care of children. It's simple, but it's a big deal! Without parents, children don't get to live. Think about a world without responsible parents. A parent is supposed to go to work. They don't, so they don't get paid. If they don't get paid, they don't get to buy food and water. If they don't get to buy food and water, their children don't get to eat and drink. As a result of that, they starve. Then they die. If all the children die, humans will become extinct. Our world would have no human life forms at all. That's how important responsibility is.

Now let's talk about how parents work. They go to a job location, work, and get paid. But having a job is more than that. If parents weren't responsible like that, nobody could do anything! Imagine this! A man, suppose his name is Bob, works at Walmart. If all the people in the world including Bob didn't come to work nobody would be able to buy anything. That also means no one gets money for working. Soon, Bob's job at Walmart is gone. Walmart goes out of business. All the stores are out of business. Pretend Bob has three kids. Since he does not have a job, he can't feed his children. He and his whole family can't eat. Now his family is gone. Do you see how much of a difference it is if people, like Bob don't go to work. That is what keeps our world living.

As you can see parents are very responsible. They do many responsible things. The things I said are only a few things about how parents are responsible. There are so many things they do. The possibilities are endless! I think parents do other responsible things. What responsible things do your parents do?

Isabel Wilson  
First Place, Grade 4

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Do you know what responsibility is or what it means? It means to be reliable and to follow through on commitments. I also understand what responsibility is. For example, turning in my homework on time and other actions are responsible.

I think being responsible is a good idea. Responsibility makes you trustworthy. A couple of weeks ago, I read an article about Rosa Parks. She had a "responsibility" to move to the back of the bus whenever the person of another race arrived on the bus. The bus rider approached Rosa in order to seize her seat. Rosa disobeyed the rules on the bus by not budging out of her seat. So, she went to jail. Rosa felt like it was her responsibility to say, "NO!" I felt like she was just sick and tired of segregation. She never liked it. Martin Luther King, Jr. carried out a march in Washington, D.C. He also delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech in the loudest voice he could. Again, we move years later to when Rosa wins the Nobel Peace Prize. Rosa Parks changed American history by being an activist. People really never thought a black person could change the world.

When I was younger and heard of Rosa, I thought, “WOW! What a remarkable person she is!” As I get older, I’m still amazed by her being responsible for her accomplishments. She is still an activist – forever will be. I think Rosa is a splendid lady. She probably was proud of herself being who she is too. But, her passing was depressing for some people. Rosa is a grand activist for the responsibility she has shown!

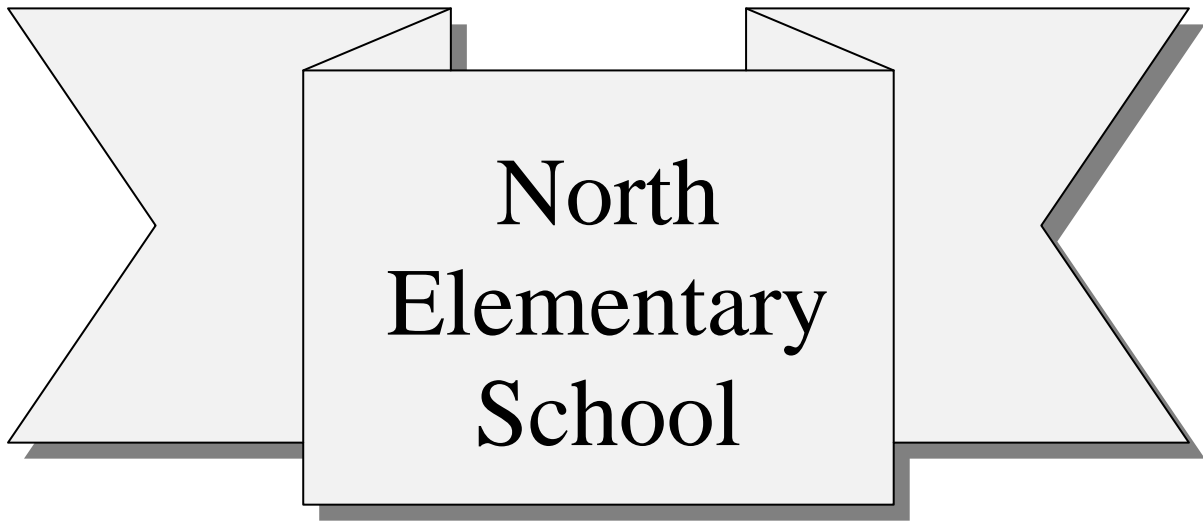
Kelsey Morris  
Second Place, Grade 4

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Have you ever been responsible, that means to be reliable and go through with your commitments? When being responsible, you are kind and you help others. I think the world without responsibility is just, Ehh! Responsibility is important because if people are not kind, then no one would be friends and nothing to keep us moving because chores are responsibilities too. A world without responsibility would be bad. It would look like a big ball of sadness and there would be a lot of disappointment, because no one could be reliable or go through with commitments that they made. The ASPCA is a group that shows responsibility. They show responsibility by not helping people, but animals. You’re probably thinking, “Now, how do you show responsibility to an animal?” Well, I can answer that. Animals are like people. This is how they were responsible. The ASPCA is a place where they take any animal that is not in a home off the road and back to the ASPCA. They also have to rely on the people that work there to feed the animals and wash them. When people came in the ASPCA, they usually are there to buy an animal and then it is their responsibility to take care of the animal. This was a big responsibility that they did because animals should be cared for just like humans. You should always show responsibility to people and animals you know and have never seen before. Responsibility is the key to everything...Responsibility Rules!

Alyssa McLamb  
Third Place, Grade 4

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North  
Elementary  
School

*Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4*

I am responsible for feeding my dog. If not, my dog would get sick.

Reed Schultz  
First Place, Kindergarten

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I am responsible when I help my sister go down the stairs.

Keely Coleman  
Second Place, Kindergarten

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I am responsible for brushing my teeth.

McKinnley Kragh  
Third Place, Kindergarten

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What is responsibility? Responsibility is doing what you should do. I am responsible at home. I take care of my fish and I take the trash out. After school, I make sure I do my homework. I take care of my Mimi and Pop Pop. They got surgery on their knees. I get them ice packs. I love taking care of them. I love being responsible.

Jenna Vannoy  
First Place, First Grade

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I am responsible! I help my sister learn. I teach her how to spell her name. I am also responsible by helping in the house. I do the dishes and make my house and car with my mom. Taking care of my pet is another way I am responsible. I feed her and take her out, then give her treats and play with her.

Nevaeh Perry  
Second Place, First Grade

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Do you think a first grader can be responsible? I am a first grader. I am responsible because I take my baby sister to the bathroom. I listen to my teacher. I play outside carefully. My mom is proud of me.

Kai Burnette  
Third Place, First Grade

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My person who shows responsibility is my sister, Cheyenne Brynn Donaghue. To me, responsibility means trustworthy. As soon as we get home, she does her chores. She checks on her pet guinea pig, Azzmo. She also takes very good care of him. She cleans his cage, holds him, and brushes him. She is a straight A<sup>+</sup> student. She never gets in trouble. She listens to our mom most of the time. If she didn't take care of her pet, it would die or get lost.

Dakota Donaghue  
First Place, Second Grade

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I know someone who is responsible! A fireman is responsible for taking care of the fire trucks and people, too. They're responsible for taking people to the hospital. They show us that they care. They're courageous and they respect everybody and keep us safe too. They put out fires. They teach us about safety. Firemen are very responsible.

Roarie Glenn-Russum  
Second Place, Second Grade

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Responsibility is most important! Responsibility is things you do to help people or doing things you are supposed to do. I helped my mom clean the dishes. I read a little critter book and he took care of his dog.

My friend asked me if I could go outside. I said no, I have to walk my dog. Who do you know that is responsible?

Ryan Virdin  
Third Place, Second Grade

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Responsibility means that people are able to show self-control and are dependable. Responsibility could mean that a person is nice to the world and shows this by cleaning up roads. People need to be responsible because we need people to do important jobs like teachers or Mrs. Wicks. People should never stop being responsible for this world or it would not be a great or safe place to live.

My dad is the one who is responsible in my life. He is important because he is the Athletic Director of Smyrna High School. He is in charge of all the sports. My dad is so busy that really the only time we see him is on the weekends. He is busy with all of the sport events. He has to schedule games. If I had to do that I would be really tired. Also, he has to go to every game at the high school. The most important job he has to do is to run the scoreboard and the concession stand. He is also so busy on Saturdays with the Smyrna-Clayton Soccer Club. Sometimes he has to coach the games. He has to make sure everyone is set up for registration. There are times



when he has to set up the field numbers and the poles. But, with all of that to do, there are still times that I miss him, even though I know he is showing how responsible he can be.

Responsibility means people have to be responsible for their toys, school, work, jobs, and other things. Responsibility should be important to people. The thing I like the most about responsibility is when people show how lovely and trustworthy they can be to me. It is an enjoyable thing to have in the world!

Mia Schultz  
First Place, Third Grade

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My school is having a writing contest. It is about responsibility. Responsibility means taking care of your things. If someone has everything in order, and neat, they must be responsible. Being responsible is also doing what you are supposed to do.

My mom is responsible. She is responsible in a lot of ways. My mom shows up at work on time, she cleans and cooks. Not only that, she also takes care of my brother and me. Responsibility is very important to my mom. She always tells my brother and myself to be responsible. When she shops for anything, she is always responsible with her money. If my mom didn't tell me to be responsible and clean my room, it would be a mess. I think responsibility is important for kids and adults. My mom says if you have a dog you have to be responsible. If no one was responsible, their house or room would be a mess. Responsibility means keeping promises, my mom does that too. In conclusion, responsibility means to me doing the right thing or making good choices. Responsibility is really important. If there was no responsibility everyone would break laws and it would be horrible. Out of all the responsible people I know, I think my mom is the most responsible.

Milan Williams  
Second Place, Third Grade

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What is responsibility? It is to be reliable. I think responsibility is very important to everybody. Some examples of responsibility are to do your homework, finish your chores, and always be on time, follow directions and help with babysitting if someone needs you. It is important to be responsible because responsibility shows that you are doing what you should. If the world didn't have responsibility people would always be depending on other people to do their work and nothing would get done.

The person I am going to talk about being responsible is myself. I am very responsible. For example, first, I sweep and help my mom clean. I always do my homework and I am on time for school. Next, I taught my little sister how to get ready for Kindergarten. It took almost all summer for me to teach her. I think all these things show responsibility.

I think teaching my sister how to get prepared and doing my chores are very responsible things. Everyone should be reliable. Responsibility shows other people that they can depend on you. Finally, being responsible shows that after doing something little you can be expected to be depended upon for bigger things. What do you do to be responsible?

Farrah Charles  
Third Place, Third Grade

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What do you think the world would be like without responsibility? By responsibility I mean following out on commitment, service to others, and having good behavior. Without responsibility in the world, it would be a disaster!

Some examples of responsibility are very simple, such as remembering your chores and tasks your parents and teachers assign you. Responsibility is also getting good grades in school so you can go to college and get a job you enjoy going to every day. Another example of responsibility is having exceptional behavior in and out of school. Also donating to charities and community service are good ways to show responsibility.

Some people might think, "Why should I be responsible? Why do I care?" Well, if no one was responsible the world would be a disaster! There wouldn't be any good schools and that would lead to no education. If there wasn't anywhere to go to get a good education, there wouldn't be iPods, iPhones, or fancy computers. Where you're sitting right now would most likely be less advanced.

Is there someone that you know that is responsible? One example of someone that I know that is responsible is my mother, not only because she takes care of me and cooks my food and does her job, but also because she donates to charities to help treat pancreatic cancer. She also buys food for the poor, and helps businesses that are not doing well. These are not the only ways you can be responsible. There are plenty of things you can do in your community to help out.

If more people in the world were responsible, it would be a much better place. If you want the world to be a better place you too need to be responsible.

Mason Semenick  
First Place, Fourth Grade

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Have you ever heard of responsibility? If you haven't, I'll explain it to you. Responsibility is taking your actions for yourself. Do you take care of your dog or clean your room? That is responsibility. It is important for everyone, and I will tell you about a man – a great man who changes a place.

Nelson Mandela was responsible, but first I should tell you what he did to be responsible. Nelson didn't like how black people were being treated in South Africa. So he wanted to stop it.

He was speaking out about it and people started taking action. He gathered people and made a group. Others started to notice and did it too.

When he spoke out to people who weren't against the black people not being treated equal, they took him to jail. He was in prison for 27 years. Now this is where some of responsibility comes in. He went to jail just so his people could be free. That is huge! He came out after he served his years and kept trying to stop the segregation!

Finally, years after years they had success. They stopped segregation. They were able to have freedom. Since they had freedom, they could vote, and they voted for Nelson! He became President of South Africa and made a great and powerful law. He made segregation illegal! Now, anyone who would do it gets in trouble. Nelson also didn't stop there. He went to other places just for fun. He got an award after what he did. When he visited other places almost everyone knew him!

Sadly, he passed away last December, but we remember him as a great, strong, and compassionate man. We should all do responsible things like Nelson Mandela!

Khady Ndiaye  
Second Place, Fourth Grade

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Responsibility is a matter of taking charge of your actions. This occurs pretty much everywhere, for example, your house, at school, and in your community. My opinion is that being responsible is a very important thing to do!

If I was to ask you if you think being responsible was important, what would you say? I would say that responsibility is a part of living. I mean if nobody was responsible, the world would be a nightmare! There would be polluted seas, garbage as far as the eye could see, and (worst of all) nobody would have any respect for each other! This would cause everyone to seal things from each other, and everyone would fight one another!

Luckily, that's not how the earth is. Most people are responsible. I wouldn't say that the world is perfect, but it's a really nice place to live. Not everyone has respect for each other, but most do. Garbage is not everywhere to be found, but it's not anywhere. People are respectful, and others are not. But for one, I'm definitely grateful for the people who do show responsibility.

The following are some examples of responsibility. One way you can show responsibility is by taking care of, or watching, a pet, such as watching your best friend's dog, or taking care of the family pet. Another way you can show responsibility is by doing your homework. This shows responsibility by getting done what you are assigned. One last way to show responsibility would be to collect money, food, etc. for charity. For example, my school holds a Yankee candle fund raiser every year.

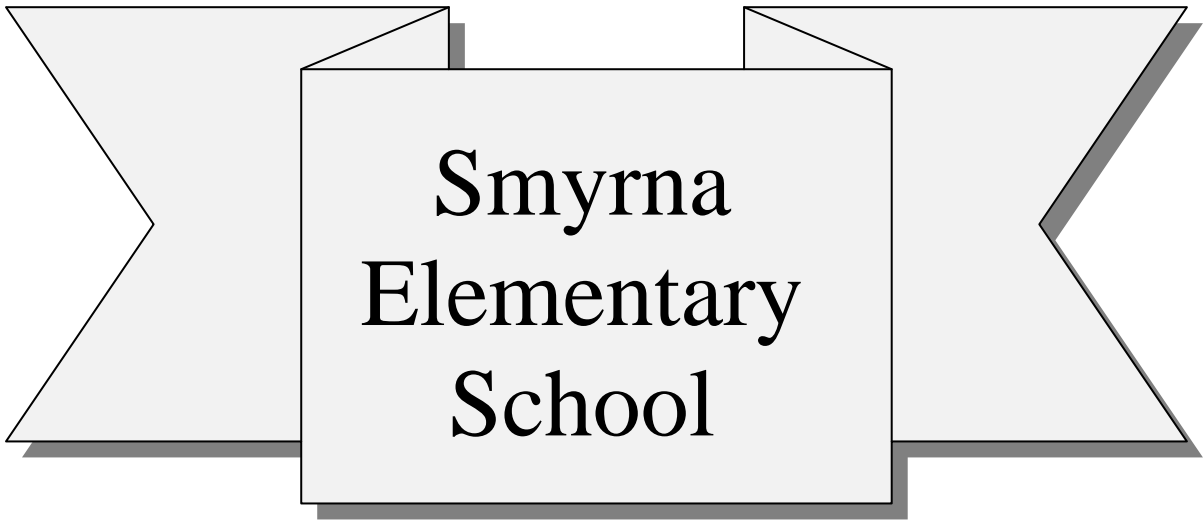
If I had to think of a responsible person, the first person that would come to mind would be my teacher, Miss Stanhope. She watches over me and 27 other kids 5 days (which is definitely

important). This is being responsible because our parents not only put their trust in her but that students also have to show respect to Miss Stanhope to make that responsibility easier.

Let's review. Responsibility is the matter of taking charge of your actions. This occurs everywhere, like your house or your community. I know that not everyone is responsible, but most are. So responsibility is not only important, but it is always a MUST!!

Bobby Tricarico  
Third Place, Fourth Grade

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*Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4*

I am responsible in three ways. I have to be nice to my little sister even when she hits me! I help the teacher by being a little teacher. I clean my room at home.

Jordan Reph  
First Place, Kindergarten

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I am responsible for cleaning my room. I put away my toys. I put away my boots. It makes my mom happy.

Hadassah Pierre-Louis  
Second Place, Kindergarten

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Responsibility is being a good friend. It means cleaning up my playroom. I like helping others.

Adison Weisenberger  
Third Place, Kindergarten

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Responsibility! Do you know what it means to be responsible? It means keeping your promises. In the story "Arthur's Pet Business" Arthur was responsible by taking great care of Perky. I am responsible at school and home. At school I am responsible for listening and doing my work. At home I am responsible for helping my dad with the dishes and doing all of the laundry. If everybody was responsible the world would be a better place.

Micaela Pennachi  
First Place, Grade 1

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Responsibility is promising someone to do something. Arthur is someone in a book that took care of pets. I help my mom set the table. I fold the clothes for my mom. I feed my hermit crab. It's important to be responsible because it's like practicing to be grown up.

Nathaniel Wagner  
Second Place, Grade 1

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Responsibility is something you should do or take care of. Arthur showed responsibility by not going to the movies because he needed to take care of the pets. It is my responsibility to play with my dog. I love my dog. If we didn't have responsibility everyone would be lazy.

Juliet Klecan

Third Place, Grade 1

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Do you know what responsibility really is? Well lucky for you I do and that is what this writing piece is all about. Also a world without responsibility is another subject that I will talk about. An example of responsibility is doing your homework. What is responsibility you ask...well I'll tell you. It is doing what you say and being nice.

For an example of responsibility, look at my Dad. He helps my sister, Katie with her homework. And takes care of me when I'm sick. He also makes sure he gets me and my sister, Katie, to school every day.

Now let's get to a world without responsibility. A world without responsibility would be horrible. There would be no...well anything because there would be no engineers. No one would be honest and there would be lots of pollution. How would you like to live in that world? I think responsibility is very important! Why you ask...well I know and that were there is responsibility there is compassion and safeness. Now you know what responsibility is!

T.J. Hernan  
First Place, Grade 2

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I am writing about responsibility. I think responsibility is counting on others. Ways to show responsibility are by being in the Marines, saving the United States, and saluting to the flag. Do you know who is responsible? I do, his name is Mark. Mark fought for the United States; he saved the United States in the Marines. The world would not be a good place without responsibility. There would be crime, people would be mean and there would be bullying. It would be a good place if we had responsibility because there would be no crime, no bullying, and no mean people. I like writing about responsibility. I hope you liked reading about responsibility.

Cody Conley  
Second Place, Grade 2

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I believe responsibility is being at school on time and cleaning your room when your parents tell you to. Responsibility is following the rules and when an adult tells you to do something you do it.

I show responsibility by occupying my baby sister, Caitlyn, when my parents clean or go outside. My parents told my brothers and I that we have to watch Caitlyn while they went outside. My mom told me to put TV on for Caitlyn while my parents go outside. When my brothers, Ryan and Chris, got zoned into TV, Caitlyn got into something and I was the one who saw her.

If responsibility didn't exist everybody would break the rules and they wouldn't do what they're supposed to do. It is important that everybody is responsible because if not everybody would be lazy.

Isabella Richichi-Leon  
Third Place, Grade 2

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Do you know what responsibility means? Responsibility means being reliable and following through on commitments. This essay will tell you how to show responsibility. Make sure you read this carefully so you will know how to show responsibility. First, I will tell you how I once showed responsibility. It was a Sunday morning. After breakfast, my brother and I went to the basement to watch TV. A few minutes later, Mom called me to wash the dishes. When I heard her at first I didn't want to because I was watching my favorite TV show. Then I thought about what responsibility meant. It meant being reliable and following through on commitments. I wanted to do that so I went upstairs and got started. When Mom saw me, she said that what I did was a great example of responsibility and I was happy. Now that you have heard that let me tell you about a time my sister, Hadassah, showed responsibility. While I was washing the dishes, Mom called my sister Hadassah to clean up her room. Hadassah was playing on the computer. She had not heard Mom calling her name. Mom called her again. This time Hadassah heard her and was not happy with what she had to do, but she knew if she didn't do it she wouldn't be showing responsibility. She wanted to show responsibility so she went upstairs to clean up her room. Mom was proud of her. The last thing I will tell you is how Jane from "Jane's Discovery" showed responsibility. One day Jane's parents wanted her to learn how to read but Jane didn't want to. As she was walking she bumped into her neighbor, Abe. She told Abe about her problem. Abe wanted to prove that reading was important so he told Jane to meet him every day at 3:00 to learn how to read. Finally, she learned that reading is important. If you are wondering how Jane showed responsibility she showed it by meeting Abe on time to learn how to read. Well, now that you know what responsibility means can you imagine what a world without responsibility would look like. Yes, it would be terrible. So make sure you are showing responsibility too!

Abigail Pierre-Louis  
First Place, Grade 3

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What is responsibility? Responsibility is what you take action for. It's like doing your chores and doing what you are supposed to do. For responsibility I'm going to write about me, someone I know, and someone who I read about.

I show responsibility by doing the chores that are on my list. The chores that I do that are on my list are doing the dishes, taking out the trash, sweeping, doing my homework, and other stuff. The first thing I always do when I get home is my homework; then I read. I'm also responsible by cleaning my room once a week. When I wake up I make my bed.



The people that I know that show responsibility are my parents. They're responsible by always making sure the house is clean, being at work on time, and taking care of me and my little sister. My little sister is also responsible. She is responsible by making sure her room is clean and doing her chores. She is four so she doesn't have a lot of chores.

The three people who I read about that are responsible are Yoon, Roadrunner, and Louis and the librarian. Yoon is responsible because one day she got a jade bracelet for her birthday. At school a girl tricked her by saying "If you give me that bracelet for one day I'll be your friend." The next day the girl didn't give her back her bracelet. Being responsible, she told her mom and her teacher. The teacher told the girl to come to her room and Yoon got her bracelet back. Roadrunner is responsible because one day a rattlesnake wouldn't let anybody use the road. So a lady made a bird called Roadrunner. He was a magical bird. He challenged the snake to a fight. The bird won, so everybody could use the road again. Louis and the librarian are responsible because one day Louis wanted to find an important book. He wasn't allowed to go to the library because it was for whites only. He went inside and one of the librarians told him to come back tomorrow after 5:00 in a whisper tone. When he did come back after 5:00 he got his book that he needed.

Now you know what responsibility is. Do you know why it's important for people to exhibit responsibility? So people know what it is, what it looks like, and what they are supposed to do. Also, a world without responsibility would be a disaster. You should write me how you are responsible, someone you know, and someone who you read about.

Eric Ray  
Second Place, Grade 3

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Do you want to know what responsibility is? Well, here I'll tell you! Responsibility is being in charge of something. But if something goes wrong or does not happen that person is held accountable for it. These are some things that are my responsibility walking my dog, take my trash out, and getting my homework done! I'm going to tell you about some people that I know that have a responsibility to. My mom's responsibility is making dinner and taking care of me when my dad can't help her. She has to do it by herself. My dad's responsibility is checking the fluids in the car and grocery shopping. My sister's responsibility is her job. I have some stories with responsibility in them that I'll tell about. In the book "Gary the Dreamer" his responsibility is his dog Blacky and his cat Boots who he has to take care of. In the story "Elijah McCoy's Steam Engine" his responsibility is school in Scotland.

In the story "Roadrunners Dance," Roadrunner's responsibility is to keep the snake away. How do you think the world would be without responsibility? I think the world would look like trash because no one would do chores, no one would have a job so the trash men wouldn't come, and if no one had a job no one would have any money.

James Cruson  
Third Place, Grade 3

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The person that I know that's respectful is a girl who wears hearing aids. She actually is kind of like me because I wear hearing aids. So I really hope all of the people who are reading this story enjoy it just as much as I do!

Hayleigh Scott a remarkable 11 year old girl from the U.S. Hayleigh runs an online business (yes, she is only 11) from which she sells jewelry and accessories for hearing aids, all of which her and her family makes by hand. Hayleigh is helping people all over the world feel more comfortable with their hearing aids. Hayleigh is also the designer and creator of [www.hayleighscherishedcharms.com](http://www.hayleighscherishedcharms.com). When she was 18 months old she was diagnosed as severe to profoundly hearing impaired. When Hayleigh's parents heard the news, they were really sad and tried to protect her by hiding her hearing aid behind her hair. At age 4, she attended a school for impaired children. Hayleigh noticed that a lot of kids tried to hide their hearing aid behind their hair. Hayleigh wanted to make her hearing aid shine and be fancy. Hayleigh wanted to be proud for her hearing aids. Hayleigh started drawing pictures showing how she could make her hearing aids shine. Her mom helped her make the designs into jewelry and tube twist for her hearing aid. They were so fancy! Other kids started wanting them too! With the help of her mom and dad, she started her own little business...Hayleigh's Cherished Charms. She has her own area at her house where she and her sisters make all of their products. She even has a patent on her creations. Audiologist Michele Labrie had this to say about Hayleigh's business "Hayleigh is one of the most inspiring and creative patients I have seen, she has embraced her hearing instruments in the most positive way to make herself even more beautiful than she already is, her cherished charms have helped people of all ages feel more beautiful and more confident about wearing hearing devices." It is Hayleigh's goal to help hearing impaired children and adults feel good about their hearing aids while supporting the schools and research that help us. Hayleigh donates 10% of every sale to hearing impairment research and schools that dedicate their time and resources to help the hearing impaired. In October 2010, Hayleigh was awarded first place in the student category for Oticon's National Contest, *Focus on People*. They recognized Hayleigh's business because she is determined to help others feel confident and comfortable with their hearing aids. Peer Lauritsen, the president of Oticon, had this to say about Hayleigh and her business, "Individuals like Hayleigh Scott are inspiring role models for people living with hearing loss. Through her achievements and contributions, she has shown us that hearing loss does not limit a person's ability to make a difference in their families, their communities, and even the world." Since winning the Oticon award and opening her business, Hayleigh has been interviewed for books, magazines, and been asked to speak at conferences and conventions. It amazes her how a little idea to help people feel better about themselves has blossomed into a full scale business. Hayleigh's goals are to continually make quality products at affordable prices for anyone who wants them, to continue to have very personalized service, to actively support schools and research for the hearing impaired, and to inspire the young and old to celebrate who they are!

Kelly Callahan  
First Place, Grade 4

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Do you know what responsibility means? Responsibility means when you are assigned a task and you do it almost immediately. You would say that I'm responsible because I'm completing

this essay. But someone who better fits the word responsibility is my brother, Samuel. Some of the ways he's responsible are that he does well in school, he helps in the community, and he is a helpful brother.

Every day he goes to school no matter what (except for when he's sick because that's the school policy). He starts off the day by waking up at 4:00 without an alarm. Then he remembers to put his books, folders, homework in his book bag that weighs 20 lbs. Also he manages to study every day in school for projects and major tests. On top of all this he manages to get all A's on his report card.

When he gets home he almost immediately does his homework. He also helps me out with mine. Then on some nights he does OM, band, math club, and boy scouts. When he gets back from these clubs, he does any work he has assigned in that club. Finally when he is asked to he helps clean up and help out in our house.

One last thing he does that is proof that he is responsible is that he helps out in the community. He picks up litter in graveyards, parks, and schools. Then he serves public service hours. He once spent eight hours at what I think is called the Plank House. Doing this gets him merit badges in boy scouts.

Those are three reasons why my brother, Samuel, is responsible. I hoped you liked this responsibility essay. But before you go I have two questions, what do you think responsibility means? And who do you think is responsible? The end.

Robert Mace  
Second Place, Grade 4

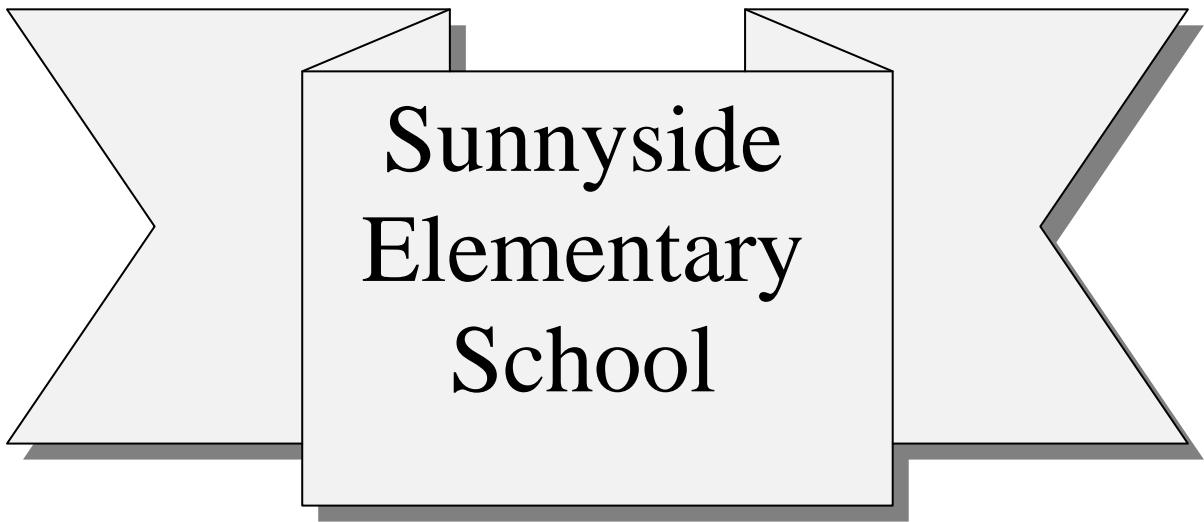
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Responsibility is being reliable and following through on commitments. In a story we read "A Day's Work" by Eve Bunting, a kid and his friends skipped church and the Lakers game just to help because they didn't do their job right. One person who I think shows responsibility is my mom. Her husband is on oxygen. What are examples of ways she shows responsibility?

One person she helps in particular is my pop pop. He is on oxygen. She would rather help him than go to the movies with her friends, which is one of her favorite things. Every day she will go out of her way and make him a delicious breakfast and dinner. She sometimes cancels her trips just to take care of him.

She also loves caring for the family. Every single time she is there she will clean and vacuum the house. She will sometimes take out her plans just to go to the mall and let us have a fun time. She will always bake tasty goodies such as banana bread, brownies, and cupcakes. She will always be a responsible person. She is funny, and she always helps her husband. She is everything in one. Who do you think shows responsibility?

Nicholas Miller  
Third Place, Grade 4



*Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4*

It is important to be responsible because it makes you safe. I'm responsible when I go to bed at the right time. Say its 7:00. Another time when I am responsible is when I clean my room.

Mia Gilliam  
First Place, Kindergarten

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It is important to show responsibility because it makes your Mom and Daddy proud.

Madison Cherkauskas  
Second Place, Kindergarten

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It is kind to show responsibility. I make my bed because I am responsible. It helps my Mom.

Matthew Inhoff  
Third Place, Kindergarten

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In Arthur's Pet Business Arthur took good care of the dogs. He shows responsibility by feeding the dogs. It is important to be responsible by walking the dogs so they can go potty.

Pia Patel  
First Place, Grade 1

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Responsibility is doing what you are supposed to do. In Arthur's Pet Business Arthur is responsible for feeding pets, and walking pets. I think it is important to be responsible so your parents can be happy.

Gabe Larson  
Second Place, Grade 1

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I heard the book Arthur's Pet Business. In the book Arthur is responsible. Arthur took Perky for a walk. He let Perky sleep in his bed. It is important to be responsible so you do not lose your pet.

Jordan Wynne  
Third Place, Grade 1

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How do you feel after working all day long and you come home and have to do more work? That work at home is called a chore. The word chore makes me feel mad. A chore is work that you do to help your family. Some chores are making my bed, taking out the garbage, and cleaning my room. If this work doesn't get done, does it show that you are not responsible? Chores make kids sneaky, they might stuff all their toys under their bed. Being sneaky doesn't help the family, it makes your family angry. I have to clean up messes. My brother has easier chores. I get no time to play or do my homework. First of all, chores are hard work. Kids go to school all day and work hard. Then they come home and do homework. Second, chores can take time away from other things that a kid needs to do. Third, chores just do not seem fair for kids. Kids will have to work a lot when they get older. The next time your kid comes home from school remember they have worked all day. They still have responsibilities like homework, brushing their teeth and eating vegetables. I hope you understand chores don't make them more responsible.

Zachary Zavitsky  
First Place, Grade 2

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Chores are small jobs you do around the house. The chores I do around the house are watering the plants by filling a cup with water and pouring it on the plants. I also feed my dog by scooping up some dog food with a cup and pouring it into a bowl. I take down the laundry by getting the laundry bin and pulling it down the steps. I think doing chores make kids more responsible because it teaches kids how to take care of themselves. Kids also learn to make good choices and some kids earn money. I feel good about chores because I am helping my family. I feel responsible when I help clean. It is fun! Chores are jobs that you can do that help your family and it's a type of responsibility because it helps keep your house clean.

Kendall Wiley  
Second Place, Grade 2

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Do you have chores at home? Chores are cleaning your room and folding your laundry. I have to make my bed every morning. I have to wipe down our table after dinner. I also have to keep my room clean. Chores give kids responsibilities. Another reason is chores keep things clean. It creates a habit of working. I do not like chores. They make me tired. But I do them because it makes my parents happy. That is why chores are a type of responsibility.

Angelina Ayala  
Third Place, Grade 2

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Smyrna is howling about the new dog park on Dog Gone Rd. The citizens have woofed in their request for a grassy open area just for dogs and their owners. The problem is the Dog Gone Builder's Group is still chewing on the idea of either building a "leash-free" fenced park or a

“leashed only” park. The park builders have given the dog owners the responsibility to choose one of the options. I am pawstitive that dogs would be digging for a “leash-free” park!

To begin, why not make a four square area so dogs could run free and be on a leash? There could be an area for little and leashed dogs. Then again dogs would be barking up the tree for the choice to either go in that section or the section for little and “leash-free” dogs. There would also be an area for no leashed and big dogs. The last area is a big and leashed area for the four legged big dogs. The big thing is that the owners would really have to choose responsibility which area their crazy k-nines go in. That is a big responsibility because if you did not, that could cause a big problem. But other than that it would be a dog gone good idea to choose a “leash-free” and four square park!

Of course, those pooches would never get away! You know that in an only leash park they don’t have walls so your dogs could get off their leashes and could be in danger. But if you choose a “leashed free” park, it would have a fence around it so your dog would not be in danger. Some people say that the fences are 8 feet high so a big dog could NEVER get away and in trouble. As you can see, having a “leash-free” park is so much safer and more fun than a leashed only park for both dog lovers and those pooches. But then again those k-nine cat-tastrefy animals will be chewing on the chew toy for a dog gone “leashed-free” park. The big responsibility is that every now and then those dog lovers should check if their dog is attempting to jump over the park wall is a bad habit. Clearly a “leash-free” park is way better than a boring, old, no-fun, leashes only park.

In addition, there would be more ways to exercise and play with a “leash-free” park. If you did not have as much energy as your k-nine friend, you could go to a “leash-free” park and relax while your pooch plays. If the Smyrna park was not “leash-free,” you would not be able to walk long so your crazy squirrel eating friend would not be able to get the exercise or play time they require. Also, they could play with other animals. When those trouble makers play with other pooches, they could make new friends. Different games you could play with your dog off their leash are fetch, Frisbee, and chase. The good thing for you is that you can make new friends too. Different ways to do that are to talk to one another and by helping and showing compassion to others. Then again, your pooches would be pawing for a “leash-free” park. The thing you have to have responsibility with is, watching your dog carefully so they do not get in trouble. It is obvious that a “leash-free” park is so much better than a leash only park.

All in all, “leash-free” parks give more than on leash parks. My dog gone big question is that, what would you feel like if you were on a choking, boring, and no-good leash every day? Anyway, “leash-free” parks are good exercise, fenced in, and are good to be a four square area. Do not forget that any way dog owners need to be responsible by picking the right place their dog goes in, every now and then check if your dog is trying to jump over the fence, and watching your dog so they don’t get into trouble. The solution is to have a “leash-free” dog park! Everything is dog gone good when you have a “leash-free” park!

Alexia Inhof  
First Place, Grade 3

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The town of Smyrna's new idea to make a dog park is chasing the right squirrel. Dog parks are for people in cities who do not have grassy areas to walk their dogs. They give dog owners a chance to have fun in a wide open space. The town has to make a responsible decision on if the park wants leashes or no-leashes and make it fair to fluffy doggies and dog lovers. When I see the sign at the grand opening, I want to see it say no leashes required.

To begin with, the dogs can have a lot more fun running around. It lets your canine friends have a sense of freedom and discover places where humans don't want walk with leashes. Along with that, dogs can make new friends and play wrestle, this makes outside time more interesting. Having no leashes is a more responsible choice because it lets dogs sitting inside all day have a chance to socialize and play with its own kind. You and your dog can also play non-leash activities like fetch and Frisbee. If you have a small backyard and your park has leashes, you cannot do these fun activities. To do all of these things is much more fun than just walking on a leash. This is what I think a dog park should be a place to run around and have a good time.

Additionally, this leash free dog park will help people. If a person can't walk well or has a very energetic dog, non-leash dog parks will let the person relax and the dog run around. People can also make friends with other owners of pets and talk together. Also, it would be nice to have a break from leashes for both the dogs and people because dogs need to have leashes everywhere else in the world. It is very responsible to put some variety in people's lives and don't have leashes all the time. Lastly, dogs should not need to stop walking because a person is tired, and people should not have to get tired trying to get their furry friends exercised. This is what should be right for dogs and people; it is also the best choice for our tiny, little town of Smyrna. In my opinion, Smyrna should make a no-leash dog park because it helps everyone in our community.

Obviously, our town also wants your fluffy friends to stay safe and a leash free park is a great way to do that. Leash free parks have fences to keep your dog safe but not all leash-required parks do. If your dog got loose in a leashed park your dog could be in danger! Also, dog parks with no leashes separate the big dogs and little dogs to make people not worry about a puppy being with a 120 pound German Shepherd. People in our pinpoint town will not be sad about a lost or hurt puppy if we have a leash free park. It would be a wonderful act of responsibility for people to take dogs to a park with a fence, and for Smyrna to make a great choice to keep our wonderful barking animals safe and unharmed. Without a doubt, we should save people from being sad and vets from being too busy! If you want your dog to be safe, leash free is the Frisbee to catch!

All in all, Smyrna's idea to make a dog park is a good idea with or without leashes. Myself I think no leashes is best. Dogs have more fun. People can enjoy themselves, and they are much safer. All of these things make our dogs and people happy and safe and that is a responsible choice, it makes everyone have fun! For all of these reasons, a dog park without leashes is the best for Smyrna.

Grace Jansen  
Second Place, Grade 3

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Hello all! A dog park is interacting with town of Smyrna. But nobody can choose if it should allow un-leashed dogs or leashed dogs. What I think is that dogs should have freedom, and around the area! It is the healthy and responsible thing to do in my opinion.

First of all, unleashed dogs friendly parks are mostly fenced so that means almost 100% of the time, dogs can't get loose. Since they are usually fenced they are child friendly. They can't get out of those tall fences. What if your dog got lost at a dog friendly leashed park? That would be sad, I would leave in grief.

Secondly, dogs stay in shape and show fitness. Dogs are able to run free of a leash that means they get more exercise. Plus, it takes a shorter time, all you get to do is go there, let them exercise, and potty, then you're done. How relaxing for you. They also have more things to do like explore, climb through places we can't get to, and play with each other. While you are relaxing and chatting with other, you are still caring for and closely watching over your dog. This demonstrates responsibility to the tee. Lastly, dogs have more fun! They can do whatever they want. Dogs shouldn't be cooped up all day while the sun is bright and the wind isn't blowing. Also who says you can go on the equipment. Wouldn't that be fun! You are also bonding with your adorable companion! A responsible dog owner closely watches over their pet, but also plays with it to show it love.

In conclusion, the most important reason is safety. Dogs and children can't get out unattended with a fence. But yours and your dog's enjoyment and health is important as well. Ps leashed dogs could be allowed in an off leashed park. Make the best decision today. Let dogs run free.

Riley Pritchett  
Third Place, Grade 3

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Is it important to have good grades in order to play sports? In my opinion, I believe that you must get good grades in order to play sports. I believe this because when my older sister didn't get good grades, she couldn't go to cross trainers. In class, we read two articles that helped me support my opinion.

My first reason for earning good grades is that sports take up a large amount of time. Some children have practice four days a week, three hours a day! That's 5:00 to 8:00! It also takes away from eating time so you will have to eat at an unhealthy fast food restaurant. Also, there isn't enough time for homework. So instead of a good answer on your homework like "Rosa Parks is a good role model because she stood up for what she believed in," you will have a rushed answer like, " she sat down where she wasn't supposed to."

My second reason is education comes before play. Even though every child dreams of being a NBA champion, only a few will actually fulfill this dream. Anyway, wouldn't you rather get a 100% on the math test that defines your grade from a C or a B than win your twelfth game? Also, you might have a guilty conscience if you play instead of studying/doing your homework. So when you pull out your scooter but all you can think about is your homework....cracks! Scooter goes bye-bye.

My final reason is that it helps you set goals. This skill will help you later in life when you want to buy a new car or house. It will motivate students to get good grades in order to stay on the team. According to the text, once students are accepted in to an after-school sport, they will already know what it's like to set a goal and achieve it. They will have learned lessons that they can apply to being a team player

My sister is a responsible person. She manages to get an A average and a 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading level and is able to go to OM, Violin Lessons, Girl Scouts, and Soccer. She never complains about homework or her 30 minutes of reading and turns in her projects on time. This may be hard for the average 2<sup>nd</sup> grader but not my sister. She is mature and her after-school activities are simply a reward for this.

Rebecca King  
First Place, Grade 4

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Some people think you should have good grades to play sports. That is not right! Your parents should decide if you need good grades not school!

Sports are like fire and school is like water. Fire is dancing around having fun playing sports then water comes and puts out its dreams.

First of all, I think school has control over a lot of things. You can't get great jobs if you have bad grades, but what do sports have to do with math? You can't be a doctor, lawyer, speaker, governor, or president but sports shouldn't have anything to do with school.

Going to school makes you smart but does it help you burn calories? NO!! Sports on the other hand are very healthy. Running is good for you which you do a lot of in sports. Running keeps your body healthy. If you're not healthy it's hard to learn.

Sports show teamwork. School helps you learn math and reading, but does it teach teamwork? It could, but sports encourage it more. Sports also encourage friendship.

Last, I will explain what responsibility is. Being responsible means doing what you should. Responsible people look very mature. I'm responsible because I'm not crazy all the time. I do my work and don't yell out random stuff. I do that because it's mature and the right thing to do. I play baseball and I am usually one of the only ones that are responsible.

Andrew Johnson  
Second Place, Grade 4

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Some students say that sports are more important than school. So, what was that word I was looking for? THEY'RE WRONG!!!!!!

Sports are a PRIVILEGE

If a student passed all their classes and got good grades like A's then did their schoolwork, now they have time to go to sports practice or a game. This is good time management. Sports are privileges, so they have to be earned. Or maybe they get good grades but don't have enough time to do their homework. Well, you could put time aside for sports and finish schoolwork first. But if you have F's all the way and passed none of your classes and you didn't give a care about schoolwork, you better start packing for summer school, friend. See, sports are a thing you have to earn and you're supposed to earn them with good grades. If you don't earn your sports, what's the whole point of being rewarded for bad grades, anyway? Yeah. That's what I thought. Kids who manage their homework time easily and get good grades can clearly earn their sports. If you do none of that.... I think we all know what will happen.

#### Grades must come first

We all know that your grades have to come first in a student's life. If you don't know, you need to learn it. Students sometimes- no, most often put all their grades last and go to sports. Does that sound responsible? No. And as Malcolm Forbes always said, "Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one." Or at least a mind that tells you **SPORTS COME LAST AND GRADES COME FIRST!!!** Always. Anyway, being responsible when it comes to sports just means put your grades first so it goes on your permanent record that you're a responsible person and you manage your time well. Yeah. I knew that.

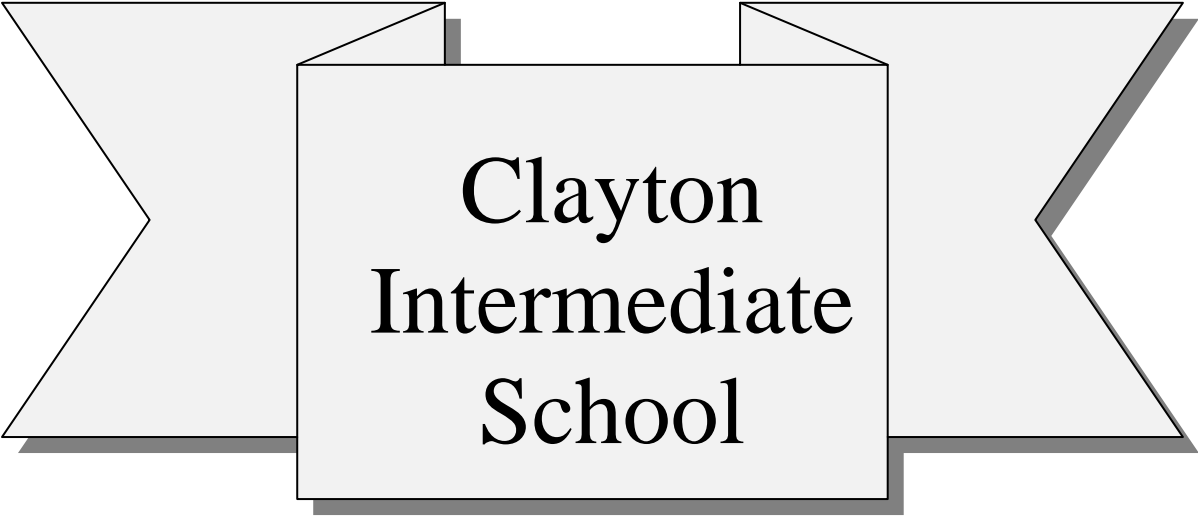
#### Responsibility must reign

Lots of kids are responsible. Sometimes they just forget about their grades and that causes them to get kicked off the football team. So if you want to **KEEP** being responsible, you could at least be the one who gets good grades, manages their time well, and is referred to as "O responsible one". Honestly, it would be nice to be referred to as that. Manage your time and get good grades. "Why?" you may ask. Or else. "Or else what?" you may ask. Or else you're going to summer school, going to get kicked off your sports team, and you won't be referred to as "O responsible one." So please be responsible so none of that ever happens in your life. A responsible person I also know is my cousin Oscar. He plays soccer but he puts his schoolwork first so he doesn't fall behind in school.

Basically all I was trying to say was that grades **ALWAYS COME FIRST!!!!!!!!!!** Sports might keep kids healthy and active, and at practice they might meet new friends there, but that has nothing to do with grades. Keep grades your #1 priority!!!

Victoria Seckley  
Third Place, Grade 4

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*Grades 5 and 6*

Water, water, water! It's great, but why drink it in a bottle? One reason you should not drink bottled water is because it is VERY harmful to the environment. Although it is true that bottled water is pretty tasty, tap water is clean and tasty too! Does everyone know what responsibility means? Well, it means making the right choice during important matters in life. I think a responsible choice is to drink tap water!

As I said before, people should drink tap water. The factories used to produce the plastic bottles pollute so much air that eventually the air will affect thousands of ecosystems around the world! The factories aren't the only sources polluting the planet. The amount of fuel used to deliver bottled water is tremendous! Another reason you should try to discontinue the use of bottled water is that five out of six people DON'T recycle their PLASTIC bottles. Over 24 billion water bottles enter our already overflowing landfills every year.

Another reason tap water should win this fight against bottled water is that tap water might be cleaner. It goes through multiple tests to make sure that the water is healthy, whereas bottled water companies do not have to do through all these strict tests. Adding on to that, there might be harmful chemicals in the bottled water. Scientists do not know if there are any such chemicals because bottled water is not subject to these important tests. I would like you to imagine yourself drinking a bottle of water and you have no clue what is entering your body! Some chemicals might even stay in your body after you use the restroom.

As you can tell, I think responsible people should not drink bottled water. I will try to be a responsible citizen and persuade people to stop buying bottled water. One way I can do that is to put up posters that say bottled water is not worth buying because one bottle of water costs the same as 450 gallons of tap water. Then I will ask if I can hang the posters up in the cafeteria. If they say "yes", then I will display the posters for all the students at CIS to see. After about a week, I can create a petition, and try to get students, staff, and other family members to sign it. The purpose of the petition is to try to get people to commit to discontinue buying bottled water. Now that's a responsible choice!

To sum it all up, I want to say that people should stop the use of bottled water. People worldwide should drink tap water because it is right there in your home when you need it. So stop buying expensive bottled water, and enjoy a cool, refreshing glass of tap water!

Sheridan Price  
First Place, Grade 5

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What a waste! Why aren't people recycling? People are just throwing away water bottles instead of recycling. It is my opinion that we should discontinue the use of water bottles. Water bottles are wasteful and expensive. You're going to need (if you want to) some responsibility to start a recycling group. Responsibility means people have to trust you on what you're going to do. Want to know what can be better than bottled water? Tap water! Read these next two paragraphs to see the differences between tap water and bottled water.

Water bottles are expensive compared to tap water. Four hundred fifty gallons of tap water costs the same as one bottle of water. If you bought five water bottles, you wouldn't get so much

water. But if you bought 5 of the 450 gallons of tap water, you would get 2,250 gallons of tap water! That's a lot of water!

Furthermore, water bottles are wasteful and filling up our wasteland. They are not being recycled, too. Water bottles NEED to be recycled more. Twenty-four billion water bottles each year are going to the landfill. That's just terrible! Only one out six Americans recycle. The other five are just throwing them away.

Since I'm against water bottles, here are a couple things I'm going to do to be responsible. I can sell bottles filled with tap water and the kids can refill it with tap water. I can tell the teachers how much healthier and how much less tap water costs than one bottle of water. Then I would ask the principal if I could walk around at lunch and collect kids' water bottles and recycle them. Lastly, I would bring in a recycling can because our school doesn't have one.

I want people to start recycling. If we don't recycle, our future will be terrifying because all the land would be taken up and about 20% would be water bottles! If all the land is taken up, we have to extend the landfill. So, it takes up more space. What are you for, tap water or bottled water? Show you are responsible and stop using water bottles today!

Steven Boyce  
Second Place, Grade 5

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Have you ever thought about how much water bottles can harm our environment? Well if not, let me tell you how. It is my opinion that we should discontinue the use of plastic water bottles. Water bottles are harming our environment because they are filling up our landfills. Also people could end up getting water for really cheap right inside their very house. A lot of plastic water bottles are not being recycled. To me, responsibility is when you see yourself or somebody else doing the right thing even if there is not an adult around. You also don't have to be asked. If you are not recycling at your house, then you are not being a very responsible person. You are just harming our earth even more.

You might not know this but 24 billion plastic water bottles are going to our landfills each year. They are really harming our environment, because they are filling up our landfills. Instead of going to the supermarket and buying water, you could walk into your kitchen or bathroom and fill up a reusable cup. Then you could get that water for much less money. Over nine billion gallons of bottled water is made in factories every year and with all the work that needs to be put into it, it is letting out a lot of fossil fuels. Also, about 450 gallons of tap water cost the same as just one water bottle. Why not use that instead?

Did you know that there are not a lot of plastic water bottles being recycled? There are a lot of people who don't recycle at their house. One out of every 6 water bottles is recycled every day. If you think about it you can start to recycle at your house because 24 billion end up at our landfills every year. I said it twice because it is very important to me.

In order to help with this problem, I will try to start a program at my school to get kids to drink from faucets and use refillable cups to drink from. One way you can be responsible is by starting

to recycle if you haven't been doing so. Also you can be responsible by starting something to not have so many water bottles going to our landfills every year. Are you willing to help? If everyone is responsible, we can truly make a difference!

I think that we should all try not to use plastic water bottles, because they are harming the earth. After all of the facts I have given you, hopefully I have convinced you to help in this worthy cause. This is important, because if we don't start to recycle then our earth will slowly start to die just from one little water bottle.

Amanda Allison  
Third Place, Grade 5

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Have you ever heard of the saying “Treat others the way you want to be treated”? By helping others, it makes them want to help you too! So, I believe that our school should raise money to support the international organization that restores school buildings around the world because I think those kids' educations are important and if my school was damaged, I'd want someone to help me. Besides, we donate locally all the time.

My first reason for supporting the international organization that restores school buildings around the world is that those kids' educations, in my opinion, are more important than animals. In the article Fundraising Efforts the author states, “It can be very rewarding to know that you've made a difference in the life of someone or something on the other side of the world.” It would be very rewarding, to me, to help a child, or children get the required education needed to exceed in life. The author in Global Fundraising says “We have all heard of the natural disasters that have taken place in countries around the world.” Most school disasters happen because of natural disasters (earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, etc...).

My second reason for supporting the international organization that restores school buildings around the world is I'd want someone to care about my future. In Global Fundraising it says “It is true that you may know somebody with more luxuries than you, but imagine your life without everything you do have.” So if we didn't have our school, we couldn't learn and that would affect our life later. Anyways, animals have people that help them through life and watch over ever single thing they do, but even these kids parents can't promise to get their school back in this situation. Another example is in the article Fundraising Efforts, it says, “There are so many worthy causes that deserve the funds that are collected.” This makes it hard to decide who you should donate to, but if you had the choice would you donate to a fundraiser that supported a school or an organization?

Responsibility means being reliable and following through on commitments. This includes being responsible for your actions as a family member, student, and citizen. Everyone has a commitment to someone or something in their life, but they change throughout your life. For example; a year ago, I didn't have the commitment to persuade my school to support an organization, but I have that now. As you get older, you have more commitments, one day, you'll have a commitment to your husband/wife and kids. If you donate to anyone or anything you can be a reliable citizen. That shows that you care not only about yourself, but others around you as well. But, with being a reliable citizen comes a big responsibility, you are trusted. So you have to

follow through on your commitments. You are also being responsible when you donate; you are taking matters into your own hands and not waiting for tomorrow.

I really want our school to support the international organization because everyone deserves a chance in life and we can't wait for someone else to donate. Not only would we be respectful to the children, but we would be respecting ourselves by showing that we will go out of our way to help someone who needs it. This is very important because you never know when you'll need someone's help. We should all give back to others and help others when we can. So if you are deciding to either go shopping with your extra money or donate to someone remember the phrase "Treat others the way you want to be treated."

Abbey Walters  
First Place, Grade 6

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If you had to choose from giving your local pet store a donation and watch it be used or give a donation to a different country repairing schools and hear it's been used what would you pick? I would pick to give to my local pet store and watch it get used. Before I say anything else, I am going to start off simply. Donating is fundraising. Fundraising is raising money to give to charities and people in need. I want to see if I can persuade you to pick local fundraising. So at the end of the essay we'll see what side you choose. Picking a charity takes a lot of responsibility. It is important to show responsibility by raising money for a local pet store because the area is improving because you're helping the animals and showing you care enough to help your community.

The first reason I choose the animal shelter is the neighborhood would become a better place when you help. If you give money to help the pet store it would help it improve and more people might think, "Hey that place looks like a nice place with a healthy habitat for animals, maybe I'll get one." In the text, "Local Fundraising," it says, "Keeping your community vibrant and well taken care of will directly affect you and your family." Another quote from the same text, "Local Fundraising," is "That's why when deciding which charity to donate to your immediate neighborhood is a great place to start." I believe what the author means by that quote is that it's a good experience to start with your neighborhood and see how it goes. Once you donate you would probably feel good inside. I would think it's a good feeling to help out your community.

The second reason I picked the local pet store is so I could show I care for my community. In the text, "Local Fundraising" it says, "Not only are you contributing to the cause, you are also giving back to yourself." That is what got me thinking about giving to local charities. To me, this sounds a lot better than global fundraising. I do like the idea of global, but I would rather watch my donation get used. Also in the text, "Local Fundraising" it says, "Helping people who need it in your own community will serve to keep your community a happy, successful place." If the community is a happy, successful place then I would think you would be happy and successful too. There are so many things that would be great for the neighborhood. You can start by fixing a bench then end up fixing houses all with the help of charity.

Do you know the meaning of responsibility? The meaning of responsibility is to be reliable and to follow through on commitments. This includes being responsible for your actions as a teacher,



a student, a leader, a family member, and more. You can demonstrate your responsibility through service to others and self-control. I am telling you this because it takes great responsibility in donating to charities. Dalai Lama once said, "Today more than ever before, life must be characterized by a sense of Universal responsibility, not only nation to nation and human to human but also human to other forms of life." You must have responsibility in you to donate money to a charity. If you don't then a lot of things could go wrong.

Now you know why I picked the Local Pet Store. The number one reason I picked local is because I would help the area improve and become a better place. The second reason I picked local is so I could see the charity improve. Helping the community shows responsibility because you're giving back to your community. Which one would you pick, local or global? Did what I say influence you to choose?

Coral Lee Dillon  
Second Place, Grade 6

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Would you rather donate time or money to a local animal shelter or a global organization that helps fix school buildings? I ask this because our school is trying to pick one to donate to. Fundraising is basically donating time or money to a worthy cause. Well, that's what it is for most people. For me, it's making a change in your community or around the world. It is also helping people or animals in need of our assistance. Honestly, I think it is important to show responsibility by contributing to local fundraising because it helps keep the animals safe and you can really see the change.

I bet you didn't know that local animal shelters (like the ASPCA) also keep the animals safe. It is their responsibility to keep the animals safe and off of the streets. In the article "Local Fundraising," the author states that if your dog got out, your local animal shelter would catch them. I know if we didn't have local animal shelters, stray animals might get hit by cars or worse. Another detail to add to the topic at hand is that there would be no place for the animals to go. If you think even further into the theory, you would find that some animals are a danger to you. Only a local animal shelter could take in these animals and care for them. Although some of these thoughts don't seem pleasant, they are true. All in all, local animal shelters keep us and our animals safe.

Do you ever see the change in your community when you donate globally? Most likely you won't because the organizations are very far away. When you donate locally, you can see the change. Even in the article the author stated "You can really see the change for the better." My grandmothers both donate to the ASPCA, and every year there are less animals wandering on the streets. Also, if we didn't donate to animal shelters, they might close down. The article also said that the strays will stay strays. The animals will die due to no one to take care of them. All in all you will feel great when donating locally because you can see the changes.

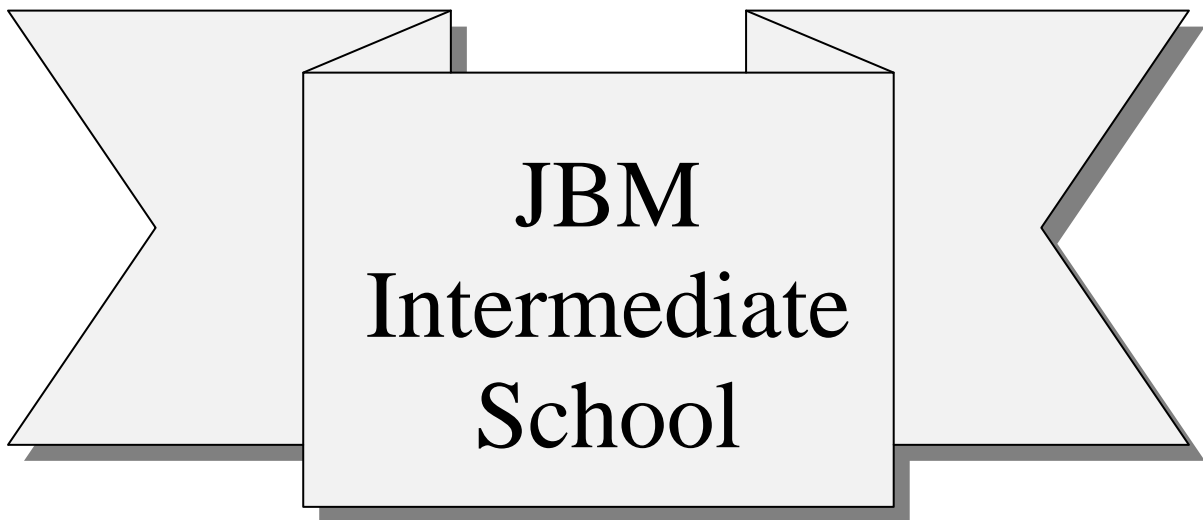
Have you ever heard the word responsibility? Every year our teachers ask us about what we think the word means, but every year my answer is different. The definition of the word is being reliable and following through on commitments. This includes showing responsibility as a family, member, citizen, student, and teacher. In my opinion, responsibility means making

commitments that will affect our future and is based on our past and present. As the great Winston Churchill once said, "The price of greatness is responsibility" which means that to be great you have to be responsible. Helping a local animal shelter shows responsibility because it is our responsibility to take care of the animals. The wise Dalai Lama once said, "Today more than ever before, life must be characterized by a sense of universal responsibility not only by nation to nation or people to people, but people to other forms of life." It also means it is our responsibility to take care of the animals. I hope that the content I have just shared will help you make any decisions on which charitable organizations to donate to.

In conclusion, we show responsibility when we help animal shelters get the supplies they need to help the poor animals. When we help our local animal shelters stay in business, they keep us and our animals safe. Also when you donate to a global organization, you can't see the change whereas locally you can. The idea to donate to a local animal shelter is responsible because it is our responsibility to help these animals. So remember, we can all show responsibility when donating to any local organization.

Adara Turek  
Third Place, Grade 6

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*Grades 5 and 6*

Cough, Cough! That's the sound of the drastic effects of a poisoning water bottle making process. It is in my judgment that we should discontinue the use of bottled water. Responsibility is caring and showing a level of compassion and/or affection for your property. Aren't you responsible for your community? But using water bottles is damaging our environment!

At this point, littering is an immense matter for our environment. So using tap water reduces the waste level. According to the article "Bottled Water: The Wrong Choice," one out of every six bottles are recycled. So that means the other five are going to our overfilled landfills for decades to come. For example, 24 billion plastic bottles are added to these landfills each year! Can't you see our ecosystem is being harmed? Our community is being overfilled by water bottles, and we're letting it happen! That's not being responsible for our neighborhood at all!

This takes us to sickness, even death that is occurring in our area all because of pollution. Some of it is because of the harmful water bottle making process. Because America's use of water bottles is so tremendous, the amount of pollution is going to be too. That is because the trucks to deliver the bottles are contaminating the air around us. For instance, trucks to transport the water bottles are using the Earth's fossil fuels. When these trucks transport the bottles all over the world, it is delaying the process of reducing our use of using the fuels.

In conclusion, our community, our environment, even our country is at stake! Why risk your home when we have clean and filtered water in your reach? It's up to you, make the right choice, tap water.

Sunice Massaquoi  
First Place, Grade 5

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Hi. I'm Anabella and I believe that water bottles are not right for our environment. I mean, sure, they are convenient and easy to carry but is it worthwhile and worth money? I don't think so, and you shouldn't either. Water bottle industries are not responsible and neither are their water bottles!

Here are a few reasons to why I don't like the idea of water bottles. The first reason is passage one, "When you think oh, let me go to the store and get some water bottles!" (Source #1 paragraph 1) Well, while you're thinking that, about a million other people are thinking the same thing. The water from your faucet is free! Plus if you are buying a water bottle that gives the water bottle industry more of your money. That isn't very responsible!

Another reason is before the water bottle gets to you, it has to be made first. (Source #3 paragraph 2). The process to make one is actually very damaging to the environment. The amount of fuel used to run the machines that make the water bottles is out of this world! Then even more fuel is being used to deliver the water bottles with the trucks. Water bottles are killing our Earth! That is not responsible at all!!

Also, there is no doubt that all Americans don't recycle. In fact, a study showed that only one out of every six plastic bottles are being recycled by Americans. (Source #3 paragraph 3) Where are the other five going? They are going to our already overflowed landfills. When they

are there, they sit there for years to come, taking up more of our land. Now that is definitely not responsible!

Now that you have read about how irresponsible water bottles are, I hope you agree and help our world be a better place to live in! So now, next time you go to the store, don't buy bottled water, and encourage other people not to either! Let's not get water bottles and get a healthy living instead!

Anabella Tiberi  
Second Place, Grade 5

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Gulp, gulp, gulp. That's the sound of someone drinking the more responsible water, bottled. It is my opinion that we should be responsible and continue to use bottled water. According to the Macmillan Dictionary for Students, responsibility is having a job and having an area of concern. It is important because it keeps you doing the right actions. Last, without it, the world would be a disaster.

I choose bottled water because you can have a good supply of it for emergencies. For instance, in the text "Bottled Water: The Right Choice," it says you are responsible for having a three day supply for emergencies. But you need that for every human! According to the text it says sometimes natural events happen and it can affect your water supply. So then you need to have bottled water.

Another advantage of bottled water is that you can have it all the time to stay hydrated. So you have to be responsible to remember to grab a bottle of water on the go. For example, bottled water is convenient. So when you play sports or exercise, you should always remember to drink water. Also, the author said that you should drink a gallon of water a day. Bottled water should make that easier because you can take it anywhere, and it's easy to travel with. So that makes drinking that gallon a lot easier.

In conclusion, just remember bottled water is more preferable to me. So take the more responsible choice and drink bottle water. That is why bottled water is better than tap water.

Logan Unterreiner  
Third Place, Grade 5

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Have you ever felt that you could be doing more to support your local community? I believe that our school should raise money to support our local animal shelter because it is our responsibility to help our community. Donating to local charities will help people you see every day, and donating to a local charity will allow you to see your progress. Since there are so many in need, it is important to reach out and give a helping hand. It is the responsible thing to do.

I have to feel that it is my responsibility to help my community in any possible way that I can. The community you live and grow up in is where you spend your life and you have to take care

of it. Stated in source two, "Having pride in your local community is so important". You must be responsible. You can't be lazy when donating to a charity in your community. Keeping your community well taken care of will directly affect you in many ways.

According to source two, "Donating to a local charity will directly help the people you pass on the street every day." Helping the people and or animals will keep your community happy and successful. Seeing your efforts going into the charity for the animal shelter in our local community is better than sending the money to an organization far away. Locally, you will be able to see your efforts, time, and money, as it helps the organization function properly. Without the money, the organization would falter and resort to closing down.

Although donating to a global charity can be rewarding, donating to a local charity will allow you to reap the benefits. Your local charity needs funds and when you give it to them you will have the mind to know you did something important for your community. Also when you put yourself in a situation like others have been in, you will understand the importance of having a local animal shelter. According to source two, "Helping the needy in your community will bring an added satisfaction to your good deeds. According to source three, "A charity that will collect various items and money that is needed would be so appreciated." Donating to the animal shelter will enable you to see a change for the better.

Helping people, whether in your local community or around the world, is the responsible thing to do. It is important to donate to local charities because many animals that are less fortunate need our help, and the different organizations that give aid to these animals rely on our donations. Without our help, many organizations that do these wonderful things would no longer be able to function properly. These animal shelters love it when you play with the animals and you as a child can't give the organization money, it is like your own way of donating because you are donating your time. Then you realize that you did the responsible thing.

Autumn Legar  
First Place, Grade 6

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Do you ever feel you could be doing more to help your community? I believe our school should raise money to support our local animal shelter because I have a lot of pride in my community. I can see the effect that it has on the people and animals in our community. The shelter takes care of animals from our local area. Since there are so many people and animals in need, it is important to reach out and give a helping hand or a paw; it is the responsible thing to do.

I have a lot of pride in my community therefore it is my responsibility to help. When you have pride in your community you want to do whatever you need to help it stay happy and successful. Helping keep stray animals off the street would be helping the animals and the people in your community. Some people don't enjoy animals walking on their lawns or using their front yard as a bathroom, so when these animals are brought to the shelter these people can live a little happier. Like it says in source one "There are so many worthy causes that deserve the funds that are collected during an event." So when and if you have to make this decision think about your community and see what you could do to help make it a better place.

I am able to see the change right before my eyes. According to source two, "Keeping your community vibrant and well taken care of will directly affect you and your family." You would notice less strays on the street and a more controlled population. If you donate to a charity somewhere on the other side of the world you won't be able to see the difference that it is making. Yes, I know it is going somewhere that it will help people but I won't be able to see the difference my contribution is making. In source three it says "These global charities help to change people's lives in a way we may never fully understand." But shouldn't we work on bettering our own community?

The stray animals are able to be taken in and cared for before they find their home. These animals that have been living on the streets their entire life have yet to feel the warmth in a house during winter or even just a full stomach. They didn't know when they would be able to find food, and harsh winter winds or scorching summer heat probably didn't feel too good. So then when you donate to your local animal shelter these animals get to feel love and attention not cold winds and starvation. So your donation helps shelters to get the necessary supplies to be able to care for and house these animals. Like it says in source two "Without these local shelters, stray animals might have to stay living as strays and there would be no place for someone to bring your pet if they were to ever get lost."

Helping people, whether in your local community or around the world, is the responsible thing to do. It is important to donate to charities because many people and animals that are less fortunate need our help, and the different organizations that give aid to these people and animals rely on our donations. Without our help many organizations that do wonderful thing in our local community would no longer be able to function properly.

Skylar Hass  
Second Place, Grade 6

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Have you ever thought about the schools that have been destroyed by natural disasters? I believe our school should raise money to support the international organization that restores school buildings around the world because children don't have a school. There needs to be more fundraising to help support their educational life. You can help. Natural disasters have caused children to not be able to learn. They need your help, and they need it now.

People around the world don't have a school. Kids can't learn new things. They don't know certain things. Natural disasters cause harm to a lot of things, even education. People around the world live without many of our everyday comforts. They don't have a house, not even a school. They need your help. We need to have the responsibility of helping those children live a better life, a more educational life. In many parts of the world there isn't a school because of a natural disaster. A small donation will make a big difference.

There needs to be more fundraising. People aren't going to school. Natural disasters made a major impact on their education. They can't learn new things, like other children do because of natural disasters. Other children around the world don't have the things we have, or don't live the life we live. Some people don't think about it, or choose not to donate. You should. Helping kids' education can make a difference. They need you.

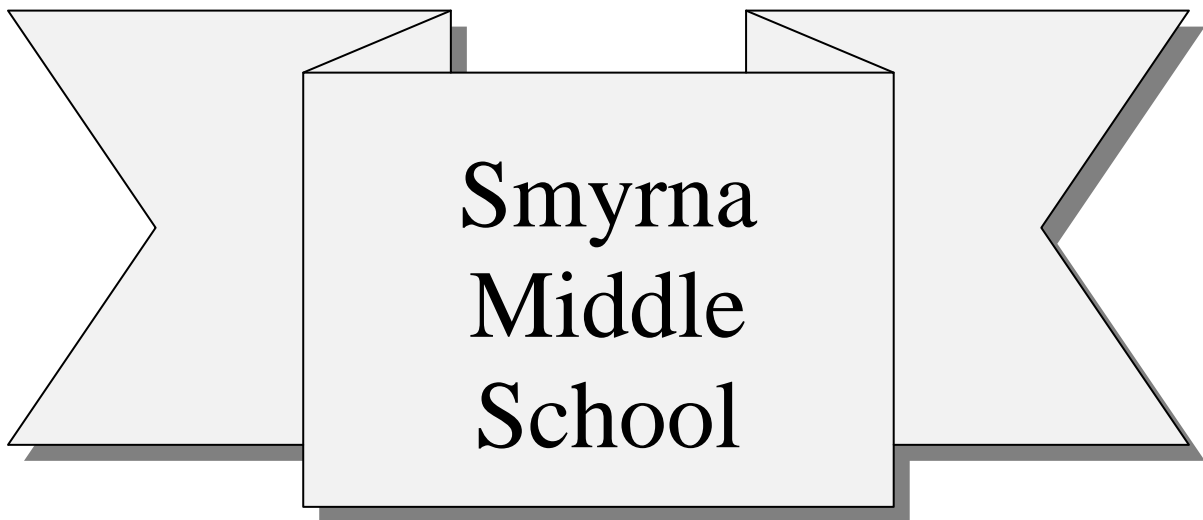
There are ways you can help. It will help the kids' lives. Organizing a fundraiser that will collect various items that are needed and money that is required to rebuild a school would be so appreciated by the people that were affected. Donating money to a charity can help rebuild schools. It's a great cause to donate. Some people don't have the things you have. They can't have the type of education you have. A small donation could make a huge difference, even help rebuild a school. You can help. They need your help.

Global fundraising could help a lot of people, no matter what the cause is. You could have a responsibility to help them. They don't have any responsibilities in life. Global fundraising is important because you could make a difference. You could change their life. You should donate to people, no matter where they are. Fundraising is important.

Olivia Reynolds  
Third Place, Grade 6

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*Grades 7 and 8*

“In the long run, we shape our lives, and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And choices we make are ultimately our own responsibility.” This very important statement came from Eleanor Roosevelt. Some people think responsibility is taking care of paying your bills. Others think it’s going to work every day. Responsibility is also taking care of your kids. My personal definition of responsibility is taking control of your education, understanding acceptable middle school behavior, and taking care of others.

I read an article about a very responsible young lady. The article was called “Malala the Powerful.” In this article, Malala was the first girl to go to school in her country. She loved going to school, but the Taliban did not think it was right for girls to go to school. They think “woman” and “girls” should be home taking care of everything. But Malala was trying to get all the girls to go to school by blogging about it. So one day after school Malala and her friend were on the bus, and a Taliban member got on the bus and asked for Malala . He shot her through the head, and shot her friends in the arm. Why? Because the Taliban saw her as a threat to their rules. In the article by Kristen Lewis, she states that “Malala’s messages were always the same. All children deserve the right to an education.” This proves that Malala displayed responsibility because she took responsibility for all girls to get an education.

I also read an article called “Responsibility in middle school.” There are several different responsibilities in middle school. You need to be on time to all your classes. You need all your supplies, and you need to be organized. You need to be respectful to your teachers and peers. You must follow the dress code. Anywhere you go, you will need your agenda throughout the building so teachers and staff know where you are supposed to be and to make sure you are not skipping class. Also, it helps to stay organized to know what you have to do with homework or what to study. The author of the article, Karen LoBello, said “understanding and accepting the responsibility of middle school can make the difference between success and failure.” This statement clearly shows that part of the definition of responsibility is understanding what is acceptable and what is not.

In my own life, I am responsible by telling my mom and dad where I'm going when I leave the house. I can watch my little cousins and feed them. I like taking care of elderly people. I don't like seeing elderly people by themselves, so I try to help them with their bags and things like that. I also keep up with my phone, because that's one thing I would never lose. So, responsibilities are evident in daily life.

In conclusion, my definition of responsibility is taking control of your education, understanding acceptable middle school behavior, and taking care of others. To show responsibility, you must value education. Also you must be able to understand middle school behavior that is appropriate and show it. Lastly, a responsible person is able to care for others. Responsibility Is Everything.

Trinity Tribbett  
First Place, Grade 7

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“I believe that we are responsible for our choices, and that we have to accept the consequences of every deed, word, and thought throughout our lifetime.” This quote, said by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, defines my personal concept of what responsibility means. The articles, “Taking

Responsibility for Your Actions” by Audrey Marlene Klingeman, and, “Dr. Phil will save your life! (Or will he?),” posted by Personal-Development-Inside-Out.com, also express some ideas and thoughts that represent my concept of responsibility. My concept of responsibility is that you should always face and accept the consequences of your choices, good or bad.

The article “Taking Responsibility for Your Actions” is a good description of my view on responsibility. In her article Klingeman states, “We all like to feel important and have others have a high opinion of us. Some more than others develop an over-inflated view of themselves. These tendencies wrap us in what many call “denial,” which creates a false perception of self and the inability to accept the truth about us. It then becomes painful to accept that mistakes are possible, and when they do occur, the first reaction is to point a finger at someone else.” That phrase helps to support my view on responsibility because it shows how many people do not like to face the consequences of their actions. Then when they have to face the consequences, they turn the blame on to another person. She also states, “Accepting responsibility earns you respect. We can’t be perfect all the time, and we all make mistakes. When we accept responsibility we are accepting the blame for our actions and also accepting the responsibility for making improvements in our lives.” That quote also symbolizes my concept of responsibility by showing that it is better to take responsibility for your choices than to dodge the blame.

Another article that defines my concept of responsibility is “Dr. Phil will save your life! (Or will he?)” In this article the author states, “I do notice however, that most of us have a tendency to search for something outside ourselves as we look for solutions to our problems. We so badly want someone else to fix our lives for us.” This piece of textual evidence helps to support my concept of responsibility, because it shows how people try to throw their problems on someone else for them to fix, while they should be the ones fixing the problem. Another quote from this article is “On the other hand, if you assume responsibility and decide to control your thoughts, you can become your own Dr. Phil if you like and let truly remarkable things happen to your inner and outer realities!” That quote supports my view on responsibility because it shows; if you were to take responsibility for your actions, you can help yourself more than if you were to just blame other people and let other people solve your problems.

Martin Luther King Jr. is someone that impacted my view on responsibility. Just like Malala stood up and took responsibility for her education in “Malala the Powerful” by Kristen Lewis, Martin Luther King Jr. stood up and took responsibility for how he, and his race, would be treated. He gave many speeches persuading other people to see his view on how African American people should get equal rights and be treated the same way that white people do. When he gave his “I have a dream” speech he persuaded many people to take action for African American people’s rights. Finally, in 1965 his efforts paid off and the rights of African American people were gained. Unfortunately, two years after this historical change in civil rights, Dr. King was shot and killed. He took on a huge responsibility, and it passed him through many difficulties but it paid off in the end, and that is why he impacted my view on responsibility.

To me responsibility is always facing the consequences, good or bad, of your choices and to take the blame for your mistakes and accepting the praises of your triumphs. The articles “Taking Responsibility for Your Actions” and “Dr. Phil will save your life! (Or will he?),” gave some key points that helped to support my view on responsibility. Martin Luther King Jr. also impacted

my view on responsibility. I fully believe responsibility is something that all people should try to incorporate into their daily life.

Raina Semenick  
Second Place, Grade 7

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"In the long run, we shape our lives, we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately are own responsibility." That was once said by Eleanor Roosevelt, a first lady of the United States, who was married to the twenty sixth president Theodore Roosevelt. Responsibility comes in many ways and forms, it is shown almost every day all around the world, whether it is a mother lion looking after and caring for her cubs to someone standing up and looking out for everyone in the world without a voice, scared for what will happen next if they don't do something about the problem soon, but they can't and that's why we need people around the world to show responsibility. We need the people that will risk their lives for what they believe in and what's right for the people they are looking after. They will stand up and defend people for whom they are showing responsibility for.

Responsibility is not only that, but it is also looking out for something or someone, being there for them, making sure they go the right direction in life, making sure they don't fall and if they do they will pick them up and help them. In my opinion responsibility is standing up, looking out for people when they need you. This world would be terrible if we didn't have those people that do that, stand up and believe.

"Malala the Powerful," written by Kristin Lewis, is a story of true events that happened to a fifteen-year old girl who lived in Northern Pakistan named Malala. Malala, an ordinary girl, on an ordinary afternoon, was riding her school bus home and the worst happened, Malala quickly turned into a victim of attempted murder. Two gunmen appeared on the bus seeking Malala as the bus drew quiet the unthinkable happened, the gunmen opened fire, a bullet hit Malala right above her left eye and two of Malala's friends were hit in their arms. Luckily her friends were not very badly injured, but poor Malala was left to die by these terrible men. Why Malala? Why just a normal fifteen year old girl? Unfortunately Malala was no normal girl. She possesses a very powerful weapon and a very useful one too. She had a weapon most did not possess. Malala had her voice as her weapon, and for that she was very powerful. Her voice was responsible for most of the girls in Pakistan. For it was invaded and over powered by the Taliban who were young men from Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan. These men were harsh and had many rules that were mostly against women, they could not wear bright clothing, makeup, or even listen to music; but what pushed Malala over the edge was that girls were not allowed to have an education. Malala managed to fight for that. Her father was in charge of one of the schools and Malala was happy for that was all she wanted was to be able to go to school and get an education, but for that they would not let her or any other of the girls in Pakistan. Malala took action and blogged about them, saying what they did; she was standing up for herself and all girls in Pakistan. In January the year of 2009 was brutal for Malala, for they made her father's school close and would not let anyone attend. Her father went against the Taliban and decided to keep his school open, but only sixty percent of the students remained to attend. Soon after the shooting Malala was healing well, and she and her father were moved to England for safety in case the Taliban would want to finish what they had started on Malala. Malala is a

great example of responsibility, she stood up, she used her voice, and she used it well for she was awarded the National Peace Prize by the president of Pakistan. Malala is one of the people they world is better with.

"Red Kayak," written by Priscilla Cummings, is a fictional story about a boy and his friends and family, but bad things happened throughout the story. One day the three boys are waiting for a ride to school when they see their new neighbor, Mr. DiAngelo, in his new red kayak. One of the boys named Digger is very mad at Mr. DiAngelo because he is living on what used to be Digger's grandfather's property that he loved going to. When the main character, Brady, is picked up early from school he is surprised to hear that his father, a crab fisherman, needs his help finding Mr. DiAngelo's wife and son Ben. Soon after searching in the river Mrs. DiAngelo is found. Brady starts to worry about Ben for he had a connection with him. He soon finds Ben and saves him from the icy waters. The next day everyone thinks he is a hero, but he doesn't feel like one when he is picked up early from school again, he stood in shock as his mother told him what had happened, that Ben had passed away in the hospital. Brady is devastated to hear this. He soon uncovers the mystery that his two best friends were the ones that had caused this event to happen, they had drilled holes in to the bottom of the kayak, but they were not meant for the wife and son, but for Mr. DiAngelo himself, they didn't think anyone would be getting hurt let alone die. Digger just seemed to out of anger, as he made his other friend J.T. keep watch. Brady ends up telling his parents what he had discovered about his two friends. They all are given a trial, but Brady will not be charged for anything. His friends are both sentenced nine months away at a detention center camp far away. Brady, the main character, shows responsibility throughout the story in many different ways. In the beginning, Brady took action in saving Ben's life by giving him CPR and keeping him warm quickly. In the middle, he was looking out for his friends by getting rid of the evidence that would send them to jail, even though it may not have been the best thing to do he did it for his friends. In the end, he ended up telling what he had known about his friends and that he had done to try to help them. Brady is one of the people the world might be better with.

I had to show responsibility one time in my life. I had to prove that I could be responsible. I was getting a pet guinea pig for myself, but before I got it, my parents had to make sure that I would be responsible enough to take on a pet of my own. When you are about to get a pet or already have one you have to think, "Will I be able to take responsibility in taking care of this and do well, feed it, give it water and a proper and suitable home for it, can I do this?" I had to think if I could. I finally decided I could do this; I would take care of this, love it, and give it everything it needs to be happy and healthy. Also when you are taking on something like this you have to remember, it is not just a pet, it is a living creature that eats, sleeps, and breathes like you. You can't just ignore it and say you are very responsible and a wonderful pet owner just because you have a pet. To be a responsible person and maybe a wonderful pet owner you have to think even though it may seem silly, "If my pet could talk, would it say that?" Sometimes I wonder if I should have waited until I was a more responsible person to take on this pet, but I am glad I did not because I have risen to the occasion and I have proven to people that I can be a responsible person and pet owner and that I am responsible.

In conclusion, responsibility comes in many forms and ways, whether you are standing up to get an education and women's rights like Malala who just wanted an education because as a young girl that is what is important to her. Or if you are just trying to protect your friends and family like Brady did. All he wanted was to not have his friends mad at him because they meant the

world to him and he would do anything to protect them, even the wrong thing. Or even if you are just thinking about or already are a pet owner because you just want to try and take on a big responsibility like that and prove that you are responsible. Responsibility is shown around the world every day, from just small town news, to something broadcasted all around the world. We the world, together, need responsibility without it we may as well be living in a society where there are no rules, terrible people, scared people with no voice to speak out, and to just say stop. As Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "In the long run, we shape our lives, we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately are own responsibility."

Danielle Schumacher  
Third Place, Grade 7

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"I must do something" always solves more problems than "something must be done" (author unknown). The responsible person is one who takes actions. They are the accountable, reliable people who do not wait to action. They are devoted and have a good sense of what is right and what is wrong, and they know that sometimes the right things are the hardest things to do, but accept the consequences. These actions also describe that of a hero, but to me the common day responsible people are the heroes of today. The hero and responsible person should be thought of as a person who takes actions, does what is right, rather than letting somebody act for them.

A responsible person can be defined as someone who acts in times of need. They do not stand down, for they possess the characteristic of responsibility. "Responsibility requires us to recognize that what we do and what we don't do matters and that we are responsible for the consequences of our choices"- [charactercountsiniowa.org](http://charactercountsiniowa.org). These people are who you could trust your child with; they are common day people who are dependable, reliable, and accountable for their actions. They say "I will and can make a difference, for I am responsible for making a change in my community." "In the wake of problems, they are people who step up and offer their time, effort, and abilities to resolve the issue at hand. Regardless of how complex or how difficult the problem may be, they are willing and ready to do what they can- the best they can." The responsible person is one who is morally accountable for one's behavior, often feeling they have an obligation to do something, to do the right thing. It is that need to make a change that turns the common day person into a hero.

An example of a common day person who turned into a hero is Darnell Barton. While driving his NFTA Metro bus on Elmwood Avenue, Barton spotted a woman standing above the Scajauada Expressway on the opposite side of the guardrail. He then took action. Darnell exited his bus and talked the woman down from the precarious perch. His act of simple responsibility turned into heroism. He says he was just doing his job and being a part of the community. "There are many, but if I can encapsulate one, I guess it would be let's administer the grace that we would have administered to us. If we want a better world, we have to be a part of that" was Darnell's response when asked what we could learn from the incident. We must act to make a difference for it is the right thing to do. Even if we aren't superman, common day people can still make the difference and do the right thing in the community.

The hero who does not take action is not a hero at all. Heroes must step up in times of need, for if

they did not nothing could be fixed. If we lived a world of I can't do this and something must be done, then who will stand up? Where would the responsible hero be without his responsibility? "The images we hold of these icons are those of people larger than life. Their accomplishments are so breathtaking, their abilities so superior, that we cannot picture ourselves in their league." (pats-eduent.net) Although we imagine ourselves not capable of making a change, we can. Darnell Barton didn't imagine himself with heroic proportions, but he being a common day bus driver made a difference. It is their responsibility that allows them to become the hero, to have the outlook of a man in a cape, but really if we didn't act then problems would still be problems that nobody can fix.

Being the hero has become a misconception to our perception of reality. In all truth, we all possess heroism for we all have the potential to be responsible people. We all have responsibility, we just must make the jump to saying I can't to I can and I'll do it later, to I need to act now. The qualities or attributes of a hero or heroine are courage, strength, and will, but the most important one is responsibility. They do what must be done, what they know is right. They know in their hearts and minds that they must be reliable and accountable for their actions. They know the hardest thing to is the right thing, but they will accept the consequences great or small for they know to be responsible, you must act not let somebody act for you. The true key to a hero's heroism is responsibility.

Jessica Bright  
First Place, Grade 8

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Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "In the long run, we shape our lives, and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our own." In other words, we choose our actions, and we choose what kind of person we want to be. We constantly learn and grown throughout our lives, and we are always responsible for ourselves. The responsibility spoken about by Eleanor Roosevelt is important because there is a lot of truth behind it. I define responsibility as several things: the ability to handle a situation, the knowledge that you cause your own actions, and the ability to admit the latter.

When a person shows bravery, they show an important part of responsibility. Having this trait means that someone is unafraid to tackle their responsibilities. They have a mind set that either does not allow fear, or gives them the ability to overcome the fear. In the article "Love Triumphs," six-year old Deamontte Love, was left by his parents to take care of his baby brother and cousins. He was very brave for taking that on. He was not afraid, despite that happening during Hurricane Katrina. The author, Ellen Barry, states, "Deamontte gave his address, his phone number, and the name of his school. He said the five month old was his brother." The fact that he cared for a five month old is outstanding. That quote from the sotry shows bravery because it shows how Deamontte was brave enough to care for a child, despite being a child himself. Bravery is an important part of responsibility because one should be unafraid in most cases in order to take on responsibility.

Another important way a person can display responsibility is by being honest. Being honest means that when asked a question, the person will tell the truth and not a lie. You can count on them to be truthful. Mathilde Loisel from "The Necklace" said, "You remember that diamond

necklace that you lent me to go to the ball at the Ministry? Well, I lost it.” That part of the story showed honesty because she was admitting to a lie. Her secret was dishonest at first, but telling her friend that she actually lost the necklace was being honest. Honesty is an important part of responsibility because it shows that the person can be trusted. Honest people are responsible. To show responsibility a person must also be mature. To be mature means that person is not childish.

Mature people can handle things in an adult way, and be serious in serious situations. In my life I learned to be mature at an early age. Although I admit I am not always mature, I am when I need to be. Once, about ten months ago, I was babysitting my niece. She was three months old at the time. I was forced to be mature because I was the adult in the situation. I had to take care of her. When I took on the role of the baby's caretaker, I made sure to behave correctly and not as a child. Maturity is an important part of responsibility because a childish person could not handle being responsible.

In conclusion, without responsibilities, the world would be chaos. Adults would run around acting like children, so actual children would have no guidance. The economy would crash because adults may not be responsible enough to go to work or pay bills. Responsibilities should be a part of our lives because our society would not function without it. We only have one world. It is important for these reasons, to be responsible. Our world is the way it is because of it. The three traits I chose add up to a responsible person. Without even one of the traits, a less responsible person would be the result. Brave, honest, and mature people have what it takes to handle responsibility.

Heather Coffin  
Second Place, Grade 8

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Eleanor Roosevelt once stated, “In the long run, we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our own responsibilities.” This quote is saying we have to take responsibilities for what we become in life and every single day we get new challenges, the process ends when our lives do and they will die with us. The responsibility spoken about Eleanor Roosevelt is important because she is telling us how life goes and either we grasp responsibility or don't bother with them. Responsibility is the way we value life, we could live a life without a worry in the world and conclude your responsibility, but if you go down the wrong path you will end up with consequences weighing you down in life. Three most important characteristics someone must possess in order to be considered a responsible person are showing leadership, dependability, and trustworthiness.

When a person displays leadership, they show an important aspect of responsibility. To have leadership you need to take matters in your own hands and make a better change. To lead people in your direction and show them you're capable of doing what other people won't, like being persuasive and having good ideas that other people can relate to and make them believe you are your own leader. In the article “Mom of Suicidal Teen Sues Who is Responsible,” the mom became a leader. This article gives you details on what a mother felt she had to do, to give herself closure after her daughter's death. She worked hard to receive justice. Christine states, “Matt Morgan purposed the Safe Schools Improvement Act of 2013. Norman said she would do



everything in her power to pass the Rebecca law.” This quote portrays the act of leadership by stating what Tricia Norman said what had to be done in order to have the law passed so other people don't suffer; she put her kindness to other people first then grief. This trait is important because if there was no leader it would be like The Lord of the Flies and everyone would go their own way. Good or bad, there's no one to tell them otherwise. When people like in The Lord of the Flies have no government or leader to make laws or decisions they will do what they want and it would be tyranny.

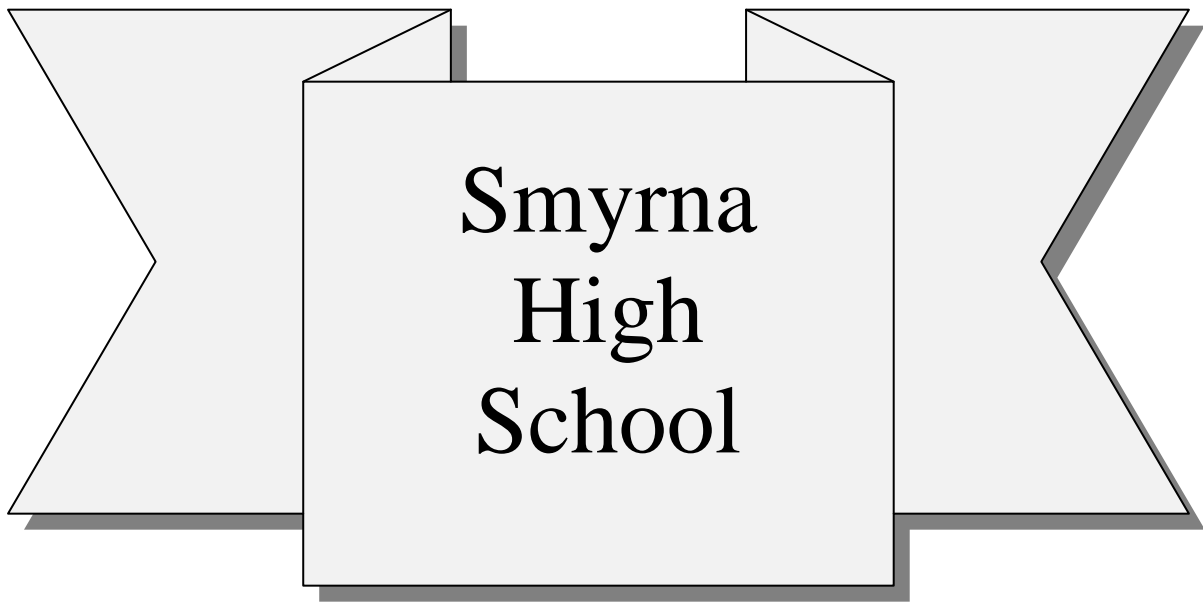
Another important way a person can display responsibility is by being dependable. To have this trait you are being relied on and someone needs you for something. You hold their fate in your hands. In the book “I am Number Four,” a man is assigned to protect a boy. A boy named number four disguised himself as John Smith and he has a guardian, Henri, was assigned to him when he was a child. They came from a distant planet called Lorien. It was taken over by ferocious beasts, those things wanted to kill all the Lorien people but 20 of them made it to earth and the beasts are on the hunt to kill all the legacies (people with special powers). Henri has the responsibility of protecting John or his kind will become extinct. The quote explains how the person is displaying this trait by keeping him healthy and protected, and John is depending on Henri to keep him safe. This trait is important to have because without trust in a person no one will respect him and follow in his footsteps and John won't feel safe. To have this trait you have people who rely on you to be something you want to be.

To show responsibility a person should also be trustworthy. To have this trait people are giving you their trust for being accounted for. If you are borrowing something of someone's they are relying on you to return it safely. Another scenario would be where the teachers are relying on you to do your homework. In my life my best friend Lexi is someone who is trustworthy. She is not afraid of telling the truth about things; she will always be careful of your belongings and hers and most importantly she is right there by your side if you need someone to talk to. Even in school when she has a lot of homework, she takes a step up and does all of it. When I ask Lexi if we could hang out, she puts her responsibilities first so I can stay longer. If she borrows things and hurts them (she hasn't ever done that) she will not be afraid to tell someone the truth because she would feel guilty. These things are displaying this trait because being trustworthy is when another person trusts you with or for something and they come through with it, and they show you they are a reliable person and will always be right there beside you. This trait is important to have in a person because you don't want a friend who disrespects things and takes advantage for it because you will forgive them, everyone needs someone to trust.

If everyone in the world was a responsible person then there would be less crime, no lies, no war, and everyone will be at peace with each other. We could live in a worry free world with no consequences weighing us down, but we don't live in a perfect picture. Responsibility is important because it takes place in everyday life. If we ignore it then, how far will we really go in life when we don't complete simple tasks? This is where time will get the better of us. The act of responsibility should be within our lives because we need to trust and rely on people and if no one can do that their lives are full of regrets and what ifs. Leadership, dependability, and trustworthiness creates a dream friend, but nobody is perfect and we need to accept people for who they are and everyone has a little of each to be a good friend or student. If everyone takes part in the act of responsibility, then why would there be fights, or conflict with other countries or people because how people were created to handle responsibility.

Kaila Mechell  
Third Place, Grade 8

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*Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12*

Dear Smyrna School Board,

One might think that it would be absurd to change one of the Core Values that have been in place for years, but this topic has been deliberated by many students. Responsibility is the state or fact of having a duty to deal with something. Everyone has their own responsibilities, whether that person may be ninety years old or five. If people do not follow through with their duties to deal with different situations, then many parts of their lives will be off balance. Realizing this, I have come to the conclusion that responsibility needs to remain a part of the Core Value System because it allows for children at young ages to learn the importance of being responsible and without students being able to learn about this, they could run into many different complications.

It is necessary for students to learn the importance of responsibility because it can be used throughout their entire lives. "You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today," Abraham Lincoln once explained. This quote helps to show that there will always be some sort of responsibility to fulfill. For example, as a student there is the responsibility of doing schoolwork; as an adult there are the responsibilities of doing a job and paying the bills. Both students and adults also have the responsibility of being on time. Epictetus stated, "Make the best use of what is in your power, and take the rest as it happens." What Epictetus meant by this is that while it is majorly important to be responsible, it is also important to realize that it is impossible to solve everything. One cannot allow the responsibilities that are placed upon them to hamper the rest of their lives. Students need to learn what responsibility is and how to act on them at a young age in order to lead normal, easier lives, and having it as one of the Core Values allows this.

If responsibility was not one of the core values, then it would take longer for students to notice their own responsibilities. George O'Neil put this idea into words nicely when he said, "When we have begun to take charge of our lives, to own ourselves, there is no longer any need to ask permission of someone." I interpreted this quote to mean that everyone needs to be responsible and look after themselves and after they learn to do this, everything else in life will come easier. Another person who was able to prove a very important point was Brian Tracy when he exclaimed, "Peak performance begins with your taking complete responsibility for your life and everything that happens to you." In order to take responsibility for different actions, that person must first know how to take responsibility. If a student does not learn what responsibility is and what their responsibilities are, then how can they reach "peak performance?" The School Board must keep responsibility as one of the core values because without it there would be so many children who will not even know the definition of what it means to be responsible. On the other hand, there are so many students that come into class late and others who come to class unprepared. It is their responsibility to be on time and be prepared, but quite a few students do not realize this. Even though responsibility has been a core value for several years, there are still plenty of students that are not responsible. Maybe responsibility being a core value is not helpful. Obviously these students who arrive at class unprepared do not know the importance of being responsible. Is responsibility being a core value actually effective? Overall, there are many more students who are responsible and prepared than there are students who are irresponsible. Responsibility is of such importance in the Core Value System because it allows for children at young ages to learn the significance of being responsible and without them knowing this, then they will not lead as beneficial lives. Throughout a student's education and later on in life they will realize why being responsible is so important. With responsibility being one of the core values, students are able to see earlier on in life the importance of being

responsible, so to adjust to gaining more responsibilities as they grow up will not be as difficult. If the core value of responsibility were to be taken out students would not be as responsible. When something that has been in the school board for so long changes, it also affects the student's whole lives.

Davynn Roberts  
First Place, Grade 9

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Dear SSD School Board Members,

When one thinks of the word 'responsibility', he or she may think of a person or student who does a job and gets work done. There are also those who would argue that responsibility is an important characteristic that everybody should have. I happen to be one of those people. I believe responsibility plays an important role in our lives and the way we live them.

A teenager's sole responsibility is to go to school. Going to school means getting a good education so we can be successful later in our lives. It is that simple. But being successful in school is not something we can do all at once. We have to take baby steps, one small victory at a time. Those small victories could be anything from turning in a project, passing a test, to something as simple as turning in homework every class. As Helen Keller said, "I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble."

Not only does responsibility play a major role in our lives at school, but it affects the way we act outside of school. When school is over and we go home, we do not just throw away our responsibilities and do whatever we want. We still have jobs we must accomplish, like doing chores, babysitting younger siblings, or going to a job. As we get older, we become more independent and are given more freedoms. But those freedoms given to us can easily be taken away if we abuse them and are not responsible. I always think back to the quote, "With great power comes great responsibility." This famous line was said by character Peter Parker in the movie Spider-Man. I feel that this quote can really explain this situation that we teenagers are in right now. In the movie, Peter Parker is given amazing powers that he ends up using to fight crime because he feels that he has a great responsibility on his shoulders; to protect the people and city he loves. He tries his hardest to follow through with this. One could relate this to teenagers now because (minus the web-shooting powers), we are getting more freedoms, such as being able to drive, and we must be sure we do not abuse those freedoms. Our parents and elders look to us to make sure we uphold our responsibilities as teenagers and perform our jobs to the best of our abilities.

There are those who would say that responsibility is a Smyrna Core Value that should be taken away because responsibility is something we use so much in our daily life that we do not even realize it. Being responsible was something that was taught to us when we were in kindergarten. All throughout our years of being in school, we have been taught this term repeatedly, and majority of us students know it like the back of our own hands. Responsibility has become such a huge part of our lives, that it wouldn't make a difference if it was still enforced as a core value or not. But, that does not mean it is okay to stop having it as a Smyrna Core Value. We should

always be reminded of how important responsibility is; therefore it should remain as a Smyrna Core Value.

In conclusion, Responsibility is a Core Value that should always be enforced in the Smyrna School District. Though we all have known we should be responsible all our lives, it should still be taught to every student because it will remind us that we should strive to be great students in school and successful individuals outside of school. Responsibility is something that will help us become successful in the future. If it is not a core value anymore, students may find it acceptable to slack off and throw away their responsibilities. If we lost our sense of responsibility, where would we be in our lives right now?

Savannah Swanson  
Second Place, Grade 9

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Dear School Board,

America's 16<sup>th</sup> president once stated "You escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today." Abraham Lincoln used ten words to explain what students would be doing each year if responsibility was no longer a Core Value in the Smyrna School District. Everyday students see signs in the hallway or hear teachers say the word and instantly they are reminded of the importance of responsibility in one's life and the difference can definitely be seen. One grows up in Smyrna schools learning how to act without being told, have high self-esteem, and be an overall benevolent person. All of these things are what makes a responsible person and allows the Smyrna schools to be a well working place.

With responsibility in schools, students take action instead of standing aside, have a higher self-esteem, and are able to make the school a better place. The students will be able to admit to their actions and take pride in them, instead of blaming others for what they have done. Brian Tracy once said, "Peak performance begins with you taking complete responsibility for your life and everything that happens to you." If Smyrna continues to include responsibility as a Core Value the students will learn to value their choices and always do their best. One can discern any Smyrna student from any other because one will see they are always the first to volunteer and finish what they are told to do. The students know that to be a responsible person they should act that way in schools and out.

Some may argue that responsibility does not change the students. One may feel that the students are forced to act responsibly, but those who feel this way have not seen the effects of this core value on Smyrna students. When a student sees a peer doing something responsible, they are more likely to do the same. So, as students grow up learning about the meaning of responsibility and how to show it, they are able to positively influence their peers. This Core Value is able to take one from feeling as if they are not worth anything to feeling good and trusting themselves. Each who has felt that responsibility is not important to have as a Core Value can just look at the students of Smyrna and see the difference.

Responsibility is a key component to the success of Smyrna students in school and out. It influences every decision and action they pursue. It is a distinct quality that all can recognize

and is why responsibility should stay a core value. The students, teachers, and parents will be able to continue seeing a difference in themselves over others because the core value of responsibility has always influenced their lives. They make better choices, feel better about themselves, and are an overall responsible person. So, as you deliberate keep in mind that Responsibility, along with Smyrna's other core values, does not take away, but enhances the students in every way.

Samantha Sawyer  
Third Place, Grade 9

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To the members of the school board,

Responsibility is an important value that most children learn from the age when they are able to pick up objects. Parents give their children the opportunity to practice their responsibilities from that young age by simply telling them to clean up their toys, brush their teeth, or pick up little things. Usually they respond, "Yes mommy or daddy!" As children get older, it becomes more difficult for a child to enthusiastically accept such responsibilities. Responsibilities become more and more demanding as age increases; however, responsibility is an important value for parents, educators, and the public to instill in future generations because it teaches children how to be organized and how to take control of a situation. This is why responsibility should remain one of the core values of the Smyrna School District.

Responsibility should remain a core value because it is crucial to ensuring that all children grow and feel good about life. According to Henrik Edberg, having responsibilities helps young people to develop pride in their accomplishments and improves communication skills. This benefits the entire community because it has a ripple effect. For example, being the manager of a store or franchise may not seem like a big deal on the surface, but the responsibility associated with this job helps to build self-esteem. There would be more confidence in how the manager acts and communicates with his or her fellow employees. This newfound confidence then radiates to his or her coworkers because they pick up the good vibes from the manager's protruding confidence. Responsibility benefits everyone, so it should be encouraged as much as possible.

Responsibilities can only really be dealt with using effective organizational skills; therefore, increasing responsibility will improve organizational skills. As seen in Smyrna High School, being class president involves the major responsibility of ensuring that the issues of the people of the class are dealt with efficiently. The class president must come together with his or her fellow cabinet members to decide how to handle to issues of the student body. This organizational flow allows all issues to be dealt with as they need to be. Being responsible ties hand in hand with being organized, because being responsible comes easily if people are organized.

On the other hand, responsibility does have the drawback of sometimes being pushed onto others. People can use responsibility to depend on others. The responsibilities that a person has can be thrown at a friend or family member because someone is lazy or feels like he or she does not have the ability to help. To illustrate, a relative may always ask for help with going to the store to get groceries simply because he or she doesn't feel like it. Not only is this refusal to

accept personal responsibilities lazy, but it can pressure the individual that responsibility is thrown at; however, if each person were to take ownership of his or her own responsibilities, then the weight of life's problems would be more manageable for everyone.

Responsibility is important because it is something that is learned from a young age. As we grow older, we should be able to handle the greater responsibilities faced during the ages of adolescence and our teens. It helps us to stay organized and improves our overall environment. The only way that we will be able to do so is through repeated practice. This is why responsibility should be maintained as core value in the Smyrna School District.

Nnennaya Okorie  
First Place, Grade 10

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To whom it may concern,

I have come to the understanding that you, the members of the school board, are currently evaluating the community core values that have been in place for many years. I also understand you are currently examining the core value responsibility and its importance to the community. I personally believe responsibility is very important and is needed to ensure productive citizens and maintain a prosperous and tranquil community.

A man by the name of Dennis Waitley once said, "A sign of wisdom and maturity is when you come to terms with the realization that your decisions cause your rewards and consequences. You are responsible for your life and your ultimate success depends on the choices you make" (7 Timeless thoughts 3). Responsibility comes with action, but whether you take responsibility for those actions or not shows your maturity level. In order for children to become mature adults, they have to be taught that they need to take responsibility for their actions, even the negative ones, so they can learn from them and grow from the experience. This core value teaches children and adults what is right and what is wrong. When a person demonstrates a negative action by ignoring a responsibility, then he or she receives a consequence as a result. He or she will learn that what transpired was wrong, correct it, and will go on with doing the right thing the next time, benefiting the community as a whole.

"By taking responsibility for our lives we not only gain control of what happens ... but also gain self-esteem" (Waitley 3). By instilling the core value responsibility into the students from an early age, we give them the tools needed to become productive citizens later in life. Also, teaching people responsibility will result in happier people. Their self-esteem will be higher because they are holding the reins to their life instead of others. They will be able to take control of their lives and navigate them down a positive path, getting jobs, and bettering the community. Through practicing responsibility, a person becomes an asset to the world instead of a burden.

Some may argue that in order to take responsibility for our actions you have to sacrifice your pride. It may result in "embarrassment, anger, humility, creating a wrong view of ourselves" (McKay 1). While that may be true, experiencing these feelings enables a person to learn because he or she will not want to experience embarrassment again. Sometimes avoidance of pain is what we need to help us grow.



As I stated earlier, I personally believe responsibility is very important and is needed to ensure future generations of productive citizens and an industrious society. It teaches us right from wrong which boosts our self-esteem and gives us control of our life. Responsibility allows people to become beneficial to the community rather than burdensome. I hope my letter has convinced you to restrain from deleting this value from the list.

Taylor John  
Second Place, Grade 10

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Dear Smyrna School Board,

Responsibility is very important for students to learn and know. I believe that we should keep responsibility as one of our core values to better our students and help them become more well-rounded. Without responsibility our country would be doing terrible. We already aren't doing our best right now and that could be because not everyone knows how to be responsible. This problem could be caused by not having responsible as one of the core values in every school around the nation. Responsibility is very important to teach young adults and should be one of our core values.

Having responsibility will only better our school district; it won't hurt it. Brian Tracy once said "Peak performance begins with our taking responsibility for your life and everything that happens to you" (Edberg). This means that if you don't have responsibility in your life, there is no way that you would be able to perform at your highest level. So if you take away responsibility, then people won't try there hardest and won't achieve what they are capable to achieve. Helen Keller once said, "I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble" (Edberg). You have to have responsibility to apply the same effort to small tasks as you do to big ones. If you take responsibility out of our core values, it's like saying it's okay to do your very best on a test, but you don't have to try that hard on homework or classwork. When student don't try as hard on their classwork and homework, than it starts showing on their tests grades, so even if they try hard and do their best, without the effort when they are learning it, they won't be able to get a good grade on a test. The last quote that I have is a counter argument. "Parents should be responsible and set a good example; they must also make clear their expectations for responsible behavior" (Rice). Although I do think that this is true, not all students have a good parent role model at home that they can look up to, so they never learn responsibility. You guys as responsible adults need to be aware of that and realize that every student should be taught responsibility. While this quote does make a good point, what about the student that don't have a role model.

Taking responsibility out of our core values could potentiality hurt some of our students. Responsibility needs to be taught to students, whether through their parents or their teachers, but they need to know that without responsibility you won't be able to successfully do anything. Students need responsibility; you should not take it out of our core values!

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Responsibility is taking care of your duties and accepting accountability for your actions. When one is truly responsible he will not blame anyone for his shortcomings, but he will pick himself up and make it his duty for that never happen again. It is the value that drives leaders, teachers to teach and student to work well, because responsibility provides worth, show unselfishness and provides an obligation despite ones feelings at the time. This is why responsibility needs to remain a community core value.

When one is responsible for a task and puts forward the effort in order to succeed, they will gain self-worth (Edberg 3). This is because you gain the feeling of competence. This is the feeling of learning and mastery and progression in a certain task. The feeling of progressing is essential in ongoing life. Responsibility gives the feeling of relatedness, which is the feeling that one matters to others, creating contributions to others and giving the feeling that you are a part of a team. Without responsibility, there is no reason to work or to have any kind of worth ethic needed to be successful.

When you are responsible, you are put aside unselfishness. Responsibility is not only the act of doing your duty well, but also admitting to the consequences. If you are responsible, you must put aside your pride and accept when you are wrong and blame no one else for your mistakes. Responsible people try to help others when they see someone make a mistake, but they must do it in a tactful way to minimize hurt. Responsibility is a main reason to make sure a task is done to the fullest completion.

Responsibility provides a needed obligation for a task to get completed. A fireman will not always want to enter a blaze of hell to consume his life, but as a fireman, he has an obligation to risk his life so that others might have a chance to live. A good fireman will do what it takes because it is his responsibility to save the lives of others despite his fear of death. Some teachers will go to school and get attacked by physical and verbal abuse, but it is the teachers' responsibility to provide, at home, to put food on the table so their children won't go a second without food, clothing, and a roof over their head to keep them warm and safe. Students will go to school to be educated but are all too often pushed by bullies, beaten by insults, drowned by insecurities which the world laughs at and choked by seamlessly never ending growing depression. Despite the agony these elite will go through years of tribulations because they have an obligation to themselves to never give up and strive toward the future no matter what the world will tell them. If you think the AP and honors students are the likely candidates for sport cars, and beach front condos, you are wrong. It is the students who are able to work to the best of their ability, the students who stand strong against the whims of pressure and do their greatest are the best candidates because they accept their responsibility toward their dreams, goals, and safety.

Some may say that responsibility creates stress, but like a muscle will never grow strong without a weight, you will never grow without a challenge. Some may say that responsibility will hurt precious time and can cause one to be disconnected from loved ones. You must have time management that allows you to live in a comfortable way because everybody is responsible for

their body, and stress can hurt your body, mind, and spirit. Stress can cause pain of any kind: heart disease, digestive problems, sleep problems, depression, and weight problems are just a few to mention. There are ways to reduce this from happening, such as setting aside relaxation time, regular exercise, a healthy diet, and plenty of sleep.

Without responsibility, there would be no reason to take sacrifices and to strive to do better in life. Responsibility provides worth that is needed to maintain self-esteem. It provides incentives for important obligations that would not have been done. It provides unselfishness to make a person develop better character. Without it, finding what is important would be difficult to distinguish the important parts of life. There is no reason for responsibility not to be a main core value.

Kendell Rennie  
First Place, Grade 11

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"It is a painful thing to look at your own trouble and know that you yourself and no one else has made it." What Sophocles is referencing is responsibility which happens to be one of our core values. Taking away even just one of our core values can have a negative effect on our district. Our district promotes responsibility. Saying that, responsibilities in our school should be maintained because it helps us grow in our education, in hard work and in self-esteem. However, having responsibility through others eyes can be difficult if no one knows their limits.

To start off, I'd like to put the spotlight on Ian Englebeck, a senior in Sammamish, who thoroughly represents us high schoolers. He stresses the importance of responsibility through education by saying, "the responsibility for one's education, can only be one's own." That being said, our education is the only education we are responsible for. If responsibility is taken out of our representation as a district, students will stop caring about their education by simply saying "It's no longer my responsibility." Now why would they say such a thing? It's because students now think that responsibility is no longer promoted, that it's no longer needed. Our education is our future and we are responsible for the future and all it holds.

Going forward, hard work has a positive effect of having responsibility. This not only applies to our school, but to the outside world as well. In the article, "Raising Responsible Children," Kate Rice interviewed a teenage boy whose responsibilities are different than others. According to him he enjoys the responsibility of having to work. Not only does hard work encourage one to take responsibility, but also the knowledge of skills and how they can apply to generally everything. Responsibility can work easily as a domino effect. Once someone owns up to their responsibility, it can create tremendous work ethic that can be used for the future.

Most importantly, self-esteem can be built through responsibility. In the article "Timeless Thoughts on Taking Responsibility for Your Life," building self-esteem is number two on the list. It may seem crazy, but if someone doesn't take responsibility for their actions, they blame it on others, usually. That can hurt. The hurt will never end if no one steps up to the plate and claim their wrong-doing. In a way, having more responsibility can prevent others from having low self-esteem issues.

However, one might argue that too much responsibility is a problem. For instance, if one does

not know their limits on how much or how little responsibility to take, suffering can occur. Some argue that too much energy will be wasted. If responsibility is taken that can't be controlled. That, in return, can create a lot of suffering for oneself. When suffering takes control, people start to stress the "could have," "would have," and "should have." In the end, sometimes taking responsibility is just not worth it.

As you can see, responsibility, all in all, should be maintained throughout our district. Although some may look at responsibility as difficult, many others, including me, look at it as an important value that everyone should cherish. Not one does it grow in or education and hard work for the future but most importantly through self-esteem. Saying that, responsibility is an absolute must have, despite the arguments of others. As Denis Waitley says, "A sign of wisdom and maturity is when you come to terms with the realization that your decisions cause your rewards and consequences. You are responsible for your life, and the choices you make." Without the motivation of the district drilling responsibility into our heads, students will never aim for success.

Karen Cimaglia  
Second Place, Grade 11

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Dear Smyrna School Board,

I am contacting you in reference to the current debate on whether responsibility should or should not remain as one of the Community Core Values. Responsibility is a simple term that represents a crucial part of the "big picture." This "big picture" of which I am referring to is the overall process of how tasks are completed. Responsibility is essentially the foundation of this "big picture." Without responsibility, many processes, tasks, and disputes cannot reach resolution. Responsibility should remain one of the core values due to its everlasting effect on a student's ability to uphold core family values, allow for successful financial growth, and to be able to obtain a maintain a stable job.

Providing ways to be responsible at home in order to follow a family's core values is essential. The value of responsibility can not only be learned exclusively in schools, it can also be taught at home. Encouraging children of all ages to say please, thank you and apologize accordingly are fundamental to their views on responsibility. "You should always offer to try in any way you can to make up for your misdeed" (McKay 3). The start of forming responsibility in an individual can also occur at a young age by parents assigning specific chores for them to complete. An article in particular, "Raising Responsible Children," said the following on the matter: "Be clear with children about what you expect from them. So often we assume that our kids will absorb or somehow know the right choices when in reality, parents haven't been specific enough" (Rice 4). In recent years parents have simply been neglecting this fact, allowing their children to lead themselves astray from being responsible for their actions.

Financial growth can and should be developed at home and in school by having children show responsibility for their finances. This includes several sources: allowance money, monetary gifts and in some cases part time salaries for older children. Following responsible guidelines for their finances throughout their developmental years will bring them success as they reach adult

hood. Responsibility of finances includes not only developing a budget, but maintaining control of spending and saving. This all derives from starting to set and reach financial goals at a young age. Again: showing responsibility, which remains a key aspect throughout life.

Showing responsibility in school is crucial in developing the right skills to prepare children for the work force. The current job market is looking for candidates that exhibit responsible actions such as: showing up on time, being honest, being able to complete tasks under strict timeframes, being able to share credit with peers, be proud of their accomplishments, (Antonio Sheldon PD:4 1/7/14) but also be responsible for their errors. "By taking responsibility for our lives, we not only gain control of what happens. It also becomes natural to feel like you deserve more in life as your self-esteem builds and as you do the right thing more consistently. You feel better about yourself" (Edberg 2). This clearly shows that responsibility is imperative to our success in life. Taking a responsible and positive stance on maintaining a stable job secures long term goals. Teenagers today tend to ignore this fact and wonder why they cannot find a job.

Others with opposing views believe that responsibility should not remain as one of the Community Core Values. Though I acknowledge their views, I do not concur with them. It is possible that they do not believe that responsibility is essential to their development. Or, they may not see the importance that it can play in the success of their lives. They must believe that responsibility is not a necessary attribute of family values, financial growth and job stability.

As you can clearly see, responsibility must be maintained as one of the Community Core Value due to its positive impact on a student's ability to uphold core family values, allow for successful financial growth and maintain a stable job. Lack of responsibility only paves the way for failure. One who clearly exhibits responsibility can reach and surpass their goals. Goals are truly the frame work of life. Long term growth in life starts and ends with responsibility.

Antonio Sheldon  
Third Place, Grade 11

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To Whom It May Concern:

As an active student in the Smyrna School District, it has come to my attention that the Smyrna School District School Board is currently reviewing the Community Core Values that each school stresses to produce responsible and productive citizens. As a school district, Smyrna strives to engage students in academics, while also preparing them for life in the community they reside. The core values are integrated in daily routines of the school day at all levels of academia for the most effective results. Students are taught a select list of values that consists of responsibility, compassion, integrity, perseverance, and respect. Our esteemed principal, Mrs. Stacy Cook, has asked students to weigh in on their opinion about the value of 'responsibility' remaining on the list or not. It is my personal belief that responsibility should remain a Smyrna School District Core Value due to its deep significance in each student's academic success, personal life, and future plans.

Students throughout the district are all provided an excellent education that will benefit their future. In order to take full advantage of the opportunity for a great education, each student must

be responsible for their academic success. Being taught the basis of responsibility will be the foundation for the mental perspective students have. In the case a student fails to turn in an assignment, the student should understand that it is his/her own responsibility to turn in all work, not his/her teachers, parents, or friends. Once the value of responsibility is instilled, the issue will be nonexistent. Discarding this as a Smyrna School District Core Value will negatively affect students' motivation to do well in school. Students will lack the proper values to ensure a positive academic career. Naysayers may dismiss this fact as a personal preference, but all students must be taken into account. Some may say that a student simply may not care about doing well in school and will therefore disregard the core value if it remains, but on the other hand, a student who does not care, needs to learn the importance of education and responsibility for that reason. Not only will the remainder of responsibility encourage students to have academic success, it will benefit their personal life.

Responsibility is a value that comes into effect as a young child and continues with a person for the remainder of life. No matter who a person is, no outside factors could eliminate the fact that they will have responsibilities. As children, having the responsibility of chores is vital for the development of personal life skills. Throughout adolescence, teens reach a pivotal age when they begin to experience the real world and learn of the many responsibilities that come along with adulthood. Students in the Smyrna School District and world-wide are in need of being taught the value of responsibility for the mere purpose of survival. If students are not taught about having responsibilities, they will go into shock when eventually faced with one. Students can be taught about responsibilities when dealing with very minor details of life. An example of this can include elementary students putting their belongings away properly. Teaching students about this value, and giving them ways to exercise it, is most beneficial. It may be said that parents are responsible for teaching their children about the responsibilities of life, but it is best to reinforce the topic during the school day, too. When children are introduced to a topic repeatedly, they are more likely to comprehend and practice it. Responsibility is a practical life skill that can only benefit students in their lives and should remain a Smyrna School District Core Value.

The impact of the term 'responsibility' is influential in every Smyrna School District student's future, emphasizing its importance on the Community Core Values list. Teaching students about this value will help them to achieve the best possible academic success by taking responsibility for one's own actions. By engaging students in a multitude of ways to exercise responsibility, they will further their personal pursuits throughout life. It is imperative that the Smyrna School District School Board preserve the value of responsibility on the Community Core Values list.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

JaQuan Anderson  
First Place, Grade 12

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Dear School Board,

It has been brought to my attention that the school board is looking to re-evaluate the core values of the Smyrna School District. Out of all five values that were selected years ago, responsibility is the most important trait for students to possess. Although many others believe

that it should be replaced with a more "up to date" word, responsibility is a characteristic that needs to be carried with people throughout their entire life. Since this core value has such a high impact on the lives of students, staff, and members of the community, it should continue to be stressed in our school district.

Responsibility is a trait that is used everywhere, not only in school. It is critical to teach students how to be responsible because it ensures their success in the future. Without responsibility, people would never learn to make well informed decisions, excel in the workplace, or manage money wisely. As Dennis Waitley says, "A sign of wisdom and maturity is when you come to terms with the realization that your decisions cause your rewards and consequences. You are responsible for your life, and your ultimate success depends on the choices you make." In other words, when one takes responsibility for their actions, it is rewarded with intelligence and success. Without this vital core value, the morals of students and staff could be corrupted. To maintain the prosperity of students in the Smyrna School District, responsibility should remain one of the community core values.

Responsibility can lead to self-respect, power, leadership, and wisdom. Why would the school board change this core value when it has so many positive definitions? In fact, responsibility goes hand-in-hand with other core values picked by the school district. Brian Tracy once said, "Disciplining yourself to do what you know is right and important, although difficult, is the high road to pride, self-esteem and personal satisfaction." The core values that result from responsibility are perseverance and respect. Training yourself to do the right thing can take perseverance, but it results in others respecting you for making the right choices. Responsibility is an excellent virtue for students to live by because it molds all-around better people.

Some people think that the school board should not maintain responsibility as a community core value because they think there are better morals to live by. On the other hand, I believe that being responsible is one of the most important values. Responsible people lead our community; teachers, governors, cops, and the president, are just a few of them. In addition, it is impossible for anyone to hold positions of authority unless they are responsible. If teachers were not responsible, then their students probably wouldn't get a good education. Students who are irresponsible do not complete any classwork or homework, making school seem very pointless. The Smyrna School District needs to set standards to live by, and I believe the original five core values are excellent choices.

None of the Smyrna School District's community core values should be altered. Responsibility, respect, compassion, perseverance, and integrity are all characteristics that mold successful people. Responsibility is what holds the school together. Without it, learning would be nearly impossible. The Smyrna School District is successfully preparing students to become productive citizens that can function in ever-changing environments by enforcing responsibility.

Kendra Williams  
Second Place, Grade 12

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Dear Smyrna School Board,

Responsibility is both a relevant and extremely important core value for not only students but also every citizen to possess. People use responsibility throughout their entire lives whether they are paying bills, showing up on time for work, completing chores, or finishing schoolwork. It would be unwise for the school board to exempt responsibility from the district's core values when it clearly is one of the most important and is more easily instilled in a person at a young age to prepare him or her for adulthood. In today's world it is clear that responsibility is disappearing from the values of most people. This makes it even more necessary for the district to not only keep responsibility as a core value, but also find more ways to promote it. The Smyrna School District School Board should maintain responsibility as a core value because it is a necessity in school, important for preparing children for adulthood and it is urgently needed as a societal value.

First, nearly everything you do in school involves using responsibility. This includes arriving to both school and classes on time, completing all assigned school and homework, remembering all materials you need for the day, and acting appropriately. It is very important for the school to indoctrinate responsibility into students at a young age to ready them for high school, college, and adulthood. Students should be taught the importance of receiving a good education and how it will help them later on in life. Some people would say it is the parent's job to begin teaching children responsibility. However, not all parents are necessarily the world's greatest and many children grow up in homes where their parents simply don't care. Although a school can only make up for so much of the parent's inaction they can and do make a difference for many children who grow up in a rough household. Ian Engelbeck, a senior in high school wrote in the Seattle Times, "Every student is the craftsmen of their own education, whether they realize it or not." This is true to some extent however; I believe children and students must first be taught some form of responsibility before they can take control of their own education and lives.

Second, arguably the most important job of a school is to prepare students for advanced education and adulthood. This cannot possibly be accomplished without first instructing the student in responsibility. Once a student graduates and moves onto college or out into the workforce, they will no longer have someone constantly reminding them of what needs to be done. No matter what a person's plans are for after school, they will almost certainly use responsibility every day for the rest of their life. Nearly every adult task including going to work, caring for children, paying bills on time, doing whatever is expected of them at work, and handling all family responsibilities involves using this core value. An opposing view to this idea would be that people have to learn from their own mistakes and learn how to be responsible adults over time. I would entirely disagree with this argument. It is too late to begin learning responsibility when all of your adult responsibilities begin pressuring you. Also, it is not a great idea to allow people to learn everything from their own mistakes or to learn responsibility on their own. The most obvious example of this are people who have parents that don't care or dropped out of school and never learned responsibility, who go out into the adult world and commit crimes or end up with an enormous debt. Responsibility cannot be excluded from the core values or the school risks raising a community of irresponsible, underachieving adults.

Third, one look at our society and it is obvious responsibility is a needed value of our country. One can tell responsibility is lacking in our society just by watching the news for a few minutes. Politicians constantly blame each other over who's at fault instead of taking responsibility. An



example of this is when, Congress bickered over the federal budget and several other issues while thousands of people were laid *off* and the government was shutdown. Another example of our society lacking responsibility is the countless people who commit crimes and are constantly in and out of prison. An opposing argument would be that these are isolated cases and that this isn't the case with the majority of people. In argument of this claim, I would say there are far too many irresponsible people in our society. For example, every family has that person that is constantly falling in debt, behind on bills, wastes money on unnecessary things, and makes other irresponsible choices for their family. Had they been taught how to act and had someone in their lives emphasized responsibility at a young age, their lives may be very different. With all of the civil issues and irresponsible people in the world it is imperative that the school district continues to promote responsibility for all of its students.

Responsibility should continue to be a core value of the Smyrna School District for years to come. Responsibility must be instilled at a young age; in order to help people make the correct choices as they mature. It is impossible to become a successful adult without first learning responsibility and the proper way to behave. Also, throughout our society responsibility has been lacking for years now, it is key that all schools promote responsibility to prepare functioning members of society. Removing responsibility from the core values would be detrimental to the mission of the school district.

Keith Shoun  
Third Place, Grade 12

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## HONORABLE MENTION

### CLAYTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Gabriella Gibson	Kindergarten
Caleb Rosa	Kindergarten
Jackson Pleasanton	Kindergarten
Lydia Shahan	Kindergarten
Brandon Drenthe	Kindergarten

Cameron Fretz	Grade 1
Margaret Garrison	Grade 1
Aubrey Downward	Grade 1
Rebecca Ignacio-Dubois	Grade 1
Gabe Bailey	Grade 1

Jhasmyn Coffman	Grade 2
Curtis Crossan	Grade 2
Janna Fretz	Grade 2
Mya Adams	Grade 2
Roland Riser	Grade 2

Karalyn Osborne	Grade 3
Hannah Heverin	Grade 3
Alex McMillan	Grade 3
Quinlyn Cullin	Grade 3
Delaney Porter	Grade 3

Grayson Dowell	Grade 4
Liam Meginniss	Grade 4
Alexa Lehnert	Grade 4
Hayden Pelton	Grade 4
Rylee Hurd	Grade 4

### NORTH SMYRNA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Justin Guzman	Kindergarten
Alyssa Spicer	Kindergarten
	Kindergarten
	Kindergarten
	Kindergarten

Laquan Stokes	Grade 1
Kali Butcher	Grade 1
Linnea Bailey	Grade 1
Taylor Wallace	Grade 1
Kaitlyn Burnette	Grade 1

Talon Buckson	Grade 2
Yassah Bryant	Grade 2
Cole Ward	Grade 2
Tobias Crawford	Grade 2
Madelyn Ezell	Grade 2

Machai Stinnett	Grade 3
Faith Starchia	Grade 3
Donovan Clark	Grade 3
	Grade 3
	Grade 3

Brenna Bowers	Grade 4
Emily Smolka	Grade 4
Az'mere Hall	Grade 4
William Hignutt	Grade 4
Kayla Murray	Grade 4

### SMYRNA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Aaron Lowman	Kindergarten	Gabriel Matysiak	Grade 2
Nevaeh Draine	Kindergarten	Madison Sparrow	Grade 2
Ava Augustus	Kindergarten	William Kulhanik	Grade 2
Jonni Hoxter	Kindergarten	Elizabeth Nix	Grade 2
Avery Fellows	Kindergarten	Mckelden Miller	Grade 2

Alexander Gaynor	Grade 1	Kaylee Casey	Grade 3
Teagan Buss	Grade 1	Maddie Sullivan	Grade 3
Breanna Moore	Grade 1	Brian Wright	Grade 3
Miranda Obeng-Agyemang	Grade 1	Leah Bonsignore	Grade 3
Isaiah Rivera	Grade 1	Autumn Steele	Grade 3

Alex Avila	Grade 4
Kevin Sarkissian	Grade 4
Xavier Bagwell	Grade 4
Nicholas Medina	Grade 4
Nathanael Pierre-Louis	Grade 4

SUNNYSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Anaya Pascascio	Kindergarten	Ava Riley	Grade 2
Thelionus McKinney	Kindergarten	Evelyn Jansen	Grade 2
Michael Jastrab	Kindergarten	Luke Michaud	Grade 2
Hayden Wynne	Kindergarten	Michael Womer	Grade 2
Hannah St. Bernard	Kindergarten	Ryan Jones	Grade 2
Aiden Strayer	Grade 1	Brooke Duke	Grade 3
Danaka Nichols	Grade 1	Amirah Torain	Grade 3
Ella Soldano	Grade 1	Sutton Baker	Grade 3
Nariah Waters	Grade 1	Kristen Keister	Grade 3
Mackenzie Pope	Grade 1	Austin Williams	Grade 3
	Sky Jackson	Grade 4	
	Raleigh Payes	Grade 4	
	Aubrey Burleigh	Grade 4	
	Milton Ousley	Grade 4	
	Michelle Barksdale	Grade 4	

JBM INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Leonard Kotowski	Grade 5
Morgan Belford	Grade 5
Katrice Burnette	Grade 5
Taylor Irwin	Grade 5
Sydney Eihinger	Grade 5
Kofi Bame	Grade 6
Sarah Charles	Grade 6
Gregory Long	Grade 6
Sarah Hamilton	Grade 6
Nigee Newson	Grade 6

CLAYTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Kassidy Parker	Grade 5
Gabrielle Treadwell	Grade 5
Gavin Porter	Grade 5
Colton Bowie	Grade 5
Courtney Ogle	Grade 5
Logan Kosky	Grade 6
Leila Sebastian	Grade 6
Emma Mayew	Grade 6
Claire Fletcher	Grade 6
Delaney Mann	Grade 6

SMYRNA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Raven Mapps	Grade 7
Ayden Smith	Grade 7
Emily Marthaler	Grade 7
Cyaza Dunbar	Grade 7
Bradley Beamer	Grade 7
Ivy Leager	Grade 8
Marissa McClenton	Grade 8
Careliz Ayala	Grade 8
MarcAnthony Smith	Grade 8
Ellisa Govin	Grade 8

SMYRNA HIGH SCHOOL

Tyler Fox	Grade 9	Alexandra Vance	Grade 11
Cole Distler	Grade 9	Elizabeth Birney	Grade 11
Justin Stafford	Grade 9	ReAnna Smith	Grade 11
Delaney Fretz	Grade 9	Khalid Rhoden	Grade 11
Jordan Burton	Grade 9	Reanna Ferguson	Grade 11
Allison Sayers	Grade 10	Casey Polasko	Grade 12
Caleb Septer	Grade 10	Alyssa Ortiz-Rivera	Grade 12
Hannah Griffiths	Grade 10	Brent Fleetwood	Grade 12
Gabbi DiRusso	Grade 10	Angelic Rideout	Grade 12
Lucas Zlock	Grade 10	Tiona Ramseur	Grade 12