

MY BEST SELF, INSIDE AND OUT

A Lesson in Self-Confidence

Bonnie L. Hinds, Extension Specialist, Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

Lynne Middleton, Interim State 4-H Curriculum Specialist, 4-H Youth Development

Jennifer Richards, Extension Curriculum Specialist, Tennessee 4-H Youth Development



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Skill Level

- Beginner (4th-5th graders)
- Intermediate (6th-8th graders)

Learner Outcomes

The learner will be able to:

- Understand the importance of self-confidence.
- Define decorum.
- Provide examples of good manners.

Impact

Students are successful if they can:

- Articulate the role of manners and hygiene in promoting self-confidence.

Time Needed - 25 minutes

Materials Needed

- Large post-it pad with several sheets
- Six broad-tipped markers

Authors

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Introduction to Content

This lesson is an introduction to a six-part unit on personal hygiene, approaching the topic in partnership with personal decorum. Practicing good manners and good hygiene help individuals feel confident, inside and out, and also help avoid illness.

Terms and Concepts

Personal hygiene – keeping your body smelling and feeling clean and healthy

Self-confidence – feeling good about yourself, inside and out

Manners/Decorum – socially correct behavior toward others

Hygiene – caring for your body and staying healthy

Introduction to Methodology

Following instruction, students will, in groups of five, list examples of good manners/proper decorum. After sharing their examples, pairs will demonstrate personal space.

Setting the Stage

Say, “Many of the things we do, whether on purpose (consciously) or from habit (bad or good), influence the way others react to us – and, even more importantly, the way we feel about ourselves. Being aware of and practicing good manners and good health help us to gain confidence and to avoid illness now and into the future. The way we are raised affects how we respond to certain situations. While it’s common in the South to say ‘yes ma’am’ or ‘no ma’am,’ it may not be appropriate in all situations.

Ask, “Why is self-confidence important?” Give students time to answer. **(Confidence allows you to feel good about yourself, to try new things, and to keep trying when you are confronted with challenges.)**

Say, “You are probably already doing much of what we are discussing today, so this is likely to be a review. In future weeks, we will go into detail about personal hygiene and its relation to self-confidence and good health.”

Experience

Ask, “What do we mean when we talk about manners?” Allow students to respond, then share this definition from the *Cambridge English Dictionary*:
ways of behaving toward people, especially ways that are socially correct and show respect for their comfort and their feelings.

Explain that another word for manners, a new vocabulary word, is **decorum**. Divide students into groups of five. Spread groups out across the room and give each group a marker and a giant post-it sheet. After groups get organized, give them five minutes to list examples of good manners/proper decorum. Subsequently, as an entire group, review their lists, explaining that with time limitations, you will focus on just a few:

Strategies to Increase Student Engagement

- Circulate during the group exercise, commenting on examples.
- Ask students if they have ever felt uncomfortable when someone has stood too close to them.

Teacher Notes

- Show courtesy and gratitude by saying “please” and especially “thank you.”
- Wait your turn. This means maintaining your place in line/not pushing ahead of anyone else and not interrupting when someone else is speaking.
- Excuse yourself by saying “excuse me” when something unexpected happens, such as a sneeze or accidentally bumping into someone else.
- Show a positive attitude. A smile is always welcome!
- Observe personal space by standing two feet (or roughly an arm’s length away) from the person to whom you are speaking.

Demonstrate

Ask students to pair up and demonstrate the proper distance for speaking with another person while observing personal space.

Explain

“Good manners show respect to and for other people and help you feel good about yourself on the inside. To be confident and happy, however, you also need to be healthy and feel good about yourself on the **outside**. Caring for your body and staying healthy is known as personal hygiene.”

Share

Ask, “Share with the person next to you the example of good manners that you most need to improve.”

Process

Ask, “Can you think of ways that decorum will help you make new friends?”

Generalize

Ask, “Will you feel better about yourself when you have behaved with respect toward others?”

Apply

Ask, “What other examples of decorum, besides those we discussed today, can help you feel better about yourself on the inside?” Behavior that is considered polite manners or proper decorum is different in different cultures. Some behaviors listed here are appropriate in the United States (smiling, waiting in line, standing two feet away) but not appropriate in other places or in other cultures.

TIPPS Life Skills

- Gather relevant information for decision-making. (HANDS)
- Follow instructions. (HEART)
- When reading, consider ideas, thoughts, information, or messages that have been written. (HEART)
- Involve oneself in helping others, demonstrate concern. (HEART)

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