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# Responsible Decision-Making Handout 2: Student Vignettes

## **Directions**

Read the vignettes and use what you have learned so far to brainstorm answers to the questions that follow. If completing this activity in a group, discuss your answers.

## **Vignette: Mike**

Mike is in 11th grade, and he recently started playing for his high school varsity soccer team. To get in shape for the team tryouts over the summer, Mike went on early morning runs and did drills with his brothers in the evenings after he got home from his restaurant job. Now that he is on the team, Mike is diligent about attending all practices after school and keeping up with his schoolwork. When he has an away game that ends late, Mike tries to plan ahead and does the homework he can complete in advance and finishes the rest on the bus going to and from the game. Late in the fall, the team makes it to the state semifinals. Mike is excited, but the semifinals mean he has games after school for five days in a row. He gets behind on some of his work and is especially stressed about an upcoming essay that is due tomorrow for his English class. Feeling overwhelmed, Mike finds a paper online about the same topic and copies some of the language into his essay. The next week, his teacher keeps Mike after class to review sections of the essay that look plagiarized.

## **Reflection Questions**

Which of the following sub-competencies are strengths for Mike? (Mark with an “S”)

* Develop, implement, and model effective problem-solving and critical thinking skills
* Identify the consequences associated with one’s actions in order to make constructive choices
* Evaluate personal, ethical, safety, and civic impact of decisions

Which sub-competencies are areas of improvement for Mike? (Mark with an “I”)

How could a teacher support this student in developing the responsible decision-making sub-competencies that are currently areas of improvement?

## **Vignette: Cynthia**

Cynthia loves going to school every day, and she especially enjoys the science exploration activity station in her kindergarten classroom. Each student can earn extra time on Fridays at the activity stations of their choice by completing all other classroom work and performing “acts of kindness” for each other throughout the week. Cynthia works hard each week to earn enough points to spend her extra time at her favorite station. Recently, another student, Max, has been choosing to spend time at the same station on Fridays. Max is very social, and he often wants to play with the same materials as Cynthia. The first few times Max asks to share what Cynthia is working on or tries to take her materials, Cynthia gets upset and goes to her teacher for help. They decide together that Cynthia can solve the problem by either sharing with Max or moving herself away to start a new activity by herself. Cynthia moves to another station and starts a new project, but when Max tries to play with her again, she grabs the materials back and pushes him to the floor. When her teacher asks her about her actions, Cynthia says she was feeling angry at Max and needed to push him, so he didn’t take her things.

## **Reflection Questions**

Which of the following sub-competencies are strengths for Cynthia? (Mark with an “S”)

* Develop, implement, and model effective problem solving and critical thinking skills
* Identify the consequences associated with one’s actions in order to make constructive choices
* Evaluate personal, ethical, safety, and civic impact of decisions

Which sub-competencies are areas of improvement for Cynthia? (Mark with an “I”)

How could a teacher support this student in developing the responsible decision-making sub-competencies that are currently areas of improvement?

## **Vignette: Jonathan**

Jonathan is an avid video gamer, and he spends lots of his free time after school at home playing online with a group of good friends from his 8th grade class. A new student who just moved to Jonathan’s school was recently invited to join his regular group by another friend. The student sometimes makes offhand hurtful comments about girls, and the comments make Jonathan uncomfortable, especially because there are two young women who participate in the group regularly. Jonathan decides he needs to say something in person if he wants the other student to really change his behavior. He confronts the student the next day at lunch about his language, explaining that the things he says are hurtful and not respectful to the young women who are playing with them. Later, one of his female friends approaches him and tells him the other student is picking on them even more now and teasing them about Jonathan. Later that night, Jonathan posts an anonymous and angry message on the game forum, calling the other student names and telling him to go back to his old town.

## **Reflection Questions**

Which of the following sub-competencies are strengths for Jonathan? (Mark with an “S”)

* Develop, implement, and model effective problem solving and critical thinking skills
* Identify the consequences associated with one’s actions in order to make constructive choices
* Evaluate personal, ethical, safety, and civic impact of decisions

Which sub-competencies are areas of improvement for Jonathan? (Mark with an “I”)

How could a teacher support this student in developing the responsible decision-making sub-competencies that are currently areas of improvement?

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