



Social Responsibility: Skill Development Framework

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Introduction

Considerable evidence supports the need for learners to develop key personal and social capabilities, also known as ‘soft skills’, ‘future skills’ or ‘21st century skills’. Research shows that employers value these skills, and this will continue to be true, as these skills are the most resistant to automation as technology advances. Incorporating development of these skills into coursework and classroom instruction is often a challenge for instructors due to a lack of support on how to teach and assess these skills. There is also a perception that these skills must be taught separately when in fact they can be integrated into the existing curriculum. To support our content developers and the instructors who use our products, we have built Skill Development Frameworks around several key personal and social capabilities (including **Social Responsibility**).

The Social Responsibility: Skill Development Framework includes a research-based definition of the skill along with relevant sub-skills which are then broken down into detailed sets of ordered indicators that describe how Social Responsibility skills develop from basic to complex levels. We further validated the framework by running panels with external experts in the skill and Pearson content development experts.

In many cases, the indicators in the framework are flexible, in that they can be learned at a range of different ages with supports, scaffolds, and opportunities to learn and experience these skills. At the same time, there are normative developmental trajectories in the social, cognitive, and executive functioning capacities of children (particularly younger children). It is important to keep these developmental milestones in mind when determining which set of indicators is most appropriate for a given learner segment. The indicators can be adapted to support a variety of instructional activities. For example, they can serve as “look-fors” in a behavioral checklist or be used to populate a grading or observation rubric. Additionally, many indicators represent strategies that can be directly taught to learners.

When thinking about the development of social responsibility, it is important to consider how it is supported by associated knowledge and values, and manifests as a set of behaviors. Indicators within our framework reflect each of these facets of social responsibility. Additionally, learners’ lived experiences will have a strong impact on their development of these skills. Learners’ exposure to and experience with social responsibility could differ depending on their cultural identity, geographic location, family values and/or the information and knowledge they’ve been exposed to. These factors are important to keep in mind when thinking through how best to teach social responsibility and how to understand a learner’s development of social responsibility.



Glossary and Notes

Mastery

Represents performance that would be typical of a highly effective adult, typically in a workplace setting.

Social Responsibility

For the purposes of this framework, we define Social Responsibility as the process of taking responsibility to behave ethically and with sensitivity toward social, cultural, civic, and environmental issues.

Cultural Responsiveness

Being knowledgeable about different cultural and social identities; recognizing the inequitable distribution of power and privilege based on these identities, and the harm this causes; working to promote equity and social justice.



Emerging

Is aware of different cultural and social identities (this may begin as noticing differences in physical features such as skin tone).



Basic

Demonstrates understanding of their own cultural and social identities and values.

Demonstrates awareness of different cultural values.

Demonstrates awareness of the biases and stereotypes that exist about specific groups of people (e.g., racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, heteronormativity).



Intermediate

Recognizes the complexity of their own and others' social identities.

Demonstrates an understanding that cultural and social identities are intersectional.

Recognizes the value that all people have as active participants in society.

Thoughtfully examines their own personal biases and stereotypes about others.

Works to develop empathy and an understanding of the experiences of others.



Advanced

Develops awareness of their own cultural biases and blind spots.

Understands the critical barriers that affect different groups of people, including discriminatory practices at the systemic, structural, and institutional levels.

Identifies and critiques instances of intolerance and discrimination.

Recognizes that issues of power and privilege are always present in relationships.

Recognizes that one's cultural identity and experiences may affect the actions one takes as well as the options for actions one can take.



Mastery

Actively works to reduce the impact of their own biases and stereotypes on personal behavior, interactions, and choices.

Takes steps to address and work towards removing systemic, structural, and institutional barriers that privilege the cultural practices of one group over another.

Adopts behaviors to promote feelings of belonging and inclusion for all members within the groups they are part of.

Remains open to ongoing discussions about issues around diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Ethical Reasoning

Demonstrating knowledge and awareness of ethical issues, the complexity of ethical decision-making, and the vast range of factors that can influence what is defined as “ethical”; applying ethical reasoning to make decisions in a variety of situations, including in both physical and digital media.



Emerging

Questions whether practices, events, or actions are ethical (e.g., by noting when someone is doing something they shouldn't or when something is unfair).



Basic

Identifies the range of factors, or aspects of context, that can be considered when discussing the most ethical choice (e.g., fair, just, etc.) in a given situation.

Identifies elements of ethical and appropriate interactions in digital media (e.g., cyberbullying, spreading misinformation, plagiarism, etc.)



Intermediate

Reasons through the broad range of factors, or aspects of context, that can be considered when discussing the most ethical choice (e.g., fair, just, etc.) in a given situation.

Identifies the rights and responsibilities that people have regarding ethical use and creation of digital media and information.

Identifies the risks and benefits of creating and/or sharing knowledge through digital media.



Advanced

Considers how issues of power and privilege influence who makes decisions about ethical standards and what is perceived as ethical.

Considers how the prior experiences or perspectives of others could lead them to come to different conclusions about the ethics of a situation.

Considers how different societies or belief systems define ethical behavior and how this influences ethical decision-making.

Understands there are different cultural perspectives to consider when determining the ethical application of new technologies.

Analyzes how new technologies can affect ethical reasoning and decision-making (e.g., how digital technology affects understanding about the ethical use of others' works, bioethics, algorithmic bias).



Mastery

Can understand and navigate conflicting perspectives of ethics.

Questions established rules and principles when they are unethical (e.g., unduly cause harm to particular groups of people) in spite of the risks that come from bringing up these issues.

Takes an active role in establishing and creating ethical standards and behaviors.

Applies different theories, perspectives, or philosophies in order to determine ethical actions or solutions to ethical problems.

Civic Engagement

Being an informed and active community member who supports collective, prosocial values using a wide range of participatory approaches.



Emerging

Notices instances of unfairness toward others and asks why such conditions exist.

Demonstrates basic awareness of how to help others and how some job roles (e.g., firefighter, social worker, community leader, teacher, etc.) can serve society.



Basic

Engages in focused action to promote fairness, justice, and respect for all community members.

Positively contributes to their school or community through acts of service, which may be organized or prompted by others.

Is familiar with the work that civil servants (i.e., people whose work helps the government function) do to serve society.



Intermediate

Articulates needs for greater fairness, justice, and respect and considers multiple forms of action to promote fairness and justice (e.g., participating in local, state, and national government, petitions, protests, letter writing, keeping up with news, etc.).

Is aware of the histories of injustice experienced by certain communities, and how those histories can still affect the present conditions of those communities.



Advanced

Understands how both personal and collective choices and actions contribute to historical movements to expand fairness, justice, and respect to all communities.

Considers histories of injustice and uses this knowledge to inform which civic and volunteer responsibilities one participates in.

Understands their role as a global and digital citizen in addition to local, state/regional, and national community membership.

Understands how the civic policies of their own country interact with those of other countries.



Mastery

Keeps informed and engaged, both personally and collectively, in efforts to promote the expansion of fairness, justice, and respect of all members of their local, state, national, and global communities.

Considers actively participating in civic life and community responsibilities to be an important and motivating value.

Encourages and organizes others to contribute to civic and community life.

Alters systems and processes to promote the expansion of social fairness, justice, and respect of all members of their local, state, national, and global communities.

Environmental Stewardship

Being knowledgeable about current issues of environmental significance; considering diverse approaches to preserving the well-being of the planet; engaging in sustainable behaviors; taking action to address environmental injustice.



Emerging

Engages with activities that build understanding of natural habitats, animals, and the environment.

Is aware that food comes from somewhere (e.g., comes from natural resources, is manufactured, etc.)

Is aware that water cleanliness is important for health.



Basic

Identifies situations that concern environmental knowledge and understanding.

Participates in established sustainability practices (e.g., school recycling program).

Understands that human decisions can have negative impacts on the environment and that different communities experience these impacts differently.

Appreciates that there are diverse perspectives on nature and the relationship between humans and nature (including indigenous views).



Intermediate

Reasons through the environmental processes and impacts in a variety of situations.

Demonstrates knowledge of the various solutions to environmental issues.

Actively seeks out opportunities to practice sustainability.

Identifies situations where different decisions and practices could lead to better results for the environment and the natural resources of different communities.

Is aware of the complexity of different perspectives on nature and relationships between humans and nature (i.e., they can be interdependent, contrary, etc.)



Advanced

Keeps up to date on environmental processes, problems, and solutions, both locally and globally.

Critically analyzes different sources of information about environmental issues.

Seeks out opportunities to participate in sustainability initiatives.

Encourages others to practice sustainability.

Develops recommendations for decision makers, leading to better results for the environment and the natural resources of different communities.

Recognizes the relevance of sustainability and environmental issues to their planned career field.

Recognizes that large-scale systemic changes (e.g., to how major companies do business) are necessary for making meaningful progress on environmental issues.

Understands that conflicting views of nature can lead to conflicting views of how to bring about systemic change.



Mastery

Actively keeps current by being a critical consumer of scientific, community-based, and business perspectives on environmental processes, problems, and solutions.

Finds ways to support sustainability in their personal, school, work, and/or community life.

Actively engages with decision makers in their school, place of work, community, and/or government to support decisions that result in better environmental outcomes for all community members.

Engages in collective efforts to bring about systemic changes that support meaningful progress on environmental issues.

Works across conflicting views about nature or environmental policy to support meaningful progress on environmental issues.