

Ways to integrate social responsibility skills into primary and secondary education

Our model of social responsibility focuses on four key components:

1. Multicultural competence, which involves knowledge of and sensitivity towards cultural identities.
2. Ethical competence, which focuses on knowledge of ethical standards and applying those standards to make ethical decisions.
3. Civic competence, which means being an informed and active local, national, and global citizen.
4. Environmental competence, which includes a concern for the well-being of the planet and practicing sustainability.

Social responsibility is an important skill that employers expect in their hires, and a crucial factor for developing ethical, just, and well-functioning societies. Employers agree that social responsibility should be taught to higher education students regardless of their area of study.¹ On a more global level, building a nation's social responsibility encourages people to be more involved in their societies and has the potential to create more caring and just communities.^{2,3}

Below are some example learning tasks to give you inspiration for how students can develop and practice social responsibility skills in the classroom.

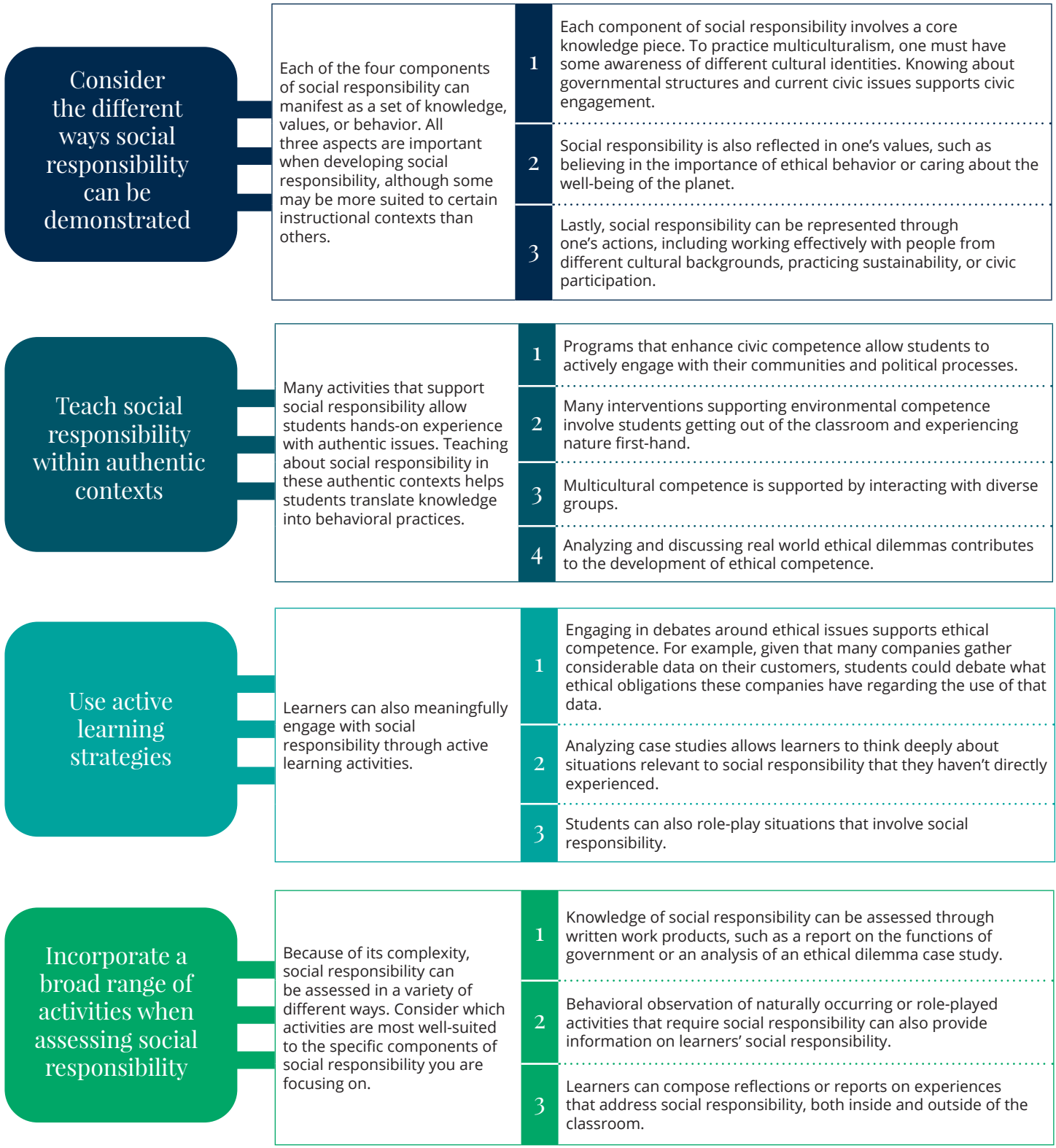
Subject	Component of social responsibility	Learning activity
English literature	Multicultural competence	Throughout a course unit, learners read works on similar topics by authors of different nationalities. Learners then engage in a discussion around how national identities and broader cultural issues may have shaped the approach and perspectives taken by each author.
	Environmental competence	Learners read an older essay, article, or other text on an environmental issue (such as <i>Silent Spring</i> by Rachel Carson) and then compare and contrast the concerns raised in the book with the current environmentalism movement.
History	Civic competence	Learners analyze and discuss real world political advertisements. As part of the discussion, learners evaluate how likely politicians are to deliver on the promises made in the ads.
	Ethical competence	Learners complete a unit on ethical philosophers. As part of this unit, they read a case study of a modern-day ethical dilemma and determine how different philosophers might approach and understand the dilemma. They could also discuss how their own ethical beliefs are similar or different to those of the philosophers.
Language teaching	Civic competence	During a lesson about cities and how different people and organizations help the city function, learners engage in a discussion about how they could contribute to their city or community.
Maths	Environmental competence	Learners analyze data on different energy efficient products and determine which will have the biggest net positive impact.
Science	Ethical competence	Learners discuss ethical standards as they relate to responsible research practice. Learners are then presented with dilemmas and discuss how ethical standards are applied to make decisions in these situations.

¹ Hart Research Associates. (2015). *Falling short? College learning and career success*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

² Beane, J., Turner, J., Jones, D., & Lipka, R. (1981). *Long-term effects of community service programs*. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 11(2), 143-155.

³ Hyman, J. B. (2002). *Exploring social capital and civic engagement to create a framework for community building*. *Applied Developmental Science*, 6(4), 196-202.

These are the big ideas behind the learning activities overleaf. Use these to adapt the examples for your students, or as guidance to devise your own learning tasks.



Are you already incorporating social responsibility skills in your teaching? Tell us how. efficacy@pearson.com