

Taking Responsibility



Learning & Growing
STEPS
Learning & Growing



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If you see something that needs to be done, do it!

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Picking Up the Pieces

Dorothy once had a special job. Every day she would take her grandfather for a walk. He was very old, and could only walk slowly, leaning on a cane. They would start from the house and go along the road until they reached a certain place, then turn and go slowly back again. When they reached the house, they would turn and start out once more for the turning place; and so they went on, backwards and forwards, sometimes as many as four times. The road was a quiet country lane, with no houses or shops, or other people, and just an occasional car. Sometimes Dorothy and her grandfather had interesting talks as they walked, but other times they didn't seem to have much to say. Dorothy often became impatient with the time it took to walk so slowly. She tried to be cheerful so her grandfather would have a nice walk, but she would often think about the other things she would like to be doing.

Then one day, as she looked at the banks and trees and the flowers in the hedges, she thought, "It's a pretty lane, but what a pity there is so much trash lying around everywhere. It spoils the look of the countryside." And so one day when she went on her walk, she took an empty bag with her and her gardening gloves.

She began to pick up the pieces of trash and put them in her bag. After a time her grandfather grew interested too, and started to point out to her with his cane pieces of paper she had missed hidden in the grass behind bushes. He even sometimes used his cane to help in poking out pieces that were difficult to get at. The lane grew tidier and Dorothy's bag got fuller and fuller.

Every day they did this cleaning up job. The walks were becoming more interesting, and Dorothy found herself looking forward to their walk time. Then one day they heard some exciting news. There had been a competition for the best kept village in the county, and their village had won first prize.

"I'm sure your cleaning up the lane helped with that," Dorothy's grandfather said to her.

"You helped too!" smiled Dorothy, giving her grandfather a hug. "And if we hadn't gone for walks every day, we wouldn't have done it!"



- Dorothy saw something that needed to be done, and she did it. Can you think of some things that you see need to be done that you could help with?
- How did Dorothy take advantage of the time she was walking with her grandfather? Do you sometimes see ways you can do two things at once, like Dorothy did? Talk about it.
- Is there something you do that you don't enjoy so much? Can you think of ways to make the job more interesting or exciting?
- Sometimes if we are going too fast, we miss something important we can do to help others. Can you give some examples of how you can help people on your way?
- Why do we need to help the aged? What are some ways that we can help them and make them feel loved? Put yourself in their place. How would you want people to treat you?



Who Will Help Me?

An elephant, a giraffe, a hippopotamus, a zebra, a baboon and an antelope lived together in a wildlife reserve.

One fine day the antelope came to the animals and said, "I'm going to make a fine feast for all of us to enjoy. Who would like to help me dig up and wash the yams?"

"Not me," said the baboon.

"Not me," said the zebra.

"Not me," said the hippo.

"Not me," said the elephant.

"Not me," said the giraffe.

"Okay, then I'll do it myself," the antelope said, as she went about her work.

In half an hour she came back to the animals and said, "Who would like to help me pick the peanuts and shell them?"

"Not me," said the baboon.

"Not me," said the zebra.

"Not me," said the hippo.

"Not me," said the elephant.

"Not me," said the giraffe.

"That's okay, I'll do it on my own," said the antelope, as she began to collect the peanuts.

It wasn't long before she was back with the animals again, asking, "Who would like to help me gather the coffee beans and grind them into powder?"

"Not me," said the baboon.

"Not me," said the zebra.

"Not me," said the hippo.

"Not me," said the elephant.

"Not me," said the giraffe.

"Alright, then. I'll just have to do it myself," she said once again, as she continued on with her hard work of preparing the meal.

Shortly after she came back again, and asked the animals, "Who would like to help me pick the bananas? Perhaps you, baboon, would be interested in this job?"



"No, not me," said the baboon.

"Not me," said the zebra.

"Not me," said the hippo.

"Not me," said the elephant.

"Not me," said the giraffe.

Every time the antelope would come to the animals to ask for their help, they always said no, choosing rather to lie under a tree, or take a swim, or munch on some tasty snack.

Finally when the meal was fully prepared, the antelope came back to the animals and asked, "Who would like to help me eat the food?"

"I will," said the baboon.

"I will," said the zebra.

"I will," said the hippo.

"I will," said the elephant.

"I will," said the giraffe.

"Oh, no. I'm sorry. I'm going to eat it myself. None of you wanted to help me prepare it, nobody wanted to help with the hard work, so I'm going to enjoy this feast all by myself," replied the antelope.

The animals felt so bad that they hadn't helped the antelope with all of her hard work. They were so sorry, and asked for her forgiveness.

"I'm sorry," said the baboon.

"I'm sorry," said the zebra.

"I'm sorry," said the hippo.

"I'm sorry," said the elephant.

"I'm sorry," said the giraffe.

Antelope, being the kind, loving animal that she was, forgave them, and invited them all to come and enjoy the food that she had prepared. From that time on, they were the most willing and helpful animals in the whole wildlife reserve.



- What are some ways we can be willing and helpful?
- Are we happier when we help?
- How does it make others feel when we offer to help them?
- Is being willing and helpful a way of showing love? Explain why.
- Do you think that if we are willing to do the little jobs that we may not want to do, that we will get bigger, more important jobs later, that we will enjoy doing? Can you think of a Bible verse along those lines? "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much" (Luke 16:10).

Good-Bye Grumbles

Jenny was six years old, and she had a problem with grumbling. She grumbled every time someone asked her to help with the dishes. She grumbled whenever her mother asked her to make her bed. And she grumbled whenever her teacher needed help cleaning the classroom.

One day her mother said, "Jenny, I don't enjoy hearing you grumble whenever I ask you to do things. Can you please be cheerful instead of grumbling?"

But Jenny didn't change. She kept on being grumbly.

One day her teacher talked to the children about being kind and helpful to others. "That makes Jesus glad," she said, "but He is not happy with His children when they are selfish. When we are selfish, it's because we want to be kind only to ourselves, instead of to other people." She told the children that if they didn't learn to be happy when obeying their teachers and parents, then they would find it hard to obey Jesus.

Jenny thought about that a long time. She remembered how she always grumbled instead of being cheerful when someone needed her help. How could she be Jesus' helper if she wasn't Mother's helper or her teacher's helper?

"Oh, my!" thought Jenny, "I'd better do the dishes when Mother asks me, and not grumble about it."

That day, after dinner, Jenny's mother said, "Jenny, will you help wash the dishes?" And do you know what Jenny did? She forgot all about what the teacher had said. Would Jenny ever learn to be cheerful?

Then the next morning, right after breakfast, Jenny's mother said, "Jenny, will you please wash the dishes?" Jenny was just getting ready to grumble, but then her mother said, "No, today let's just do the things we want to do."

Jenny's face brightened and she smiled and smiled. "I don't have to do the dishes then?" she asked hopefully.

"No," said her mother, "not unless you want to."

"Oh, boy!" said Jenny. "And I don't have to go to school?"

"No, not unless you want to," said her mother.

"And can I eat the cake you made for my birthday party tomorrow?"

"Sure," said her mother, "if you want to."

Jenny didn't do the dishes. She didn't go to school. For a while she played with her doll. When she got tired of that, she ate four pieces of cake. Then she went outside to play, but the other children were at school, so there was no one to play with. She walked around the yard and came back in the house. The dishes were still not washed.

"Mother," she said, "the dishes aren't washed yet."

"Oh, no," she replied, "today we'll just do the things we want to."

Finally it was time for lunch. Jenny's mother always made good lunches for her, but today she didn't fix any lunch.

"Mother, isn't it lunchtime?" asked Jenny.

"Yes," said Mother, "but I don't feel like making lunch today, and today we're just going to do the things we want to do. Maybe you can find a glass of milk in the refrigerator."

So Jenny drank a glass of milk and went out to play. But she grew tired of playing and she was still hungry. She came back and ate four more pieces of cake and began to feel very sick.

"Mother," she said, "I feel sick. Will you come be with me?"

"I'm busy right now," said Mother. "Just go lie down and perhaps you'll feel better."

So Jenny went to bed. By suppertime she felt better, but there wasn't any supper.

"Why don't you eat the rest of your birthday cake?" her mother asked. "It's your birthday tomorrow, you know."

"Oh, I don't want any more cake now," said Jenny. "Will you make another cake for me tomorrow?"

"No, I don't want to do that. I want to read now."

Poor Jenny! Finally she went to bed. The next morning Mother said, "It's your birthday, Jenny. Shall we do just the things we want to do today?"

Jenny thought about yesterday. She hadn't had much fun. She remembered how sick she had felt after eating all that cake. She remembered Mother wanting to do everything else except take care of her. She remembered what her teacher had said about being happy and obeying her mother.

Then Jenny said, "No, let's do things for each other today."

I guess Jenny finally learned a lesson because she didn't grumble so much any more. Well, she did grumble sometimes, but she very quickly remembered what had happened on the day before her birthday, and she tried her best to be cheerful and helpful.



- What did Jenny grumble about?
- "Whatever you do do it heartily, as to the Lord" (Colossians 3:23). Do you think Jenny kept this verse in mind when she was asked to do something? Do you keep it in mind when you are asked to be a helper?
- Look up 2 Corinthians 9:7. What kind of giver does Jesus want us to be? What kind of helper does He want us to be? Are you a cheerful helper? If not, what can you do to be one?
- Do you sometimes do jobs that you don't like? Talk about some of them. Try to imagine what your life would be like if no one did those jobs. Why do we need to do what is needed instead of just what we want?



I'm Here, Sir!

"Jerry!" cried Daddy. "Come here, please. I need you."

"Okay, here I come!" replied a voice from the house. Daddy proceeded with his work. A big load of firewood, ordered for the winter's fuel, had been dropped on the sidewalk, and he was hurrying to get it carried in before nightfall.

After a while he called again, more insistently, "Jerry! Where are you?"

"I'll be right there!" answered Jerry.

Daddy wondered whether he should leave the pile of wood and go get his son or continue with the job by himself. He decided to go on working. In a little while, however, he began thinking about Jerry. "He's probably reading or drawing, but I could really use his help."

"Jerry, I need you to come along quickly and help carry this wood to the shed." There was a long pause.

"Are you coming," asked Daddy, "or do I have to come and get you?"

"I'm coming," came the answer, and in a few minutes Jerry came out of the front door. "What shall I do?" he asked.

"We must move this wood off the sidewalk before nightfall. Hurry up now," said Daddy.

At long last Jerry stirred himself and was soon busily lifting the logs into the wheelbarrow for Daddy to wheel to the shed. He was a good worker once he got going, but getting him going was the hard part. He badly needed a self-starter*.

When the job was finished, and the last log had been carried in, Daddy turned to Jerry. "Thanks, son," he said. "You're a great help. I like to have you working with me. If you would come the first time you're called, that would be even better. I wonder if you could improve along that line?"

"It's always hard to get started," said Jerry, "especially when I'm interested in something else."

"Let me tell you a story," said Daddy.

Jerry was "all ears" at once. He loved stories.

"Do you remember hearing or reading of a man called Shackleton—Sir Ernest Shackleton?"

"You mean the famous explorer who went to the Antarctic?"

"Yes. Well, once when he was planning an expedition to the Antarctic he decided he must take someone called Wild with him, a man who had been a most faithful and devoted helper on former trips. But Wild was nowhere to be found. It was said that he had gone big game* hunting in the heart of Africa, and there was no way to reach him.

"You had better give up trying to locate him," said a friend. "If he's in Africa, you'll never find him. And if he's big game hunting, he probably won't want to go



to the Antarctic anyway.'

"'But I must have Wild along with me,' said Shackleton.

"'Better sail without him,' said his friend. 'You can't find him, and if you could, he wouldn't go.'

"'If Wild knows I am going on this trip, he will come,' said Shackleton. 'I'm sure he will, whether he is in Africa or anywhere else.'

"'I don't think so,' said his friend.

"Just then there was a knock on the door. It was a messenger boy with a card in his hand. 'There's a gentleman downstairs to see you, Sir,' he said.

"Shackleton looked at the card. He read: 'Ernest Wild.'

"'It's Wild! He's here!' he cried. 'Bring him in.' Beaming with smiles, the friends met and shook hands.

"'But how, why?' began Shackleton. 'I thought you were hunting big game in Africa.'

"'I was, Sir,' said Wild. 'But I heard you were going on this expedition; so I dropped everything and came at once.' Then, standing stiffly at attention and saluting, he said, 'I'm here, Sir! Captain, what are your orders?'

"Now, Jerry, what do you think of what Wild did? He didn't wait to be called. He just felt that he was needed and came along. He dropped everything he was doing and hurried to what he felt was his post of duty."

"That was terrific! He was right there when he was needed!" said Jerry.

"I wish ..." began Daddy.

"I know," said Jerry. And he did. Next time Daddy called him to help on a job, a cheerful voice replied immediately: "I'm here, Sir! Captain, what are your orders?"



- What was Jerry's reason for sometimes not wanting to help when he was asked? Do you think that was a good reason?
- How do you respond when you are asked to do something or help someone? If you are doing something else that you like to do, does that change how you respond to a request for help?
- Read the story of the son who said, "I go, Sir" in Matthew 21:28-31a. Did he really obey his father? Have you ever done the same thing? Why?
- It is a wonderful blessing to have a place of service for the Lord, and like Wild with his captain, we should consider it an honor to be called to serve and help others in Jesus' name. Discuss this quote: "Many are called, but few are chosen, because so few choose His way."
- Read Philemon 1 and discuss if you think others would have this sort of confidence in you. Would you like them to? What could you do to help others say this of you?

Prayer and Praise

Thank You, Jesus, that there are so many things I can do to help others. Please help me to be willing to help and learn to take responsibility. Amen

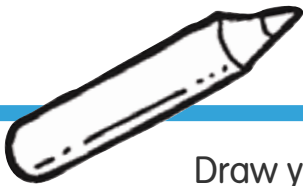
Memory Fun



Bear one another's burdens.
Galatians 6:2

Pencil Page

My Responsibilities



Draw yourself in the "duties" box. List two duties you are responsible for in each place. You can either draw them or write them out.

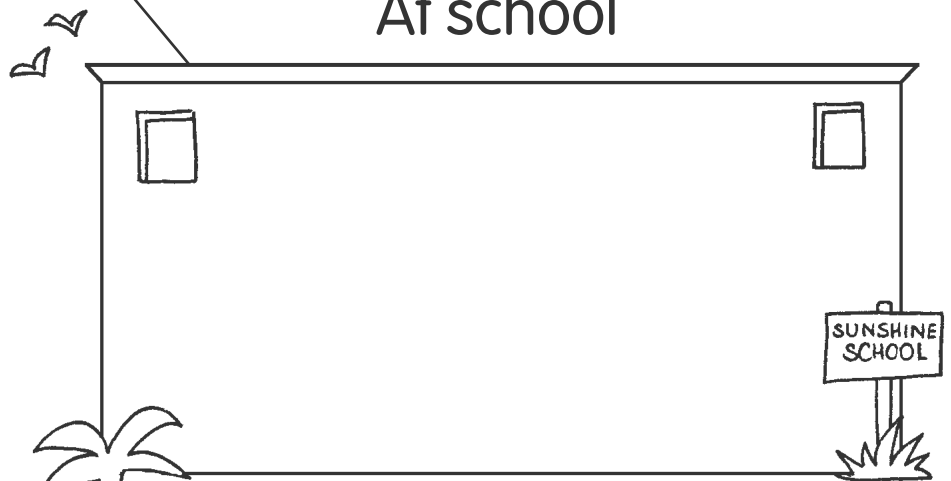
Duties

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to draw or write their responsibilities.

At home



At school



In my community

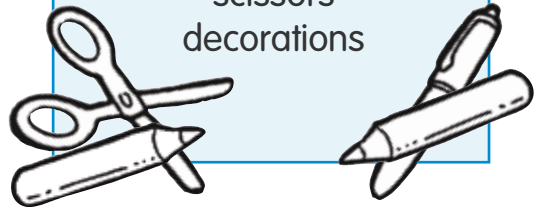


Make and Do

Treasure Box

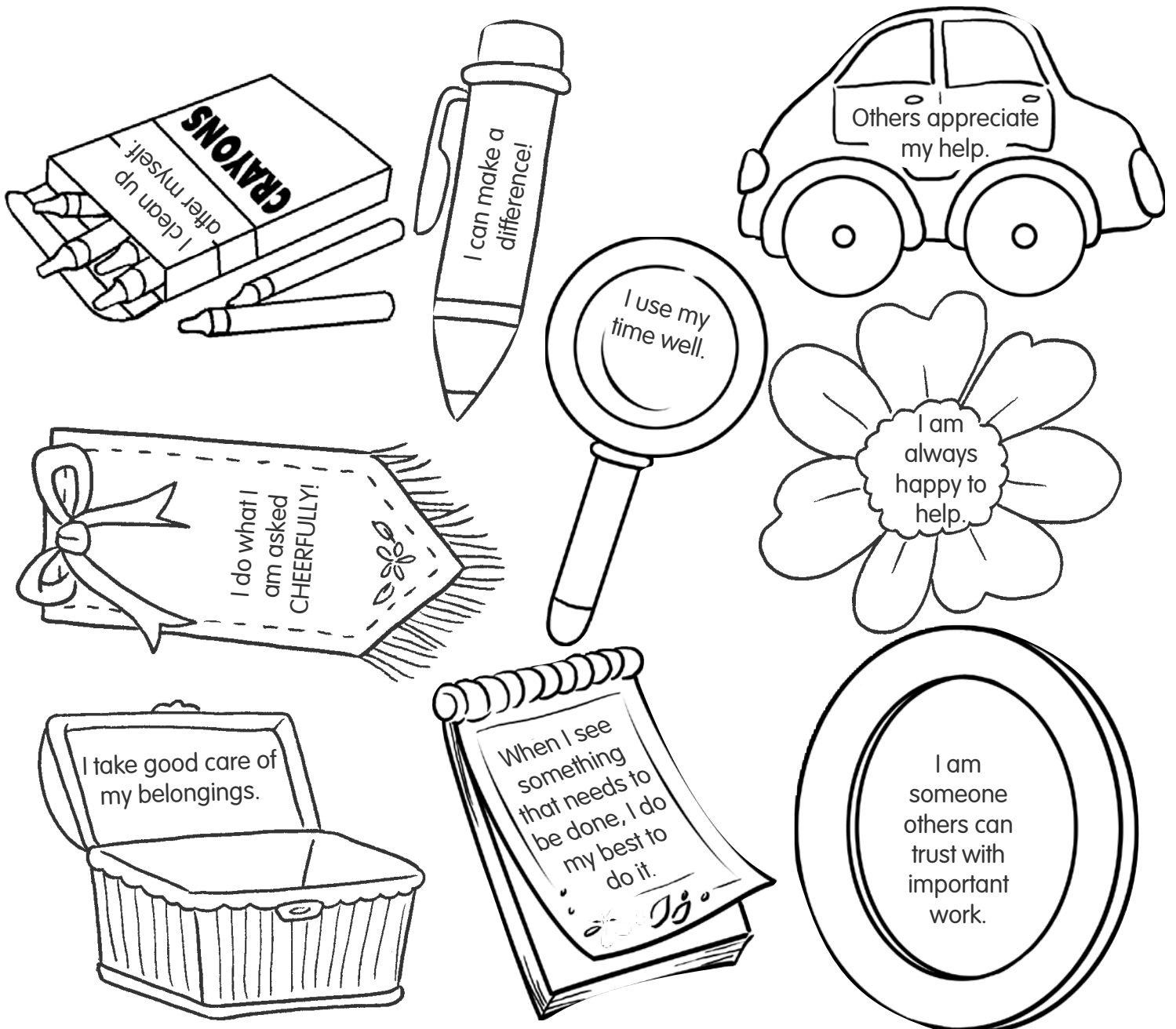
You will need:

a box
glue
color crayons or pencils
scissors
decorations



How to:

- Find a small box with a lid. (If you don't have a box, you can make your own box or envelope.)
- Decorate your box. You can use pasta shapes, pencil or crayon shavings, wrapping paper, magazine pictures, or anything else you can think of!—Have fun!
- Color and cut out the treasures below.
- Now put these treasures, with treasured words, in your box to remind you of your responsibilities.
- Pull out a reminder every day! You can even add more reminders as you go!



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From Jesus—with Love



There are all kinds of things you can do to be a happy helper and show My love to others! You can ask to help do the chores. You can put away your toys and books after playtime. You can make an extra effort to be neat and tidy, and to eat all the food on your plate. You can obey right away. All of these are little ways to be a sample of My love, and doing them will help you grow up to be the loving person that I want you to be.



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