

# Navigating with the Golden Rule Compass



**Grade Levels:** All Grades (easily adaptable)

**Arizona SEL Competencies:** This AGREE activity addresses *all five* SEL Competencies, including:

- Self-Awareness- to recognize how thoughts, feelings, and actions are interconnected
- Self-Management- the ability to regulate emotions and behaviors
- Social-Awareness- to take the perspective of others, to empathize and feel compassion
- Relationship Skills- to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships
- Responsible Decision-Making- to make constructive choices about personal behavior

**AGREE Objective:** Engage students in modeling navigation with the Golden Rule, helping establish a culture of peaceful interaction in the classroom and on campus.

**Instructions:** Part II of this activity is intended to be repeated often. Regular review of the compass words and giving examples of their meanings is encouraged. Additional uses for the compass may include using the compass to respond to difficult classroom or campus related situations as they arise. Consider utilizing a standard compass for additional classroom activities (search “navigation activities”) and sharing stories of early Arizona settlers.

## Activity Part I:

1. **Read:** *“In the early days of Arizona, before her statehood, the Arizona territory was not well known and often treacherous. People came from all over in search of gold, land and other natural resources. In order to keep from getting lost, using a compass was crucial. A compass is a dependable guide that points us in the cardinal directions (North, South, East, and West).”*

*“Similarly, the Golden Rule can guide us as we respond to others. Just like the early settlers, we have disagreements and struggle to get along in our learning environments. The Golden Rule teaches us to treat each other the way we’d like to be treated using the four compass words: Kindness, Empathy, Respect, and Civility. By navigating with the Golden Rule at school, we can mitigate our interactions with others, avoiding similar injustices and contentions.”*

2. Split the classroom into four groups. Assign each group one of the compass words to discuss what the word means, and to come up with an example of what that word looks like, feels like, and sounds like. Encourage them to look up their word in the dictionary. Through acting, drawing or written descriptions, they will present what their word looks like, feels like, and sounds like to the class.

## Activity Part II:

1. Invite four students (or one from each group) to put the compass puzzle together, assisting them in aligning the compass with the cardinal directions.
2. Explain that they will be using the Golden Rule Compass that includes the four compass words (Kindness, Empathy, Respect, and Civility) to help them respond to others when they are in difficult situations.
3. As a class, brainstorm specific examples where the following three events have happened. Encourage them to use details but to be respectful and avoid using names.
  - a. When someone is being mean.
  - b. When your best friend is not talking to you.
  - c. When there's been a problem and your teacher needs to know about it.
4. Select a student to stand in the middle of the Golden Rule Compass, explaining that they will be using the compass to decide how to respond in one of the situations. They may only respond with kindness, empathy, respect, and civility. If their response doesn't align with one of the directions, the class or teacher will help them correct their course.
  - a. They may need to navigate in multiple directions to respond to the situation.
  - b. You may need to assist the student in creating responses, phrases or statements that defuse the situation.
5. Repeat the activity two more times, choosing two additional students to address one of the class created scenarios each.

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