


SEL Curriculum

6-8th Grade

I. Introduction

- A. What does SEL refer to? The acronym refers to social and emotional learning and is the process through which children and young adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.
- B. This SEL curriculum selected by OUSD has been adapted from the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Foundation "*Choose Love Enrichment Program*". The full curriculum can be found at www.jesselewischooselove.org. The curriculum meets Common Core State Standards and the American School Counselors Associations' Mindset and Behaviors for Student Success as well as Oceanside Unified School Districts five SEL targeted cognitive competencies.
- C. Within this document you will find the OUSD SEL competencies chart, an educator's guide, explanation of lesson breakdown, list of supplies needed for lessons, supplemental materials and a curriculum for students in grades 6-8.
- D. The Choose Love Enrichment Program teaches foundational concepts and skills of SEL. The program had been designed to provide students with the knowledge, attitude, and skills to positively impact, contribute, or respond to school and community climate.
- E. Lessons are to be taught in order and are designed to meet the five SEL competencies:
 - 1. Self Awareness
 - 2. Self Management
 - 3. Social Awareness
 - 4. Relationship Skills
 - 5. Responsible Decision Making

 OCEANSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING STANDARDS AND UNPACKING (Resources & Toolkit here)					
SEL COMPETENCIES (Click on the competency to be taken to potential lesson plans)	SELF-AWARENESS	SELF-MANAGEMENT	SOCIAL AWARENESS	RELATIONSHIP SKILLS	RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING
DEFINITIONS	The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and growth areas and having a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.	The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward personal and academic goals.	The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures; to understand social and ethical norms for behavior; and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.	The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.	The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.
STUDENT GOALS	GOAL 1: Develop self awareness to have knowledge of one's emotions, to develop a confident and optimistic self-concept, and to recognize individual strengths and growth areas.	GOAL 2: Develop and demonstrate self management skills and resiliency to regulate emotions and behaviors, to monitor and achieve goals related to school and life success.	GOAL 3: Develop social awareness skills and empathize and understand the perspectives and social norms from diverse backgrounds and cultures.	GOAL 4: Demonstrate relationship skills needed to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships.	GOAL 5: Demonstrate decision making skills, and responsible behaviors in school, personal, and community environment.
STUDENT OBJECTIVES & "I" STATEMENTS	SEL.1.A. Student demonstrates an awareness of one's own emotions and behaviors. "I am able to identify and communicate how I am feeling."	SEL. 2.A. Student demonstrates an ability to manage emotions and behaviors constructively. "I can appropriately handle my feelings."	SEL.3.A. Student demonstrates awareness of other people's emotions and perspectives. "I care about the feelings and opinions of others."	SEL.4.A. Student uses effective communication and social skills to interact and cooperate with others. "I will interact appropriately with others."	SEL.5.A. Student considers self, social, and relationship factors in making constructive and respectful decisions.
	SEL.1.B. Student demonstrates awareness of personal characteristics and preferences. "I am aware of what I like and dislike as well as my strengths and challenges."	SEL.2.B. Student demonstrates the ability to seize opportunities to be assert and show integrity. "I can act in an honest manner."	SEL.3.B. Student demonstrates consideration for others and a desire to contribute to the well being of their school and community by serving others. "I care about others and do my part to make my school community better."	SEL.4.B. Student develops affirming and healthy relationships. "I will work on having positive relationships."	SEL.5.B. Student uses effective decision making skills.
	SEL.1.C. Student demonstrates awareness of growth areas and identifies external supports. "I am aware of where I can find help and support."	SEL.2.C. Student demonstrates an ability to be resilient in setting and achieving goals. "I can adjust my goals when necessary."	SEL.3.C. Student demonstrates an awareness and respect for cultural and social differences. "I care about and respect the individual differences of others."	SEL.4.C. Student demonstrates an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve conflicts in constructive ways. "I will learn to handle conflicts in constructive ways."	SEL.5.C. Student applies problem solving skills to respond respectfully, responsibly, and safely to academic and social situations.
	SEL.1.D. Student demonstrates an awareness of personal responsibility. "I am aware of my responsibilities at school."	SEL.2.D. Students demonstrate an ability to manage supports for school and life success. "I can set and achieve goals that will make me more successful."	SEL.3.D. Student demonstrates awareness of social norms and can respond to social cues. "I care about how I treat others and how they treat me."	To model relationship skills, staff members should strive to demonstrate open, collaborative, clear and concise communication, contribute to a reciprocal relationship with coworkers, conduct crucial conversations with immediate parties, be approachable, avoid passive aggressive or overly assertive approaches, and model the "Golden Rule" (treat others the way you want to be treated). One step further - treat others the way they want to be treated.	To model responsible decision-making, staff members should strive to demonstrate integrity, ensure decisions are for the good of the group, practice STAR ("Stop, Think, Act, Reflect"), be selective in addressing issues ("pick your battles"), consider the context of your decision, maintain high levels of respect at all times, and handle matters in an appropriate setting and in a timely manner.
STAFF DESCRIPTORS	To model self-awareness, staff members should strive to be a reflective practitioner, ask for help, offer help, be solution oriented, have a growth mindset, be aware of emotions and how your attitude affects others.	To model self-management, staff members should strive to monitor and reflect on short term and long term goals, be mindful of and in control of your emotions and understand the impact they can have on others, recognize potential detrimental emotions and their triggers, and take initiative.	To model social awareness, staff members should strive to have an open mind, know the kids you teach, the staff and parents you work with, be culturally aware and exhibit the highest level of professionalism (dress code, deadlines, punctuality, language/voice, awareness of school events and expectations).	To model relationship skills, staff members should strive to demonstrate open, collaborative, clear and concise communication, contribute to a reciprocal relationship with coworkers, conduct crucial conversations with immediate parties, be approachable, avoid passive aggressive or overly assertive approaches, and model the "Golden Rule" (treat others the way you want to be treated). One step further - treat others the way they want to be treated.	To model responsible decision-making, staff members should strive to demonstrate integrity, ensure decisions are for the good of the group, practice STAR ("Stop, Think, Act, Reflect"), be selective in addressing issues ("pick your battles"), consider the context of your decision, maintain high levels of respect at all times, and handle matters in an appropriate setting and in a timely manner.

II. Lesson Structure

- A. In each unit, you will find the following sections: **Objectives, Educator Preparation, Lesson Directions, and Activity Handouts if required.** The lessons are designed to be taught in sequence, and vary in teaching time from 25-50 min. There are 2 lessons per SEL competency offering a total of 10 lessons per-grade. Lessons are recommended to be taught at the beginning of the week and reinforced throughout the school year. It is recommended to cover 2 or 3 lessons each quarter.
- B. The **Objectives** section allows for why the lesson is being taught and its importance for students. The **Educator Preparation** section outlines what materials or resources need to be gathered before teaching the lesson. It is

highly recommended that lessons are reviewed before actively teaching them. The lessons themselves are low prep.

- C. The **Lesson Direction** section offers educators a complete script for discussion, reflection and activities. Check all URL addresses to make sure they are still active for videos activities prior to teaching the lesson.

III. SEL Curriculum Teaching Strategies

SEL teaching strategies are sometimes different from other classroom teaching strategies. Students may notice this and at first respond in ways that are not desirable. Students may also not be used to discussing their thoughts and feelings openly. This nervousness can occasionally cause them to act disruptively. Have patience as students not only learn new content, but also learn new ways of interacting with one another. Off topic or disruptive behaviors are opportunities to reinforce SEL skills. Managing a classroom of diverse students can require a variety of techniques that a teacher may need to employ to help keep students focused, attentive, safe and productive.

- A. Modeling is one of the most powerful teaching strategies an educator can use. Offering positive behavioral examples of how to successfully perform social emotional skills reinforces student learning. Throughout each day, practice using SEL skills in front of students. This shows them how to be successful applying these skills to everyday situations. When you model the skills you subsequently teach and support students in learning, you help build a sense of belonging in the school environment. By noticing your congruence, students' trust for you increases which fosters a sense of belonging and promotes a positive attitude toward learning and working.
- B. Coaching is a process of helping students learn how to practice new skills. Simply put, it includes giving students constructive and immediate feedback about the way they are behaving. According to the International Coaching Federation (ICF), coaching is defined as “partnering with clients [students] in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential”. For students this means establishing a caring and supportive relationship that helps improve their academic and life success. You may ask students powerful questions that help them understand concepts in new ways, or assist them in taking new perspectives, for example. The ICF also suggests that when you are coaching someone, you are honoring that person as an expert at his or her life, and believe they are resourceful, whole human beings. As a result, you help them discover, clarify and align to their goals (for students this can look like getting good grades, making new friends, trying out for a team, or challenging themselves); you encourage their self-discovery; you elicit strategies and solutions that they come up with; and you hold them

responsible and accountable for their actions. Coaching is helpful as students are still remembering how to use new skills. They may need support determining what to say/do, how to say/do something, or when the appropriate time is to apply a skill. Coaching students helps create a safe space for them to both fail and succeed, which in turn can improve classroom trust and school success.

- C. Cueing is when you support students in knowing when to use a skill. Students may remember how, but may be uncertain about timing. For example, when is a good time to let someone know they've hurt your feelings, or when is a good time to use a calming down technique? Reminding students and prompting them helps them understand and develop a sophisticated sense of when it is appropriate to use learned skills. This also helps students build an awareness of there being different social norms in different social settings. This cultural awareness helps them learn to be successful not only in the classroom but in their families and communities. Both coaching and cueing help students build self-confidence in their ability to succeed.
- D. Nonjudgmental responses are used to encourage student participation in discussion, practice using nonjudgmental responses to their answers. Unlike subjects like math or science, when we talk about emotions and experiences there is not always one "correct" or "right" answer. There can be many possible responses to the same question. Use some of the following tips and nonjudgmental phrases when responding to students:
- Say, "Thank you."
 - Say, "That's one idea, who has another?"
 - Parrot back what the student said to acknowledge their response.
 - Paraphrase what the student said.
 - Ask a question about what the student said.
 - Ask if anyone has another similar or different response.

Using nonjudgmental response is not the same as allowing incorrect responses. Off-topic or inappropriate responses should be corrected or redirected.

- E. Varied calling on of students helps educators be mindful of who your extroverts and introverts are (Who likes to raise their hand for every question, and who is shy?). Pay attention to students in the front and back of the class. Notice the frequency in which you call on students of different genders, races, or abilities. Mix up not only who you call on but how you call on them. Sometimes call on people directly, while other times ask for volunteers. In some situations all the students chant a response out loud, or give you a thumbs up if they can relate to

what you've said. Students can also use a talking stick that they pass around to denote whose turn it is to talk.

- F. Nonverbal responses are also great ways to engage students. Students can raise their hands, snap, clap, or otherwise demonstrate agreement or disagreement with what is being discussed. They can make facial expressions or use body postures that indicate their response. This is a great way to promote whole body participation throughout the lessons.
- G. Working in pairs might be a way to work at times throughout the curriculum. Students will be asked to turn and talk to a learning partner. These can be preassigned by you or can be determined by what is convenient (two students who sit next to each other). You can keep the same partners throughout the year to help build rapport among students, or mix them up periodically to give everyone a chance to work with one another. Use your discernment to determine what would most benefit the students' learning. You may consider pairing a stronger skilled student with a weaker skilled student to promote peer to peer learning. When pairing students, take into consideration race, gender and religious diversity. Do not pair up students who might be in bullying relationships.
- H. Small group work might also be appropriate at times throughout the curriculum. Students will be asked to work in small groups of 4. This is a great opportunity for students to practice their social and teamwork skills. These can be preassigned by you or can be determined by what is convenient (four students who sit in a pod together). You can keep the same partners throughout the year to help build rapport among students, or mix them up periodically to give everyone a chance to work with one another. Use your discernment to determine what would most benefit the students' learning. This helps students practice collaborative conversations with diverse partners about age-appropriate topics with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- I. Authentic Sharing (What's Appropriate to Share), sharing personal examples with your students of times when you used curriculum skills. This is a great way to build trust with the students. Students will experience a stronger connection with you as they see the ways in which we are all alike. By sharing thoughts, feelings and experiences, students will come to see you in a more real, authentic, and human way which makes the teaching more genuine and impactful, and your relationship with your students more substantial. By seeing you authentically open up, they not only see a model for how to do so, but they develop a stronger rapport that creates a trusting, safe environment which encourages them to express themselves. It is very important, however, that you use professional discretion when sharing with students. Remember this isn't a time for therapy, confession or adult content. It is not appropriate to talk about drama or sordid details. Share stories that are age appropriate and relatable. Often it is a simple utterance like "Wow, did I have a bad morning. This is what happened...", "I'm

sorry guys, I just made a mistake when I was teaching that lesson...”, “I’m having a really hard time with...”, or “I am so happy right now because...” Share both challenging and celebratory experiences that relate to the skills students are learning such as dealing with feelings, being courageous, friendships, handling adversity, practicing gratitude, forgiving someone, showing compassion and the like. It’s important to share some negative, challenging feelings and situations because that is honest and authentic...as long as they are appropriate. But make sure you balance it out with positive, “feel good”, inspiring shares which will help build positivity and model resiliency and choosing love. Authentic sharing creates safe, connected environments, builds trust and relationships, and creates teachable moments that can be transformational.

- J. Pausing or waiting after you pose a question is a great opportunity to give students time to think about their response. In SEL instruction, the speed of the response time is less important as the quality of the response. In fact, teaching students to pause and reflect is a valuable skill. Providing a wait time before you call on a student allows students who need more time to think of an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion. This reinforces impulse control and encourages students to be thoughtful.
- K. Reinforcing positive behaviors during the lessons helps students transfer what they’ve learned to different areas of their lives. Rather than focus on external rewards, help develop students’ intrinsic motivation, or the motivation to do something because the activity brings you pleasure, joy, or personal satisfaction.

Here are a few suggestions for how to support prosocial behaviors:

- i. Let students know when they have used a skill the right way. Smile, nod or give them a thumb up as a cue that they made a prosocial choice or did something kind. Reinforce the things they do right as much as you might correct off-task behaviors.
 - ii. Give students positive verbal feedback when they act compassionately or perform a skill correctly. Give them behaviorally specific feedback. Let them know exactly what you heard or saw them do, and how it impacted you or others around them.
 - iii. Encourage students to share positive feedback with one another. If one student does something kind for another student, cue them to describe how the kind deed affected them.
 - iv. Rather than reward children for “right” answers, give them attention and praise when they do something that promotes a healthy, safe and caring classroom. Instead of saying “don’t do this” (don’t run, don’t talk, don’t be mean, etc.) rephrase your instruction to focus on the behavior you want to see (please walk, use quiet voices, etc.).
- L. Create collective and public goals together. For example, try to demonstrate 100 compassionate acts as a class each month.

- M. Set clear, easy to follow classroom rules for behavior in the classroom. When you reinforce positive behaviors, you help instill a belief in students using their abilities to their fullest to achieve high-quality results and outcomes. You also help model setting high standards of quality in your classroom both academically and socially.
- N. Refocusing disruptive behavior during SEL lessons might involve utilizing different teaching strategies.

Here are some suggestions for how to prevent disruptive behavior during the lessons:

- Give simple, clear instructions and directions. Ask students to parrot back the instructions to you.
- Review listening skills before an activity that requires listening. Ask students to focus on one specific listening skill to practice.
- Reduce distractions on desks and in classrooms.
- Post the Choose Love Constitution where it is easy to see.
- Positively reinforce students demonstrating the behavior you want to see.
- Before asking for student responses, model what an appropriate response to the question would sound like.
- Make sure seating is arranged so that every student can see you and make eye contact.
- Let students know how long a lesson or activity will last (ie. We will spend two minutes on this activity.)
- Remember that all students learn differently, and engaging our bodies can help us learn.
Consider allowing students to doodle, stretch, stand or walk during a lesson instead of sitting still. After the lesson, ask students if they think they learned better by engaging their bodies in the learning differently.
- Attention-getting techniques to maintain focus:**
- Clap your hands if you can hear the sound of my voice. (Or raise your hand, blink your eyes, etc.)
- Raise or lower the lights to denote focusing attention.
- Notice if you need to raise or settle the energy in the classroom to help focus attention.

- ❑ Repeat breathing techniques to calm down, or have students do jumping jacks to bring up the energy. Pause and invite the class to stretch.
- During discussions, you may need to redirect off topic responses and can do so by some of the following techniques:**
- ❑ Thank the student for their response and ask them to listen carefully to the question again. Then, restate the question.
 - ❑ Nonjudgmentally move on to another response.
 - ❑ Note that sometimes sharing feelings can be uncomfortable. Giggling or making jokes is normal. However, you are asking students to use their courage to overcome their discomfort, and to share authentically.
 - ❑ Thank the student for a creative response, and ask them to focus on a more relevant or practical one that has to do with your example.
 - ❑ Intervene and provide immediate feedback to redirect behaviors, rather than allowing inappropriate behaviors to continue.
 - ❑ If a student is excessively disruptive and must be removed from the group, try to keep the student nearby so he/she can still listen to the lesson. It is often these students that need to practice SEL the most and removing them from class does them a disservice.

IV. Referring Students

This program will require that students delve into their feelings during the discussion of sometimes difficult topics. They will become more aware of their feelings and be better able to identify and manage them. For many students this will be the first time they have really explored and talked about their feelings. Self-exploration and feeling identification is a very beneficial and powerful process. But it is important to be highly engaged and sensitive to the needs of your students as they work through their feelings. Gently encourage students to participate, but understand that some may have a harder time opening up in this way. For some students these lessons may bring up painful situations and the feelings associated with them. If you notice a student struggling with these lessons and with strong feelings that come up for them, please don't hesitate to refer them to your school counselor. School counselors are trained to help students work through difficult situations and feelings. Through individual counseling, they can more deeply explore students' issues and give them the tools to help them navigate and

manage their feelings. They can provide the proper resources to the child, and parents if necessary, and make referrals where appropriate. When in doubt, err on the side of caution, and refer a student to a counselor, nurse, or a school psychologist. A school counselor can better assess the situation and work with the student in a more personal, private and therapeutic way.

Remember you are not alone, reach out for assistance from other school resources if you need to.

V. ***What SEL Is Not***

There are many myths and misconceptions about what SEL is. SEL is not parenting and it does not replace the role or responsibilities of primary caregivers. SEL is not psychotherapy and does not attempt to diagnose or provide therapeutic instruction. SEL does recognize, however, that building emotional intelligence and empathy improves children's ability to succeed in life. SEL does not occur at the expense of core academic subjects; rather it increases children's ability to learn. It is not a luxury, or something students do after they've studied their "academic subjects" (Zakrzewski, 2012). Finally, SEL has no religious basis. While the Choose Love Program encourages the development of the universally recognized values of courage, gratitude, forgiveness and compassion, it is not affiliated with any political or religious institution or organization.

VI. Goal Skills for Students

- A. Through this curriculum students have the opportunity to learn: courage, gratitude, forgiveness, compassion, empathy expression, emotional management, impulse control, communication, problem solving, focused awareness, reflection, active listening, emotional vocabulary, how to effect positive climate change in school and in the community.

VII. Curriculum Adaptation

A. Adapting for Cultural Context

As an educator you already know the importance of cultural sensitivity not only within the classroom, but in life. This is a student-centered approach where the teaching persistently meets the cultural, emotional, and ethical needs of each student. The foundation of creating a nurturing environment for all students and teachers is to require communal respect. Respect can be modeled by the teacher through effective interpersonal communication and a caring heart. When students feel nurtured, cared for, and safe they are more likely to succeed within a classroom and adopt a communal sense of responsibility that negates ethnocentric attitudes. Students want to do better and become more motivated when they have a caring teacher. It is the job of the teacher to not only model respectful behavior, but to require it. Creating a culturally sensitive classroom is not a simple task, but it is possible. Teachers must understand that behavior, emotion, and thinking can be directly related to multiculturalism, socio-economic status, religion, ethnicity, community leaders, geography, language, clothing, holidays, family structures, etc. Acting as

a culturally responsive teacher requires sensitivity and understanding as to why a student may not participate in certain activities, make physical contact such as holding hands in a group circle, make eye contact with others, or various other verbal or non-verbal means of communicating. Ways of communicating differ greatly across cultures and it is essential we build upon these experiences and our cultural knowledge to set an example for our students and create a nurturing environment.

SEL can greatly assist the educator in fostering a culturally sensitive class because the curriculum is already designed to enable students to gain a more global perspective and respect for worldviews. By stressing the importance and power of individual contribution within our society and respect for our differences, students will cultivate an enduring allegiance to our community and the practice of multicultural awareness.

Self-awareness is one of the most important components of a culturally sensitive classroom. By investigating your surroundings and encouraging students to do the same you are helping to model an environment that is conducive to all learning styles and one that meets the needs of all students. Before reacting to a situation that presents a challenge for you as the teacher asks yourself: What does this student need from me to be successful? As we all know this can be a daunting task especially when faced with so many diverse students each day. However, by building your own self-awareness you will become more connected to the emotions, morals, tribulations, and ethics of each student which will motivate and establish a safe and sensitive learning environment. Social and Emotional Learning does not begin and end in the classroom. For students to fully benefit from our SEL curriculum the learning must transcend the classroom into the personal lives of students through family and school partnerships, community organizations, religious societies, and cultural value systems (Zakrzewski, 2012). By embracing differences we are taking responsibility in building a safer, more tolerant community for all to enjoy.

B. Adapting for ESL, ELL, or Multilingual Students

ESL (English as a Second Language) or ELL (English Language Learners) students have specific needs when it pertains to instructional methods in regular content areas that can differ slightly when teaching a curriculum based on Social and Emotional development. The most important way teachers can support and prepare for the learning of these particular students is to be aware of culture shock or lack of acculturation. Students may become frustrated, confused, and overwhelmed by the information presented and demonstrate unusual behaviors such as fearfulness, anxiety, aggression, depression, withdrawal, negative attitudes, or crying. These behaviors are not limited to those listed, but are most common amongst students experiencing difficulty assimilating/acculturating into a new environment.

ESL and ELL students need information presented in a slightly different format that uses clear directives. Eliminate colloquialisms, unnecessary adjectives, and complex vocabulary. Speak literally, and without metaphors. Concrete examples

and short sentences work best. The use of visuals and re-writing directions in steps is also extremely helpful. Be sure to change or adapt the language used, not the content. It is necessary for ESL or ELL students to become exposed to the language of the school by listening and speaking with their peers and teachers. Encourage students when they make vernacular mistakes and offer a correction that does not belittle, but instead empowers the student. Use phrases like, "I see you are really trying and that is wonderful" or "Next time try saying this..." Another option is to use non-verbal cues such as thumbs up, body language, facial expressions, etc. The focus here is on comprehension over pronunciation, and repetition helps. This will help establish a nurturing environment where the student will feel safe, encouraged and in turn be more likely to succeed. The use of visuals such as posters, photographs, word walls, pictures, vocabulary cue cards, and videos with subtitles will provide ESL students with different learning options and mediums to increase comprehension. ESL and ELL students can also greatly benefit from outlines, or notes written in his or her native language. Although this may not be feasible based on lack of resources or time, it is most helpful to provide the student with a translation dictionary. Another suggestion is to pair the ESL student with a "buddy" who can offer assistance, organizational tips, ease frustration, and help the student feel included. These buddies can also translate for students. Through this assistance both the buddy and partner benefit. The buddies become more proficient in two languages and in translating skills. These are sought after skills that will benefit them greatly in the future.

C. Academically Gifted

It is important to remember that just because a child is gifted in a specific subject, doesn't mean their development is the same across the board. Social situations are challenging, regardless of a child's age. Here are some tips for how to engage students in more sophisticated ways:

- Have students come up with their own challenging scenarios so that situations are relevant to them.
- Have students write plays or skits about their learning.
- Have students write a short comic or book about their learning.
- Encourage students to model behavior to younger students.

Curriculum By Grade Begins on the Next Page

6th Grade Standards Alignment

Common Core Standards

READING: LITERATURE AND INFORMATIONAL TEXT

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.7 Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1.E Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

Production and Distribution of Writing:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline specific tasks, purposes, and audience

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.B Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.C Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.D Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.4 Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

Conventions of Standard English:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.4.A Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

Knowledge of Language:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.3.A Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.3.B Maintain consistency in style and tone.

Vocabulary Acquisition:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.5.B Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/ whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success:

MINDSETS

Mindset 1: Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/ emotional, and physical well-being

Mindset 2: Self-confidence in ability to succeed

Mindset 3: Sense of belonging in the school environment

Mindset 5: Belief in using abilities to their fullest to achieve high-quality results and outcomes

Mindset 6: Positive attitude toward work and learning

BEHAVIOR STANDARDS

Learning Strategies:

Learning Strategies 1: Demonstrate critical-thinking skills to make informed decisions

Learning Strategies 2: Demonstrate creativity

Learning Strategies 3: Apply self-motivation and self-direction to learning

Learning Strategies 7: Gather evidence and consider multiple perspectives to make informed decisions

Self-Management Skills:

Self-Management Skills 1: Demonstrate ability to assume responsibility

Self-Management Skills 2: Demonstrate discipline and self-control

Self-Management Skills 3: Demonstrate the ability to work independently

Self-Management Skills 4: Demonstrate ability to delay immediate gratification for long term rewards

Self-Management Skills 7: Demonstrate effective coping skills when faced with a problem

Social Skills:

Social Skills 1: Use effective oral and written communication skills and listening skills

Social Skills 2: Create positive and supportive relationships with other students

Social Skills 4: Demonstrate empathy

Social Skills 5: Demonstrate ethical decision-making and social responsibility

Social Skills 6: Use effective collaboration and cooperation skills

Social Skills 7: Use leadership and teamwork skills to work effectively in diverse teams

Social Skills 8: Demonstrate advocacy skills and ability to assert self, when necessary

Skills 9: Demonstrate social maturity and behaviors appropriate to the situation and environment

6th Grade Curriculum

In each lesson, you will find the following: student objectives, educator preparation, and handouts if the lesson requires one.

Self-Awareness (2 Lessons)

Unit 1: Self-Awareness

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 1 of 1

Lesson Title: What is Self-Awareness?

Length of Lesson: 50 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 1: Develop self awareness to have knowledge of one's emotions, to develop a confident and optimistic self-concept, and to recognize individual strengths and growth areas.

SEL.1.A. Student demonstrates an awareness of one's own emotions and behaviors. "I am able to identify and communicate how I am feeling."

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Correctly label emotions
- Recognize that emotions can and will affect behavior
- Recognize that behavior can affect emotions

Educator Preparation:

1. Ability to display essential lesson questions for all students to see
2. Print copies of the handout for this lesson
3. Extra writing utensils and paper

Unit 1: Self-Awareness

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 1 of 1

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (15 min)

- 1) "What challenges do you face on a day-to-day basis, or expect to face in middle school?"(Students share their ideas.)
- 2) "What skills do you think would help you overcome these challenges and be successful?"(Students share their ideas.)

- 3) "As part of our work together this year, we'll look at ourselves and society, with an aim to improve many of the skills you just mentioned. We'll do this through the SEL program. This program involves us taking a short break to look at other parts of ourselves to develop."
- 4) "Students engage in many different types of learning in school. You learn math, science, art, and history from teachers. You learn about teamwork, leadership, and friendship with your peers. As part of this curriculum, we'll do activities and discuss issues relevant to you. We'll find out how having courage, showing compassion, and being good communicators can benefit us physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. We're going to have a lot of fun."
- 5) "Some of the concepts we'll cover, such as courage, gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion, are not topics regularly discussed in school. How do you feel talking about these ideas?" Encourage students to use emotional language such as "scared," "nervous," "happy," "surprised," instead of judgmental language such as "weird," "strange," or "stupid."
- 6) "Because we'll be dealing with sensitive topics, it's important that we have a shared understanding as a class about how we'll work together. What are some class ground rules we should set up for these lessons?" (Allow them to answer. While they answer, record their ideas.)

Opening Activity (10 min)

- 7) "Let's start with our first topic." Write or type the word Self-Awareness all students can see.
- 8) Read the following out loud "Today we are going to be talking about self-awareness. Let's brainstorm some ideas by raising our hands and discussing what we think it means out loud. You can write notes down on the back of your paper."
- 9) Take 3- 5 minutes for them to answer and put some answers on the board.
- 10) After students have answered, create a definition using their words to define Self-Awareness displayed for everyone to see. Use the following definition to help create a definition. **Self-Awareness: the ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior.**
- 11) Have a volunteer read the definition they created. Have them write it on the lesson handout.

- 12) “Now take a few minutes to review the list of feelings in the feelings bank. We will need them for the next part of the activity.” Allow students 2 minutes to review the word bank of feelings.

Individual Activity (20 min)

- 13) Read the following story out loud. “I am now going to read you a story. Reggie wakes up in the morning at 6 a.m. He helps wake up his younger sister and brother. He helps them dress and makes them breakfast. He makes sure they have what they need for snacks and lunch as well as himself. Then he walks them to school. Reggie continues walking to his school. When he arrives he realizes he forgot to bring the homework he completed last night for this morning. It is sitting on his desk at home. He has no time to do the assignment. The teacher will be around any minute to collect the homework”
- 14) Be silent for a minute or two to let students think about the story they just heard.
- 15) “Please read the questions on the handout and use the feelings word bank to help put your feelings into words about Reggie’s story. If you do not know what a word means raise your hand and I will help.”
- 16) Take 10 minutes after students answer the questions and review the questions with them in order. and ask for volunteers to share their answers. Highlight answers that reflect emotional awareness and empathy for Reggie.
- 17) Take 5 minutes to help students come up with ways Reggie could avoid this from happening again within reason. Help students focus on what Reggie can control.

Closing Reflections (5 min)

- 18) Close the lesson by asking these reflective questions. “Raise your hand if you have felt feelings listed in your word bank before? Raise your hand through Reggie’s story and understand some actions you could take to change how you could feel? Raise your hand if you would like to share something you are going to take away from the Self-Awareness discussion.”

Brainstorming Notes

Self-Awareness is...

Feelings Word Bank

Confused: uncertain, doubtful, embarrassed, encertain, unsure, lost, tense, upset

Sad: crushed, heavy, frustrated, weepy, anxious, heavy

Strong: sure, certain, unique, bold, determined, confident, secure, empowered

Happy: amused, delighted, joyful, content, grateful, cheerful, pleased, glad

Anger: annoyed, irritated, bitter, outraged, mad, fed up, agitated

Energized: creative, renewed, motivated, focused, inspired

Directions: Answer these questions after your teacher reads you Reggie's story.

What did you feel after the story was read?

What is a challenge Reggie is faced with?

How do you think Reggie feels about having these responsibilities?

What could Reggie do to change some of what he might be feeling right now?

What do you think his teacher might say? And how could that make Reggie feel?

If you were in Reggie's place how would you feel?

What do you think he could say to his teacher?

If Reggie says that to a teacher how could that affect his feelings?

What is a strength Reggie has?

What would you say to Reggie?

Unit 1: Self-Awareness

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: Who's the boss?

Length of Lesson: 50 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 1: Develop self awareness to have knowledge of one's emotions, to develop a confident and optimistic self-concept, and to recognize individual strengths and growth areas.

SEL.1.A Student demonstrates an awareness of one's own emotions and behaviors. "I am able to identify and communicate how I am feeling."

Objective:

Students will be able to

- Correctly identify and label their own emotions and emotions they feel for others
- Recognize that emotions are temporary and that they can and will change
- Recognize that emotions can and will affect behavior
- Recognize that behavior can affect emotions (including that it is possible to improve how ones feels)
- Recognize that emotions have physical effects

Educator Preparation:

1. Write these objectives on the board- Today we are going to learn how: to identify things we feel more closely, understand how this happens and learn what we can do with what we feel.
2. Ability to display students voluntary answers for all to see.
3. This lesson can be adapted by having students read parts of the script as well.
4. Print Self-Awareness Unit 2 Handout

Unit 1: Self-Awareness

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (15 min)

1. Read this script "Today we are going to learn how to identify things we feel more closely, understand how this happens and learn what we can do with what we feel. We make the choice of what controls our actions in every situation. When we feel strong emotions we either can have strategic thoughts about what to do about those feelings or our brain can go on autopilot and just react without thought." (Pause)

2. "When we are in a situation that excites us in either a positive (delighted, joyful, or motivated) or negative (confused, embarrassed, or uncertain) way, each of us can choose to override our brains' and stop any quick unguided reactions. We can learn to control our emotions and therefore, our actions while feeling that emotion." (Pause)
3. "Let's take an angry feeling as an example such as feeling annoyed. When we feel annoyed, that feeling awakens a part of our brain within the limbic system by sending blood and oxygen to it; the blood and oxygen then feeds the emotion making it more intense which then calls for our body to react to that feeling." (Pause)
4. "Think of this as a cause and effect type relationship between our feelings, the brain, and our body, like in a science experiment."
5. Write this in the board: Emotion/Feeling + Oxygen/Blood to the brain= Stronger Feelings/Body Wants to Get This Out Physically
6. "The body might want us to fight, run, or freeze (stop from fighting or running because the body cannot decide what to do) from what is annoying us. Everyone has the power to choose how to work through the brain's impulses and get past the fight, run, or freeze drive."

Lesson Transition Activity (10 min)

7. "Let's start with something that might make us feel annoyed, which remember from our feelings word bank describes anger. I will start by writing an example of something that annoys me on the board."
8. Write an example on the board unrelated to students, for example do not use examples such as, "When students do not turn in homework."
9. "I will need volunteers to write things that annoy them on the board too. Who would like to volunteer to write something on the board?"
10. "Now I need volunteers to write how their body might react to one of the examples written on the board. Those reactions again are wanting to fight, run, or freeze."

Foundation Skills for Emotional Control (15 min)

11. "Now let's pick 1 example from the board and talk about steps we could take to stop the fight, run, or freeze response."

12. Guide them through the below steps for the example. Ask students to volunteer to share their answers.
13. "Okay let's put ourselves in this person's shoes. Let's take a moment to recognize that we suddenly feel annoyed. As your brain starts to get oxygen and blood going to it, which reaction is your body pulling you to? Fight, run, or freeze?" (Pause let some students answer.)
14. "Now let's take the first step together to stop this reaction. Let's slow down our breathing. Take a few deeper than usual breaths. Inhale...fill up those lungs, hold for a few seconds then exhale slowly. Repeat. This will slow down the brain and give us more oxygen for our next step." (Pause to let students take a few breaths)
15. "While you are still breathing slowly and with purpose, review the feeling. Go through your feeling word bank in your mind, make sure the correct word to describe how you feel is actually annoyed. Is it class? Could it be hurt? Or sad instead of annoyed?"(Pause to let students answer yes or no as a class)
16. "Keep breathing with purpose to maintain control of your brain. Now you have time to stop and think about the feelings even more."
17. Now consider the following, "What caused me to feel this way? Do you think the person that annoyed you in the example did it on purpose? OR meant to make you feel this way? (Pause to let the class think)
18. "Maybe the person did not have any idea that you could feel this way. Could that be a possibility class?" (Pause to let the student's answer)
19. "We are now using the thinking part of your brain instead of being on autopilot. We can identify exactly what we are feeling and not mistake it for something else and think clearly about actions we could take."
20. "What are some things we could do about what made us feel this way for the example that will not cause us to feel worse or cause the other person to feel negative?" (Pause let volunteers answer.
21. "Remember like most things such as sports, video games, reading, or math self-awareness of our feelings, controlling our breathing and brain reactions takes practice.

Reinforcing Learning Activity- Controlled Breathing (10 min)

22. "Now we are going to practice the deep/controlled breathing we just did without any examples that cause us to feel a strong emotion. We are just going to breathe together. Listen to what I am asking and follow along by simply participating."

- "Find a comfortable way to sit in your chair. While sitting up tall to open your lungs." (Pause)
- "Set your gaze down towards the table, floor, or your desk." (Pause)
- "Roll your shoulders back." (Pause)
- "Slowly take a quiet deep breath in through your nose." (Pause)
- "Fill your lungs full of air." (Pause)
- "Hold the breath and count in your mind for 3 seconds." (Pause)
- "Now slowly let the breath out through your mouth." (Pause)
- "As you get the last of the air out. Notice how your body might feel. Maybe a little more relaxed, a little more focused." (Pause)
- "Again take a quiet deep breath through your nose." (Pause)
- "Let's take the next few minutes to do just this and take note with how you're feeling." (Let them continue on their own for 5 min)
- "Pay attention to my voice again class, on the next inhale I want you to slowly open your eyes, or set your gaze at the front of the room again." (Pause until everyone is attentive again)

23. "Does anyone want to share what they feel like now after taking controlled breaths?"

Closing Reflections (5 min)

24. "So, who's the boss? Which part of you is influencing your behavior?"

25. By understanding what triggered the feeling, identifying the correct feeling you are feeling, breathing deeply, stopping the body from carrying out a possible choice without taking the time to understand what is happening, we should then make a negative choice while our body is on autopilot. By becoming aware of how we feel we are resetting our feelings and taking control. We can make the right choice in how to respond to different feelings such as fear or anger and different situations. Remember you are in control and you get to decide how to react."

Self-Awareness Unit 1 Lesson 2 Handout on Next Page

The Steps to gain control.

1. Recognize that you suddenly feel angry and annoyed.
2. Take a few long and deep breaths. This will slow down the feeling from taking over your brain and launching the fight, run or freeze reaction.
3. While you are still taking these deep long breaths, review the feeling to make sure the correct way to describe how you feel by using the word annoyed.
4. Ask yourself what caused me to feel this way.
5. Ask if you think that the person that made you feel that way did it on purpose, meant to make you feel this way, or had no idea that you could feel this way.
6. Think about what you could choose to do next. Will it result in positive results?

The Steps to gain control.

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Self-Management (2 Lessons)

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: Taking control!

Length of Lesson: 40 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 2: Develop and demonstrate self management skills, and resiliency to regulate emotions and behaviors, to monitor and achieve goals related to school and life success.

SEL.2.B. Students demonstrate the ability to seize opportunities to be honest and show integrity. "I can act in an honest manner."

Objectives

Students will be able to

- Define Self-Management
- Understand how Self-Management builds on Self-Awareness
- Demonstrate the Self-Management Technique of "Talking Back to the Brain"

Educator preparation

1. Write these objectives on the board-
Today we are going to learn:
 - What Self-Management is...
 - How it links with Self-Awareness
 - A new way to work through strong feelings
2. Posting the positive statements somewhere in the room but do not reveal them until it is time. Positive statements:
 - I am doing this, just at my own pace.
 - I am going to raise my hand and share because I like sharing my ideas.
 - Life is tough right now but it will get better like it does.
 - I am going to keep trying to figure this out, it's a tough lesson but I know I can do it.
 - I am really good at writing but math is a struggle and that is okay.
 - I am going to ask someone to help me figure this problem out.
 - My best feature is my eyes, the color or my hair, my smile, etc.
 - I am so upset right now, but that is normal. I can work through this.
 - I will not give up.
 - I am going to try out for a sport, I want to learn how to get better.
 - I am going to join a club because I want to meet new friends.
 - I am so angry and want to do something that makes me feel better.
3. Paper and writing utensils for students.

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 6

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (10 min)

- 1) "Today we are going to do an activity called, 'Talking Back to the Brain. Usually you are not encouraged to talk back, and you get in trouble for it. But today you are going to get the chance to talk back. Last time we learned how to use controlled breathing to help us think more clearly when faced with a strong emotion or feeling. That was a very important step in becoming self-aware. Sometimes our emotions/feelings stay strong even though we are using controlled breathing and taking the steps needed to better understand and choose what to. Today we are going to learn about Self-Management."
- 2) "Let's brainstorm what we think Self-Management means" (write their ideas on the board and have a student volunteer to create a definition from their ideas, guide that student into including ideas from this definition below

Self-Management- the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, controlling uncomfortable feelings."

Introduction to the Activity (15 min)

- 3) "I am going to read a list of statements that could pop into your minds while feeling strong emotions. Warning, these are self-defeating/fearful/anxiety-provoking statements."
- 4) (Pause to explain what this means). "Statements like this become the impulse to fight, run, or freeze. They also try to hang about in our minds longer but eventually go away. What we want to do is replace them to make them and the strong feelings go away faster and get control of our brain."
- 5) "Here are the statements:
 - I have to do this because everyone else is doing it.
 - I can't raise my hand because I am not sure if my answer is correct. I can't wear this because it is not what everyone else is wearing.
 - My life is horrible, I just want to run away and hide!
 - I am not smart enough to do this.
 - I'm so overwhelmed, I can't think straight!
 - I am not good at (football/dancing/acting/soccer), so I can't try out. I don't have any friends.
 - I am so ugly.
 - I am so upset, I'll never get over this.
 - I am too fat/thin/tall/short.
 - I give up.

- I'm so angry I'm going to explode.
- I'll never learn how to do this.
- Oh my gosh, what am I going to do?"

“Talk Back” Activity (10 min)

- 6) “I am sure everyone in this room has had one of these statements pop into their minds at some point.”
- 7) “Now on a piece of paper, draw a picture of your brain saying something negative inside of it like one of the statements you just heard. Then “Talk Back,” use the examples around the room to write 3 positive things you could think to yourself instead around the brain. You can also add statements you come up with on your own.” **(Reveal the statements now to students.)**
- 8) “Now if you would like to share a few of the positive statements with a person next to you. They may have different ideas that you never considered.”

Closing Activity Linking Back (5 min)

- 9) “Let’s revisit Reggie’s story. Right after Reggie realized he left his homework at home. His brain might have had these negative statements pop-up, I am always forgetting things! Why can’t I remember all the things I need to do?! I am so stupid.”
- 10) “What could Reggie say to his brain back?”
“Examples: You are doing so much, you are overwhelmed, be honest with the teacher and tell him/her everything you had to remember today and make sure to express that it is a lot. Ask if you can bring the homework first thing tomorrow.”
- 11) “Now let’s close this activity by focusing on 1 positive statement and saying it 3 times in our minds.”

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: The Self-Management Lense

Length of Lesson: 20 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 2: Develop and demonstrate self management skills, and resiliency to regulate emotions and behaviors, to monitor and achieve goals related to school and life success.

SEL.2.B. Students demonstrate the ability to seize opportunities to be honest and show integrity. “I can act in an honest manner.”

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Monitor and regulate emotions more effectively
- Use awareness of emotions as a guide to decision making
- Motivate oneself
- Cope well with stress and anxiety

Educator Preparation

1. Write the questions for the lesson where all students can see but keep covered until after you read the story then reveal one question at a time

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Story (5 min)

1. Today we start with another story. (Read this story out loud), “Jen is tapping her finger on her desk during class. The teacher asked her to stop, but Jen says she cannot control her hand.”

Class Discussion (10 min)

“Let’s answer this question about the story together:

2. “When might Jen be tapping her finger? Think back to Reggie's story and the ‘*Talk Back to your Brain Exercise*’ (Guide students to identify negative thoughts Jen could be having about what is happening in class or outside of class that could be making herself nervous.)
3. “Why do you think the teacher asked Jen to stop tapping her finger on the desk?”
4. “What does Jen mean when she says, she cannot control the tapping? What feelings do you think Jen is having?”
5. “What could Jen do to break the habit?”
6. “How could Jen ask for the teachers' help to break the habit?”
7. “Who else could Jen ask to help with this habit.”

8. "If this habit is linked to a negative brain statement what could Jen do?"

9. "If you were Jen what would you do or say to yourself?"

Closing Reflection (5 min)

10. What do you think the purpose of hearing and discussion this story was about today? How could each of us help Jen? Do you even feel this way, anxious about something? How can we show Jen compassion? How could we show ourselves compassion if we were in her shoes? What could we do to manage this type of response in our bodies?" (Lead them to answers that are grounded in Self-Aware and Self-Management link the ideas together, talk about breathing and feelings awareness)

Social-Awareness (2 Lessons)

Unit 3: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: Do you see the world and the people in it?

Length of Lesson: 35 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 3: Develop social awareness skills and empathize and understand the perspectives and social norms from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

SEL.3.A. Students demonstrate awareness of other people's emotions and perspectives. "I care about the feelings and opinions of others and my affect on them."

Objectives

Students will be able to

- Put themselves in other people shoes and see another persons viewpoint
- Understand the other person's thoughts and viewpoints
- Accurately interpret situations and cues that indicate other people's feelings
- Understand what it mean to be empathetic

Educator Preparation

1. Write the words social awareness?' where all students can see but
2. Write the questions from the lesson where all students can see, keep them covered until after you read the story then reveal each question one at a time
3. The feelings word bank as a reference for students

Unit 2: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Directions

Activity- Introduction of Topic (10 min)

- 1) "What is Social-Awareness? Let's brainstorm what we think it is." Have students volunteer to add answers to the board.
- 2) "Let's create a definition from our words." Have a student volunteer to create a definition guide the student to include some of this definition.

Social-Awareness is the ability to take on the perspective of others and empathize with others, including people from different cultures and backgrounds than ourselves.

Story (10 min)

- 3) "Ashley just cleared her desk and the teacher is giving everyone a 5 minute break. It is almost Spring Break. Spring break is when Easter occurs. Some classmates are sharing what they do for Easter with their families. Ashley looks sad and is very quiet. A nearby classmate remembers that Ashley does not celebrate Easter. That classmate then walks over and asks Ashley if she has anything cool planned for the Break." (Pause let students reflect)
- 4) "Can anyone relate to what Ashley's classmate did?"
- 5) Can anyone talk about why the classmate might have asked Ashley about Spring break and not Easter specifically?"
- 6) "What the classmate showed was empathy, which is the ability to understand what Ashley might be feeling."
- 7) "How do you think Ashley might have felt after this classmate included her in sharing something about Spring Break?"

Activity- Self Story (10 min)

- 8) Have the students break down into groups of two and share a time when they could relate to what another person was feeling and what they did about it. Encourage students to use the word empathetic and words from the feelings word bank.

Closing Reflections (5 min)

- 9) " In past activities, can you think of ways you demonstrated Empathy then? When you heard Reggie's story, or Jen's story?" Ask students to raise their hands and volunteer their answers.

Unit 3: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: Compassionate Selves

Length of Lesson: 40 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 3: Develop social awareness skills and empathize and understand the perspectives and social norms from diverse backgrounds and cultures

SEL.3.A. Students demonstrate awareness of other people's emotions and perspectives. "I care about the feelings and opinions of others and my affect on them."

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Students will practice self-awareness and how they affect others.
- Students will expand upon their emotions to encompass compassion.
- Understand compassion of self and others

Educator Preparations

1. Write the following quote on the board: ***'It never hurts to see the good in someone else. They often act the best because of it.'*** – Nelson Mandela
2. Have the following questions posted so all students can see them: What do you think about this quote? Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?

Unit 2: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Directions

Introduction of Topic (5 min)

1) Write the following quote on the board: ***'It never hurts to see the good in someone else. They often act the best because of it.'*** – Nelson Mandela (Pause to students reflect on the quote)

Discussion (10 min)

2) Open a discussion and ask these questions one at a time. Have them posted where students can see them.

- What do you think about this quote?
- Do you agree or disagree?
- Why or why not?

3) It's been my experience that this quote is really true. Think about a time when someone saw the good in you or thought the best of you and told you. How did that feel? How did them seeing you like that change or affect you in a positive way? Did it inspire you to motivate others in the same way? Would anyone like to share their story? How do you think that could make others feel if you told them you saw something positive in them?"

4) "Looking for the good in what we have done and looking for good in others is a demonstration of compassion. Compassion for yourself and compassion for others. How would you define compassion?"

Activity- Defining Compassion (10 min)

5) "We are going to break into small groups (you decide how big the groups can be). Just as before I want you to first brainstorm what you think compassion means. Then create a definition of the word from the group's ideas."

Closing Reflection (5 min)

6) "Which groups want to share their definitions?"

7) "Beside seeing the good in people, how else can we practice being compassionate?"

Relationship Skills (2 Lesson)

Unit 4: Relationship Skills

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: "What is Forgiveness?"

Length of Lesson: 30 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 4: Demonstrate relationship skills needed to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships.

SEL.3.A. Students use effective communication and social skills to interact and cooperate with others. "I will interact appropriately with others."

Student Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Students will discuss what forgiveness means to them and learn the definition of forgiveness.
- Students will discuss what forgiveness means and why it's important

Educator Preparation:

1. A way to display the quote for all students to see
2. Extra paper and writing utensils for students

Unit 4: Relationship Skills**Grade Level:** 6**Lesson:** 1 of 2**Lesson Directions**

Opening Discussion (5 min)

1. Write this on the board. ***“The truth is, unless you let go, unless you forgive yourself, unless you forgive the situation, unless you realize that the situation is over, you cannot move forward. - Steve Maraboli***
2. Write the following definition of **Forgiveness on the board:**
Forgiveness means choosing to let go of anger and resentment toward yourself or someone else, to surrender thoughts of revenge, and to move forward with your personal power intact.

Discussion (25 min total broken down by each step below)

3. “Forgiveness is the next topic. Everyone makes mistakes, but what really makes us human is our ability to forgive.”
4. “Let’s break things down and talk about what forgiveness really is. Take out a piece of paper. On the top of the first page write ‘WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?’. Now take a few minutes to write down what forgiveness means to you.” (5 min)
5. “Turn to your neighbor or partner and share what you wrote. Discuss the similarities and differences in your definitions.” Allow a few minutes for sharing and reflection. (5 min)
6. “What did you come up with? Let’s share with the class some ideas we already have about forgiveness.” Students share examples. (2 min)
7. “The definition of forgiveness that we will use is this... Forgiveness means choosing to let go of anger and resentment toward yourself or someone else, to surrender thoughts of revenge, and to move forward with your personal

power intact.”

8. “How does that definition compare to your experience about what forgiveness means?” Allow for reflection and discussion. (5 min)
9. “What do you think I mean by personal power?” Students share examples.
10. “Think about the definition of forgiveness. What do you notice? I notice that this definition talks a lot about the ‘victim’ no longer feeling resentment or anger. It does not mention the perpetrator’s feelings at all.”

Closing Reflection (5 min)

11. “That is what forgiveness is all about...it is not about how the other person is feeling. It is about cutting yourself free. Forgiveness is a gift that you give yourself by letting go of feeling angry, resentful or revengeful. When you do this, you are not wasting your time and energy on this negativity....you are holding onto your personal power.”

Unit 4: Relationship-Skills

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: The Gift

Length of Lesson: 25 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 4: Demonstrate relationship skills needed to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships.

SEL.3.A. Students use effective communication and social skills to interact and cooperate with others. “I will interact appropriately with others.”

Student Objectives

Student will be able to:

- Students will discuss the analogy of carrying boxes to represent the weight of anger and resentment that we carry when we don’t let go and forgive.
- Students will discuss what forgiveness means and why it’s important, using a

gift analogy.

- Students will write down things that make them angry or resentful and grudges they need to let go of.

Educator Preparation:

1. A way to display the quote for all students to see on a white board, chalk board, or projected from a computer
2. Have extra paper and pencils ready for students

Unit 4: Relationship-Skills

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (5 min)

1. “We talked about what Forgiveness is, but did you also know it is considered a gift? A gift you give to someone else. It feels good to be forgiven for a mistake or wrongdoing. But forgiveness is most importantly a gift that you give to yourself. It allows you to cut the cord to pain, anger, sadness, resentment, and all of the hurtful and challenging feelings you may have as a result of what someone has done to you. It lightens your load and frees you from negativity. Forgiveness also is a gift in that it builds bridges and connections where there once was a divide and separation.”

Activity (15 min)

2. “Everyone takes out a piece of paper and draws a picture of a gift/present.” (Demonstrate on the board.) Now inside of the present write down some things that you can forgive in your life. They can be little things, like forgiving your little brother for scribbling in your favorite book, or something bigger, like forgiving your friend for making fun of you in front of a group of peers. Jot down as many things to forgive as you can!”
3. Allow time for students to do this.
4. “Just writing these things down can help you start your journey toward forgiveness. Acknowledging the things that are weighing you down and causing you pain, anger and resentment is very important. It takes courage to be aware of your feelings and it gives you a lot of power. Let’s end today with an affirmation that we can say aloud together. Let’s say this, ‘I am cutting the

cord to the things and people that have caused me pain, anger, and sadness. I am free and happy because I forgive.” As a class, say this affirmation a few times. You can ask students how they feel after saying this and beginning to think about forgiveness and letting go of challenging feelings.

Closing Reflection- Discussion

5. “Practicing forgiveness is a way to show compassion. It is how we connect to others and become more connected to ourselves. How is forgiveness and compassion linked?” (5 min)

Responsible Decision Making (2 Lessons)

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: Compassion in Action

Length of Lesson: 40 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 5: Demonstrate decision making skills, and responsible behaviors in school, personal, and community environment.

SEL.5.A. Students consider self, social, and relationship factors in making constructive and respectful decisions.

Student Objectives

Student will be able to:

- Students will learn the definition of Compassion in Action
- Students will create a drawing representing what compassion means to them.
- Students will set Compassion Learning Goals for the unit.

Educator Preparation

1. Write the definition of compassion on the board: ***Compassion is the understanding of a problem or the suffering of another and acting to solve the problem or alleviate the suffering.***
2. Extra paper and writing utensils

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Directions

Mindful Minute Opening (5 min)

1. "Let's begin by taking a Mindful Minute. Find a comfortable position to sit. Close your eyes and focus your attention on your heart for one minute. Just take the time to be still for a few minutes and have a self check in."

Discussion (5 min)

2. "Today we will be talking about compassion. What does compassion mean to you?" Allow for responses and discussion.
3. "Compassion in action is the understanding of a problem or suffering of another and acting to solve the problem or alleviate the suffering. We add 'in action', because we want to go beyond just understanding how someone feels and actually take action to make them feel better. "
4. "Choosing to be compassionate can be what makes a difference, no matter the situations we might face. We all have tremendous courage within us to choose how we respond to situations even if we can't control what happens to us all the time. We can find things to be grateful for even when we find ourselves in challenging times. We can choose to forgive ourselves and others, understanding that no one is perfect and we can learn from our mistakes."
5. "When we have compassion, we are aware of the pain or suffering of others, and have a desire to alleviate it. During this Compassion in Action Unit, we are going to learn more about what compassion is, learn skills to become more compassionate, and learn ways to demonstrate compassion in action in our lives. Compassion in action has a ripple effect. When we take action to increase compassion, it has a profound impact on many- we all benefit."

Activity – Compassion Learning Goal (10 min)

6. "Right now, let's write this formula: **Compassion + Understanding + Action = Alleviation of Suffering.**
7. Next, I'd like you to write down a personal learning goal you have for yourself with Compassion in Action in mind. What do you hope to learn about compassion? How can you use compassion? You can write down more than one thing.

Closing Activity

8. Finally, I'd like you to take a few minutes to make a drawing that represents your Compassionate Learning Goal and what Compassion means to you. How can being compassionate help others? How could it affect the relationships you have with others?" (Allow time for students to work on this. Then have students share their Compassion Learning Goal(s) and/or their drawings.)

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title:

Length of Lesson: 25 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 5: Demonstrate decision making skills, and responsible behaviors in school, personal, and community environment.

SEL.5.A. Students consider self, social, and relationship factors in making constructive and respectful decisions.

Student Objectives

Student will be able to:

- Students will review and reflect on quotes about compassion.
- Students will develop a deeper understanding of compassion
- Student will be able to provide examples of compassionate decisions

Educator Preparation

1. Make copies of the Compassion Quotes page for each student.

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making

Grade Level: 6

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (15 min)

1. "Today I want to share what some famous people had to say about compassion. I'm going to pass around a sheet that has various quotes on compassion. Let's get some volunteers to read each one aloud. As each quote is read, I want you to stomp your feet twice (or clap/snap fingers) if you agree with it."

2. Distribute the Quotes sheet to all. Call on volunteers to read each one aloud.
3. “For the next few minutes, I want you to reflect on these quotes in your journals. What stood out to you? What is something that you learned about compassion from them? Which quote is your favorite? Write it in your journal and reflect on the quote and why it is your favorite. React and respond to it.”
4. Time permitting, you can have students break into partners or small groups and share some of their favorite quotes and reflections. You can even allow students to use their phones to find another quote on compassion to share with the larger group. This can be an in class activity or can be an out of class assignment or extra credit opportunity where they find a different quote and give a written reaction or response to it.

Closing Reflections (10 min)

5. “How can we use compassion when making decisions? Could we use one of these quotes as a personal or class motto? Will you share one of these quotes with anyone? Will you share what you learned about compassion with anyone?”

Compassion Quotes Sheet for This Lesson on the Next Page

Compassion Quotes

- “Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a harder battle.” —Plato
- “No one has ever become poor by giving.” —Anne Frank
- “There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.” —John Holmes
- “Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.” —Leo Buscaglia
- “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” —Aesop
- “I would rather make mistakes in kindness and compassion than work miracles in unkindness and hardness.” —Mother Teresa
- “It does not matter how long you are spending on the earth, how much money you have gathered or how much attention you have received. It is the amount of positive vibration you have radiated in life that matters.” —Amit Ray
- “Some people think only intellect counts: knowing how to solve problems, knowing how to get by, knowing how to identify an advantage and seize it. But the functions of intellect are insufficient without courage, love, friendship, compassion, and empathy.” —Dean Koontz
- “To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.” —Ralph Waldo Emerson
- “If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.” —Booker T. Washington
- “Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.” —Mother Teresa
- “How beautiful a day can be when Kindness touches it.” —George Elliston
- “The heart is like a garden. It can grow compassion or fear, resentment or love. What seeds will you plant there?” —Buddha
- “At the end of the day, the world will either be a more or less kind, compassionate, and a loving place because of your presence. Your move.” —John Pavlovitz

7th Grade Standards Alignment

Common Core Standards

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Reading & Writing :

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.3 Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1.A Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1.C Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.2.B Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

Speaking & Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.B Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.C Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.D Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.2 Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success:

MINDSETS

- **Mindset 1:** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/ emotional and physical well-being
- **Mindset 2:** Self-confidence in ability to succeed
- **Mindset 3:** Sense of belonging in the school environment
- **Mindset 5:** Belief in using abilities to their fullest to achieve high-quality results and outcomes
- **Mindset 6:** Positive attitude toward work and learning

BEHAVIOR STANDARDS

Learning Strategies:

- **Learning Strategies 1:** Demonstrate critical-thinking skills to make informed decisions
- **Learning Strategies 2:** Demonstrate creativity
- **Learning Strategies 4:** Apply self-motivation and self-direction to learning

Self-Management Skills:

- **Self-Management Skill 1:** Demonstrate ability to assume responsibility
- **Self-Management Skill 2:** Demonstrate discipline and self-control
- **Self-Management Skill 3:** Demonstrate the ability to work independently
- **Self-Management Skill 4:** Demonstrate ability to delay immediate gratification for long-term rewards
- **Self-Management Skill 10:** Demonstrate ability to manage transitions and ability to adapt

Social Skills:

to changing situations

- **Social Skill 1:** Use effective oral and written communication skills and listening
- **Social Skill 2:** Create positive and supportive relationships with other students
- **Social Skill 4:** Demonstrate empathy
- **Social Skill 5:** Demonstrate ethical decision-making and social responsibility
- **Social Skill 6:** Use effective collaboration and cooperation skills
- **Social Skill 7:** Use leadership and teamwork skills to work effectively in diverse teams
- **Social Skill 8:** Demonstrate advocacy skills and ability to assert self, when necessary
- **Social Skill 9:** Demonstrate social maturity and behaviors appropriate to the situation and environment

7th Grade Curriculum

In each lesson, you will find the following: student objectives, educator preparation, and handouts if the lesson requires one.

Self-Awareness (2 Lessons)

Unit 1: Self-Awareness

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 1 of 1

Lesson Title: “What is Self-Awareness?”

Length of Lesson: 40 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 1: Develop self awareness to have knowledge of one’s emotions, to develop a confident and optimistic self-concept, and to recognize individual strengths and growth areas.

SEL.1.A. Student demonstrates an awareness of one’s own emotions and behaviors. “I am able to identify and communicate how I am feeling.”

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Understand what self-awareness is
- Correctly label emotions
- Recognize that emotions can and will affect behavior
- Recognize that behavior can affect emotions

Educator Preparation:

1. Ability to display essential lesson questions for all students to see
2. Hand out of Feelings Word Bank
3. Writing utensils
4. Paper for students to write on

Unit 1: Self-Awareness

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 1 of 1

Lesson Directions:

Opening Discussion (10 min)

1. Read the script outloud, “What challenges do you face on a day-to-day basis, or expect to face in middle school?”(Students share their ideas.)
2. “What skills do you think would help you overcome these challenges and be

successful?”(Students share their ideas.)

3. “As part of our work together this year, we’ll look at ourselves and society, with an aim to improve many of the skills you just mentioned. We’ll do this through the SEL program. This program involves us taking a short break to look at other parts of ourselves to develop.”
4. “Students engage in many different types of learning in school. You learn math, science, art, and history from teachers. You learn about teamwork, leadership, and friendship with your peers. As part of this curriculum, we’ll do activities and discuss issues relevant to you. We’ll find out how having courage, showing compassion, and being good communicators can benefit us physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. We’re going to have a lot of fun.”
5. “Some of the concepts we’ll cover, such as courage, gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion, are not topics regularly discussed in school. How do you feel talking about these ideas?” Encourage students to use emotional language such as “scared,” “nervous,” “happy,” “surprised,” instead of judgmental language such as “weird,” “strange,” or “stupid.”
6. “Because we’ll be dealing with sensitive topics, it’s important that we have a shared understanding as a class about how we’ll work together. What are some class ground rules we should set up for these lessons?” (Allow them to answer. While they answer, record their ideas.)

Activity (10 min)

7. Write or type the word Self-Awareness in a place displayed where all students can see.
8. Read the following out loud “Today we are going to be talking about self-awareness. Let’s brainstorm some ideas by raising our hands and discussing what we think it means out loud. You can write notes down on the back of your paper.”
9. Take 3- 5 minutes for them to answer and put some answers on the board.
10. After students have answered write a definition using their words to define Self-Awareness
11. Use this actual definition to help as a guide to use their words to create a definition. It is the ability to accurately recognize one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior.
12. Read the definition created by the class. Have them write it on the lesson

handout.

Class Activity (15 min)

13. Read the following aloud “Now take a few minutes to review the list of feelings in the feelings bank. We will need them for the next part of the activity.” Allow students 2-3 minutes to review the word bank of feelings.

14. Read the following story out loud. “Smantha wakes up in the morning at 6 a.m. She helps wake up his younger sister, feeds and walks the dog. She packs her sister and herself lunch. Then she gets her sister on the bus. Samantha continues her day by walking to school. When she arrives she realizes she forgot her lunch on the counter and her permission slips for a field trip she really wants to go on. The teacher will be around any minute to collect the slip and it is due today.” (Be silent for a minute or two to let students think about the story they just heard.)

15. Say the following aloud. “Please read the questions on the handout and use the feelings word bank to help put into words what the story made you think and feel. If you do not know what a word means raise your hand and I will help.”

16. Take 10 minutes after students answer the questions and review the questions with them in order. and ask for volunteers to share their answers. Highlight answers that reflect emotional awareness and empathy for Samantha.

17. Take 5 minutes to help students come up with ways Samantha could avoid this from happening again within reason. Help students focus on what Samantha can control.

Closing Reflections (5 min)

18. Close the lesson by asking these reflective questions. “Raise your hand if you have felt feelings listed in your word bank before? Raise your hand through Samantha’s story and understand some actions you could take to change how you could feel? Raise your hand if you would like to share something you are going to take away from the Self-Awareness discussion. Did you know that the ability to connect and feel strong feelings for Samantha is called Empathy? That is the ability to understand what someone elses is feeling or understand what they are going through without having gone through that exact situation yourself..”

Self-Awareness Unit 1 Handout On Next Page

Brainstorming Notes

Self-Awareness is...

Feelings Word Bank

Confused: uncertain, doubtful, embarrassed, encertain, unsure, lost, tense, upset

Sad: crushed, heavy, frustrated, weepy, anxious, heavy

Strong: sure, certain, unique, bold, determined, confident, secure, empowered

Happy: amused, delighted, joyful, content, grateful, cheerful, pleased, glad

Anger: annoyed, irritated, bitter, outraged, mad, fed up, agitated

Energized: creative, renewed, motivated, focused, inspired

Directions: Answer these questions after your teacher reads you Samantha's story.

What did you feel after the story was read?

What is a challenge Samantha is faced with?

How do you think Samantha feels about having these responsibilities?

What could Samantha do to change some of what she might be feeling right now?

What do you think his teacher might say? And how could that make Samantha feel?

If you were in Samantha's place how would you feel?

What do you think she could say to his teacher?

If Samantha says that to a teacher how could that affect her feelings?

What is a strength Smantha has?

What would you say to Samantha?

Unit 1: Self-Awareness

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: “Wheel of Coping?”

Length of Lesson: 45 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 1: Develop self awareness to have knowledge of one’s emotions, to develop a confident and optimistic self-concept, and to recognize individual strengths and growth areas.

SEL.1.A. Student demonstrates an awareness of one’s own emotions and behaviors. “I am able to identify and communicate how I am feeling.”

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Recognize that emotions are temporary and that they can and will change
- Recognize that emotions can and will affect behavior
- Recognize that behavior can affect emotions

Educator Preparation:

1. Each student will need two paper plates and a brass fastener (or substitute for this piece that follows the arrow to spin)
2. Colored pencils or markers for student use
3. Heading on the board that says, “Coping Skills”
4. An example “Wheel of Coping Skills” so students have a model

Unit 1: Self-Awareness

Lesson 2 of 2

Grade Level: 7

Lesson Directions:

Opening Discussion (10 min)

1. Read the script outloud, “When we are dealing with heavy, challenging feelings like anger, hurt, frustration, and anxiety, it’s important that we have a toolkit packed with many skills or things that we can do to manage these feelings.”

2. “Coping skills are ways or methods of dealing with and managing stressful situations and the feelings that are produced by them. It is so important to remember that we can’t always choose what happens to us, but we can always choose how we respond. We have a lot of power and control.....much more than we realize. It’s easy to feel overwhelmed and get worked up and stressed over things that happen in our lives...situations that we create or those that

are created by others. But we have the power to choose how we respond and we can choose courageous, compassionate responses to move past these circumstances and set ourselves up for success and a healthy well being.”

3. “We’ve learned what Self-Awareness is and how to properly name emotions we are feeling. Now through reflection we are going to determine what some of you already do to cope or work through strong feelings or stressful times. Self-awareness includes being able to identify what you do to get through tough times. We will also identify new or other ways to cope.”

Activity- Brainstorming (10 min)

4. “Let’s brainstorm! Here is the starting question, when you feel stressed or overwhelmed what are some things you do? (Have student volunteers write their answers in a place where everyone can see.)
5. “Now let’s create a list of other things we can add to what we do to empower ourselves and put ourselves in a positive mindset.” (Examples to help students include: going for a walk or run, watching the sun set, journaling, talking with someone, listening to music, reading a book, playing board games, creating something, drawing, meditation, yoga, controlled breathing, ect. Write these on the board under the heading, ‘Coping Skills.’
6. “Perhaps there are some great skills and methods you have that we haven’t brought up....let’s share them and add them to the list. Remember these should be things that don’t hurt you or anyone else.....these should be things that relieve your anxiety, calm you, encourage and inspire you, and put you in a positive place.” (Add more ideas/skills to the list. You should have a long list created, the more suggestions the better. Students will be selecting the ideas that they wish to use to create a ‘Wheel of Coping Skills’ that they will create with two paper plates.)

Activity- “Wheel of Skills” (20 min)

7. “Now we are going to make our ‘Wheel of Skills’. Each of you will have two paper plates. On one plate, cut out a small triangle towards the middle of the plate. Put this plate with the box/triangle cut out on top of the other plate. When you spin the top plate, you will see a blank section on the bottom plate. In this blank space that you can see where you cut out the box or triangle, you will write down a safe, appropriate way to calm down and cope with anxiety and other difficult feelings. Spin the top plate and write the skills in each section of the second plate that is exposed in the section that was cut out. Pick the skills/ways/methods that you like the best and that you think will work best for you. After you have written all of your coping skills, insert a brass/paper fastener so the plate can spin and reveal the skills. Finally, decorate the plate

any way that you wish!”

8. “These can be a great go to for you. When you are stressed or overwhelmed dealing with feelings and stressful situations, spin your wheel and try the method that you see. You can spin it more than once if you need to. This is your toolkit to help you cope in a positive, healthy way.”

Closing Reflection (5 min)

9. (Remember when situations arise, you can prompt and encourage students to use their wheels. You can even practice using them by giving them stressful situations and allowing them to use their wheels to find a way to cope.) “Where are you going to put your Wheel? Who will you share it with?”

Self-Management (2 Lessons)

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: Mindful Minute

Length of Lesson: 40 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 2: Develop and demonstrate self management skills, and resiliency to regulate emotions and behaviors, to monitor and achieve goals related to school and life success.

SEL.2.B. Students demonstrate the ability to seize opportunities to be honest and show integrity. “I can confront my emotions in an honest manner and choose the best way to react.”

Objectives

Students will be able to

- Define Stress
- Understand stressful situations occur
- Learn a way to physically de-escalate stress
- Demonstrate the Self-Management Technique of taking a “Mindful Minute”

Educator preparation

1. A place for someone to write students answers to what stresses them out for all students to see.

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (5 min)

- 1) Read the following script out loud, “Stress is unavoidable. **Stress is defined as: the body’s reaction to any change that requires an adjustment outside of our comfort zone.** Stress is a normal part of life, but understanding that fact alone is not always enough to make strong feelings associated with stress disappear or go away.”

Activity (15 min)

- 2) “Let’s create a list as a class. Can someone volunteer to write what your classmates share on the board so everyone can see. What are some things that stress you out? It can be related to school or things that happen outside of school.”
- 3) “ Raise your hand if someone else said something you can relate to. We all experience stress and can feel overloaded. These feelings can happen at any time of the day and any place we go. I am sure just looking at this list might be causing stress to rise in how you may be feeling right now.”
- 4) “Therefore, It is helpful to have a few quick tricks up your sleeve to help you relax and be calm.”

Activity “Mindful Minute” (15 min)

- 5) “Acupressure is an ancient practice where you are able to affect one part of your body through pressure points on other parts of your body. It follows the same principles as acupuncture. There are over 25 pressure points in your hands. Here are some ways to use those points in your hand to help calm yourself down.”
- 6) “Simply rub your hands together until they become hot. Just like I am demonstrating for you. Rub yours hands back and forth to generate heat through the friction) As you rub them briskly back and forth, apply a little pressure into the palms as well. This creates a bit of friction and a bit more heat. After a few seconds, stop rubbing and separate your hands about an inch apart. Close your eyes and notice the sensation between your palms.”
- 7) “What does it feel like? How does the sensation change as you slowly pull your palms apart another inch? Allow them to move closer together again. How does that feel?” Allow a few minutes for practice and reflection. Then continue.

- 8) "Massage your hand. Begin in the fleshy space between your thumb and pointer finger. This is called the hand valley point. This acupressure point is said to help relieve stress as well as relieve the pain associated with migraines, headaches, tension in the neck and shoulders. It also helps to release excess heat from the body. This can often occur when we are very angry and frustrated." (Pause to let students reflect in thought)
- 9) "Apply pressure or simply massage the chunky muscle at the base of your thumb. This is the muscle that often fatigues or cramps when you do a lot of writing. While applying pressure or massaging, notice your breath. See if it becomes more relaxed and deeper."
- 10) "Finally, let's apply pressure to the tips of each finger. Squeeze the nail and the fleshy pad of each digit. This helps to turn on your thinking brain so you can come up with some creative ideas, or focus your attention to learn something new." Allow your students to play with this space between their hands. Cue them to use their breath to inhale and separate their hands and exhale as they draw them back towards each other.
- 11) After a minute or so, allow the students to describe their sensations and what they noticed with these exercises. Do they feel calmer and more relaxed? Are they thinking more clearly? They may even continue to do these exercises with a partner or in small groups.

Closing Reflection (5 min)

- 12) "We've just spent a few minutes doing something really simple, but powerful. This is another mindfulness tool. It's an easy way to press pause in our brain and specifically direct our thinking in the moment. In this case, using acupressure we are relaxing and calming ourselves. I encourage you to show someone at home what you learned today and to practice it at least once today. You can do this exercise anytime you feel a little stressed. It is best to practice this as often as you can, even when you are not feeling overwhelmed."

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: Mindful Manager

Length of Lesson: 50 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 2: Develop and demonstrate self management skills, and resiliency to regulate emotions and behaviors, to monitor and achieve goals related to school and life success.

SEL.2.A. Students demonstrate an ability to manage emotions and behavior constructively. "I can appropriately handle my feelings."

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Highlight what personal power is all about
- Discuss their emotions and why they lose control over them
- Students will learn and practice 'Word Up' activity to freely express their thoughts and feelings through word association about feelings and forgiveness

Educator preparation

1. "Why Do We Lose Control of Our Emotions" cued up ready to be projected with sound so that all students can see this video
2. Paper for students to write on
3. The following written on a large piece of paper that students cannot see until the "Word Up" activity: Feelings, Powerful, Anger, Hurt, Heart, Broken, Mend, Kindness, Comfort, Happiness, Peace going from top to bottom of a page in large print

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 7

Lesson Directions

Opening Warm Up (10 min)

- 1) Read the following script, "Let's begin today by taking a Mindful Minute. Find a comfortable position to sit. Let's practice the Mindful Minute technique we learned with our hands as a stress relief from before."

- 2) "Start by rubbing your hands together until they become hot. As you rub them briskly back and forth, apply a little pressure into the palms as well. Massage your hand. Begin in the fleshy space between your thumb and pointer finger. Apply pressure or simply massage the chunky muscle at the base of your thumb. Finally, let's apply pressure to the tips of each finger. Squeeze the nail and the fleshy pad of each digit. Cue them to use their breath to inhale and separate their hands and exhale as they draw them back towards each other."

(Pause and let them relax into the exercise)

- 3) "Once you have taken this minute and you're done warming up let's start with a quick introduction."

Video Activity (15 min)

- 4) "So who can tell me why we learned the Mindful Minute Hand exercise?" (Guide the students to getting to the point that it is used to alleviate stress.) "Today we are going to learn another exercise we can do to help manage strong emotions, but first a short video."
- 5) Preview and cue the following video, 'Why Do We Lose Control of Our Emotions':
<https://youtu.be/3bKuoH8CkFc>
- 6) "When we have been hurt, wronged or betrayed by someone....or when we have made mistakes or let ourselves and others down, it brings up a lot of challenging feelings. This on top of all the other stress we carry just from day to day life can be very overwhelming."
- 7) "Have you ever heard someone say, 'They make me so mad!', 'They made me feel so sad!', or 'They pushed my buttons!'. When we feel angry or hurt, we might think it's because someone is doing something to us to create those feelings. While they might be using a negative behavior toward us, we are 100% responsible, or accountable, for our own feelings. Other people aren't in charge of our feelings; we are. We own them they are ours"
- 8) "If someone made you feel a certain way or 'pushed your buttons', this assumes that the other person has control over your feelings and reactions. It means they have power over how you respond, rather than you having the power and control over how you respond."
(Lesson adaptation, you can copy the script and pass out parts for students to read too.)
- 9) "When you maintain your personal power, it means you get to choose how you respond to a situation. When we are talking about forgiveness, it means that you have the choice to feel angry, hurt, resentful, and bitter or you can decide to let those feelings go. But the choice is yours. Forgiveness gives you back your personal power. But emotions can be very powerful. It's easy to get overwhelmed by feelings and make choices out of feeling certain ways that can hurt ourselves and others. If we don't find ways to calm down, think clearly, and take the time to respond thoughtfully, we can have a lot of problems and certainly not be at our best."

Activity- **“Word Up”** (15 min)

- 10) “We are going to do an activity called, ‘Word Up’. We are going to start by writing the word ‘Feelings’ on a piece of paper. Then, I want you to think of the first word that comes to your mind and write it underneath ‘Feelings’. (Pause)
- 11) “Then, think of the next word that comes to mind from the 2nd word, write that underneath your second word. Continue on like this writing down 8-10 words. This is a form of free association where you just freely and spontaneously express what comes to mind without spending too much time, thinking too much, or making judgments on what comes to mind. After you have 8-10 words listed, go back and look at what you’ve expressed. It’s interesting to see where our mind takes us.”
- 12) “Let me show you mine first.” Write the following words on the board using arrows to connect the words from top to bottom to show how one word stemmed from the preceding word: **Feelings, Powerful, Anger, Hurt, Heart, Broken, Mend, Kindness, Comfort, Happiness, Peace**” Write these words going top to bottom on a pieces of paper prior as recommended in the Educator Preparation part.
- 13) “Now you take a few minutes to do this. Start with the word, ‘Feelings’ and flow from there, word after word after word.....quickly writing the first word that comes to mind after each word. Be spontaneous and creative- express your thoughts and feelings freely, let your mind make its own connections.” Allow students a few minutes to do this activity. Afterwards, you may invite some students to share their word associations.” (Lesson Adaptation: You may have students do another ‘word up’ free association with the word ‘forgiveness’ or any other word of your choosing.)
- 14) “If you are needing a way to relax your brain and manage your feelings, you can try this ‘Word Up’ free association activity again. You can start with any word that represents what’s on your mind, how you are feeling, or what’s stressing, upsetting or angering you. This is a great way to clear your mind, express your thoughts and feelings, and make important connections and reflections.”

Closing Reflections (5 min)

- 15) “What was this like for you to do?” “Will you use this new way of identifying how you feel and working through it?” “Will you share this with anyone?”

Social-Awareness (2 Lessons)

Unit 3: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: Compassion in Action

Length of Lesson: 45 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 3: Develop social awareness skills and empathize and understand the perspectives and social norms from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

SEL.3.A. Students demonstrate an awareness of other people’s emotions and perspectives. “I care about the feelings and opinions of others and how I affect them.”

Objective

- Students will learn the definition of Compassion in Action.
- Students will create a drawing representing what compassion means to them.
- Students will review and reflect on quotes about compassion.

Educator Preparation

1. Write ‘Courage + Gratitude + Forgiveness + Compassion in Action = Seeing the World and Helping it Turn.’
2. Write the definition of compassion in action on the board: *Compassion in action is the understanding of a problem or the suffering of another and acting to solve the problem or alleviate the suffering.*
3. Have plain white paper or construction paper available for this activity for all students along with colored pencils or markers

Unit 3: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 7

Lesson Directions

Mindful Minute (5 min)

1. Read the following script out loud, “Let’s begin by taking a Mindful Minute. Find a comfortable position to sit. Close your eyes and focus your attention on your heart for one minute. Feel your heart beating and feel alive in this very moment.” (Pause and give them a few minutes) “Okay, let’s open our eyes and begin.”

Opening Discussion (5 min)

2. “Just like courage, gratitude and forgiveness, compassion is a choice and has many benefits. What does compassion mean to you?” Allow for responses and

discussion.

3. “Compassion in action is the understanding of a problem or suffering of another and acting to solve the problem or alleviate the suffering. We add ‘in action’, because we want to go beyond just understanding how someone feels and actually take action to make them feel better. ”

4. “SEL is about how we can respond to any situation, however difficult. We all have tremendous courage within us to choose how we respond to situations even if we can’t control what happens to us all the time. We can find things to be grateful for even when we find ourselves in challenging times. We can choose to forgive ourselves and others, understanding that no one is perfect and we can learn from our mistakes.”

Activity- The Umbrella of Compassion (15 min)

5. **“Compassion in its simplest form is a response of kindness and concern toward the suffering of others.** Compassion is an umbrella term which means the word is used to cover a group of concepts that are all related. Some examples of the concepts under the umbrella of compassion are as follows: kindness, empathy, tolerance, acceptance, nurturing, healing, comfort, survival, love, action, helping. (Feel free to add your own words or student ideas as well. These words can be displayed where all students can see. Feel free to already have an example drawn ahead of time.)

6. “Now take a piece of paper and draw an umbrella. On the top write compassion. Then write some of the words you just heard that have a particular meaning to you under the umbrella.

7. “What are some other terms that you think fall under the umbrella of compassion?” Allow for responses. Add any other terms under the umbrella. This way you can save this and refer back to it when you need to. Hang this someplace you will see it often. On your door at home, in your locker, on the fridge so your family can see it and see what compassion means to you.” (When they are done have them clean up and take their seats again to continue.)

Listen Along (15 min)

8. “Listen carefully as I read some facts so you can begin to really understand what compassion is on a deeper level.”

Read the following statements about compassion:

- “Compassion is understanding how a person feels.”
- “Compassion is caring about yourself and others.”
- “Compassion is lending a helping hand and sharing with others.”

- “Compassion is being patient.”
- “Compassion is accepting others that are different from you.”
- “Compassion is understanding.”
- “Compassion is using kind words, actions, and intentions toward others.”
- “Compassion is taking action.”

9. “When we have compassion, we are aware of the pain or suffering of others, and have a desire to alleviate it. When we take action to increase compassion and love, it has a profound impact on many- we all benefit. Showing compassion will positively impact your body, mind, life, and those around you!”

10. “Through the SEL program, you are becoming more emotionally intelligent, gaining awareness of your feelings and becoming better able to understand and manage these feelings. You are learning skills that empower you to make good choices, be your best self, and connect with others in positive, meaningful ways. You are being inspired and empowered as you increase your levels of empathy and learn how to practice compassion in action! Now let’s focus on some questions.”

Ask the following questions and any others of your choosing to continue the dialogue. Allow for response and reflection. You may wish to have students take a moment to answer these questions on the back of the umbrella paper too before having a class discussion or they may reflect on them in writing after the class has had a discussion.

- “Can you only show compassion to someone in need? Or can we show compassion to anyone and everyone?”
- How does it make you feel when someone treats you with kindness and respect?
- How does it feel to show compassion to someone?
- Why do you think forgiveness is an important component of compassion?
- When are there times we must show courage to be compassionate?
- Can you show compassion even if you are angry, anxious, or sad?”

Closing Reflection (5 min)

11. Who will you share what you learned with today? How will you practice compassion in action?”

Unit 3: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: Compassion Role Models

Length of Lesson: 40 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 3: Develop social awareness skills and empathize and understand the perspectives and social norms from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

SEL.3.B. Students demonstrate consideration for others and a desire to contribute to the well being of their school and community by serving others. "I care about others and do my part as a role model."

Objective

- Students will discuss role models and what it takes to be a great leader, someone who is empathetic and compassionate.
- Students will view and discuss a video clip on spreading kindness and illustrate how they can start a ripple effect of kindness.
- Students will discuss Ellen DeGeneres as a Humanitarian and will write about their favorite Humanitarian.

Educator Preparation

1. Preview and cue the following music video about the Kindness Boomerang called, 'One Day': <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwAYpLVyeFU>
2. Have the definition of role model and empathy displaying where all student can see
3. Paper and colored pencils or markers for drawing

Unit 3: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 7

Lesson Overview (10 min)

1. Read the script outloud, "Role models come in many different forms and earn their title for many different reasons. A role model can be a coach who always urged you to do your very best, a favorite teacher who gives you great advice, a kind neighbor, a friend who is always there to help others, or even a famous celebrity who sets a positive example for his/her fans."
2. "The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines **role model as: someone who another person admires and tries to be like. One of the most admirable qualities in a person is their ability to be kind and empathize with others. Empathy is our ability to understand someone else's feelings, actually putting ourselves in another person's shoes.** Empathy is the key to unlock our communication and understanding of one another as human beings."

3. "Throughout history and even in the present day, there are many people that choose to exercise their leadership in ways that help others, help the environment, help animals, and more. These people are essential members of society. Not only are they positive role models with great leadership skills, they also give us hope that we, too, can become empathetic, compassionate role models and positively impact the community and world around us."
4. "This week we will profile a different empathetic, compassion role model each day. As you are learning about each person, think about how you can start being a leader in your own school, family, or community. Combining this with Compassion in Action."
5. Ask students to respond to and reflect on the following questions. This can generate a class discussion.
 - What type of qualities make up a great leader or role model? Name some characteristics you think are important.
 - What are some things we can learn from people who are great leaders?
 - Do you think it's necessary for a leader to be empathetic? Why or why not?
 - Can you name a person who you think is an empathetic, compassion role model?

Activity (10 min)

6. Let's watch a music video about acts of kindness that become contagious between complete strangers....a Kindness Boomerang. Listen to the lyrics as you watch one single act of kindness boomerang through society.
Show the following video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwAYpLVyeFU>
7. "A great way to begin your journey of being a compassionate role model is to start a ripple effect of kindness, like the kindness boomerang. Well, what are you waiting for?!"

Closing Reflection/Drawing (20 min)

8. "How would you start the Kindness Boomerang? How can you become a role model?"
Draw a picture of how you would start the ripple of kindness and compassion and be a role model for others. "What could you do in your class, at school, in your community?" Invite students to share.

Relationship Skills (2 Lessons)

Unit 4: Relationship Skills

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: What is Forgiveness?

Length of Lesson: 35 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 4: Demonstrate relationship skills needed to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships.

SEL.4.A. Students use effective communication and social skills to interact and cooperate with others. "I will interact appropriately with others."

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Explore their ideas about forgiveness and learn the definition of forgiveness
- Understand the positives of practicing forgiveness and how it will improve their life

Educator Preparation:

1. Ability to display the 2 definitions of Forgiveness for all students to see
2. Paper for students to write on if they do not have their own

Unit 4: Relationship Skills

Grade Level: 7

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (5 min)

- 1) Have this definition on display for all students to read the following script out loud, "Today we are going to talk about Forgiveness. **Forgiveness means choosing to let go of anger and resentment toward yourself or someone else, to surrender thoughts of revenge, and to move forward with your personal power intact.**" (You can choose to have a volunteer read it to the class.)
- 2) "Forgiveness is very important for developing and maintaining relationships with friends, family, and companions. Everyone makes mistakes, but what really makes us human is our ability to forgive."

Activity (5 min)

- 3) "Let's break things down and talk about what forgiveness really is. Take out a piece of paper. On the top of the first page write 'WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?'. What are your first thoughts about forgiveness? Now take a few minutes to

write down what forgiveness means to you.”

Pairing and Sharing Small Groups (10 min)

4) “Turn to your neighbor and share what you wrote. Discuss the similarities and differences in your definitions.” Allow a few minutes for sharing and reflection.

5) “What did you come up with? Let’s share with the class some ideas we already have about forgiveness.” Students share examples.

A Moment in Reflection (10 min)

6) Now reveal the other definition of Forgiveness and read this: “The definition of forgiveness that we will use is this... **Forgiveness means choosing to let go of anger and resentment toward yourself or someone else, to surrender thoughts of revenge, and to move forward with your personal power intact.**”

7) “How does that definition compare to your experience about what forgiveness means?” Allow for reflection and discussion.

8) “Think about the definition of forgiveness. What do you notice? I notice that this definition talks a lot about the ‘victim’ no longer feeling resentment or anger. It does not mention the perpetrator’s feelings at all. In this way, forgiveness is something that you do for you and not for the other person.” (Pause for them to reflect internally or share some thoughts)

9) “That is what forgiveness is all about. Forgiving is not about how the other person feels, although when you forgive someone it will make the other person feel better and mend fences. But ultimately, it’s a choice you make for yourself. It is about cutting yourself free from the hurt and pain that someone else caused. Forgiveness is a gift that you give yourself by letting go of feeling angry, resentful or revengeful. When you do this, you are not wasting your time and energy on this negativity....you are holding onto your personal power.”

Closing Questions (5 min)

10) “What is something you will take away from these ideas today? How can we practice forgiveness right now in school, at home, or in our communities? What are some ways we can state how we are forgiving someone?”

Unit 4: Relationship Skills

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: “The Gift”

Length of Lesson: 35 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 4: Demonstrate relationship skills needed to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships.

SEL.4.B. Students develop affirming and healthy relationships. “ I will work on having positive relationships, with myself that will translate into having positive relationships with others.”

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Understand the positives of practicing forgiveness and how it will improve their life
- Students will experience what it’s like to be attached to another by anger, resentment or pain, through a partner activity.

Educator Preparation:

1. Ability to display these considerations: How will forgiving change your life for the better? How will it make you feel? How will practicing forgiveness impact your thoughts, feelings, actions and choices? - for all students to see
2. Paper for students to write draw on

Unit 4: Relationship Skills

Grade Level: 7

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (10 min)

- 1) Read the following script out loud, “For this lesson we are going to revisit Forgiveness Forgiveness is a gift you give to someone else. It feels good to be forgiven for a mistake or wrongdoing. But forgiveness is most importantly a gift that you give to yourself. It allows you to cut the cord to pain, anger, sadness, resentment, and all of the hurtful and challenging feelings you may have as a result of what someone has done to you. It lightens your load and frees you from negativity. Forgiveness also is a gift in that it builds bridges and connections where there once was a divide and separation.” (A student can read this script too as a lesson adaptation)

Activity (15 min)

- 2) "Draw a picture of a gift on a piece of paper. Now inside the gift box write down all of the ways in which forgiving yourself and others will be helpful to you and positively impact your life." **Display these considerations: How will forgiving change your life for the better? How will it make you feel? How will practicing forgiveness impact your thoughts, feelings, actions and choices?** Write down all of these positives, these 'gifts' that you will receive when you choose to forgive." Allow time for students to do this.

- 3) "Find someone in the classroom you have not had a chance to work with in a while. Share some of the things you wrote down with each other."

Closing Reflection (10 min)

- 4) "Just writing these things down can help you start your journey toward forgiveness. Let's end today with an affirmation that we can say aloud together. Let's say this, 'I am choosing to forgive (pause) because it is a gift I can give myself. (pause) Forgiving will give me my power back and let me be free to be happy.'" As a class, say this affirmation a few times. You can ask students how they feel after saying this and beginning to think about the choice and gift of forgiveness and how it can positively impact their lives. You can also post their pictures for display in the room where everyone can see them.

Responsible Decision Making (2 Lesson)

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: Social Media Smarts

Length of Lesson: 40 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 5: Demonstrate decision making skills, and responsible behaviors in school, personally, and community environment.

SEL 5.A.: Students consider self, social, and relationship factors in making constructive and respectful decisions.

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Define responsible decision making.
- Connect responsible decision making with compassion, forgiveness, and courage
- Understand what it means to have a responsible decision making mindset

Educator Preparation:

1. Preview the video before teaching the lesson
2. Have the video cued up so all students can see and hear the video
3. Paper and writing utensils for students to write reflections at the end

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making

Grade Level: 7

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (10 min)

1. Read the following script out loud, “Today we are going to talk about responsible decision making. What do we think the definition of responsible decision making is?” (Let students discuss ideas.) Give them this definition after: **Responsible decision making is the ability to make choices that are good for you and for others. The ability to understand yourself, your actions, how your actions affect others.**”
2. “Today we are going to look at what mindsets we take on about life while we are deciding something. Making decisions is never easy whether they are short term, motivated by strong negative emotions or long term decisions that include a life goal and positive things we feel toward that life goal.”
3. “When we talked about forgiveness, we learned that it is a powerful skill or tool to use to help us face, cope and solve some of the problems we face. It takes practice and courage to face and work through your problems and feelings just as it takes great courage to forgive. But practicing courage and forgiveness are ways in which we can have control and personal power over things in our life that often feel out of our control. While we can’t always control the seas- the tides, the waves, the current- we can be the master or captain of our ship and we can steer our own course and successfully navigate these waters.”

Discussion (5 min)

4. “There is a great quote that says, **‘If you want to change what’s going on around you, change what’s going on within you’**. What do you think this means? How does this relate to our talk of courage, gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion? How might this relate to your life?” Allow for discussion and reflection.

Video- Responsible Decision Making Mindset 20 min)

5. “Today we are going to watch a video of an inspiring commencement speech that actor Matt Damon gave. As you watch, think about what he’s saying and how it may relate to you and your life.”

6. Show the following video:

<https://youtu.be/XXew7rhnvdM>

7. After the video is shown, allow time for discussion and reflection as a class or in small groups. Some questions for them to consider in their groups: What are some problems you would like to turn to? How can you be your best self when making responsible decisions about that problem? How can you incorporate compassion, forgiveness, and courage when approaching the problem and decision making?" Allow groups to share ideas and discussion points.

Closing Reflections (10 min)

8. "As we finish class today, take a minute to reflect on a piece of paper. How can or will you be the master of your ship? What course will you take when making decisions? What mindset will you try to be in when making them even if you are currently feeling negative emotions? What problems will you face and solve? And what can you start doing right now to engage and steer your ship through whatever waters you may face?" Allow time for discussion and reflection as a class.

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making

Grade Level: 7

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: Choosing the SEL mindset.

Length of Lesson: 50 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 5: Demonstrate decision making skills, and responsible behaviors in school, personally, and community environment.

SEL 5.B.: Students use effective decision making skills.

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Understand what it means to commit to practicing the SEL program
- Make final connections
- Have closure as a group for going through the program

Educator Preparation:

1. Draft your own commitment statement to choosing love to share with students.
2. Copy the following on the board to help inspire the students' commitment statements: I commit to choosing love because...I believe... I value... I want... I think... I feel... I can... I dream... I hope...I know...
3. If you choose to, you can hold a SEL 'graduation' ceremony. You may choose to have some party decorations to make this last lesson a celebration of finishing the SEL Program and a celebration of all that was learned and accomplished.

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making**Lesson 2 of 2****Grade Level: 7****Lesson Directions**

Mindful Minute (5 min)

1. Read the script outloud, "Let's take a final Mindful Minute. Find a comfortable position to sit or stand. Close your eyes and focus your attention on choosing to do all the things we learned during the SEL program for one minute."

Activity (15 min)

2. "In our final lesson, I'd like you all to write a statement declaring your commitment to SEL. Then we will take turns reading them out loud and declare our commitment to one another."
3. Share an example of your commitment to choose love. Give students a few minutes to write a statement in their journal. This can be about what choosing love means to them, or a statement of action regarding how they will choose love every day. Use the following prompts to inspire creativity and write them on the board:
I commit to choosing love because...
I believe... I value... I want... I think... I feel... I can... I dream... I hope...I know....
4. After students have shared their commitments. You can have a mock graduation party for the SEL program. This is a great time to reflect on the program and highlight all that the class has learned and accomplished. Give students a chance to reflect and share their feelings. How have they changed? How has this program changed them? How is the class different? How do they feel? What are they most proud of? What is something powerful that they have learned?

Closing Reflection (5 min)

5. "I hope you see that this is only the beginning. You have a great story to write and I hope that it is filled with courage, gratitude, forgiveness, compassion, and choosing love. While we can't always choose what happens to us, we can always choose how we respond.....and we can always respond with love. Don't forget this power you have. You are special, important, and valuable. You are capable of great things and of making a profound difference in this world. You can create a loving world for yourself and for others.....and you can start today!"

8th Grade Standards Alignment

Common Core Standards

READING: LITERATURE AND INFORMATIONAL TEXT

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.5 Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.6 Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.1.C Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2.D Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2.F Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.D Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.E Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.B Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.C Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.D Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 8 Language standards 1 and 3 here for specific expectations.)

LANGUAGE

Conventions of Standard English:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.2.C Spell correctly.

Vocabulary Acquisition:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4.A Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success:

MINDSETS

- **Mindset 1:** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/ emotional, and physical well-being
- **Mindset 2:** Self-confidence in ability to succeed
- **Mindset 3:** Sense of belonging in the school environment
- **Mindset 5:** Belief in using abilities to their fullest to achieve high-quality results and outcomes
- **Mindset 6:** Positive attitude toward work and learning

- **BEHAVIOR STANDARDS**

- **Learning Strategies:**

- **Learning Strategies 1:** Demonstrate critical-thinking skills to make informed decisions
- **Learning Strategies 2:** Demonstrate creativity
- **Learning Strategies 4:** Apply self-motivation and self-direction to learning
- **Learning Strategies 6:** Set high standards of quality
- **Learning Strategies 9:** Gather evidence and consider multiple perspectives to make informed decisions

- **Self-Management Skills**

- **Self-Management Skills 1:** Demonstrate ability to assume responsibility
- **Self-Management Skills 2:** Demonstrate discipline and self-control
- **Self-Management Skills 3:** Demonstrate the ability to work independently
- **Self-Management Skills 4:** Demonstrate ability to delay immediate gratification for long term rewards
- **Self-Management Skills 6:** Demonstrate ability to overcome barriers to learning.
- **Self-Management Skills 7:** Demonstrate effective coping skills when faced with a problem
- **Self-Management Skills 10:** Demonstrate ability to manage transitions and ability to adapt to changing situations

Social Skills:

- **Social Skills 1:** Use effective oral and written communication skills and listening skills
- **Social Skills 2:** Create positive and supportive relationships with other students
- **Social Skill 4:** Demonstrate empathy
- **Social Skill 5:** Demonstrate ethical decision-making and social responsibility
- **Social Skill 6:** Use effective collaboration and cooperation skills
- **Social Skill 7:** Use leadership and teamwork skills to work effectively in diverse teams
- **Social Skill 8:** Demonstrate advocacy skills and ability to assert self, when necessary
- **Social Skill 9:** Demonstrate social maturity and behaviors appropriate to the situation and environment

8th Grade Curriculum

In each lesson, you will find the following: student objectives, educator preparation, and handouts if the lesson requires one.

Self-Awareness (2 Lessons)

Unit 1: Self-Awareness

Grade Level: 8

Lesson: 1 of 1

Lesson Title: “Calming the Mind and Body”

Length of Lesson: 50 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 1: Develop self awareness to have knowledge of one’s emotions, to develop a confident and optimistic self-concept, and to recognize individual strengths and growth areas.

SEL.1.A. Student demonstrates an awareness of one’s own emotions and behaviors. “I am able to identify and communicate how I am feeling.”

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Students will learn about mindfulness.
- Students will understand the benefits of mindfulness practices.
- Students will practice a guided meditation to experience its benefits.
- Students will learn Diaphragmatic Breathing (Brave Breath) as a tool to help them calm down and reduce anxiety and fear.
- Students will practice some mindful exercises to increase confidence and courage.

Educator Preparation:

1. Preview and cue the following video, “Mindfulness Animated in 3 Minutes’:
<https://youtu.be/mjtfyuTTQFY>
2. List the following on the board: Benefits of Meditation and Mindfulness:
Lowers cortisol levels (cortisol causes stress). Decreases the sympathetic nervous system (which causes the fight, flight or freeze mode when you are angry, scared, or anxious). Increases your immune system function (which boosts your health). Increases connections in the brain. Improves your

concentration. Improves attention span. Reduces depression. Reduces anxiety. Reduces self-doubt. Increases happiness. Increase compassion

3. Preview the following Mindful Minutes (guided meditations) created By Dave Romanelli. You and your students will be listening to one of your choosing during this lesson.

<https://soundcloud.com/david-yeah-dave-romanelli/mindful-minute-1>

<https://soundcloud.com/david-yeah-dave-romanelli/mindful-minute-2/s-f2t4L>

<https://soundcloud.com/david-yeah-dave-romanelli/mindful-minute-3/s-Yf0nw>

****No Matter which you choose the second or third one, make sure to play students the first one which introduces the concept.

Unit 1: Self-Awareness

Grade Level: 8

Lesson 1 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (15 min)

1. Read the script outloud, “What challenges do you face on a day-to-day basis, or expect to face in middle school?”(Students share their ideas.)
2. “What skills do you think would help you overcome these challenges and be successful?”(Students share their ideas.)
3. “As part of our work together this year, we’ll look at ourselves and society, with an aim to improve many of the skills you just mentioned. We’ll do this through the SEL program. This program involves us taking a short break to look at other parts of ourselves to develop.”
4. “Students engage in many different types of learning in school. You learn math, science, art, and history from teachers. You learn about teamwork, leadership, and friendship with your peers. As part of this curriculum, we’ll do activities and discuss issues relevant to you. We’ll find out how having courage, showing compassion, and being good communicators can benefit us physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. We’re going to have a lot of fun.”
5. “Some of the concepts we’ll cover, such as courage, gratitude, forgiveness,

and compassion, are not topics regularly discussed in school. How do you feel talking about these ideas?" Encourage students to use emotional language such as "scared," "nervous," "happy," "surprised," instead of judgmental language such as "weird," "strange," or "stupid."

6. "Because we'll be dealing with sensitive topics, it's important that we have a shared understanding as a class about how we'll work together. What are some class ground rules we should set up for these lessons?" (Allow them to answer. While they answer, record their ideas.)
7. "Let's start by asking ourselves, am I being Mind Full? Write the word, '**Mind Full**' on the board. Raise your hand if you think you are Mind Full. Maybe you aren't sure. Mind Full means just that- your mind is full of the many thoughts that go through your brain all the time. Did you know that we have between 50,000 and 80,000 thoughts a day? That means we have between 35 and 48 thoughts per minute! How does that make you feel? Just thinking about that many thoughts makes me feel overwhelmed and a little stressed out. And the problem is that most of these thoughts are negative thoughts."
8. "We tend to jump from one thought to another, just like a monkey or squirrel jumps from limb to limb, scurrying around in a frenzy. So when a negative thought springs to mind, we tend to jump from that negative thought to another negative thought, and so on and so on. It's like we feed the negative thoughts and grow them more and more, taking ourselves down a very stressful, dark road. The worst part is that often these thoughts are about what happened long ago or what may or may not happen in the future. We are wasting time and mental energy on the past and future which causes anxiety and keeps us from enjoying and engaging in the moment."
9. "We need some ways to focus our thoughts and attention, and to choose our thoughts, letting go of any that don't serve us well. Mindfulness is basically thinking about thinking. It's paying attention on purpose. When you practice mindfulness you are more aware of your thoughts, you are better able to focus on this moment, you stop dwelling on the negative or on the what-ifs, and stop wasting your energy and attention on challenging feelings. You pay attention to the here and now and find the good right in this present moment. Remember, your thoughts come and go....and you are in control of them and can decide if you want to keep them, change them, or how you act on them. Mindfulness gives you control."

Video- Mindful Minute/Meditation Foundations (10 min)

10. "One form of mindfulness is meditation and it has lots of benefits. Meditation is where you train your mind to think in a way that puts your concentration on

thoughts that reduce your anxiety and promote happiness. Meditation helps clean out your brain of stress...just like wiping a slate clean. It's like a restart or redo for your brain. We are going to watch a brief video that explains mindfulness and meditation very clearly and simply. It will highlight the benefits and even show you how to do it. After watching this, we'll highlight all the benefits which are many....and then we'll practice a brief meditation."

Show the following video, "Mindfulness Animated in 3 Minutes":

<https://youtu.be/mjtfyuTTQFY>

11. After the video, allow a few minutes for reflection. **Then, go over the benefits listed on the board.** Ask students if they have any benefits to add. Have this list of benefits written on the board.

Benefits of Meditation and Mindfulness:

- Lowers cortisol levels (cortisol causes stress)
- Decreases the sympathetic nervous system (which causes the fight, flight or freeze mode

when you are angry, scared, or anxious)

- Increases your immune system function (which boosts your health)
- Increases connections in the brain
- Improves your concentration
- Improves attention span
- Increases activity in the prefrontal cortex of the brain (the place in charge of planning and judgment)
- Improved cognitive function
- Reduces depression
- Reduces anxiety and nervousness
- Reduces self-doubt
- Increases happiness
- Increase compassion

Activity/Guided Mindful Minute (20 min)

12. . "We are going to practice a short meditation right now called Mindful Minutes. It's ok if you feel a little weird or uncomfortable as we begin this, as you've probably never done this before. But usually that discomfort means you are learning and growing....challenging yourself which is essential. And the more you do it, the more comfortable you will feel. I promise you if you have an open mind, listen and go with it, you'll experience some immediate benefits." The Mindful Minutes by David Romanelli and so that you can use any one of them again to help students practice this mindful practice and increase their focus and reduce their anxiety. You and your students will be listening to the two of

your choosing during this portion the first one as an introduction and either of the next two)

<https://soundcloud.com/david-yeah-dave-romanelli/mindful-minute-1>

<https://soundcloud.com/david-yeah-dave-romanelli/mindful-minute-2/s-f2t4L>

<https://soundcloud.com/david-yeah-dave-romanelli/mindful-minute-3/s-Yf0nw>

Give students a minute to rest and call them back to focus by asking them to listen to your voice, open their eyes, take a few deep breaths and then look in your direction.

Closing Reflection (5 min)

“How did it go? Were you able to let go a little? Were you able to focus your mind? Do you feel any different? Did you experience any benefits? I encourage you to keep doing mindful minute meditation to practice the art of self-awareness. Like anything, the more you practice, the better you get at that skill. There is a lot of good information you can find on meditation online and there are some great meditation and mindfulness apps you can get to help you with this practice. Remember we want to be mindful, not have a mind that is FULL!”

Unit 1: Self-Awareness

Grade Level: 8

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: ‘Who Doesn’t Like Balloons?’

Length of Lesson: 40 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 1: Develop self awareness to have knowledge of one’s emotions, to develop a confident and optimistic self-concept, and to recognize individual strengths and growth areas.

SEL.1.A. Student demonstrates an awareness of one’s own emotions and behaviors. “I am able to identify and communicate how I am feeling.”

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Identify the signs of feelings anxious
- Learn another visionary skills to assist in reducing anxiety

Educator Preparation:

1. Preview and cue the following video, 'Peace Out Guided Relaxation Video for Kids- The Balloon': <https://youtu.be/ZBnPlqQFPKs>

Unit 1: Self-Awareness**Grade Level: 8****Lesson 2 of 2****Lesson Directions**

Opening Discussion (10 min)

1. "When we try to have courage, we might feel afraid or anxious. We may also be confused or un- certain. When this happens, our bodies get tense, our hearts start beating faster, and we might start breathing more shallow and rapidly. These are just a few of the ways our bodies tell us that we are nervous, scared, or upset. What are some other ways that your body lets you know when you are afraid or anxious?" Discuss and reflect as a class. Write examples on the board and have students list these on a piece of paper or in an SEL journal if you decide to have them create an SEL journal for the program. Examples may include but aren't lim- ited to the following: face flushed, body feels hot, stomach upset or uneasy, feeling fidgety or jittery, shrinking or slumping body posture, eyes widened.
2. "We want to be aware of these body signs and pay attention to them so we can do something to feel better and not get overwhelmed by these feelings. It can be hard to make good choices and decisions when our minds and bodies feel this way. We want to teach and train our minds and bodies to rest and relax so that we can relieve our body of these nervous, tense feelings. When we relax, we feel more confident, we can think more clearly, and we are able to make the best decisions, no matter how we are feeling."
3. "How are you feeling right now? Take note of the way your body feels. On a piece of paper or in your journals, write down how your body and mind feel? Make note of the signs your body is giving you." Give students a minute to write down their body feelings and signs.

Activity- Who Doesn't Like Balloons? (15 min)

4. "We are going to go through a short guided imagery relaxation activity. Guided imagery is a way to practice managing and reducing your stress. In this practice, you use your imagination to envision something, someone, or someplace that gives you a feeling of peace, relaxation, and happiness. With

Guided Imagery you use all of your senses to really create this place or thing in your mind that is calming.”

5. “Today we are going to be guided, or walked through a short journey. To really benefit from this practice to reduce stress and calm your body and mind, have the courage to let go a little and just go with it. Don’t make judgments about what you’re doing, just be willing and open to trying something different and new. This opens you up to learning and growing in wonderful ways.”

Play the following video, ‘Peace Out Guided Relaxation Video for Kids- The Balloon’:

<https://youtu.be/ZBnPlqQFPKs>

6. After, reflect as a class allowing time for brief discussion. Ask the following questions, “What did that feel like? Did it relax you? In what way? How does this relate to courage? How could you use this in your life? How could this make your life better?”

Closing Reflection (8 min)

7. “Before we did this activity, I had you write down how your body and mind were feeling and make note of your body signs. Right now, take a minute to write down how your body and mind are feeling now? What body signs are you noticing now? What’s different? Today we listened to a guided imagery script, but you can practice this anytime even without something to listen to. Simply close your eyes, take some brave breaths, and take yourself back to that place that makes you feel happy and calm.....float on a balloon like today, or travel on a cloud, on a magic carpet, etc. Remind yourself of what it smells like, feels like, looks like.....envision every little detail and imagine yourself there for a few minutes...just long enough to feel relaxed and at peace.”

Self-Management (2 Lessons)

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 8

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: What is Courage

Length of Lesson: 45 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 2: Develop and demonstrate self management skills, and resiliency to regulate emotions and behaviors, to monitor and achieve goals related to school and life success.

SEL.2.A. Students demonstrate the ability to manage emotions and behaviors constructively. “I can handle my feelings when practicing positive ones.”

Objectives

- Students will learn the definition of courage and discuss its meaning and application
- Students will identify the mental, physical, and emotional benefits of acting courageously

Educator preparation

1. Prepare to identify examples of courageous behavior that are relevant to the students in your class.
2. Prepare to use non-judgmental responses in this discussion. Correct off-topic responses, but otherwise respond non-judgmentally. Unlike some academic subjects, where there are clear right or wrong answers, social and emotional learning is more ambiguous and subjective. Say things like “thank you” or “that’s one idea, who has another to add” in order to acknowledge participation without making value judgments about responses. You can also ask follow up questions about student’s responses as a way to increase engagement without critiquing their ideas, feelings, or experiences. This teaching strategy helps bring psychological and emotional safety in the classroom and improves learning by fostering trust and connections and encouraging participation.
3. Have the definitions of Self-Management and Courage posted in the room so all students can see (Lesson adaption you can have student volunteers read the definitions to the class)
4. Paper for students to write on and writing utensils for students that do not have anything to write with
5. Have the following word poem displayed so all students can see, but do not reveal it until the word up activity: “Courage, Hope ,Belief, Faith Strength, Confidence, Me, Happiness with the added words from the below in the activity.

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 8

Lesson 1 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (10 min)

1. Read the following script out loud, “Today we’ll start by jumping into Self-Management. **Self- Management is the ability to take responsibility for one’s own behavior and well-being.** Which leads us to Courage. What are some words you think of when you think of courage?” Responses may include: brave, superhero, fearless, help, support, protect, guide, strong, etc.
2. **“Courage is defined as the willingness and ability to work through obstacles despite feelings of embarrassment, fear, reluctance or uncertainty.** Take the time to explain these words if students do not know their meanings.
3. “When you make positive choices, even though they may be difficult for you, you are practicing courage. Big acts of courage typically involve a larger risk, such as overcoming pain or danger, or acting in a large heroic fashion such as a life-guard rescuing a drowning swimmer.” (Pause them to let them consider this)
4. “While small acts of courage help you overcome everyday challenges like presenting in front of a class, solving conflicts, standing up for someone in need, or stating an unpopular opinion. Courage helps you make powerful and meaningful decisions.”

Activity- Heros in the Making (10 min)

5. “What are some examples of heroic acts of courage? You can use an actual superhero from a comic book or movie, a non-fictional person that has done heroic acts, ect. Encourage students to identify examples from the news, stories they have read, or from history. Have a few examples available as needed.”
6. “What are examples of acts of courage? How about everyday acts of courage” Encourage students to identify acts of courage in their personal lives, school or community. This can be things they’ve experienced or witnessed or even things they’ve done themselves. For example: Scoring in the last minutes of a game, asking a teacher for help, standing up to a bully, welcoming a new student, taking a test, trying out for a team or play, standing up for someone

being teased, performing in front of an audience, learning something new, solving conflicts peacefully, making a new friend, sharing your opinion/honest feelings about something, etc.

Activity- Word Up (20 min)

7. "We are going to do an activity called, 'Word Up'. We are going to start by writing the word 'Courage' on a piece of paper.. Then, I want you to think of the first word that comes to your mind and write it underneath Courage.

8. "Then, think of the next word that comes to mind from the 2nd word, write that underneath your second word. Continue on like this writing down 8-10 words. This is a form of free association where you just freely and spontaneously express what comes to mind without spending too much time, thinking too much, or making judgments on what comes to mind. After you have 8-10 words listed, go back and add words before and after the word you wrote down...in this way, you are adding content and depth, shaping your poem."

9. "Let me show you mine first." Write the following words on the board using arrows to connect the words from top to bottom to show how one word stemmed from the preceding word:

**"Courage Hope
Belief Faith Strength Confidence Me Happiness
I added words before and after these words to fill out my poem.
COURAGE
I have HOPE for today,
BELIEF in all that is good.
My FAITH will stand firm.
I find STRENGTH through my struggles. My CONFIDENCE shines brightly,
The light is ME.
HAPPINESS is my choice."**

10. "Now you take a few minutes to do this. Start with the word, 'Courage' and flow from there, word after word after word.....quickly writing the first word that comes to mind after each word. Be spontaneous and creative- express your thoughts and feelings freely, let your mind make its own connections. Then, use your words as the base for your poem...fill in the blanks, expand upon these starting words." Allow students to create their poems and then see if anyone has the courage to share theirs.

11. "If you are needing a boost of courage, try this 'Word Up' free word association activity again. Think of the first word that comes to mind and then spiral that down writing the consecutive words that emerge from the previous word. You can continue to list words for as long as the flow continues. You can turn it into a poem as we did today or just leave the single words as is. This is a great way

to clear your mind, express your thoughts and feelings, and make important connections and reflections.”

Closing Reflection (5 min)

12. “Today we’ve gotten a better idea of what courage is. Small and large acts of courage are both important. One is not better than the other. Even the littlest acts of courage can make a huge difference and they have a ripple effect that spreads out to many others. Sometimes we’re called on to demonstrate great acts of courage, while other times we are asked to show small acts or everyday acts of courage. Courage sometimes looks like great physical strength, but it can also sound like gentle, kind words. Who will you share your poem with? Who will you ask to make a poem too?”

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 8

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: Affirming Self

Length of Lesson: 35 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE):

SEL Goal 2: Develop and demonstrate self management skills, and resiliency to regulate emotions and behaviors, to monitor and achieve goals related to school and life success.

SEL.2.B. Students demonstrate the ability to seize opportunities to be honest and show integrity. “I can act in an honest manner.”

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Define the word affirmation
- Understand how positive affirmations can help with self-management
- Practice creating positive affirmations

Educator preparation

None

Unit 2: Self-Management

Grade Level: 8

Lesson 2 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion Up (10 min)

1. Read the following script out loud, “Today we are going to talk about another

type of Self-Management. Does anyone remember Self-Management? It is **the ability to take responsibility for one's own behavior and well-being.**"

2. "Did you know you have between 50,000 and 70,000 thoughts each day! That's a lot of thoughts! And it's pretty amazing! What's not amazing, is that about 95% of those thoughts are those repeated from the day before and about 80% of those thoughts are negative! Our mind is constantly working to help us learn, make sense of the world, and make decisions. When we feel anxious, nervous, afraid, or angry we might start hearing negative thoughts. Negative thoughts or judgements awaken the numbat. Positive self-talk can help nudge the numbat and calm us down. This helps us hug our human brain. Remember our brain hand model?" Show your fingers wrapping around your thumb to make a fist. "When we make the choice to change our thoughts, we can change how we feel, and be better able to make good decisions."
3. "We are going to practice some positive self-talk by creating and saying some affirmations. **An affirmation is a statement we repeat to ourselves to help us focus our attention on something we want to do, think or feel.** (Have the students say the definition with you).
4. "They are declarations that we say to affect how we think. They are used to inspire, energize and motivate us to be our best selves. Affirmations can really change the way you think and act. When you use an affirmation you are saying that you ARE something and by doing that, you focus your attention and energy on being that. It's really easy to slip into negative self-talk and this is a great way to fight this kind of talk."

Activity (10 min)

5. "Affirmations can calm us, help us nudge our brains to calm them down and stop over thinking. Affirmations can help us stay focused on doing the right thing and achieving our goals. When we repeat positive affirmations about courage, it puts our human brains to work and helps us build our courage muscles."
6. "Here is one of my favorite affirmations- 'I am in charge of how I feel today and I choose happiness.'" An image of this affirmation can be found on the web and can be displayed, or you can write it on the board if you wish. (Pause so they can think about that.)
7. "Here are some examples of affirmations..."
 - These can be read aloud and/or written on the board.
 - I am in control of me.
 - I am courageous.

- I can handle anything that comes my way. I face difficult situations with courage.
 - I am calm and at peace.
 - I am in control of my thoughts, feelings and actions.
 - I choose happiness.
 - I will choose to self manage and calm my mind down.
 - I have the strength and love to stand up for what is right. I have important ideas to share.
 - I will do my best today.
 - I have the courage and ability to face any challenge. I choose positive thoughts over negative thoughts. I am strong and full of courage.
 - My fears won't stop me."
8. "Affirmations can help us overcome fear. They can help us be in control of our thoughts and feelings and set our intentions in a courageous and positive way. Affirmations build our confidence, help us face challenges, help us make good choices, and help us achieve and succeed. For instance, if you are nervous about speaking in front of a class you could say, 'I am a confident public speaker.' If you are about to play in a big game or take a big test you could say, 'I'm ready and focused on doing my best.'"

Group Activity (10 min)

9. "Let's break down into groups of 3 and come up with a combined list of some additional examples of affirmations?"
10. Have groups share some of their examples.

Closing Reflection (5 min)

11. "Think about 2 affirmations that you can run through your mind to boost your confidence and courage, to help you overcome difficult feelings, and to help steer you to make good decisions and reach your goals. Use these to help direct your thinking so you can replace that negative thinking with positive, feel good thoughts. Repeat these to yourself daily and at times when you really need focus, strength, and positivity. Write them in bold and decorate them with positive images to inspire and empower you! Who will you teach what an affirmation is?"

Social-Awareness (2 Lessons)

Unit 3: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 8

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: Compassionate Role Models

Length of Lesson: 30 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 3: Develop social awareness skills and empathize and understand the perspectives and social norms from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

SEL.3.A. Students demonstrate awareness of other people’s emotions and perspectives. “I care about the feelings and opinions of others and my effect on them.”

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Students will discuss role models and what it takes to be a great leader, someone who is empathetic and compassionate.
- Students will view and discuss a video clip on spreading kindness and illustrate how they can start a ripple effect of kindness.
- Students will discuss Ellen DeGeneres as a Humanitarian and will write about their favorite Humanitarian.

Educator Preparation

1. Prepare to watch a video on Ellen DeGeneres, link provided below.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atNiYtCTcPc>

Unit 3: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 8

Lesson 1 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (15 min)

1. Read the following script out loud, “Ellen DeGeneres is most famous for her daytime talk show ELLEN which has won countless Emmy Awards. But did you know Ellen is also a major advocate for tolerance and diversity, for Susan G. Komen for the Cure (breast cancer), for relief aid, and for the fair and ethical treatment of animals. Ellen is famous for being one of the most charitable

celebs in pop culture. In addition to the many awards she has won for her comedy genius, she also has won many awards for her humanitarian efforts. Humanitarians are people who dedicate themselves to improving the lives of others. Most recently, Ellen was named 'Favorite Humanitarian' at the People's Choice Awards in 2016. She even chose to donate the \$200,000 monetary prize that accompanies the award to St. Jude's Children's Hospital whose mission is to help find a cure for cancer in children."

2. "Let's watch a clip of Ellen winning her 'Favorite Humanitarian Award'. Not only is Ellen changing lives and inspiring others through compassion in action, she is making people laugh while doing it (EllenShow, 2015)!" Show the following clip: (10 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atNiYtCTcPc>

3. "What do you think about her speech? What stood out to you? How were you inspired by Ellen? Would you consider Ellen socially aware? How does she care about others? How does she show how she cares and is aware of how she affects others? How can we use her social awareness as an example in our lives?" Allow for reflection and discussion.

Activity (10 min)

4. For this activity, students will write about a favorite compassion role model. Time permitting or if feasible, you may wish to allow students to research compassion role models on their phones, tablets, or computers. This could be broken into two lessons. One for students to do research and create a storyboard or short presentation on their role model. The second class for students to give presentations.
5. "Who is your favorite humanitarian or compassion role model? Is there a celebrity or famous person that you know who does a lot to help others. Or maybe this person isn't famous, they are just a regular person doing extraordinary things who should be recognized. In your journal, write about who they are and why you chose that person. What qualities about this person are inspiring?" Allow students a few minutes to write about their compassion role models. After having students share with the larger class.

Closing Reflection (5 min)

6. "I want you to think about the following: Who will you share this video with? What will you take from Ellen's message moving forward? Who will you share your role model with?"

Unit 3: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 8

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: Make a Difference

Length of Lesson: 40 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 3: Develop social awareness skills and empathize and understand the perspectives and social norms from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

SEL.3.B. Students demonstrate consideration for others and a desire to contribute to the wellbeing of their school and being of their school and community by serving others. "I care about others and do my part to make my school community better."

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Students will become 'Compassion Researchers', working in groups to review research articles on the benefits of compassion and sharing their findings with the larger class.
- Students will create compassion creations to express what compassion means to them and how they will change the world through compassionate action.
- Students will reflect on and discuss a quote that relates to compassion.
- Students will work in groups to brainstorm ways to deal with and respond to typical situations with peers in compassionate ways.
- Students will brainstorm ways to engage with others and the world with an open hand instead of a closed fist.

Educator Preparation

1. Write the following quote on the board:
"Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive". -Dalai Lama
2. Make copies of the following articles or allow students to use their phones/computers to look up these articles. Students will work in small groups. Each group will be assigned an article. You may have more than one group reviewing the same article depending on how many students/groups you have. You will want a few copies of each article for the groups to review.
 - a. <https://emmaseppala.com/top-10-scientific-benefits-of-compassion-infographic/>
 - b. <http://www.spring.org.uk/2014/02/8-wonderful-psychological-effects-of-being-compassionate.php>
 - c. <https://www.littlethings.com/benefits-of-being-compassionate/>
 - d. http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/asma-dassu/why-we-all-need-to-be-mor_b_12352740.html

3. You may wish to have poster board, chart paper, and some simple art supplies for students to use for their presentations if desired.

Unit 3: Social-Awareness

Grade Level: 8

Lesson 2 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (15 min)

1. Read the following script out loud, “Let’s get started today by looking at a great quote by the Dalai Lama. If you are not familiar with who the Dalai Lama is, he is the world famous spiritual leader of the Tibetan people. His wisdom and teachings are followed and respected by many around the world. What do you think he means by this quote? Do you agree? Why? Take a minute to write this quote in your journals and reflect on the quote and these questions.” Allow time for reflection and then brief discussion as a class.
2. “As human beings it is certain we will experience pain and suffering throughout our lives. Scientifically speaking our suffering- such as loneliness, anxiety, depression, and pain in all its forms, can do serious damage to our bodies all the way down to a cellular level.”
3. “But, there is always a silver lining. The silver lining of pain and suffering is that it can help us grow and learn and build our emotional strength, character, and resilience. Through our pain and suffering we can experience the compassion of others which builds connections and relationships. By simply establishing a connection to others through compassion, love, and kindness we are already improving our physical and emotional well being.”
4. “With lots of research, scientists have proven that compassion not only helps us develop healthy relationships and connections with one another, but it also makes our bodies stronger and improves our overall well being. There are quite a few benefits to compassion.”
5. “What have you noticed when you show compassion or kindness to someone? What impact does that have on the other person? What impact does that have on you? Does it change the world around you? In what ways?” Allow for class discussion and reflection.

(Lesson adaptation- Print the script for students to read parts of)

Activity - Compassion Research (20 min)

6. “There are people who study and do research on compassion and kindness. That’s their job. They have found out a lot about what compassion is all about and how it can benefit us. Today I want you to be ‘Compassion Researchers’. I am going to break you into small groups. Each group will be given an article to read and review. This is your research. Then you will summarize your findings and create a presentation for the class. In this presentation you will be sharing your findings with the class. Make sure you have accurate, strong, and clear content in your presentation and be creative in the way you share it with the class.”

Assign each group one of the articles below. More than one group may have the same article. Give a few copies of the articles to each group or they may use computers if available to view these articles.

- <https://emmaseppala.com/top-10-scientific-benefits-of-compassion-infographic/>
- <http://www.spring.org.uk/2014/02/8-wonderful-psychological-effects-of-being-compassionate.php>
- <https://www.littlethings.com/benefits-of-being-compassionate/>
- http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/asma-dassu/why-we-all-need-to-be-mor_b_12352740.html

Allow time for students to read and discuss their articles and plan their presentations. This lesson could be broken up into two or more lessons if desired/needed. Each group will present to the class. A list should be generated on the board of the ‘findings’ or information on compassion and its benefits. Students should be instructed to write down this info on paper.

7. “What did you learn from our compassion researchers today? What stood out to you? What was the most important information that you took from these presentations? What benefits of compassion are you most interested in? How can you be compassionate and help your classmates? Your school community? Take a few minutes to write these down on a piece of paper.

Closing Reflection (5 min)

8. “I think we all learned quite a bit about how practicing compassion can really benefit us, others, and the world around us!! I encourage you to do more research on compassion. Who will you share your research with?”

Relationship Skills (2 Lessons)

Unit 4: Relationship Skills

Grade Level: 8

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: Open Hands

Length of Lesson: 30 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 4: Demonstrate relationship skills needed to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships.

SEL.4.A. Students use effective communication and social skills to interact and cooperate with others.

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Students will brainstorm ways to engage with others and the world with an open hand instead of a closed fist.
- Students will make the connection between mindset, actions, and relationships they have with others.

Educator Preparation:

1. Display the following quote for students to see, 'You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist.' - Indira Gandhi
2. Paper for students to trace their hands

Unit 4: Relationship Skills

Grade Level: 8

Lesson 1 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (10 min)

1. Read the following script out loud, "Let's start today by hearing a quote by Gandhi. Let me read it to you, 'You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist'. What do you think that means? Do you agree? Why? How does this relate to forgiveness, compassion, and choosing love?"
2. "When we are hurt by someone we feel angry, hurt, frustrated and other strong ways as well. We can become like the closed fist. When we are feeling like the closed fist, it makes it hard to feel good about ourselves and the world around us. With a closed fist mindset, it is very difficult to engage and interact at all or

positively with others. A closed fist signifies hate, anger, negativity and disconnect.”

Activity-Open Hands (15 min)

3. “Right now I want you to trace your open hand on a piece of paper. All over your hand, I want you to write ways that you can interact with others and the world around you with an open hand, rather than a closed fist. How can you effectively deal with challenging feelings so that you are not angry and closed off from others?”

Closing Questions (5 min)

4. We’ve talked about healthy and positive ways to deal with challenging feelings. Use some of the ideas we’ve generated. How can you respond positively to life’s challenges and engage with others and with life with an open hand....with positivity, gratitude, compassion and love? How does this mindset relate to having relationships with others? Or interacting with others?” You may invite students to share their ‘open hands’ with the class.

Unit 4: Relationship Skills

Grade Level: 8

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: I Was Here

Length of Lesson: 25 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 4: Demonstrate relationship skills needed to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships.

SEL.4.A. Students use effective communication and social skills to interact and cooperate with others. “I will interact appropriately with others.”

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Students will reflect on the song ‘I Was Here’
- Identify how they can make this world a better place and make a positive impact on others and the world to show, ‘I Was Here’.

Educator Preparation:

1. Preview and cue the following video, ‘I Was Here’ by Beyonce:
<https://youtu.be/i41qWJ6QjPI>

Unit 4: Relationship Skills

Grade Level: 8

Lesson 2 of 2

Lesson Directions

Opening Discussion (5 min)

1. Read the following script out loud, “Let’s start today by taking a Mindful Minute. Get comfortable and close your eyes. For a minute, focus your attention on your goals and dreams for the future.”
2. “It’s exciting to think about what lies ahead...what your future may bring. But all of that depends on right here and now. It starts with how you work through feelings, relationship habits you develop with the world and people around you. You are planting the seeds for your future and the future for other generations. What a great responsibility and what power comes with that.....you are in control of this destiny...and that’s very exciting! Today I want you to embrace this responsibility, this power, this control, this future, this destiny. Let’s watch the following video of international superstar Beyonce’s performance at the United Nations World Humanitarian Day. The song she performs in this video is called, ‘I Was Here’.
- Video Activity (8 min) Show the following video: <https://youtu.be/i41qWJ6QjPI>

Activity (15 min)

3. “This is a very powerful song that talks about the mark she wants to leave on this world. Towards the middle of the song she delivers a set of inspiring lines that I think are very important to remember: ‘I just want them to know. That I gave my all, did my best and brought someone to happiness. Left this world a little better just because I was here’”
4. “Right now I’d like you to take out a piece of paper and write a response to this video and song. Think about these things while you write; How does it make you feel? How does it inspire you? What stood out to you? What do you want people to remember you by? Do you give your all and do your best? What happiness do you and can you bring to others? How can you leave this world a better place? What can you do right now to give your best, bring happiness to others, and leave this world a better place? How do you show, ‘I Was Here’? Reflect on this on your paper. As you do, be reminded of the importance of this moment. Be reminded of how your choices do matter. Be reminded that you can and will make a difference. Be reminded of how important you are!”

Closing Reflection (5 min)

5. “In closing let’s reflect on these things: What can you do right now to give your best, bring happiness to others, and leave this world a better place? How do you show, ‘I Was Here’? Reflect on this on your paper. Remember the

importance of this moment. Be reminded that you can and will make a difference. Be reminded of how important you are!”

Responsible Decision Making (2 Lesson)

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making

Grade Level: 8

Lesson: 1 of 2

Lesson Title: Social Media Message

Length of Lesson: 40 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 5: Demonstrate decision making skills, and responsible behaviors in school, personally, and community environment.

SEL 5.A.: Students consider self, social, and relationship factors in making constructive and respectful decisions.

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Students will view and discuss the video, ‘How to Change the World’ by Kid President.
- Students will identify how they will change the world.
- Students will create their own scripts for their own ‘How to Change the World’ videos.
- Students will create Choose Love Portraits of themselves to show them as an inspiring role model for others.

Educator Preparation:

1. Preview and cue the following video by ‘Kid President’:

<https://youtu.be/4z7gDsSKUmU>

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making

Grade Level: 8

Lesson 1 of 2

Lesson Directions:

Opening Discussion (10 min)

1. Read the following script out loud, “We have been talking about the different ways that as an individual or as part of a group you may practice compassion, make a difference in the lives of others, and make this world a better place.

You may think that your actions won't really make a difference or matter unless you are someone famous or powerful.....but your actions matter. Sometimes people think that little acts won't make much difference. They feel that they must do something big to make a difference, so they don't bother doing anything."

2. "We've talked about the ripple effect of kind and compassionate acts. Remember that your little actions create a ripple effect that creates an even larger impact, spreading compassion and love far and wide. And collectively, by combining your compassionate efforts, you can truly change the world. You can make little changes and big changes.....either way, your efforts truly matter. You have more power than you think, more influence than you realize.....your choices and actions, no matter how big or small, make a profound difference!"

Video Activity (8 min)

3. "Let's watch a quick video by Robby Novak, otherwise known as 'Kid President'. We've watched one of his videos before. Even though Robby is only 13, he has created some videos that have some powerful, positive, encouraging words for people of all ages. His videos have been viewed millions of times by so many individuals all over the world! They have made quite an impact!"
4. "Did you know that Robby has a condition called Osteogenesis Imperfecta Disease? This is a rare brittle bone disease that basically means his bones break very easily. As of 2013, he had broken more than 70 bones and had 13 surgeries. He's had a lot of physical challenges and he has also experienced a lot of bullying. But Robby stays positive and is even able to do these YouTube videos to inspire others. Despite the hardships he has faced, he has a great attitude, lives a life with great purpose, and is full of gratitude. Let's watch his video called, 'How to Change the World'. It will give you a lot to think about, will inspire you, and will make you laugh a little, too! He has a great voice and ideas to share with the world and so do you! Let's watch and hear his ideas for change and positive impact!"

Have students view the Kid President video at the following link:

<https://youtu.be/4z7gDsSKUmU>

5. After watching the video, have students reflect on his ideas and message. Possible discussion questions could include: How does this video relate to Compassion in Action and Choosing Love? What was Kid President's message? Did you agree with what he has to say? Why? What ideas did you like most and why? Are these things easy or hard to do? How do you think

doing some of these things would affect you and those around you?

Independent Activity- How to Change the World (15 min)

6. "On a piece of paper, jot down a few ideas of Kid President's that are things you will start doing today! Then, pretend you are Kid President (or give yourself another name), what would your video look like? What would your list look like? Write down your list/ ideas for how to change the world. Remember, they can be little and/or big things. How would you spread compassion and love to make the world a better place? Now, create a short script for the video you would create using some of the things you just jotted down. Make it a call to action, make it funny, make it catchy, make it you!"

Closing Group Activity (10 Min)

7. Have students share some of their ideas and video scripts in partners, small groups or as a class. As an extension, students could use phones or tablets to actually record and make their own videos. This could be a class project or extra credit project. Some may even be played/shown on the school announcements.

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making

Grade Level: 8

Lesson: 2 of 2

Lesson Title: Make It Right

Length of Lesson: 50 min

Grade Level Expectation (GLE)

SEL Goal 5: Demonstrate decision making skills, and responsible behaviors in school, personally, and community environment.

SEL 5.A.: Students consider self, social, and relationship factors in making constructive and respectful decisions.

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Identify what a Make It Right statement/motto is
- Create their own Make It Right statement
- Appreciate each others commitment
- Celebrate that commitment as a group

Educator Preparation:

1. Draft your own commitment statement for making the right responsible decision to share with students.
2. Copy the following on the board to help inspire the students' commitment statements:
I commit to making the right decision because...**I believe... I value... I want... I think... I feel... I can... I dream... I hope...I know...**
3. Be ready to read your statement to them.

Unit 5: Responsible Decision Making**Grade Level:** 8**Lesson** 2 of 2**Lesson Directions**

Opening Discussion (5 min)

1. "Let's take a Mindful Minute. Find a comfortable position to sit or stand. Close your eyes and focus your attention on the idea of making the responsible decision when faced with a challenge. Do this for one minute."

Introduction the Concept (5 min)

2. "In Ellen DeGeneres's Humanitarian Award speech, she outlines her commitment statement as, "I want to see people happy through kindness I can share. Let's consider that for a moment. What if everyone created a statement or motto to live by with the intention to choose the right decision? This stems from the idea that people are not bad, they sometimes choose the irresponsible decision"

3. "I'd like you all to write a statement declaring your commitment to Make It Right, a motto to strive to make your life and the lives of others better through good decision making. I wrote a statement that I would like to share to help give your ideas." Read your statement.

Activity (25 min)

4. "Now it's your turn to write a statement using the same outline I have which is on the board." Give students a few minutes to write a statement on their own.. Then, have students practice a courage pose and declare their motto to the class.

Sharing Out

5. Allow volunteers to share what they have written. After students have shared their commitments. You can have a mock up a motto celebration ceremony where students can celebrate the commitment they are making to Make It Right

Closing Reflections (5 min)

6. "I hope you see that this is only the beginning of our SEL journey. You have a great story to write and I hope that it is filled with courage, gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion. While we can't always choose what happens to us, we can always choose how we respond.....and we can always respond with love. Don't forget this power you have. You are special, important, and valuable. You are capable of great things and of making a profound difference in this world. You can create a loving world for yourself and for others.....and you can start today!"

