

A Toolkit for Social Emotional Learning in the English/Language Arts Classroom

Investing in students' social-emotional development is done by the entire system of adults in schools. This investment is key to promoting engagement in—not a substitute for—teaching academic content; it represents a change in how academic content is taught. Through the close reading of complex literary texts, educators can facilitate socio-emotional learning by ensuring that grade-level anchor texts throughout the curriculum reflect and reveal accurately a multicultural world and that their study includes perspective-taking by attending to how characters might think and feel to support understanding of emotions and thoughts. Anchoring topical knowledge building in collaboration with other students provides practice in cooperation, communication, reflection, self-regulation, and empathy in addition to developing their research, writing and speaking skills. Educators of youngest students can promote a sense of belonging by including language routines, such as choral reading and word games, while teaching them to read so they can see themselves as part of a learning community.

The following toolkit is designed to be a starting point for school staff, counselors, and community members to begin integrating SEL into their ELA teaching practices or interactions with children. Members of the school community (or for some of the groups, larger community) can use this toolkit to find initial strategies and resources to improve student social, emotional, behavioral, and in the English/Language Arts classroom. Please also refer to the [SEL/ELA crosswalk](#).

SEL COMPETENCY	ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS RESOURCES	
	ELEMENTARY RESOURCES	SECONDARY RESOURCES
1. Self-Awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an awareness of one's own emotions. 1A • Demonstrate an awareness of personal qualities and interests. 1B • Demonstrate a sense of personal responsibilities and advocacy. 1C • Identify external and community resources and support. 1D 	<p>Selecting Books for your Child: Finding Just Right Books <i>This short guide provides advice as to how educators can help children find books that are not "too hard" and not "too easy" but instead are "just right"?</i></p> <p>Super Synonym Sets for Stories <i>This collection of synonyms provides students with new vocabulary to describe emotions and moods more precisely.</i></p>	<p>The Mechanics of Developing a Writer's Voice <i>This brief article provides suggestions for helping your students develop their own voice in writing by focusing on details, word choice, and sentence fluency.</i></p> <p>Promoting Student-Directed Inquiry with the I-Search Paper <i>This Strategy Guide from the National Council of Teachers of English provides the foundation for cultivating interest and authority through I-Search writing, including publishing online.</i></p>
Self-Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and use strategies for managing one's own emotions and behaviors constructively. • Set, monitor, adapt and evaluate one's own goals to achieve success in school and life. 	<p>Timed Repeated Readings <i>This strategy facilitates SEL through the building of foundational reading skills by engaging students in reading and rereading to build habits as increasingly independent readers.</i></p> <p>Writing Conferences</p>	<p>Single Point Rubric: A Tool for Responsible Student Self-Assessment <i>This journal article details a study on the effectiveness of the use of the single point rubric for student self-assessment and goal setting.</i></p> <p>Reading Guides</p>

	<p><i>Whether they occur with pairs, with small groups, or with the teacher, the social benefits of sharing writing improves writing. This webpage provides guidelines, videos, and research to support the practice.</i></p>	<p><i>Reading Guides help students navigate reading material, especially difficult textbook chapters or technical reading. Reading Guides help students to comprehend the main points of the reading and understand the organizational structure of a text.</i></p>
<p>Social Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate awareness and consideration of other people's emotions, perspectives and social cues. • Exhibit civic responsibility in multiple settings. • Demonstrate an awareness of and respect for human dignity, including culture and differences. 	<p>Developing Social-Emotional Skills Through Literature <i>Asking SEL-based questions at different stages of the reading process can be an effective and time-efficient strategy for building your students' social and emotional intelligence. This article describes text-based questions that also lend themselves to SEL development.</i></p> <p>K-5 Classroom Protocols <i>This compendium of protocols (structured conversations) is used in the EL Education Language Arts Curriculum. (The EL curriculum is identified by the DDOE as High-Quality Instructional Materials for grades K-8.) This resource is free, but requires a login to access.</i></p>	<p>Up-Down-Both-Why: A Feeling-Based Approach to Literature <i>The strategy described in this blog post puts everyday feeling front and center in the process of literary interpretation. Readers draw on their initial feelings and use them as a jumping-off point for interpretive reading.</i></p> <p>Talk Moves in Academic Discussions <i>This short, 3 minute video from the Teaching Channel demonstrates the use of sentence frames to promote active listening and appropriate ways of responding to peers during academic discussions.</i></p>
<p>4. Relationship Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others. 4A • Develop and maintain positive relationships. • Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and/or resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways. 	<p>Close Read-Aloud in the Primary Grades Part 1 and Part 2 <i>These videos from EL education demonstrate how SEL is facilitated through close reading of complex text by reading and listening to texts as a learning community.</i></p> <p>Simple Critique Protocol for Elementary and Primary Students <i>This resource from EL education provides sentence frames for students and educator guidance for supporting young children in providing and receiving feedback on their work.</i></p>	<p>Learnzillion Guidebooks Conversations Guide <i>This guide focuses on productive conversations, an essential component in students' success in English Language Arts. It includes creating a classroom environment that encourages conversations. (The Guidebooks curriculum is identified by the DDOE as High-Quality Instructional Materials for grades 6-8.)</i></p> <p>Reciprocal Teaching in High School <i>In this video, a high school humanities teacher describes how she teaches her students about the strategies and structures of Reciprocal Teaching. Viewers watch students discuss literature in small groups while playing</i></p>

		<i>the role of discussion leader, summarizer, questioner, or predictor.</i>
Responsible Decision Making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider and use multiple factors in decision making, including ethical and safety factors, personal and community responsibilities, and short-term and long-term goals. Develop, implement, and model effective decision-making skills to deal responsibly with academic and social situations. 	10 Fun Digital Citizenship Videos for K-5 Classrooms <i>This resource is a series of short videos for students collected by CommonSense.org for Digital Citizenship Week.</i>	Exploring Plagiarism, Copyright, and Paraphrasing <i>This lesson from NCTE helps students understand copyright, fair use, and plagiarism by focusing on why students should avoid plagiarism and exploring strategies that respect copyright and fair use.</i> Teaching Adolescents How to Evaluate the Quality of Online Information <i>This article from Edutopia outlines strategies to help middle and high school students identify relevance, accuracy, bias, and reliability in the content they read. It also provides hyperlinks to resources for further exploration.</i>

General Resources

[Literature's Emotional Lessons](#)

This article from The Atlantic summarizes research and theory on how the study of literature increases students' abilities to identify and manage their emotions.

[From Surviving to Thriving: Four Research Based Principles to Build Student's Interest](#)

This journal article presents four research-based principles of reading interest—individual interests, situational interest, text-based interest, and interest regulation—and describes how each can be used and implemented in the classroom to nurture motivated and resilient readers.

[Theory of Sentence Composing](#)

This site is devoted to the well-established approach to teaching improved sentence structure by using respected professional writers as mentors whose sentences become models for students.

[Reading Literary Fiction Improves Empathy](#)

This article from Scientific American describes the research that found how the types of books we read impacts how we relate to others.

[NYU Culturally Responsive Scorecard](#)

The Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecards were designed by the NYU Metro Center to help parents, teachers, students, and community members determine the extent to which their schools' English Language Art, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) curricula are (or are not) culturally responsive.

[Disrupting the Canon: A Self-Paced Professional Development Module](#)

This 9 hour professional development module from Student Achievement Partners features on-demand content that includes readings, short videos, asynchronous discussion, and opportunities to apply this work to your own context.

[Consensus Decision Making](#)

This strategy guide from the National Council of Teachers of English describes a method of facilitating evidence based discussions. Students first read and discuss issue statements related to the text. They respond to the list of issue statements individually, providing rationale for their positions. Students then discuss their positions in small groups and as a whole class, focusing on the areas that prompted the biggest disagreements among students.

[EL Protocols for Critique and Feedback](#)

This collection of protocols (critique and feedback) is used in the EL Education Language Arts Curriculum. (The EL curriculum is identified by the DDOE as High-Quality Instructional Materials for grades K-8.) This resource is free, but requires a login to access.