

CKLA and Social Emotional Competencies

What is Social Emotional Learning (SEL)?

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) notes five areas of social emotional competence, defined as follows:

- **Self-awareness:** The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.
- **Self-management:** 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 achieving personal and academic goals.
- **Social awareness:** 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.
- **Relationship skills:** 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.
- **Responsible decision making:** 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.¹

1. <http://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2013-casel-guide-1.pdf>

How does CKLA support SEL?

Although CKLA is not intended to replace a comprehensive, stand-alone SEL program, it includes many elements that support the acquisition and development of SEL competencies. In addition, this guide offers flexible activities and resources teachers may use to support students in developing these crucial competencies.

SELF-AWARENESS

CKLA Core Connections

CKLA's strong knowledge domains help students develop vast background knowledge of literature, science, social studies, and the arts. Students also gain the ability to comprehend increasingly complex ideas and texts, to make connections and inferences, and to engage in lengthy discussions of the works they hear read aloud. As students acquire this wealth of information, their confidence soars.

CKLA students become active, curious, and discerning participants, but—crucially—they also learn how to express their own views while remaining rooted in the text. Students learn that liking or disliking a text is not the only possible option; rather, their emotional reaction to a work they read is just one kind of reaction. Throughout the CKLA program, students learn to grapple with, interpret, and understand works they may not always prefer reading—and this skill teaches them to view their reactions and perspectives within a broader context than just their personal preferences or emotions.

CKLA students also gain substantial practice in assessing their own strengths and limitations through the use of reflective tools such as KWL Charts and through self-evaluation of their own work, as seen in writing activities in which students use editing checklists to monitor their progress toward assignment expectations.

For Additional Development/Support

The following activities will help further promote self-awareness through CKLA core instruction.

Recognizing emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior

While individuals with strong emotional maturity may be able to articulate their feelings with ease, some students, particularly younger ones, will find it easier to first name emotions in

others. CKLA's rich text selections offer numerous opportunities for such activities. Use the following approaches to help students reflect on characters and figures from text.

- During discussion of a story's plot, ask students how they think various characters feel about what has happened. Ask students to name details in the text that help them know how the characters feel.
- If these details take the form of character behaviors, encourage students to consider whether the behaviors are appropriate or not. For example, Grade 1 students who are studying the tale of "Sleeping Beauty" may say that the evil fairy is angry, and they know this because she uses a loud voice and curses the baby. Encourage students to determine if these behaviors are an acceptable way to express anger.
- You may extend the activity in several ways, including having students discuss what would happen in the text if characters selected different behaviors, brainstorm better options for how they might share their feelings, or even write a new scene for the story to explain what might happen if the characters made different choices.

Older students may be more prepared for self-evaluation and introspection. In addition to the activities above, these students may benefit from considering how they would react in a similar situation or reflecting on how they channel emotions similar to those about which they are reading.

To help students identify and discuss their own emotions, see the following Blackline Master:

- My Personal Weather Report

Assessing strengths and limitations

To offer students additional support in assessing their abilities and areas for growth, teachers may incorporate the following reflective items. Each chart is designed for students to identify a topic or activity, then name areas at which they already excel and areas in which they could grow, learn, or try a new approach. (See Blackline Masters section for printable versions of these items.)

- Glow and Grow chart
- KWL chart
- Alternative Choices chart

SELF-MANAGEMENT

CKLA Core Connections

CKLA offers students multiple means of practicing self-management in an academic setting. In regular Speaking and Listening routines, students learn how to interact appropriately with others, presenting their ideas and views with craft and care. Students learn how to give and receive feedback, including critique, with respect and balance, and they gain substantial practice in discussing ideas with which they may not always agree. Oral and written assignments teach CKLA students how to craft arguments, persuasive appeals, and other texts to appeal to particular audiences. Through these activities, students learn that their emotions and perspectives are not the only ones available; they practice self-management as a means of relating respectfully with others.

CKLA students also take agency in their own learning, using tools such as KWL charts to identify items they want to learn and to reflect on the knowledge they have already acquired. Students have increasing independence in selecting topics and ideas for their writing or performance activities, and with appropriate scaffolding, they learn to manage their work and progress toward goals and learning objectives. CKLA's independent reading program incorporates goal-setting as part of the student learning process, further equipping students to manage their reading accomplishments.

For Additional Development/Support

To offer students additional support in setting and working toward goals, teachers may incorporate the following items. (See Blackline Masters section for printable versions of these items.)

- SMART Goals
- Goal Guide
- Glow and Grow chart
- KWL chart
- Alternative Choices chart

SOCIAL AWARENESS

CKLA Core Connections

CKLA students come to understand other perspectives and cultures. One of the advantages of CKLA's knowledge-rich program is that students have a deep appreciation and

understanding of the history and cultures of people across the world. They learn about people's differences but also about their universality. CKLA aims to instill cultural literacy so that students can engage and interact with a diverse and complex world.

CKLA promotes diversity

To help students truly value humanity's diversity, CKLA ensures that children become familiar with civilizations from around the world, and students learn that people everywhere have made many important contributions. CKLA lessons and knowledge domains expose students to a diverse array of subjects, cultures, genres, authors, and time periods. The program offers many opportunities for students to recognize themselves in familiar characters and to open their minds to new perspectives—all while developing a lifelong love of reading and learning.

Many CKLA texts help children develop an appreciation for diverse cultures. For example, in the *Different Lands, Similar Stories* domain, students enjoy identifying similarities and differences in stories like “Little Red Riding Hood” from Germany, “Hu Gu Po” from China, and “Tselane” from Botswana. Other units, such as *Personal Narratives* and *Poetry*, showcase an ethnically and culturally diverse group of individuals, many of whom are figuring out their own unique identities.

Throughout CKLA, students study the experiences of Native Americans, African Americans, Latinos, and others. They learn about people who have advocated change, both in topical units, such as *Fighting for a Cause*, and in individual texts, such as excerpts from *My Story* by Rosa Parks or “A Boy Goes to Washington” by Bertie Bowman. Through domains such as *Immigration* and texts such as Richard Blanco’s “The First Real San Giving Day” and Naomi Shihab Nye’s “My Father and the Fig Tree,” they learn about the challenges of being in a new place and culture. By representing a wide range of student interests and perspectives, these texts develop student curiosity while building skills and content knowledge.

CKLA fosters sensitivity to academic and social emotional competencies

CKLA offers teachers content and pedagogical insight as well as cooperative learning techniques to encourage positive student-to-student interaction and promote a climate conducive to learning. The program promotes a focus on the whole child with sensitivity to academic and social emotional competencies by valuing diversity while instilling students with the knowledge and skills in Academic English they will need as they move toward college and career readiness.

Students in the 21st century must be able to both respect their own backgrounds and experiences and confidently communicate and work with peers from around the world. A depth and breadth of knowledge is required to fully grasp the importance of diversity to human history and current affairs. In this way, students learn the real value of diversity—the

myriad ways in which different civilizations, now and throughout history, have scientifically, politically, and artistically enriched each other.

The knowledge domains and core instructional practices found within CKLA are designed to build community within the classroom that will extend to students' lives outside of school. Personal narrative writing gives students a chance to share their own experiences, point of view, and individual voice. Sharing sessions encourage positive feedback and constructive criticism to build students' confidence and competence in writing, along with their comfort with sharing in a large group. Differentiation, scaffolding, and accessibility aids help students at all levels find an equally powerful voice.

CKLA students learn about themselves through exploring core texts, including texts that depict children and young adults in both urban and rural environments. For example, in the Grade 2 Skills Reader *The Job Hunt*, students read about a contemporary young adult looking for a part-time job, while Grade 4 students encounter Condoleezza Rice's memories of growing up in an era when ideas about race and gender shaped individual experience. Reflecting on and analyzing these culturally relevant texts gives students a chance to reflect on themselves and how they would feel or act in similar situations.

CKLA further builds on these connections between students and texts by helping students use their experiences to better understand the experiences of others. For example, after reading *The Job Hunt* and Rice's personal narrative earlier in the CKLA program, Grade 5 students have considered their own relationship to authority and economics, and they are better equipped to understand Jacques (a character they encounter in the Reformation domain, whose father has arranged an apprenticeship for him) or Amy (whose interest in detective stories helps her solve a real-world crime in the Student Reader for the *Chemical Matters* domain). CKLA texts come from diverse authors, backgrounds, and places from around the world, and the careful progression of these texts gives all students a chance to see themselves represented and to use their increasing knowledge of self to better understand the commonalities of the human experience.

For Additional Development/Support

One activity that can help students gain social awareness is to have them role-play or otherwise practice explaining ideas that are not their own. CKLA offers students some opportunities for this kind of activity, but the following suggestions can help you incorporate more of this into your classroom.

- Ask students to perform a dramatic reading of texts. Assign students roles as different characters and have them read the parts. Afterwards, encourage students to reflect on how they felt when they acted as each character. Was anything surprising to them?

- Ask students to construct narratives imagining the perspectives of figures they are reading about in core instructions. For example, have Grade 4 students who are studying Medieval Empires imagine what it would feel like to be a king, a serf, or a lord. Facilitate a discussion about what students discovered.
- Ask students to perform an “In Your Shoes” activity by giving them a few minutes to imagine they were in a character’s situation. (Alternatively, you may wish to write a series of prompts to which students could respond.) Have students write or discuss what they would do if they were faced with a character’s problem. For example, Kindergarten students reading *Ox and Man*, a book about a runaway ox, might be asked to consider how they would feel if their ox escaped, how they would express those feelings, and what they might do to try to catch the runaway ox. With support, they could further think about why people have oxen (for work, pets, food) and how that would affect people’s feelings over a runaway ox. For example, if a farmer lost his ox, he might feel scared that he would not be able to plant his crops.
- Many CKLA activities ask students either to evaluate character actions or decisions or to make an argument about which side they would be on in similar circumstances. One way to build understanding of social and cultural difference is to challenge students to switch sides—not to change their beliefs necessarily, but to experience briefly a perspective different from their own. For example, if Grade 4 students studying the American Revolution decide that if they had been colonists, they would have rebelled, you may wish to challenge them to write or discuss the other view, imagining what someone who stayed loyal to Britain might have thought or felt.

Additional ideas for promoting a classroom culture of social awareness and appreciation for diversity appear below. As with any suggested activities, make sure that these ideas are compatible with your school’s guidelines (such as school-wide policies on sharing food in the classroom).

- Have a class meal celebrating foods from each student’s family. Ask students to bring in a dish their family eats regularly and ask them to share the food’s origin and how their family discovered the recipe.
- Invite speakers from local groups to share their group’s history and culture. Alternatively, staff from local museums or historical societies may have student-friendly materials about indigenous groups from your area or region.
- Supplement your classroom library with texts representing diverse populations. For ideas, you may wish to seek input from your school or local librarian. You may also wish to consult organizations such as We Need Diverse Books or the 1000 Black Girl Books project.

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

CKLA Core Connections

The rich content knowledge CKLA students gain offers a strong foundation for building and maintaining relationships with members of diverse populations. Additionally, in keeping with equipping students for 21st-century study and career, CKLA prioritizes helping students develop a sense of how to speak and interact with others. CKLA develops wonderful conversationalists, helping students develop the ability to present, debate, and build upon one another's responses—all key components of healthy relationships.

CKLA instructional activities further support the acquisition of such relationship skills by offering explicit guidance on things such as giving constructive feedback, respectfully debating the ideas of others, working in collaborative and cooperative settings, and practicing active listening. CKLA discussions, debates, and presentations lay out clear rules for exchange and give students a chance to formally voice their opinions but also to ask questions and collaborate in understanding a text. Response starters offer suggestions for effective feedback, while whole class, small group, and partnered discussions give students practice in collaborating and interacting in an academic setting. Reading out loud and acting out scenes gives students opportunities to interpret texts through their own lens.

By routinely working with diverse partners—in pairs, heterogeneous groups, and homogeneous groups—CKLA students routinely practice the kinds of communication and interpersonal skills needed for healthy relationships.

For Additional Development/Support

To offer students additional support in setting and working toward relationship skills, teachers may incorporate the following items. (See Blackline Masters section for printable versions of these items.)

- Glow and Grow chart
- Alternative Choices chart

RESPONSIBLE DECISION MAKING

CKLA Core Connections

CKLA has several aspects to support students learning about making appropriate decisions in social interactions. In CKLA, students learn to communicate both orally and in writing with

multiple audiences and with purposes as diverse as performing a stage play, relating events in their own lives, and summarizing and presenting elements of a literary text. Through regular practice in daily classroom discussions, writing, and group or partner work, students learn to make the transitions between audience, task, purpose, and discipline fluidly and early. This ensures these habits are firmly rooted as they enter the higher grades, and it instills a strong basis for helping students learn to make appropriate choices in their relationships and interactions with others.

Many CKLA texts also carry lessons, both implicit and explicit, about relating to others and making appropriate, responsible decisions. These lessons appear in a range of forms, from vocabulary “Making Choices” activities supporting the vocabulary word *honorable*, to complex, text-based discussions in which students evaluate and reflect on the choices made by characters and historical figures. While selected examples appear below to illustrate the scope of such lessons, their sum total over the six-year CKLA program ensures that students gain ample exposure to the kinds of global and individual decisions that have been made throughout history, providing them with many opportunities to reflect on what constitutes responsible and respectful decisions.

- **Kindergarten** students encounter stories such as “Chicken Little,” in which characters learn the consequences of their actions and start to think carefully about how they behave.
- **Grade 1** students study ancient civilizations and evaluate how people have lived in community with each other, evaluating the decisions of rulers and their various approaches to leadership.
- **Grade 2** students learn about historical figures who have fought responsibly for causes in which they believe.
- **Grade 3** students confront the bad behaviors of Toad in *The Wind in the Willows*, grappling with whether or not he is a good friend.
- **Grade 4** students write about whether or not they would have supported the American Revolution—and risked treason in the eyes of the British Empire.
- **Grade 5** students write a persuasive essay arguing whether they think Don Quixote’s good intentions justify his often calamitous actions.

For Additional Development/Support

To offer students additional support in responsible decision making, teachers may incorporate the following item. (See Blackline Masters section for printable versions of this item.)

- Alternative Choices chart

Blackline Masters

When applicable, Blackline Master variations exist for both younger and older students. Please use whichever work best for your students, even if that means mixing and matching materials within a class.

- Glow and Grow charts
- KWL charts
- Alternative Choices chart
- SMART Goals
- Goal Guide
- My Personal Weather Report

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Glow and Grow Chart

Instructions: Write down the topic your teacher assigns. Think about the topic, then write down one way you “glow,” or excel, at it. Then write down one way you would like to “grow,” or get better, at it.

Topic

I glow at

I would like to grow by

NAME: _____

FORM B

DATE: _____

Glow and Grow Chart

Instructions: Write down the topic your teacher assigns. Think about the topic, then write down one way you “glow,” or excel, at it. Then write down one way you would like to “grow,” or get better, at it.

Topic _____

I glow at

I would like to grow by

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

KWL Chart

Instructions: Write down the topic your teacher assigns. Think about the topic, then write down at least one thing you already know about the topic (K) and at least one thing you want to know about the topic (W). After you have worked on this topic, you will write down at least one thing you have learned about it (L).

Topic _____

K	W	L

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

KWL Chart

Instructions: Write down the topic your teacher assigns. Think about the topic, then write down at least one thing you already know about the topic (K) and at least one thing you want to know about the topic (W). After you have worked on this topic, you will write down at least one thing you have learned about it (L).

Topic _____

K	W	L

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Alternative Choices Chart

Instructions: Write down the person and activity or event that your teacher names. Then use the boxes on the left to write down or draw the choices that person could make during that activity. In the box to the right of each choice, write whether it is a good or bad choice. Alternatively, note good choices with a smiley face 😊 and bad choices with an X. After filling out the chart, circle the choice you think is best.

Person

Activity or event

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Possible Choice	Good or Bad

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Alternative Choices Chart

Instructions: Write down the person and activity or event that your teacher names. Then list the choice the person usually makes about that event or activity. Write down any consequences of that choice. Then name alternative choices and their consequences. At the bottom of the page, write down which choice you believe will produce the best results.

Person _____

Activity or event _____

My first choice _____

Consequence or result _____

Alternative choice 1 _____

Consequence or result _____

Alternative choice 2 _____

Consequence or result _____

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

FORM B

CONTINUED

Alternative choice 3 _____

Consequence or result _____

Best choice _____

Reason _____

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

SMART Goals

If you want to improve at something, it's important to set goals. But not just any goal will do—you want to set SMART goals! This kind of goal called SMART because the name reminds you what your goal should be like.

S-specific

- Goals should name one thing you will do.
- Sometimes if you have a really big idea, you might need to break it down into pieces to develop SMART goals. For example, let's say you want to get better grades. That's a good idea, but it's not specific. You need to pick a place to start, so you might set a SMART goal of learning all this week's spelling words.
- Get better at school—not specific
- Learn all this week's spelling words—specific

M-measurable

- This means you will be able to tell if you succeed or not.
- If your goal is to get better grades, how will you know if you met it? Do you have to get better grades in every class, or just in one subject? Do you mean on one test or on your overall report card?
- Get better grades—not very measurable
- Get an A on the next spelling assessment—measurable

A-achievable

- This means you can accomplish your goal. Sometimes, you might really want to do something, but it's just not possible. For example, let's say you bombed your last spelling assessment. You can't change that now.

R-relevant

- This means your goal is connected to something you want. For example, if you want to make better grades, your goal should relate to that somehow. It wouldn't make sense to set a goal such as "learn to sing" unless you are taking a music class! A better goal might be to get an A on the next spelling assessment.
- Learn to sing—not relevant to getting better grades
- Get an A on the next spelling assessment—relevant to getting better grades

T-time-bound

- This means that your goal is something you will accomplish by a certain date or benchmark. You know when you will do it.
- Get an A in spelling—not clearly time-bound
- Get an A on the next spelling assessment—time-bound

Now that you know how to set SMART goals, you can use the Goal Guide to set goals for yourself. Good luck—you've got this!

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Goal Guide

Instructions: Use the following guide to help you set a goal and plan how you will reach it.

First name something you would like to be able to do or accomplish.

I would like to _____

Now let's make your goal SMART!

S— _____
Use the line above to write how you can make your goal SPECIFIC.

M— _____
Use the line above to write how you can make your goal MEASURABLE.

A— _____
Use the line above to write how you can make your goal ACHIEVABLE.

R— _____
Use the line above to write how you can make your goal RELEVANT.

T— _____
Use the line above to write how you can make your goal TIME-BOUND.

Rewrite your goal, incorporating all the above elements.

MY SMART goal: _____

Now that you've identified your SMART goal, you're all set! Good luck!

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

My Personal Weather Report

Instructions: Consider how you are feeling right now. Then imagine what your mood would look like if it were weather. For example, if you feel happy, would the weather be sunny and warm or full of thunderstorms? Decide what kind of weather your mood today would be, and draw a picture of that weather in the box below.

If you would like to talk with an adult about how you're feeling today, please tell your teacher.

