

Engaging Strategies are instructional practices that you may use throughout your class to help students practice SEL skills. They can vary in complexity and length and are designed to help students to intentionally practice what they are learning academically while also strengthening SEL skills. Below are several approaches that you can have fun with your students, while still reinforcing Academic Content and promoting SEL Skills building during the school day.

Select-Reflect-Connect

- Number popsicle sticks or Ping-Pong balls, doubles of each. Place in Jar or fishbowl in a centralized area of the classroom.
- Prompt students to select a number at the start of the activity.
- Present a question, quote, topic, image or song for student reflection. 3-5 minutes of reflection.
- Prompt students to connect with a classmate with a corresponding number. If uneven, allow groups of three.
- Students will share their reflection with a peer and regroup for whole class discussion.
- Pairs will share findings together during whole group discussion.
- This activity can be used multiple times throughout the lesson.
- **Voice & Choice Modification:** Students develop and submit the questions, themes, songs for the daily activity. Students can sign up to lead the activity and discussion that follows.

SEL skills: Relationship skills, social awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making

Gallery Walk

Supplies: Chart Paper, markers

Purpose: Collaboration, share ideas and/or respond to meaningful questions, learn from each other

Process:

1. Questions/Prompts: create a variety of questions/prompts and write on a piece of chart paper and hang or place on tables around the room to create different stations
2. Group students into teams (about 4-6) and have them all start at a different station
3. At each station, groups will read what is posted and work as a group to respond to the question/prompt. (If it would be helpful for your students, you could assign 'leaders' at each station)

SEL skills: Relationship skills, Social awareness

Say Something

A cooperative learning strategy where students chunk text and share 'something' with a partner

- Pair up
- Read silently and simultaneously to designated stopping points.
- When each partner is ready, stop and 'say something'
- The something might be a brief summary, question/curiosity, key point, interesting idea, or connection.

Continue the process until you have completed the reading.

(from www.thinkingcollaborative.com)

A/B Each Teach

Similar to jigsaw, but in pairs.

- Pair up and designate one person 'A' and one person 'B'
- Person 'A' reads one section of the text (or solves one problem, answers one question)
- At the same time, Person 'B' reads another section of the text (solves a different problem or answers another question)
- When both are ready, they teach their section to their partner

(from www.thinkingcollaborative.com)

Password

One student sits with their back to the whiteboard while the other students sit facing them. Write the secret "password" on the board, and set a timer for 60 seconds. The other students must figure out how to get the player to say the word written on the board, without using it directly. Make this even more challenging by telling them they can't talk at all. This can be adapted to content by choosing words or facts that pertain to recent content taught.

Targeted SEL Skills: Relationship skills

Targeted NYS SEL Benchmarks: Goal 2: Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain mutually supportive relationships with individuals and groups and nurture a strong sense of belonging.

OPTOMISTIC CLOSURE

One Dollar Summary

Prompting students to develop a one-dollar summary is a fun way to encourage self-reflection following instruction.

Ask students to write a reflection that adds up to no more than \$1.00. Each word is worth 10 cents.

Modification: Students can be asked to write a reflection that must add up to at least \$1.00, no more than \$2.00, or another dollar amount you choose

Three W's

Students discuss or write:

- What did you learn today?
 - So What?
 - Why does it matter?
 - How is it relevant? Important? Useful?
 - Now What?
 - How can you apply what you learned? How does it connect to other things you have learned /are learning?
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Feelings Charades

- Have students practice acting out different feelings while others guess the feeling.
 - Talk about the feelings and ask for examples of when students felt that way.
 - Discuss different strategies students can use when they are feeling different ways. (Mindful Breathing, 5-4-3-2-1)
 - *Modification:* Students can draw the feelings or describe a situation that might make someone feel that way.
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Pair/Square

A collaborative learning strategy where students work together to solve a problem, answer a question, etc.

- Building on Think/Ink-Pair-Share, this strategy asks one pair to join another pair, making a square so that four students can now share and discuss their ideas/answers before handing something in or sharing with the whole class

Brainstorm/Review Relay Race

Supplies: Chart Paper with Topics/ Markers

Purpose: Review material in a fun way or brainstorm for creativity in a fun way

Process:

1. Divide participants into teams.
2. Explain if you are doing a brainstorm or a review- if it is a brainstorm, there are definitely no rights or wrongs- if it is a review, there may be right answers but the goal of this is to work as a team to try to get the right answers in a fun way
3. Have teams form lines across from their team's chart paper- hung on a wall or placed on a table- behind a designated piece of tape
4. Each team gets one marker. The first person runs/walks to their team's chart paper and writes down their idea (brainstorm) answer (review), runs/walks back to their team and hands the next person the marker. Each person must write a different response- team members can help each other
5. When everyone is finished, review the chart papers together

Targeted SEL Skills: Relationship skills, social awareness, self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making.

Targeted NYS SEL Benchmarks: Goal 1: Develop self-awareness that: nurtures and affirms a strong sense of identity, informs decisions about personal actions, and builds a sense of agency. Goal 2: Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain mutually supportive relationships with individuals and groups and nurture a strong sense of belonging.

Goal 3: Demonstrate intentional decision-making skills and behaviors that consider social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being in personal, family, school, and community contexts.

Make Your Case

- Develop handout with four to eight topic-related statements or content questions.
- Students will complete it by answering agree/disagree (other response options include acceptable/not acceptable, fair/unfair or positive/negative.)
- Pose the first statement to the group. Assign one side of the room 'agree' and the other side 'disagree'. Prompt students to move to the side of the room that support their opinion, bringing their handouts with them.
- Give time for students to speak with each other and identify common ground. Prompt each group to make their case and use examples to persuade others to understand their point of view.
- Allow students to move sides if their opinion has changed. Each side will state their case, if there is time, allow clarifying questions or rebuttals.
- Continue this process for each statement.
- Virtual: Put students in breakout groups based on their answer. They will collaborate during a small group discussion and return to the larger group to make their case.

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Four Corner Thinking

- The four corners of the room are designated as strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree.
- After each statement, students move to the corner and discuss why they made their selection.
- A spokesperson in each corner shares out the group's thinking.
- Repeat statement to give students a chance to change their position.
- Discussion prompts: Why are you in the corner of the room you selected? Why have you reacted to the statement the way you have? What are the reasons you decided to be there opposed to the other three corners? What have you learned about your peers' responses to the statements posted?
- **Voice & Voice Modification:** Call out a series of decisions that are made, and students will pick the corner that best matches their experience. Explain the four corners –
 1. Students make this decision on their own. The teacher supports the students' choices.
 2. The teacher makes this decision on her or his own. Students are expected to follow it.
 3. Teacher and students decide what to do together, negotiating when they have differences of opinion.
 4. Someone else who isn't in the classroom decides. This could include the principal, parents, curriculum planners, the state legislature, and others.

Targeted SEL Skills: Self-awareness, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills.

Skill or Content Bingo

- Prepare BINGO cards indicating key points/phrases/statement related to topic.
- Hand out BINGO sheets at the start of class. This activity will be used throughout the lesson.
- Instruct students to mark off key words they hear used/discussed during the lesson.
- When a student calls "BINGO!" they will read out their card and choose one square to briefly explain.
- Break to acknowledge win, then continue lesson. Allow multiple winners as to maintain engagement.
- Discussion prompts: What have we discussed today that was not on the sheet? Is there anything you would like further explained?

Targeted SEL Skills: Self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making.

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