



SEL

Social
Emotional
Learning

ACTIVITIES: ENHANCING LEARNING THROUGH FUN

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SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

WELCOME

to this comprehensive packet of information designed to help you leverage your understanding of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) for personal growth and development.

Understanding and effectively applying SEL principles are crucial as they provide valuable insights into your emotional intelligence, social skills, and self-awareness.

Our SEL activities encompass a diverse range of topics, from building empathy and resilience to fostering teamwork and self-reflection. Through engaging exercises, discussions, and interactive games, participants can develop essential life skills that contribute to their holistic development.

Together, let's cultivate a culture of kindness, collaboration, and growth through the power of Social and Emotional Learning!

We encourage you to explore each section of this packet carefully, paying special attention to the SEL competencies that resonate with you the most. By doing so, your students will gain the knowledge and skills needed to navigate life's complexities with confidence and compassion.



Sheri A. Smith



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Introductions

The Goal: The purposes of this exercise is to kick off the group, get to know the students, and set the tone of these activities.

Materials:

Circle of chairs, paper and pencils/pens.



Step 1: Have students sit in a circle and introduce yourself and the purpose of the group. Emphasize that the point of the group is to dive deeper into what your strengths and weaknesses are, help you grow, examine why you are at school, and figure out what you want to get out of school.

Step 2: Instruct each student to share their name, how long they have been at the school and/or lived in the area, then tell the group one thing everyone knows about them and one thing nobody knows about them. Ask follow-up questions.

Step 3: Students should get out paper and pencil/pen. Ask them to write down answers to the prompts below. Let them know that they will not be asked to share their favorite/least favorite things so they can be honest.

- What is your favorite thing in life right now?
- What are your top three least favorite things?
- What do you love about this particular school?
- What do you dislike about this particular school?
- What does the world look like to you?
- What do you wish the world looked like?
- How can you be a part of making this happen?

Step 4: Discuss the answers to the final two questions together as a group. Conclude by outlining how the group will explore each individual's approach to actively address the last two responses.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Building Supportive Adult Relationships.*

Social/Emotional: *Sense of Belonging; Self-Motivation / Self Direction; Perseverance; Self Confidence; Coping Skills; Building Positive Peer Relationships.*



Art Project

The Goal: The idea behind this exercise is to spark creativity in the students. Creativity is essential because it helps people not feel trapped in their lives. The other purpose to this exercise is to give the students an opportunity to express themselves freely. There are no restrictions, and the students will have no fears of being judged or graded.

Materials:

Room, tables and chairs, [Indigo Reports](#), whatever art materials are accessible.

Step 1: Provide the students with any art materials on hand. Some examples are poster board and markers, canvases and paint, modeling clay, magazines and scissors (*for those who don't like to draw*) or simply a pen and paper. Have the students create a piece of art that represents themselves. The students are free to be as creative as they want. There are only two rules: the art has to be all about themselves and it has to be positive. (See an **Example** on the right).



TIP: [Motivators](#) from the [Indigo Report](#) are a good place to start to inspire students to think of images that represent what drives them.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Career: *Creativity; Communication.*

Social/Emotional: *Whole Self; Sense of Belonging; Positive Attitude; Self-Direction; Open Perspective; Extracurricular Activity; Coping Skills; Empathy; Self Advocacy; Positive Relationships.*



Highs and Lows

Note: *Facilitator should use themselves as an example to demonstrate trust within the group.*

The Goal: The purpose of this exercise is to remind students that all of life contains both positives and negatives; life is never “all good” or “all bad.” This exercise is a good icebreaker within the first few sessions, when students are still getting a feel for the group.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#).

Step 1: Have the students sit in a circle. Each student takes a turn sharing one low from their week (something that made them sad, frustrated, or angry) and one high (something good that happened). Limit each person’s turn to one minute each.

Example: “One low from my week was when I received a poor grade on my math test. One high from my week was when I went to the movies with my friends.”



TIP: You can use pages on the [Indigo Report](#) such as the [Communication Do’s and Don’ts](#) to highlight examples of high and low points during interactions or help them brainstorm. You can also use a hacky sack or soft object that students to throw to the next participant.

Note: Some SEL facilitators do a quick round of Highs and Lows before each session.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Presenting; Concepts Comprehension.*

Career: *Communication; Listening; Presenting; Empathy; Collaboration/Cooperation; Teamwork.*

Social/Emotional: *Whole Self; Self Confidence; Sense of Belonging; Positive Attitude; Self Discipline/Control; Coping Skills; Supportive Relationships; Empathy; Self Advocacy; Social Maturity.*



Use Your Unique Strengths

The Goal: This exercise helps students understand their strengths, how to articulate them, and explore how to use them.

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.



Step 1: Have students read the [Summary: Your Strengths](#) page of their report and star the strengths that stand out to them.

Step 2: In groups of three, have students talk about their strengths and examples of those strengths in their life.

Step 3: Now have the groups talk about where they can use their strengths in the future. Have each student write down three examples for themselves.

Example: *Two of Sally's strengths are "Thinks outside the box when gathering information." and "Brings enthusiasm to the creative process." She realizes these could be used to excel on the multimedia research project she has been dreading in her history class.*

TIP: You may need to rephrase some of the strengths on the [Indigo Report](#) if students have difficulty understanding certain words or phrases.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Results Orientation; Extracurricular Activities Participation.*

Career: *Self Confidence; Whole Self; Perseverance.*

Social/Emotional: *Building Positive Peer Relationships; Sense of Belonging.*



Voicing Your Personal Needs

The Goal: This exercise will help students understand what their unique combination of needs is and how to express them to others.

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, Indigo Report, pencil and paper.

Step 1: Have students read the *Things You May Want From Others* section of their Indigo Reports and star the ones that resonate.

Step 2: Have students write down answers to the following questions using their Indigo Report:

1. What is your most important need?
2. When has a person fulfilled your most important need? How did it feel?
3. When have you not received what you needed? How did that feel?



Step 3: Divide students into pairs. Have them share their answers with each other and brainstorm instances or places where they need to express their most important needs to people around them.

Example: Tom's most important need could be "Public recognition of his ideas and results." Tom realizes he should express his need for more feedback from his teacher on class projects.

TIP: If some students feel uncomfortable sharing, they can work alone and write down places in their lives where they can express their needs.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Critical Thinking; Positive Attitude.

Career: Overcoming Obstacles; Perseverance; Self Confidence.

Social/Emotional: Sense of Belonging; Self Advocacy; Coping Skills; Social Maturity.



Ideal Work Environment

The Goal: This exercise helps students understand the need to find and create best-fit environments for their personality.

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.



Step 1: Have students read the [Your Ideal Environment](#) section of the [Indigo Report](#). Have each student star the most important items.

Step 2: Ask students to describe the “perfect class” or “perfect job” in words or pictures. When finished, ask students to share with the group. Here are a few questions you can use to guide the conversation:

- Would the teacher call on you often or not at all?
- What would the room look like?
- Would you work in teams or on your own?
- Are you graded on projects, tests, book reports or something else?

Example: *Jane sees her report says she likes “Work tasks that change frequently.” She writes about a classroom where activities are different every single day.*

TIP: It’s important to communicate to the group that students will have different desires for their school and work environment - and that is okay. It’s not about conforming but about better understanding your needs.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Creativity; Results Orientation; Positive Attitude.*

Career: *Self Advocacy; Self Motivation / Self Direction; Critical Thinking.*

Social/Emotional: *Sense of Belonging; Self Confidence; Communication; Whole Self.*



Positive Self Talk

The Goal: The purpose of this exercise is to teach students to control their thinking patterns and view themselves in a positive light.

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: Ask students to think of a time they used negative self-talk.

Step 2: Pair students up. Ask each student to share something they like about their partner.

Step 3: Then have each student share something they like about themselves. Ask the students to continue practicing positive self-talk throughout the week.

Step 4: In the next session, ask students to share stories about how positive self-talk affected their week.

**no
negative
thoughts
allowed**

Example: Instead of a student telling himself “I’m out-of-shape”, reinforce positive traits like, “I’m a great listener and I make people laugh.”

TIP: Use the [Summary Page](#) in the [Indigo Report](#) and look at [Strengths](#) and [Value to a Team](#) to help reinforce positive self talk.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Career: Empathy; Teamwork.

Social/Emotional: Self-Confidence; Positive Attitude; Perseverance; Sense of Belonging; Coping Skills; Results Orientation; Self Motivation / Self Direction.



Support System

The Goal: This exercise will help students understand the qualities of “safe” people so that they can build a solid support system.

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: Brainstorm qualities of “safe” people. Students can use real or imaginary people for examples.

Step 2: Have students list real people in their lives that fit these qualities.

Step 3: Challenge students to be a “safe” person for someone else by demonstrating qualities of a safe person.

Example: *An example of a safe person could be “caring, a good listener who knows my needs” or “honest, direct, gives me smart advice.”*



TIP: The definition of “safe” will vary from student to student. Use the [Summary](#) and [DISC](#) pages in the [Indigo Report](#) to determine what type of safe person will be the best fit for each one.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Career: *Take Responsibility; Self Advocacy; Self Motivation / Self Direction.*

Social/Emotional: *Whole Self; Critical Thinking; Personal Safety; Building Positive Peer Relationships, Building Positive Adult Relationships.*



Letter to Yourself

The Goal: The goal of this exercise is to encourage students to be self-loving and self-empowered by giving good advice to themselves.

Materials:

Room, place to write, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: Have students write a letter of advice to an imaginary person who has the same personality and faces the same problems. Ask students to write the advice like they would to a friend or family member.



Step 2: Upon completion, challenge students to apply their own advice to their problems and life.

Step 3: Invite any students who feel comfortable to share their letters and experiences with the groups.

Example: A student could write a letter advising to stay away from upsetting things such as social media's overstated opinions or negative people. Instead, the student can apply this to her own life by encouraging herself to spend more time creating things and less time on social media.

TIP: If students are having a hard time thinking of advice, they can look at the [Don'ts: ... and How Others Should Not Communicate with You](#) page of their [Indigo Report](#) to get ideas of negative things in their life.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Identifying Goals; Take Responsibility.

Career: Perseverance; Communication; Self-Advocacy.

Social/Emotional: Self Confidence; Self-Motivation; Coping Skills; Handling Change.



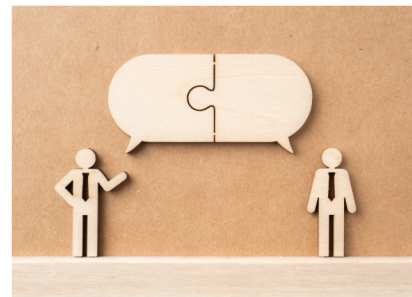
How to Communicate with Others

The Goal: The objective is to explain how every person has different behaviors and unique communication style preferences. Students can benefit from understanding this to connect with students who are not like them.

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: Split the room into two groups—those [above 50 Dominance](#) and those [below 50 Dominance](#). Review the unique strengths of each and how not to communicate with them by using the [DISC Reference Guide](#). Feel free to ask the following questions:



- What are some things we can do to make both Highs and Lows feel comfortable communicating?
- Are there any [High D's](#) or [Low D's](#) that would like to share how they communicate with others?

Step 2: Do the same for [Influencing](#), [Steadiness](#), and [Compliance](#).

Step 3: Have students go back to their seats and either write one paragraph or draw a picture talking about their strengths and potential challenges.

Example: When going over [High Influencing](#) and [Low Influencing](#), one take away may be that Highs need to make room for Lows to speak up in group projects—because the [Low I's](#) may be observing details [High I's](#) miss.

TIP: Make sure to reinforce that there are no better or worse styles. Research shows the best performing teams have a mixture of highs and lows in all categories.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Communication; Building Positive Peer Relationships; Results Orientation.*

Social/Emotional: *Sense of Belonging; Self Advocacy; Communication; Perseverance.*



Talent Show

The Goal: This exercise is designed to boost students' self-esteem. The activity demonstrates that their talents can be used in many ways in their life. Exploring the many options is important to keep students inspired and moving forward.



Materials:

Room, chairs arranged audience style, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: The week before this exercise, tell students to write down a talent they want to display or perform. Feel free to be creative!

Step 2: Allow each student time to share their talent with the group. After the student has shared, use the [Indigo Report](#) to brainstorm what sort of education or career futures could best utilize their talents and abilities.

Example: A student brings in a short story to share. Upon reviewing the student's [Indigo Report](#) and seeing she's a *High I*, suggest that she may do very well in journalism, travel writing, or advertising.

TIP: You can use pages on the Indigo Report such as [Potential Degree Matches](#) to help make connections between the talent and real world opportunities.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Creativity; Self Motivation / Self Direction.

Career: Collaboration / Cooperation; Results Orientation; Identifying Goals.

Social/Emotional: Building Supportive Adult Relationships; Self Confidence; Sense of Belonging.



Understanding Your Behavior

Goal: This exercise not only reinforces self-awareness of unique strengths and skills, but how to listen and understand the strengths, skills, and styles of others.

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.



Step 1: Divide students into pairs. Have students read their partner's [About You](#) page from the [Indigo Report](#). Have them star things they think are accurate about the other person.

Step 2: Swap reports back, and have students star things that stand out on their individual report. Give students time to talk about why they starred the things that they did on each report.

Step 3: Ask the following questions:

- How did it feel to hear about yourself?
- Were there any similarities between you and your partner?
- How can you better use your style at home and school?

Example: *Jack discovers that what stuck out most to his partner about him is “likes to win through persistence.” He thinks about how he could apply that mentality toward the college environment.*

TIP: Emphasize to the students that this exercise is about highlighting strengths, not weaknesses.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Results Orientation; Communication; Collaboration; Social Maturity.*

Social/Emotional: *Building Positive Peer Relationships; Self Confidence; Sense of Belonging; Empathy.*



Practicing Resiliency

The Goal: This exercise is designed to remind students that “failure” is not a bad thing - mistakes are often the best and most effective learning experiences!

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 2: Show [this clip: bit.ly/SEL-Resilience](https://bit.ly/SEL-Resilience) (or scan the QR code), from Disney’s *Meet the Robinsons*. It’s a perfect example of how failure can be a good thing.



Step 1: Have students share with the group a time they failed and what they felt and learned. After each story, the group will applaud and cheer.

Example: *A student shares about a time he missed the details in a project and how it caused him to get a low grade. He talks about how he learned to pay attention to details and communicate with the teacher if he needs clarity.*



TIP: Feel free to reference the [Skills](#) page in the [Indigo Report](#) —some students’ past failures may actually have resulted in the development of certain skills.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Critical Thinking; Open Perspective / Informed Decisions; Taking Challenges.*

Career: *Perseverance; Overcoming Obstacles; Handling Change/Adapting.*

Social/Emotional: *Life-Long Learning; Self-Confidence.*



Conquering Fear of the Future

The Goal: The goal of this exercise is to build students' confidence about their future by remembering past successes.

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#).

Step 1: Ask students to think of something they are nervous about. These fears do not need to be shared out loud.

Step 2: Pair students up and have them both share a victory from their past. They can share with the group if they are willing.

Step 3: Encourage students to think about this past success throughout the week when facing challenges that make them scared or nervous.



Example: A student is nervous for an upcoming test, but remembers studying for and passing a previous test. As they prepare for the next test, the memory of the last test can be used as motivation.

TIP: Look at the [Motivators](#) section of the [Indigo Report](#) for clues of how you could inspire or drive students to tackle certain challenges they fear.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Results Orientation; Taking Challenges.

Career: Positive Attitude; Take Responsibility.

Social/Emotional: Self Control / Self Discipline; Perseverance; Social Maturity; Self Confidence; Empathy.



Listening

The Goal: Students will learn the value and validation that active listening provides, and they will practice actively listening to others.

Materials:

Room, chairs arranged in pairs, [Indigo Report](#).

Step 1: Divide students into pairs: one speaker and one listener. Facing each other in chairs, have the speaker share for 30 seconds about any topic they choose.



Step 2: The listener must try to summarize what the speaker told them. The speaker can politely correct them if they are wrong.

Step 3: Repeat this exercise as many times as desired with new pairs. You can also have the listener ask questions about what they heard and summarize the answer.

Step 4: Conduct a group debrief on what was heard and learned.

TIP: To challenge students, have them look at their partners [Do's: ...How Other People Should Communicate with You](#) page on their [Indigo Report](#) to figure out what is the best way to communicate and listen with someone.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Communication / Listening.*

Career: *Social Maturity / Appropriate Behavior; Open Perspective.*

Social/Emotional: *Building Positive Peer Relationships; Empathy; Collaboration.*



5-4-3-2-1 Game

The Goal: The point of this exercise is to teach a coping mechanism to students to help handle stress, panic attacks, or emotional overload.

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, pencil and paper.

Step 1: Have everyone sit on a chair or the ground and think about five colors they see.

Step 2: Have students think about four sounds they *hear*.

Step 3: Have students move about the room and touch three objects. Ask them to think about how they *feel*.

Step 4: Have students remember two *smells*.

Step 5: Have students think of the *taste* of their favorite food.



Example: *I see the colors blue, grey, white, green, and red; I hear crickets, the air conditioning, people walking, and my breathing; I feel my pen, the carpet, and my shirt; I smell fresh air and my shampoo; I remember the taste of mocha-flavored ice cream.*

TIP: Incorporating these five stress coping steps into their routine can be a powerful tool for students navigating challenging moments. By grounding themselves in the present through colors, sounds, textures, smells, and tastes, students create a mental sanctuary, cultivate a sense of mindfulness, and regain control over their emotional responses. Students are encouraged to embrace these steps in moments of stress or frustration, finding solace and resilience in the simple act of reconnecting with their immediate sensory experiences.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Career: *Take Responsibility; Overcoming Obstacles; Positive Attitude.*

Social/Emotional: *Coping Skills; Self Advocacy; Whole Self; Self Confidence.*



Asking “Why?”

The Goal: This exercise helps students take a deeper look into their insecurities to find ways to overcome them.

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, Indigo Report, pencil and paper.

Step 1: Have students form pairs - one listener, one speaker. Ask the talker to share one of their insecurities with the listener.



Step 2: Have the listener begin asking the speaker “Why” questions like, “Why does this make you feel insecure?”. There will be five questions each round.

Step 3: Switch roles and complete another round of five “Why” questions.

Step 4: Have the students talk about how they could deal with their insecurities. Ask if any groups feel comfortable sharing.

Example: *The “why” questions may enable a student to share their desire to excel in school so they seem intelligent to others. The student fears performing poorly in school as this causes the student to feel inadequate or like a “loser.”*

TIP: For individual students that discuss deep or troubling issues, reference their **Social Emotional Scores** in the Indigo Dashboard.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Critical Thinking; Self Direction / Self Motivation.

Career: Communication; Social Maturity.

Social/Emotional: Identifying Goals; Perseverance; Coping Skills; Empathy; Self-Confidence; Whole Self.



Guest Speaker

This exercise can be tailored to the guest speaker and the topic they choose to discuss with the class.

The Goal: A guest can bring an outside perspective on the problems that can help students see issues from a new light—it equips students with new ways to approach the thing with which they are struggling.

Materials:
Depends on how you tailor this exercise.

Step 1: Find a speaker who can speak on a topic that seems relevant to your students (i.e. self confidence, relating to others, sense of self).

Step 2: Invite the speaker into your classroom. S/he can be woven into other exercises or can be a stand-alone activity about a certain issue.



Example: *If your students particularly struggle with negative self-image, bring in a speaker discuss reframing techniques to cultivate positive mindsets. The speaker could have expertise on how to promote positive body image, or positive self-talk.*

TIP: Use the **DISC and Motivators** of your group to help prep your speaker. Are your students **High D's** who want to be spoken to directly and firmly? Are they motivated by **Social** and therefore want to know how they can use this information to help others?

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

The ASCA Mindset & Behaviors addressed depends on what the speaker presents to the students.



The Wrap Up

Goal: The goal of this exercise is to talk about what students learned from the SEL Activities and what practical lessons they can use in their lives.

Materials:

Room, circle of chairs, pencil and paper.

Step 1: Ask them a series of open-ended questions. Feel free to guide the conversation in any direction you see fit:



- What will you take away from these activities?
- What will you continue to work on?
- Was there any one exercise that inspired you more than others?
- Did you bond with any of the other students in this group?
- Did this provide clarity how to do things in your life?

Example: *Brendan shares that he really enjoyed learning how to voice his personal needs, and that he feels like Jack is now a close friend who he can talk to about these sorts of things.*

TIP: If you are conducting any post-test / feedback form about the SEL Activity experience, this exercise would be the ideal time.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Career: *Take Responsibility; Handling Change / Adapting; Self Advocacy.*

Social/Emotional: *Self Confidence; Sense of Belonging; Building Positive Peer Relationships; Self Motivation / Self Direction; Perseverance; Overcoming Obstacles.*



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