SEL Book Project – Question Bank

Washoe County School District

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is the ongoing process of developing skills to understand and manage emotions, make thoughtful decisions, and sustain meaningful relationships.

How to Use This Document

- Find the competency and social emotional skills/indicators most highlighted in the text as noted in the one-page document accompanying the book.
- Select your discussion questions from below. (Adjust complexity of questions as necessary to reflect the age of your students.)
- Scan the QR code to share your SEL wins, stories, & feedback!

Self-Awareness	
1) Develop personal interests and self-efficacy	a) What activities make [character] happy and confident in the story? What do they do or say that helps you know that? b) How do [character]'s hobbies or interests help them in the story? Give examples. c) What is something the character enjoys doing? What is a challenge they encounter? How do they keep trying, even if it's hard?
2) Identify emotions	a) What are some different feelings [character] shows in the book? Describe a time in the book when [character] was having that feeling. What helps you know that? b) How does the character feel when something big happens? How can you tell?
3) Cultivate a growth mindset	a) How does [character] react to new challenges? Give an example of a challenge they face and how they keep trying. b) When [character] faces a series of challenges, how do they change their approach when the first try doesn't succeed? c) When the character faces a problem, what helps them keep going and not give up?
Self-management	
4) Regulate emotions	a) What strategies does [character] use to calm themselves when they are upset? b) Discuss how [character] manages their feelings during a stressful part of the story. c) When the character feels upset, what do they do to calm down and make a good choice?
5) Set and achieve goals	a) What goals does [character] have, and what steps do they take to achieve them? b) How can you tell what something is that (character) wants to achieve? Why do you think that goal is important to them?
6) Develop agency*	a) How does [character] show they can make decisions by themselves? b) How does [character] show leadership or independence in making decisions? c) How does the character take charge of solving their own problem or making things better?
Social awareness	
7) Recognize the emotions	a) What are some ways [character] shows they understand what others are feeling?

and perspectives of others	b) How does [character]'s understanding of another character's feelings affect their actions? c) How do you think the other characters feel in this part of the story? Why might they feel that way?
8) Demonstrate empathy and compassion	a) How does [character] show they care when another character is in trouble? b) Provide an example where [character] goes out of their way to support someone else emotionally. c) What does the character do to show kindness or help someone else who is feeling sad or upset?
9) Practice gratitude	a) Describe a time when [character] says thank you or shows they are grateful. b) How does showing appreciation affect the relationships between characters in the book? c) What is something the character is thankful for? Why is it important to them? How do the others in the book know that (character) is thankful?
Relationship Skills	
10) Communicate effectively	a) What are some examples of times [character] does or doesn't listen to well to others? How does that affect what happens? What are some examples of when a character shares their thoughts clearly? Why does that matter? b) Analyze a conversation where [character] has to express difficult feelings or ideas. c) How does the character share their thoughts or feelings with others? What helps them communicate well? How does that impact the story?
11) Practice teamwork and collaborative problem-solving	a) Describe a time when [character] and others work well together. How does each character contribute to solving the problem together? b) What conflict arises in the story and how do the characters work together to resolve it? c) Which characters work together to solve a problem? What makes their teamwork successful?
12) Seek and offer support when needed	a) What are some ways [character] asks for help or offers help to others? b) Discuss a scene where characters helping each other leads to a positive outcome. c) When the character needs help, how do they ask for it? How do they help others when needed?
Responsible Decision-making	
13) Cultivate curiosity and open-mindedness	a) When does [character] learn something new from someone else? What do they learn and how does the other character help them learn it? b) How does learning from others help [character] overcome a problem or achieve a goal? c) What is a new thing that the character discovers or learns? What helps them to stay curious?
14) Make reasoned decisions and judgements	a) Can you give an example of a tough choice [character] has to make? How do they decide what to do? b) Think about a decision [character] made. What were the impacts the decision would have on themselves or others? c) How does the character decide what to do when they face a difficult choice? What factors help them make a good choice?

15) Understand the impact of one's actions	a) What are some consequences [character]'s actions have on other characters? b) Reflect on a significant action by [character] and its long-term effects on others in the story. c) How do the character's actions affect the people or the world around them?

Classroom Extension Questions for Teachers
How does one of the character's experiences connect to challenges we might face? **Describe an example from the text that show how the character responded to their emotions?** *Literacy connection*: Cite textual evidence to support an analysis of character actions or feelings. *SEL connection*: Encourage students to draw parallels between characters' challenges and their own experiences to help students reflect on emotional regulation and decision-making.
What words or phrases does the author use to show how the characters are feeling? How do these descriptions help you understand what they are going through? *Literacy connection*: Encourage students to analyze descriptive language and word choice. *SEL connection*: Support emotional awareness by helping students recognize the many ways emotions can be conveyed through language.
What do you think the main character learned by the end of the story? How can we apply this lesson to our classroom or everyday life? *Literacy connection*: Focus on identifying the theme and inferring lessons from the text. *SEL connection*: Encourage students to connect the character's growth or resolution to their own lives, fostering self-awareness and social responsibility.
Family School Connection
What is something about this story that you'd like to share with someone in your household? What makes that something you want to talk about?
Describe the book that we read together today to someone in your household. Choose one part of the story that you're still thinking about. Ask them to share their thoughts.
Share one of the SEL skills that was a part of today's book and how it impacted the story. Ask them who they think they know that is really good at that skill.