

# SEL Discussion Resource

These questions provide opportunities to apply the concept to each of the five core competencies of social and emotional learning: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making, Social Awareness, and Relationship Skills.

## SEL Discussion Resource: I AM A LEADER



### Self-awareness

Let's say the affirmation together: I am a leader.

When working with a team on a project or in a sport, are you more likely to tell other people what to do or to follow the direction from others? How do you feel when someone puts you in charge?

When someone else doesn't do things the way you think they should be done, how do you handle it? Give an example of how negative emotions can influence a leader, and then give an example of a positive way to handle those emotions.

### Self-management

Leadership means accepting input and opinions from others on a team. How can you tell if you're being too controlling and not letting someone else have a say?

Conflicts are natural in groups. If you and another person disagreed about how to complete a task, how would you settle that disagreement?

### Responsible decision-making

Sometimes a task seems impossible. What would a problem-solving person do if everything the team tried wasn't working?

Leadership isn't about being a bossy person. Describe a way you can influence someone else to do something that encourages them to use their own ideas and abilities without being demanding or bossing them around.

### Social awareness

The success of a team isn't a win for the leader. It's a win for *everyone* on the team.

Describe what it means to collaborate rather than to have one person do everything. One job of a leader is to look for where someone else is too shy to speak up or doesn't give their input. Why is it important to involve every person in a project?

## Relationship skills

Let's say you noticed that some students were bullying another student. What actions would a leader take in this situation? Discuss the possible outcomes of each option.

Imagine that you're doing a group project and one person is the group leader. But someone else in the group has a concern that affects the success of the project. What might happen if the leader's listening skills are weak, and the leader chooses to ignore the input of the other person and demands that the group does it their way?

## SEL Discussion Resource: THE TRUTH IS IMPORTANT TO ME

the **truth** is  
important to me

### Self-awareness

Let's say the affirmation together: The truth is important to me.

When you discover that someone has lied to you, how do you feel? What emotions do you have? What physical reaction do you have?

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Sometimes people claim something is a lie because they don't like the truth. How can you tell the difference between a lie and the truth?

### Self-management

You're telling a personal story to someone and you realize you have stretched the truth and added extra, untrue information. Which do you do? (*This is about discussion, not a right or wrong response.*)

- A) Immediately pause, and say, "Wait a minute. Part of that wasn't true. Let me start over."
- B) Ignore it because a little exaggeration isn't a big deal.
- C) Go back to the person later and admit that you added details in your story. Explain that truth is important and apologize.
- D) Hope the person never notices and promise yourself you won't do that again.
- E) Other \_\_\_\_\_.

### Responsible decision-making

How can you decide if something is true?

- What questions can you ask?
- Where can you look to verify information you hear in the news, on social media, or from a friend?

Explain why it's important to verify information before sharing it right away. What does it mean to verify something?

## **Social awareness**

Imagine someone tells you a secret about a friend. You aren't sure the rumor is true, but you share it with someone else anyway. Later you find out it wasn't true. How do you think your friend feels when they learn it was you who shared the lie about them?

What does the word "bias" mean? How does this affect our thoughts about truth?

## **Relationship skills**

When someone says something, and you aren't sure if it's true or not, what kinds of questions can you ask as a "truth detective?"

How can you ask truth-seeking questions in a way that the other person feels valued and doesn't feel as if you accused them of lying to you?

How can we test each other's ideas in a way that everyone feels validated as an important contributor to a discussion?

## SEL Discussion Resource: I CAN ACHIEVE ANYTHING



### Self-awareness

Let's say the affirmation together: I can achieve anything.

Name something you would like to achieve in the next week. (Ex: Draw a picture, bake a cake, shoot a free-throw, run a mile, write a story, learn a song, pass a test, finish my homework, etc.) It must be something within your control.

On a scale of 1–5, with 5 the surest, how confident are you that you can achieve the thing you just said?

Hold up:

- 5 fingers for "I'm sure I can do it!"
- 4 for "I'm mostly sure I can do it."
- 3 for "I'm halfway sure I can do it."
- 2 for "I'm a little sure I can do it."
- 1 for "I'm not sure I can do it at all."

What would make your answer turn into a 5?

### Self-management

If you couldn't remember the instructions for an assignment, what could you do to ensure you achieve the best outcome? See if you can think of ideas other than asking the teacher.

If I wanted to achieve the goal of making macaroni and cheese, there would be steps needed, right? Let's list all of the steps we can think of.

Now, think of a goal you want to achieve. List three steps that you'd have to take to get to that goal.

### Responsible decision-making

Achievers don't quit when they have a problem. They look for ways to solve the problem. Let's imagine I wanted to improve my health by going for a bike ride. But when

I go to get my bike, the tires are both flat. What would an achiever do to solve the problem and reach their goal?

Here's another one. Imagine I wanted to have a lemonade stand to make some money to buy myself a game. But I discover I don't have any lemonade at home. How can I still achieve my goal?

### **Social awareness**

Sometimes, another person's success makes us feel jealous. It's important to avoid unhealthy comparisons. Explain how both of these examples are great achievements:

- A student wins a state math competition.
- A student who has always struggled with math receives their first A on a test.

Discuss why it's important to measure our achievement based on our own personal best rather than on someone else's.

### **Relationship skills**

If you're working as a team to achieve a goal such as winning a basketball game, what happens when one person tries to show off and doesn't pass the ball to anyone else?

How can other team members problem-solve to make sure the team works well together? What are some ways to work out the challenges without immediately asking a coach or teacher for help with a conflict?

## SEL Discussion Resource: I NEVER GIVE UP

**i never  
give up**

### Self-awareness

Let's say the affirmation together: I never give up.

If you feel like quitting when a task becomes difficult, what emotions do you feel in that moment?

When something is challenging for you, are you more likely to want to quit, or are you more likely to work even harder to prove you can do it?

### Self-management

Imagine you want to give up on a task. You're feeling frustrated. What can you do to manage that frustration?

If someone is ready to give up and they are frustrated, what might happen if they took a little break and came back to it later? Why does this sometimes help us to be ready to keep trying? (Discuss how it calms emotions, clears our head, gives us new ideas, etc.)

### Responsible decision-making

Let's imagine you're trying to invent some amazing, motorized shoes, but the design isn't working. So, you decide to throw away the design and start over with a new plan. Describe the difference between quitting/giving up and starting over. How is starting over still "never" giving up?

### Social awareness

Describe some behaviors you might see in someone else who was ready to give up on a homework assignment. What physical behaviors would they show? What might they say?

If you're playing soccer on a team and two people on the team quit, how does their quitting affect the whole team?



## Relationship skills

Friendships can be frustrating sometimes. You might even want to quit being friends with someone. Instead of giving up on a friend, what do you think might happen if you tried to find a new way to talk through your differences?

Sometimes a person shows unkind behavior to their friends to hide their feelings and emotions. They might take out their frustration on you when you weren't the one who upset them. If you are a friend who never gives up, what could you say or do to let them know they hurt you, but you still care about them as a friend?

## SEL Discussion Resource: I AM BLESSED



### Self-awareness

Write or say the affirmation together: I am blessed.

If someone is unhappy all the time, what effect do you think it has on their life?

What emotions do you experience when you think everything is going wrong?

Gratitude is a big part of our happiness and sense of being blessed. Think of one thing you're grateful for. Now close your eyes and think of how it makes you feel. (Have students express that feeling in a movement, a drawing, or other creative expression.)

### Self-management

If your emotions are negative, how can you redirect your thoughts away from the negative to see what is positive? Do you write in a journal? Talk to a friend? Say an affirmation? List some ideas.

What do you think makes a person happy?

Why do you think some people can be happy even when they have problems?

### Responsible decision-making

If you're having a rough day, what are some choices you have that are within your control, even if you can't control the situation? Finish this statement: I can choose to

\_\_\_\_\_.

### Social awareness

Describe the facial expressions and emotions you might see from a person who is happy and content (blessed).

What are some ways you can bring joy to others and bless them?

## Relationship skills

Relationships with other people can help us to feel happier. Describe how friends can be a blessing (a good thing) to have. What things does a friend do that helps someone else to feel loved and accepted?

How does a friend bring happiness and joy?

What could YOU do that helps your friend feel blessed?