

# Lesson Blueprints: What is SEL?

## Lesson Title: SEL Stations

### Grade Level: Elementary School

#### Overview

As every good elementary school teacher knows, stations allow students to use instructional materials alone or in small groups, giving them opportunities to practice and explore topics in an interesting and productive manner. Centers should be designed to enhance the learning in a topic area or introduce a new topic.

Listed below are eight (8) ideas for centers on SEL topics, complete with materials you will need for each.

- 1. Mix and Match Headlines, Photos and Stories of Current Events.** Cut up articles, headlines, and photos from current event articles on a topic you are discussing in class into three separate piles and mix them up, then challenge students in groups to see who can correctly match them in the shortest amount of time. When they are finished, have them independently write a response to the question “What conclusions can you draw about the importance of headlines and photos in articles?”

**Materials:** cut up articles, headlines, photos, (these can be laminated if planning to use multiple times) paper, pencils, other tools as needed.

- 2. Vocabulary.** Using key words and ideas from your lesson, generate a list of vocabulary words for students to research. Have them bring paper and a pencil to this station and provide them with a dictionary and a list of words. Instruct students to do the following steps with each word:

- Write the word and part of speech
- Write the definition found in the dictionary
- Write a definition of the word in your own words
- Write a sentence using the word
- If applicable, draw a picture to accompany the sentence

**Materials:** vocabulary lists or words on index cards, writing tools, dictionaries, thesauruses, paper, crayons and/or markers.

- 3. Write a fictional story.** Using a key idea discussed in class, have your students write a narrative. For example, if you have been discussing character traits, instruct your students to write a story about a character that displays that trait. Their story should reflect their understanding of the qualities of this character trait. Depending on your students, you may want them to complete a 4-block graphic organizer before they write their story.

**Materials:** Paper and writing tools or computer writing app, copies of graphic organizer (if using)

- 4. Write a journal entry.** It is very important for kids to know that they can express their personal connections and thoughts about a topic without judgement. This station is popular for many students because it requires them to make a personal connection to the topic you are discussing in class. Whether you are learning about the effects of bullies, internet safety, health, or character traits, your students should be able to make a connection. Encourage them to write in a journal or on a piece of paper and express their thoughts and feelings.

**Materials:** Journals and/or paper, writing tools or computer with writing app.

- 5. Create a play.** If your students are in small groups for their station rotations, have them write a play to display their understanding of the idea you have been discussing in class. Instruct them to write a script and make sure each group member has a role in the play. You may choose to give them scenarios that they must use, or have them create the scenario for themselves. At the end of the class period, have each group present their plays.

**Materials:** Paper and writing tools or a computer writing app, space, (possibly) props and costume pieces.

- 6. Write a Public Service Announcement.** This station can be applicable to many different key ideas from your lessons. You may want to show some examples of print PSA announcements to use as a guide. Instruct your students to create a 1-2 line statement to inform the public about the key idea of your lesson. Have them write their statement on a piece of paper and draw a related picture. Display their PSA announcements around the school for others to see.

**Materials:** Paper and writing tools or computer writing app, art supplies, scissors, means to mount paper

- 7. Write a song or rap.** Instruct your students to write a song or rap about a key idea being discussed in class. Give them the freedom to take any approach to the assignment, fictitious or not, and encourage them to get as creative as possible. Have each group perform their songs to the rest of the class.

**Materials:** Paper and writing tools or computer writing app, space, recording devices (possibly)

- 8. Design a comic book or comic strip.** Using a key idea being covered in class, instruct your students to create a comic strip that displays their understanding. Encourage them to brainstorm their entire story line before drawing anything. Remind students that comic strips can have many different layouts.

**Materials:** Paper, pencils, crayons, colored pencils, markers, rulers

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