



5
SESSIONS

45 Min
PER SESSION

Zero
TEACHER PREP

CASEL
SEL FRAMEWORK

VA SOL
READING STANDARDS

Up to 15
STUDENTS

READING STANDARDS • VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING (VA SOL) • GRADES 6-8

| SKILL | HOW NO JUDGING ALLOWED DELIVERS THIS | SAMPLE DISCUSSION PROMPT |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Close Reading and Textual Evidence | Students use text-based evidence to support analysis of character actions, choices, and inferred meaning in literary texts | <i>"What in the story makes you think the character felt that way?"</i> |
| Theme Analysis | Students identify and analyze the theme of a literary text and explain how it is developed through character choices and story events | <i>"What did the character learn? What can we learn from that?"</i> |
| Character Analysis | Students analyze how characters develop and how their responses to conflict and challenge drive the plot and its consequences | <i>"How did the character change from beginning to end?"</i> |
| Making Inferences | Students make inferences and draw conclusions using evidence from the text to understand character motivation and unstated meaning | <i>"What did the character feel even though the story didn't say it directly?"</i> |
| Point of View | Students analyze how the author's choice of narrative perspective shapes meaning and influences the reader's understanding of events | <i>"How would this story change if told from another perspective?"</i> |
| Collaborative Discussion | Every session builds oral communication and discussion skills through structured, text-based conversation with accountable talk | <i>"Build on what your classmate said. Do you agree or see it differently?"</i> |

SEL STANDARDS • APS SEL FRAMEWORK (CASEL-ALIGNED) • FIVE CORE COMPETENCIES

| COMPETENCY | HOW NO JUDGING ALLOWED DELIVERS THIS | SAMPLE DISCUSSION PROMPT |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Self-Awareness | Students identify character emotions and connect those experiences to their own sense of identity, strengths, and emotional responses | <i>"Have you ever felt the way this character felt?"</i> |
| Self-Management | Students examine how characters regulate emotions and manage stress under pressure, evaluating those strategies against their own experiences | <i>"What could the character have done to manage that feeling differently?"</i> |
| Social Awareness | Students practice perspective-taking and empathy, examining how social context and community influence characters' choices and responses | <i>"How might the character's background shape how they see this situation?"</i> |
| Relationship Skills | Students analyze the dynamics of relationships in the story, examining communication, trust, loyalty, and the impact of choices on others | <i>"Was that a healthy choice for the friendship? What would a healthier choice look like?"</i> |
| Responsible Decision-Making | Students evaluate the consequences of character choices and identify the factors that influence ethical decision-making under social pressure | <i>"What could the character have done differently? What might have changed?"</i> |

SESSION-BY-SESSION STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

| SESSION | READING STANDARDS MET | SEL COMPETENCY | ACTIVITY |
|---|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Enter the Story Read together. Meet the characters. Set the room. | Close reading, Character analysis | Self-Awareness | Feeling Charades |
| 2 Feel With Them Explore what the characters felt and why those feelings make sense. | Character analysis, Point of view | Self-Awareness, Social Awareness | Emotion Timeline |
| 3 Choose Wisely Analyze the choices the characters made and what those choices cost. | Theme analysis, Making inferences | Responsible Decision-Making | Choice Road |
| 4 Connect to You Bring it home. Share connections out loud, on paper, or with a partner. | Theme analysis, Collaborative discussion | Relationship Skills | Silent Write + Pair Share |
| 5 Grow Together Reflect on what shifted. Name it. Celebrate it. | Theme analysis, Collaborative discussion | Self-Management | One Word Wall |

WHAT STUDENTS GAIN

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|--|--|
| ✓ Emotional Vocabulary Ability to identify, name, and articulate their own emotions and the emotions of others | ✓ Critical Reading Skills Strengthened ability to analyze theme, character, and cause and effect through close reading |
| ✓ Decision-Making Framework Practice evaluating choices and consequences before acting, using character decisions as a safe starting point | ✓ Perspective-Taking Ability Strengthened capacity to consider how situations look and feel from another person's point of view |
| ✓ Structured Discussion Skills Experience in text-based academic discussion with turn-taking, active listening, and evidence-based responses | ✓ Relationship Awareness Greater awareness of what healthy relationships look like and how personal choices affect others |
| ✓ Stress and Emotion Management Exposure to strategies for managing difficult emotions through the lens of character choices and outcomes | ✓ Confidence in Their Own Voice A structured, judgment-free space to share personal connections to text, building academic and social confidence |

PROGRAM PILOT • OXON HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL, PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD (SERVING THE DMV REGION)

“ Our young people have become excited about reading, thoughtful in their decisions, and positive in their interactions.

VICTORIOUS HALL

8TH GRADE ACADEMIC DEAN • OXON HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL • PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD

Reading standards: Virginia Standards of Learning (VA SOL) for English Language Arts, Grades 6-8. SEL alignment: APS SEL Framework, CASEL-aligned, five core competencies, implemented 2024-2025 school year. This document is intended for use by APS administrators and counselors.