| 5 | 45 Min | Zero | City Schools Student Wholeness | MCCR | Up to 15 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SESSIONS | PER SESSION | TEACHER PREP | SEL FRAMEWORK | READING STANDARDS | STUDENTS |

## READING STANDARDS • MARYLAND COLLEGE AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS (MCCR) • GRADES 9–12

| SKILL | HOW NO JUDGING ALLOWED DELIVERS THIS | SAMPLE DISCUSSION PROMPT |
|---|---|---|
| **Close Reading and Textual Evidence** | Students cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly and what is inferred from character actions and choices | *"What in the story makes you think the character felt that way?"* |
| **Theme Analysis** | Students analyze how two or more themes develop over the course of a text, examining how character choices and consequences shape meaning | *"What did the character learn? What can we learn from that?"* |
| **Character Analysis** | Students analyze how complex characters develop, interact, and advance the plot and themes through their decisions and consequences | *"How did the character change from beginning to end?"* |
| **Making Inferences** | Students draw inferences and analyze what is not directly stated, using textual evidence to support conclusions about character motivation and subtext | *"What did the character feel even though the story didn't say it directly?"* |
| **Point of View** | Students analyze how an author's choices about point of view and narrative perspective shape tone, meaning, and reader understanding | *"How would this story change if told from another perspective?"* |
| **Collaborative Discussion** | Every session uses text-based evidence and structured discussion, building skills in academic discourse, active listening, and evidence-based responses | *"Build on what your classmate said. Do you agree or see it differently?"* |

## SEL STANDARDS • CITY SCHOOLS STUDENT WHOLENESS INITIATIVE • CASEL FIVE CORE COMPETENCIES

| COMPETENCY | HOW NO JUDGING ALLOWED DELIVERS THIS | SAMPLE DISCUSSION PROMPT |
|---|---|---|
| **Self-Awareness** | Students examine character emotions and connect those experiences to their own developing sense of identity and emotional history | *"Have you ever felt the way this character felt?"* |
| **Self-Management** | Students examine how characters manage stress, pressure, and difficult emotions and evaluate those responses against their own experiences | *"What could the character have done to manage that feeling differently?"* |
| **Social Awareness** | Students examine multiple perspectives, practice empathy, and analyze how social context and community pressures shape characters' choices and responses | *"How might the character's background shape how they see this situation?"* |
| **Relationship Skills** | Students analyze relationship dynamics in the story, examining trust, loyalty, peer pressure, and the long-term consequences of choices made within relationships | *"Was that a healthy choice for the friendship? What would a healthier choice look like?"* |
| **Responsible Decision-Making** | Students trace consequences of character choices and evaluate the factors that influence decision-making under pressure | *"What could the character have done differently? What might have changed?"* |

## SESSION-BY-SESSION STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

| | SESSION | READING STANDARDS MET | SEL COMPETENCY | ACTIVITY |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Enter the Story**<br>Read together. Meet the characters. Set the room. | Close reading, Character analysis | Self-Awareness | Feeling Charades |
| 2 | **Feel With Them**<br>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**<br>Analyze the choices the characters made and what those choices cost. | Theme analysis, Making inferences | Responsible Decision-Making | Choice Road |
| 4 | **Connect to You**<br>Bring it home. Share connections out loud, on paper, or with a partner. | Theme analysis, Collaborative discussion | Relationship Skills | Silent Write + Voice It |
| 5 | **Grow Together**<br>Reflect on what shifted. Name it. Celebrate it. | Theme analysis, Collaborative discussion | Self-Management | One Word Wall |

## WHAT STUDENTS GAIN

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

## WHAT EDUCATORS SAY

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

**VICTORIOUS HALL**
FORMER 8TH GRADE ACADEMIC DEAN
OXON HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD

> *"[No Judging Allowed's] interactive sessions create a welcoming environment where students feel seen, heard, and valued, fostering a strong sense of belonging while encouraging them to meet rigorous academic expectations."*

**JONAS N. STRICKLAND, M.DIV., MLIS**
CERTIFIED SCHOOL LIBRARIAN
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Reading standards: Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCR) for English Language Arts, Grades 9–12. SEL alignment: City Schools Student Wholeness Initiative, CASEL five core competencies. This document is intended for use by Baltimore City Public Schools administrators and counselors.*


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