



5
SESSIONS

45 Min
PER SESSION

Zero
TEACHER PREP

OSSE SEL
SEL FRAMEWORK

CCSS
READING STANDARDS

Up to 15
STUDENTS

READING STANDARDS • DCPS COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS (CCSS) • 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	<i>"What in the story makes you think the character felt that way?"</i>
Theme Analysis	Students analyze how two or more themes develop over the course of a text, examining how character choices and consequences shape meaning	<i>"What did the character learn? What can we learn from that?"</i>
Character Analysis	Students analyze how complex characters develop, interact, and advance the plot and themes through their decisions and consequences	<i>"How did the character change from beginning to end?"</i>
Making Inferences	Students draw inferences and analyze what is not directly stated, using textual evidence to support conclusions about character motivation and subtext	<i>"What did the character feel even though the story didn't say it directly?"</i>
Point of View	Students analyze how an author's choices about point of view and narrative perspective shape tone, meaning, and reader understanding	<i>"How would this story change if told from another perspective?"</i>
Collaborative Discussion	Every session uses text-based evidence and structured discussion, building skills in academic discourse, active listening, and evidence-based responses	<i>"Build on what your classmate said. Do you agree or see it differently?"</i>

SEL STANDARDS • DC OSSE SEL STANDARDS (2024-2025) • 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 self-understanding	<i>"Have you ever felt the way this character felt?"</i>
Self-Management	Students examine how characters manage stress and difficult emotions and evaluate those strategies against their own lives	<i>"What could the character have done to manage that feeling differently?"</i>
Social and Cultural Awareness	Students examine multiple perspectives, practice empathy, and analyze how culture and social context shape characters' choices and responses	<i>"How might the character's background shape how they see this situation?"</i>
Relationship Skills	Students analyze relationship dynamics in the story, examining power, trust, loyalty, and the long-term consequences of choices within relationships	<i>"Was that a healthy choice for the friendship? What would a healthier choice look like?"</i>
Decision-Making and Agency	Students trace consequences of character choices, evaluate ethical dimensions, and connect those choices to their own sense of agency and responsibility	<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 and Cultural Awareness	Emotion Timeline
3 Choose Wisely Analyze the choices the characters made and what those choices cost.	Theme analysis, Making inferences	Decision-Making and Agency	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

✓ 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 (ADJACENT TO DC)

“ 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: DCPS Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts, Grades 9–12. SEL alignment: DC OSSE Social and Emotional Learning Standards, five core competencies, implemented 2024–2025 school year. This document is intended for use by DCPS administrators and counselors.