



5
SESSIONS

45 Min
PER SESSION

Zero
TEACHER PREP

OSSE SEL
SEL FRAMEWORK

CCSS
READING STANDARDS

Up to 25
STUDENTS

READING STANDARDS • DCPS COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS (CCSS) • GRADES 6-8

SKILL	HOW NO JUDGING ALLOWED DELIVERS THIS	SAMPLE DISCUSSION PROMPT
Close Reading and Textual Evidence	Students read the original story together and cite evidence to support their understanding of character actions and choices	<i>"What in the story makes you think the character felt that way?"</i>
Theme Analysis	Students analyze how the theme develops across the story and connect it to broader life lessons	<i>"What did the character learn? What can we learn from that?"</i>
Character Analysis	Students analyze how characters respond to challenges and how those responses shape the story	<i>"How did the character change from beginning to end?"</i>
Making Inferences	Students draw inferences about emotions and motivations not directly stated in the text	<i>"What did the character feel even though the story didn't say it directly?"</i>
Point of View	Students consider how the story would read differently from another character's perspective	<i>"How would this story change if told from another perspective?"</i>
Collaborative Discussion	Every session includes structured facilitated discussion with turn-taking and text-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 identify and name emotions characters experience and connect those to their own	<i>"Have you ever felt the way this character felt?"</i>
Self-Management	Students discuss how characters handle difficult emotions and explore healthier responses	<i>"What could the character have done to manage that feeling differently?"</i>
Social and Cultural Awareness	Students consider multiple perspectives within the story, practice empathy, and recognize how culture and background shape characters' choices	<i>"How might the character's background shape how they see this situation?"</i>
Relationship Skills	Students analyze healthy versus unhealthy relationship choices made by characters	<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, consider alternatives, and connect those choices to their own sense of agency	<i>"What could the character have done differently? What choice would you make?"</i>

SESSION-BY-SESSION STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

SESSION	READING STANDARDS MET	SEL COMPETENCY	ACTIVITY
1 Enter the Story Read together. Meet the characters.	Close reading, Character analysis	Self-Awareness	Feeling Charades
2 Feel With Them Explore what characters felt and why.	Character analysis, Point of view	Self-Awareness, Social and Cultural Awareness	Emotion Timeline
3 Choose Wisely Analyze choices and consequences.	Theme analysis, Making inferences	Decision-Making and Agency	Choice Road
4 Connect to You Text-to-self connections and discussion.	Theme analysis, Collaborative discussion	Relationship Skills	Silent Write + Pair Share
5 Grow Together Reflect and celebrate.	Theme analysis, Collaborative discussion	Self-Management	One Word Wall

WHAT STUDENTS GAIN

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

FROM THE PILOT SCHOOL • 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 6-8. 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.