



# PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

## Integrating SEL with Content: Building Discussion Leadership Skills



### TEACHER NOTES

This strategy is very “portable.” It is an effective structure that lets students practice the SEL skills you’re focusing on, during an academic content lesson. Several examples of discussion prompts based on Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are provided, along with a blank template that you can customize to your needs.

Once the students are familiar with this strategy and the discussion agreements, they will only need a brief focusing reminder before moving into their work.

Everyone benefits when we cultivate a learning environment in which students are intentionally developing their personal leadership skills, as well as the teamwork skills it takes to support others when they lead.

Most of the leadership coaching we do with students occurs behind the scenes, in personal conversations. It’s also important to be overt with the group about what you value related to peer leadership. This makes it more likely that students will be motivated and able to demonstrate those qualities and behaviors during their group work.

### TEACHER TIPS

- Select very accessible readings until students master the strategy.
- If appropriate to your group, you may wish to duplicate the graphic organizers on cardstock and laminate them for reuse. A container full of old socks, each containing a dry erase marker, makes this system easy. Students slip their hand inside the sock to rub the board clean, then put the marker back inside.



**DURATION:** 20 minutes (Introducing Discussion Agreements and Leadership Strategy)

Varies (Practice: depends on your academic content)

**GOALS:** [Teacher and Student](#)

### MATERIALS:

- [Discussion Leader Graphic Organizer](#) for each student
- [Discussion Agreements Poster](#)
- Your literacy, science, or social studies text



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**MAIN POINTS:** Setting expectations for practicing leadership skills

- Using the [Discussion Agreements Poster](#), describe the teamwork and leadership qualities you will be watching for during their group work today:
- Use welcoming language
- Stay on topic
- Share ideas in a friendly, respectful way
- Listen carefully
- Remind students that the best way to help others do well is to be a model of these qualities. Introduce a strategy to use if a partner needs a reminder beyond the good example.



**GUIDING LANGUAGE** (10 minutes)

*All through our lives, we get to go back and forth between helping others by being a leader, and supporting others when they are being leaders. I see you do this already, when you work together and cooperate and take turns and when you are flexible and able to both speak up and listen to others. These are qualities of strong leaders and of excellent team members.*

*Today during our lesson time, we're going to practice taking turns leading a discussion with a partner. When you're the leader, your job will be to use welcoming language, and to help keep the discussion on topic. When you're not the leader, you'll do your very best to make the leader's job easy by following all of our agreements.*

*First, let's think about welcoming language. What kind of encouraging words could you use that would help others know you care about them and about their ideas? Pause. Turn to a neighbor and tell each other some of your examples of welcoming language. Pause. Let's share a few of our ideas with the whole class.*

Solicit ideas. Record on the poster if you wish. Add your own suggestions if needed, so that students have a clear idea of your vision of welcoming language. Students may say such things as, "I'm glad we're partners," "That's an interesting idea," or "Please tell me more."

*Our next agreement is that we'll all work to stay on topic. Remember, that means to talk about our work now and save other conversations for a different time. If our partner gets distracted and starts to talk about recess or after school, or anything that's not our work, what are some things we can say to help get our discussion back on track? Pause. Turn to a neighbor and tell each other something that might help you get back on topic, if you start to get distracted during the your discussion. Pause. Let's share a few of our ideas with the whole class.*

Solicit ideas. Record on the poster if you wish. Students may say such things as, "Let's talk about that later," "Please help me finish our work," or "Remember our agreements."

*And everyone will work to speak respectfully and listen carefully. Think for a moment, and then raise your hand when you have an idea of what we can do to show our partner we are really listening to them.*

Solicit ideas from the group, adding your own ideas as needed.



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**MAIN POINTS:** Introduce the graphic organizer and text

- Introduce your content text
- Introduce the graphic organizer



**GUIDING LANGUAGE** (3 minutes)

Example: *Today we're going to read about how plants grow. Or Today we'll read the next story in our Reader.*

*...and we're going to use this graphic organizer to write down ideas you'll use in your discussions. We'll take about (X) minutes of quiet time, so everyone can do their reading and recording.*

Example: *Today you and your partner will be thinking about things we learn from the text, which means the words we're reading, and things we learn from the illustrations, which are the pictures. Write at least one idea in each of the boxes on your organizer.*

Allow sufficient time for your students to read the material, assisting as needed. When the quiet reading time is almost over, let the students know that if they haven't written any ideas yet, now is the time, even if they're not quite finished with all of the reading.



**MAIN POINTS:** (8 minutes)

- Practice discussion using graphic organizer and text
- Briefly review the four discussion agreements.
- Remind students of a few examples of how the leader might begin.
- Instruct students to partner up with a neighbor and do "rock, scissors, paper" to determine who will lead first (or use a partnering strategy of your choice).
- Let students know that when the first partner has finished leading, the second should begin.



**GUIDING LANGUAGE**

*Look at your graphic organizer and put a check mark next to the box that you're hoping to be the leader for. Maybe that will happen; maybe it won't. Think to yourself for a moment about something you can tell yourself if you don't end up getting to be the leader for your first choice. Something like, "Oh well, maybe I'll get my first choice tomorrow." Or, "That's okay, I will still get to be leader for the other part."*



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*As you get started, you may want to look back at our Discussion Agreements Poster. Remember that as the leader, you'll be using welcoming language and also helping to keep your conversation on topic. Everyone pay special attention to sharing your ideas in a respectful and friendly way, and to listen carefully so that you can learn from each other.*

*When it's your turn to lead, you might share your own idea first and then ask your partner about his or her idea. Or you might start by asking them to share, and add your own idea second. Both of these are good strategies.*

*In a minute, you and your partner will play "rock, scissors, paper" to see who'll lead first. That person will start the discussion of the box they put a check mark next to. When you're done sharing all the ideas you both have, the other partner will lead the discussion about the question in the second box. We'll have about (four minutes, or whatever time is appropriate to your group), so be sure both partners have time to lead. Let students know if you will be keeping time and telling them when to switch to the next discussion leader.*

## **DISCUSS YOUR CONTENT LESSON AS APPROPRIATE.** Consider:

- Verbal: Solicit input from the group
- Visual and verbal: Record their input on a public T-chart
- Captured check for understanding: If using paper, have students put their name next to each box, then cut into sections, to deposit in basket labeled for each category. (Cut up a blank handout for easy labeling.)
- If using laminated cardstock: During your observation of their conversations, write your initials in the top left corner of students' cards who you've seen understand the concept. At the end of the lesson, ask students whose cards you didn't initial (or haven't gotten to yet) not to erase before everyone turns their cards in.



## **MAIN POINTS:** (4 minutes) Reflection and closure

Ask students to notice what it felt like when they were taking their turn as discussion leader and how it felt when their partner was leading.

Have each student give two specific appreciations to their partner: one about when they acted as the leader and one related to when their partner was the leader.



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## GUIDING LANGUAGE

*Let's reflect now on how this worked, and how it felt to be a part of your partnership. Think quietly to yourself: How well were you able to think together about ideas from our reading? Pause. How did it feel when you were leading? What do you think went really well? Why do you think that was? Pause.*

*Turn to your partner and tell them one thing you appreciate about what they did while you were being the discussion leader. Pause.*

*How did it feel when your partner was the leader? What do you think went really well and why? Pause.*

*Turn to your partner and tell them one thing you appreciate about what they did when they were the leader. Pause.*

*Great work, everyone! I'm very impressed with the leadership skills you showed during our discussion today. Well done!*



## ADAPTATIONS

For younger students, consider making a large poster version of the graphic organizer. Invite students to read along out loud with you as you read the text to the group. Then record responses from the group in the appropriate boxes. As they mature, you can have them turn to a neighbor and ask each other one of the leader questions.



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## Teacher: Personal Responsibility Goals

*Personal Responsibility: A child's tendency to be careful and reliable in her/his actions and in contributing to group efforts.*

### My students are aware of:

- The value of showing leadership by demonstrating personal responsibility
- A variety of ways to show leadership with their peer group
- The beneficial effects of encouraging positive behavior in others
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### I am aware of my individual students' abilities to:

- Show leadership capacities in varied and evolving ways
- The environment I create supports my students' growth related to:
- Naming ways in which they can show leadership by modeling personal responsibility
- Developing an evolving sense of ownership of their own responsible actions
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### Student: Personal Responsibility goals and demonstrated behaviors

#### Students will:

- Reflect on their own strategies for demonstrating personal responsibility  
Example: "I can describe things I do well that contribute to our classroom running smoothly."
- Demonstrate positive leadership skills  
Example: "I can act as respectful leader when it is my turn."
- Show leadership by supporting others in developing these skills  
Example: "I can respectfully support others when they are leading a discussion."

### DESSA SELF-MANAGEMENT INDICATORS

(Highlighted indicators are directly addressed in this lesson.)

I can:

Remember important information
Handle my belongings with care
Serve an important role at home or school
Encourage positive behavior in others
Prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events
Do routine tasks or chores without being reminded
Act as a leader in a peer group
Get things done in a timely fashion
Show care when doing a project or school work
Follow rules

# Discussion Leader Graphic Organizer

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL. 1.7, 2.7

<p><i>Share something important about a character from the story that you learned from the text (words).</i></p>	<p><i>Share something important about a character from the story that you learned from the text (words).</i></p>
<p><i>Share something important about a character from the story that you learned from the illustrations (pictures).</i></p>	<p><i>Share something important about a character from the story that you learned from the illustrations (picture</i></p>

## Discussion Leader Graphic Organizer

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.4

<p><i>Share a phrase from your text that is literal, where the meaning matches the words. ("She ran to the door.")</i></p>	<p><i>Share a phrase from your text that is non-literal, where the meaning is different from the words. ("She flew to the door.")</i></p>
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## Discussion Leader Graphic Organizer

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.4

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**Discussion Leader Graphic Organizer**

<p><i>Share one fact from your reading. Show evidence in the text that it's a fact</i></p>	<p><i>Share one opinion based on your reading. Tell what makes it an opinion.</i></p>
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**Discussion Leader Graphic Organizer**

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## Discussion Leader Graphic Organizer

CCSS.E-LITERACY.RL.1.3

<p><i>MAIN EVENT:</i> What is something important that happened (plot) in your story and why is it important?</p>	
<p><i>PLACE:</i> Where does something important in your story happen (setting)?</p>	<p><i>PERSON:</i> Who is an important person or animal (character) in your book?</p>

## Discussion Leader Graphic Organizer

CCSS.E-LITERACY.RL.1.3

<p><i>MAIN EVENT:</i> What is something important that happened (plot) in your story and why is it important?</p>	
<p><i>PLACE:</i> Where does something important in your story happen (setting)?</p>	<p><i>PERSON:</i> Who is an important person or animal (character) in your book?</p>

# Our Discussion Agreements

## **Strong leaders:**

- Use welcoming language
- Guide the discussion
- Help everyone stay on topic

## **Great team members:**

- Share ideas in a friendly, respectful way
- Listen carefully