

WHAT IS A SEL KERNEL?

“SEL Kernels are short, flexible, easy-to-use strategies and routines that build social and emotional skills. Each Kernel is designed to target a specific skill or competency, such as emotion knowledge, perspective-taking, or conflict resolution.”

Topics Include:

Welcoming Environment
Student Agency
Empathy in Action
Growth Mindset
Gratitude

SEL KERNEL

CREATING A TRUSTED SPACE

Welcoming Environment

A Warm Welcome/Daily Check In (Edutopia)

- Roses and Thorns (Also can be called Highs and Lows): Have youth share one highlight and one challenge from their day.
- Sticky Notes Check-In: Have youth place a sticky note on where it most resonates with them in different categories including **“I’m great” “I’m okay” “I’m meh” “I’m struggling” “I’m having a hard time, and wouldn’t mind a check in” and “I’m at a really dark place.”** Include an option to write on the back of the note for only you see.
- Mood board: Have youth identify “Which mood are you today” on a grid of images/gifs.
- Written Check-Ins: Have youth write in a journal or notebook about how they are feeling.
- 3 Emojis: Have youth show which three emojis describe their day.

For more information click on the link below:

<https://www.edutopia.org/video/starting-each-class-warm-welcome>

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/make-most-quick-check-ins-school>

SEL KERNEL

CREATING A TRUSTED SPACE

Student Agency

Youth Voice and Choice (Edutopia, Alliance for A Healthier Generation)

Here are some ways you can gain student interest and what they would like more of.

- Brainstorm Time: Have youth brainstorm and create a list of things they want to know more about and are interested in.
- Multiple Options: Provide different options for youth to be able to choose from.
- Feedback Fridays: Ask questions about what went well for the week, what you can do to help, and what you can do to be a better after-school professional.
- Assessments: Assess their needs and wants using the Likert scale as a quick, quantitative measure to see where youth are.

Likert Scale Example



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For more information click the links below:

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/five-strategies-more-voice-choice-students-rebecca-alber>

<https://www.edutopia.org/practice/personalized-learning-enabling-student-voice-and-choice-through-projects>

<https://www.healthiergeneration.org/articles/their-voice-their-choice-ideas-for-supporting-youth-engagement#:~:text=Centering%20youth%20voice%20can%20be%20as%20simple%20as,a%20team.%20Caregivers%20and%20parents%20are%20essential%20too.>

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/soliciting-weekly-student-feedback>

SEL KERNEL

EMPATHY IN ACTION

The Power of Empathy

Empathy Maps (Edutopia)

- Empathy Map: “A simple visual that captures knowledge about the behaviors, attitudes, needs, strengths, struggles, emotional states, and other key attributes of a particular student or group of students.”

Use this [Template](#)

SplashLearn has several activities focused on empathy here are a few:

- Walk in their Shoes: This activity involves children sharing stories from their own lives and discussing how they might feel in another person’s circumstances.
- Compliment Circles: This activity students will sit in a circle and take turns giving genuine compliments to each other, focusing on internal qualities.
- Gratitude Journals: Have youth write daily entries about things they are grateful for.

For more information click the links below:

<https://www.edutopia.org/video/building-relationships-empathy-maps>

<https://www.splashlearn.com/blog/empathy-activities-for-kids/#6-5-walk-in-their-shoes->

SEL KERNEL

G R O W T H M I N D S E T

Positive Self-Talk (Berks Teens Matters, Very Special Tales, the Pathway2Success)

- Create a Positive Self-Talk Flower Craft: Have youth can make a flower and for each petal write down a positive affirmation for each one. Some examples include **“I am enough” “I love myself” and “I’m working at my own pace.”**
- Positive Thought Jars: Have youth can write or draw positive thoughts and place them in a jar so whenever they feel down, they can pick one to read.
- Practice changing negative thoughts into more positive ones: Take a real life or made-up example to have youth give a positive spin such as **“I only did well on this test due to luck.”** From there challenge youth to turn the negative statements into a more positive one.

For more information click on the link below:

https://extension.purdue.edu/4-H/_docs/positive-self-talk-flower-lesson-and-craft-canva1.pdf.pdf

<https://veryspecialtales.com/positive-self-talk-kids/>

<https://www.thepathway2success.com/how-to-teach-positive-self-talk/>

SEL KERNEL

GRATITUDE

The Power of Appreciation (thePathway2Success, Edutopia)

- Gratitude Jar: Have youth write on note cards or small slips of paper sayings such as “I’m grateful my partner loaned me a pencil when I didn’t have one.” Put these into a gratitude jar and when your program needs a brain break, take time to open the gratitude jar and read a couple of them.
- Circle Share: Sit or stand a circle. Have youth choose one thing they are grateful for that day and then go around in a circle and have each student share their “one thing.”
- Artistic Expression: Have youth express their gratitude through a drawing, painting, sculpture, or collage on people, nature, health, small things, and more on what they are grateful for.
- Gratitude using the ABCs (Gratitude A to Z): Each day have youth focus on a new letter by asking students to share some things they are grateful for that start with each letter. For example, what are you grateful for that starts with a S? The sun, sleep, squirrels and soup are a few S examples.
- Thank You Notes: Have youth choose one person to write a thank you letter to. Encourage your students to give their letter to that person.

For more information click the link below:

<https://www.thepathway2success.com/30-gratitude-activities-for-kids-and-teens/>

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/teaching-ways-express-gratitude>
[Gratitude Worksheets & Activities for Children and Families](#)