

# #SELday

## Social-Emotional Learning

### GRADES 6-8 ACTIVITY PACK

**On the second Friday in March, schools around the world will be celebrating SEL Day. What is SEL Day? It's a day when students, educators, and families can show their support for social-emotional learning (SEL) in schools. This pack contains two activities you can use with your students to celebrate the importance of SEL.**

On SEL Day, join in the global celebration on social media. Post photos or videos of your students' gratitude boards and advocacy messages using the hashtags #SELday and #SecondStep, and explore what other classes are doing to celebrate.

Find more engaging, free SEL activities at [secondstep.org/free-sel-resources](https://secondstep.org/free-sel-resources)

Learn more about SEL Day at [selday.org](https://selday.org)

### Contents

#### **SEL Day Activity: Gratitude Board 2**

Individual classes can easily do this fun activity in a single period, or a whole school can collaborate on it to help support a culture of gratitude and kindness.

#### **SEL Day Service-Learning Project: Social-Emotional Learning Advocacy 4**

In this three-period project students engage in authentic service-learning as they identify their own reasons why SEL is important and share their reasons within their own communities.

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# Gratitude Board

## ACTIVITY

### Overview

In this activity, students will reflect on people or things in their lives they're grateful for.

**Key** **Bold**—Teacher's script  
*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Objective

By the end of this activity, students will identify one or more good things in their lives that they're grateful for.

### Notes

- If multiple classes in your school are doing this activity you could have one board in a hallway where all classes can contribute to it instead of creating a board in each class.
- After completing this activity you can continue to give students opportunities to add to their Gratitude Board. Make expressing gratitude a regular part of your classroom routine.

### Time

15–20 minutes

### Themes

- Growth Mindset
- Perspective-Taking
- Thoughts and Emotions

## Part 1: Prepare

### Materials

- 1 large piece of poster paper, or a bulletin board, with the words "SEL Day Gratitude Board" written on it
- 1 post-it note or notecard for each student
- Writing utensils

### Preparation

- To streamline the lesson, prepare the board ahead of time. Alternatively, if you have extra time, you can have students decorate the board before beginning this activity.
- Think of a few things you're grateful for you can share as examples during the activity.

## Part 2: Steps

- 1. What's something someone's done for you recently that made you feel happy?** Give students time to think, then call on a few volunteers to tell the class their answers.
- 2. Social-emotional learning day is coming up. This is a chance for us to reflect on our work setting goals, handling big emotions, building relationships, and resolving conflicts.**
- 3. Today we're going to celebrate SEL Day by practicing an important social-emotional learning skill, expressing gratitude.**
- 4. What's gratitude? What does it mean to be grateful?** *Saying "thank you." Showing your appreciation to someone or for something.*
- 5. Think of 2–3 people or things in your life you're grateful for.** Give students time to think. **If you're stuck, remember what we talked about at the beginning of class. Someone doing something to make you feel happy is something to be grateful for.**
- 6.** Write the following sentence stem on the board:  
I'm grateful for \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7. Each of us is going to write down one person or thing we're grateful for on a notecard and post it on our Gratitude Board. When we're done, we'll be able to see the different things in our lives we're grateful for.**
- 8.** Hand out notecards and have students write down one thing they're grateful for and fill out a card yourself.
- 9.** Share what you're grateful for and invite volunteers to share what they wrote.

## Part 3: Wrap-Up

- 1. How did expressing gratitude make you feel?** Give students time to think, then call on them to tell the class their ideas.
- 2.** As students finish class, have them stick or staple their cards to the Gratitude Board.
- 3.** Repeat this activity periodically so students can continue to add to the board.

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# Social-Emotional Learning Advocacy

## SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT

### Overview

SEL Day is the second Friday in March. In this service-learning project, students will spend the week of SEL Day exploring the reasons why social-emotional learning is important, and craft a social media message to inform people in their communities about the value of SEL.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Objective

By the end of this project, students will be able to:

- Identify specific reasons why social-emotional learning is valuable
- Create a plan for communicating the value of social-emotional learning via social media

### Notes

This project centers around sharing messages via social media posts. Depending on your students' access to social media, your school and district's guidelines around use of social media, and your own comfort level, there are several ways to make this work:

- Let students post directly to their own social media accounts
- Collect student messages and work with your administrators to share them from a school or district social media account
  - Students can write text to be shared
  - Students can record short videos to be posted
  - Students can make signs with their messages and take pictures of those signs
- Collect student messages, as above, and share them with students in another class to get feedback on how they might be received if posted online

### Time

3 class periods

## Themes

- Helping Others
- Values
- Relationships

## Part 1: Prepare

### Materials

- At least 1 internet-connected device per student group
- 1 copy of each of the 3 worksheets and the Social-Emotional Learning Advocacy Research Handout per student group
- Writing utensils

### Preparation

- Before the first day, be ready to divide the class into project groups of 3–5 students.
- Have a plan in place for how students will share their social media messages. See the notes above for ideas on managing this.
- Ideally, the social media messages should go live on SEL Day, the second Friday in March. If students will make their posts themselves, try to schedule Day 2 for SEL Day. If you'll be handing off their posts to someone to share on school or district social media, schedule Day 2 far enough ahead of SEL Day to allow for this to happen.
- If this doesn't work for your schedule, that's okay! Post whenever it works for you and your students.

## Part 2: Steps

### Day 1: Introduction and Investigation

- 1. What do things like goal setting, handling our emotions, building relationships, and resolving conflicts have in common?** *Various answers. One thing these have in common is they're all elements of social-emotional learning. These skills help people achieve their goals, get along with each other, and do well in school and, later, in life.*
- 2. We all use social-emotional skills every day. What are some ways social-emotional skills help you personally?** Call on volunteers to answer. *Help me make friends. Handle stress. Keep me from getting distracted. Stay calm.*
- 3. What are some ways SEL could help everyone at this school or in your community?** Call on volunteers to answer. *Everyone could get along better. Less bullying. Less drama. People would understand each other. Everyone could be themselves.*
- 4. This Friday is International SEL Day. Lots of people don't understand the value of social-emotional learning, and this day can help let them know more about it.**
- 5. This week we're going to work on a project to help people in our communities learn more about why SEL is important.**
- 6. Divide the class into groups of 3–5. Your first goal for this project is to choose a social-emotional skill your group thinks is important, and some reasons why it's important.**

7. Hand each group the Day 1 worksheet and the Social-Emotional Learning Advocacy Research Handout, and have them use the resources to pick a skill to investigate.
8. When the groups are finished have each one present the skill they picked and one reason why it's important. Collect their Day 1 worksheets.

### **Day 2: Planning and Action**

1. **Today we're going to continue our SEL Day project by preparing the social media messages we'll send in support of social-emotional learning.**
2. How students engage with social media depends on their ages, their access to social media, your access to your school or district's social media, and school guidelines. Tell your students how you're planning for them to engage. (See notes section above for more information.)
3. Place students back in their project groups and hand back their Day 1 worksheets, along with the Day 2 worksheets. Have each group complete the Day 2 worksheet building their message.
4. When students have finished, have them post their messages or collect their messages so you can post them or send them on to your school or district leaders. (See notes.)
5. **What do you think people's reactions to your posts will be?** Call on volunteers to share their thoughts.
6. If students' posts are live, or will go live before the final reflection day, say, **If you can, check your posts before we meet to finish this project. See if you've gotten any responses or reactions. We'll finish this project by reflecting on how our social-emotional learning advocacy efforts went.**

### **Day 3: Reflection**

1. Place students back in their project groups.
2. If students' social media posts are live ask if anyone has had a chance to see if they got any responses or reactions. Then, have groups review them and look at the responses together.
3. Hand out a Day 3 worksheet to each group and have them collectively reflect on their work during this project.
4. Have each group share their reflections with the class.

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# Social-Emotional Learning Advocacy

## DAY 1 WORKSHEET

**Group members:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The social-emotional skill we think is important is:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**We think this is important because:**

• \_\_\_\_\_

• \_\_\_\_\_

• \_\_\_\_\_

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## DAY 2 WORKSHEET

**Group members:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Social media message plan:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**The social media platform and account we'll use to share our message:**

Platform (TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, etc. . . .)	Account (personal, school, district, etc. . . .)

**Who are the people who will see this post?**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**What will your post include? Check all that apply.**

- Text     Image     GIF     Photo     Short Video/Reel     Long Video

**Post text and/or video outline:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Description of GIF, image, or photo you will make:**  
\_\_\_\_\_



**What hashtags will you use? (See Research Handout for suggestions.)**

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**How will we respond to positive reactions?**

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**How will we respond to negative reactions?**

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# Social-Emotional Learning Advocacy

DAY 3 WORKSHEET

## Project Reflections

The goal of this project is to raise awareness about the value of social-emotional learning.

Do you think your group achieved this goal?

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Why or why not?

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If you were to do this project again, what would you do differently?

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Why?

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Think about how your group worked together during this project.

In what ways did your group work well together?

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How could your group have worked better together?

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# Social-Emotional Learning Advocacy

RESEARCH HANDOUT

## Social-Emotional Skills Information

Use these to learn more about key social-emotional skills

- SEL Overview  
[secondstep.org/social-emotional-learning](https://secondstep.org/social-emotional-learning)
- What Is SEL?  
[cfchildren.org/what-is-social-emotional-learning](https://cfchildren.org/what-is-social-emotional-learning)
- How Schools Use SEL  
[cfchildren.org/about-us/success-stories](https://cfchildren.org/about-us/success-stories)
- Summaries of Academic Research on the Value of SEL  
<https://bit.ly/selresearch>
- Four Short Videos About What SEL Is  
English: [bit.ly/SELVideosEng](https://bit.ly/SELVideosEng)  
Spanish: [bit.ly/SELVideosEsp](https://bit.ly/SELVideosEsp)

## Social Media Messaging Resources

Use these to help create an effective social media message.

### SEL Advocacy Social Media Resources and Toolkits

- All Kids Safe and Well Campaign  
[cfchildren.org/policy-advocacy/all-kids-safe-and-well](https://cfchildren.org/policy-advocacy/all-kids-safe-and-well)
- All Kids Safe and Well Social Media Toolkit  
[bit.ly/AKSWToolkit](https://bit.ly/AKSWToolkit)
- SEL Day Social Media Toolkit  
[bit.ly/SELDayToolkit](https://bit.ly/SELDayToolkit)

## Social Media Hashtags

Hashtags help social media posts reach a wider audience, and help viewers know what posts are about. These are some tags you may want to use:

- **#SEL** This is a tag followed by people who are interested in social-emotional learning.
- **#SELday** This is the official hashtag for SEL Day.
- **#SELVoices** This tag is used by students talking about social-emotional learning.