

Engaging Strategies are instructional practices that you may use throughout your class to help students practice SEL skills. They can vary in complexity and length and are designed to help students to intentionally practice what they are learning academically while also strengthening SEL skills. Below are [6 activities](#) that you can have fun with your students, while still reinforcing Academic Content and promoting SEL Skills building during the school year.

### Make Your Case

- Develop handout with four to eight topic-related statements or content questions.
- Students will complete it by answering agree/disagree (other response options include acceptable/not acceptable, fair/unfair or positive/negative.)
- Pose the first statement to the group. Assign one side of the room 'agree' and the other side 'disagree'. Prompt students to move to the side of the room that support their opinion, bringing their handouts with them.
- Give time for students to speak with each other and identify common ground. Prompt each group to make their case and use examples to persuade others to understand their point of view.
- Allow students to move sides if their opinion has changed. Each side will state their case, if there is time, allow clarifying questions or rebuttals.
- Continue this process for each statement.
- Virtual: Put students in breakout groups based on their answer. They will collaborate during a small group discussion and return to the larger group to make their case.

Targeted SEL Skills: Relationship skills, social awareness, self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making.

Targeted NYS SEL Benchmarks: Goal 1: Develop self-awareness that: nurtures and affirms a strong sense of identity, informs decisions about personal actions, and builds a sense of agency. Goal 2: Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain mutually supportive relationships with individuals and groups and nurture a strong sense of belonging. Goal 3: Demonstrate intentional decision-making skills and behaviors that consider social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being in personal, family, school, and community contexts.

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### Skill or Content Bingo

- Prepare BINGO cards indicating key points/phrases/statement related to topic.
- Hand out BINGO sheets at the start of class. This activity will be used throughout the lesson.
- Instruct students to mark off key words they hear used/discussed during the lesson.
- When a student calls "BINGO!" they will read out their card and choose one square to briefly explain.
- Break to acknowledge win, then continue lesson. Allow multiple winners as to maintain engagement.
- Discussion prompts: What have we discussed today that was not on the sheet? Is there anything you would like further explained?

Targeted SEL Skills: Self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making.

Targeted NYS SEL Benchmarks: Goal 3: Demonstrate intentional decision-making skills and behaviors that consider social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being in personal, family, school, and community contexts.

## Brainstorm/Review Relay Race

- This activity will allow students/participants to review material in a fun way or brainstorm for creativity in a fun way. Supplies needed include chart paper with topics (could be work related skills, industry specific, things you learned this week, what you hope to learn/do next week, etc.), markers
- Divide participants into teams.
- Explain if you are doing a brainstorm or a review- if it is a brainstorm, there are definitely no rights or wrongs- if it is a review, there may be right answers but the goal of this is to work as a team to try to get the right answers in a fun way.
- Have teams get in lines across from their team's chart paper- hung on a wall or placed on a table.
- Each team gets one marker. The first person runs/walks to their team's chart paper and writes down their idea (brainstorm) answer (review), runs/walks back to their team and hands the next person the marker. Each person must write a different response- team members can help each other.
- When everyone is finished, review the chart papers together.

Targeted SEL Skills: Self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making.

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## Four Corner Thinking

- The four corners of the room are designated as strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree.
- After each statement, students move to the corner and discuss why they made their selection.
- A spokesperson in each corner shares out the group's thinking.
- Repeat statement to give students a chance to change their position.
- Discussion prompts: Why are you in the corner of the room you selected? Why have you reacted to the statement the way you have? What are the reasons you decided to be there opposed to the other three corners? What have you learned about your peers' responses to the statements posted?
- Voice & Voice Modification: Call out a series of decisions that are made, and students will pick the corner that best matches their experience. Explain the four corners –
  1. Students make this decision on their own. The teacher supports the students' choices.
  2. The teacher makes this decision on her or his own. Students are expected to follow it.
  3. Teacher and students decide what to do together, negotiating when they have differences of opinion.
  4. Someone else who isn't in the classroom decides. This could include the principal, parents, curriculum planners, the state legislature, and others.

Targeted SEL Skills: Self-awareness, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills.

## Password

One student sits with their back to the whiteboard while the other students sit facing them. Write the secret “password” on the board, and set a timer for 60 seconds. The other students must figure out how to get the player to say the word written on the board, without using it directly. Make this even more challenging by telling them they can’t talk at all.

Targeted SEL Skills: Relationship skills

Targeted NYS SEL Benchmarks: Goal 2: Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain mutually supportive relationships with individuals and groups and nurture a strong sense of belonging.

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## Brainstorm/Review Relay Race

Supplies: Chart Paper with Topics/ Markers

Purpose: Review material in a fun way or brainstorm for creativity in a fun way

Process:

1. Divide participants into teams.
2. Explain if you are doing a brainstorm or a review- if it is a brainstorm, there are definitely no rights or wrongs- if it is a review, there may be right answers but the goal of this is to work as a team to try to get the right answers in a fun way
3. Have teams form lines across from their team’s chart paper- hung on a wall or placed on a table- behind a designated piece of tape
4. Each team gets one marker. The first person runs/walks to their team’s chart paper and writes down their idea (brainstorm) answer (review), runs/walks back to their team and hands the next person the marker. Each person must write a different response- team members can help each other
5. When everyone is finished, review the chart papers together

Targeted SEL Skills: Relationship skills, social awareness, self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making.

Targeted NYS SEL Benchmarks: Goal 1: Develop self-awareness that: nurtures and affirms a strong sense of identity, informs decisions about personal actions, and builds a sense of agency. Goal 2: Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain mutually supportive relationships with individuals and groups and nurture a strong sense of belonging.

Goal 3: Demonstrate intentional decision-making skills and behaviors that consider social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being in personal, family, school, and community contexts.