A Biblioguidance Approach to Understanding and Developing Adolescents’ Social-Emotional Competence in the Health Education Classroom: A Formative Research Study

Jennifer R. Banas
Northeastern Illinois University, j-banas@neiu.edu

Julia Valley
Northeastern Illinois University, j-valley@neiu.edu

Amina Chaudhri
Northeastern Illinois University, a-chaudhri@neiu.edu

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A Biblioguidance Approach to Understanding and Developing Adolescents’ Social-Emotional Competence in the Health Education Classroom: A Formative Research Study

Abstract

Purpose - Though the benefits of social-emotional competence (SEC) are well-recognized, measuring it and designing appropriately matched interventions remains elusive and methodologically challenging. This paper shares formative research designed to uncover the SEC of one secondary school health teacher’s students and to help her make evidence-based curricular and instructional decisions.

Design/methodology/approach – Inspired by bibliguidance (or bibliotherapeutic) approaches to wellbeing, the researchers and teacher developed a fiction literature curriculum intended to foster SEC and health literacy skills. A mixed-method approach was used to gather and analyze data from 133 students and the teacher. A survey and journal entries embedded into the curriculum, and an interview were the sources.

Findings - Results indicate the curriculum paired well with national standards for health education and a respected SEC framework; it also served well as a vehicle to reveal students’ SEC. Students appeared to be competent in some areas and less in others, and there were differences between self-assessed and expressed competence.

Practical implications – Biblioguidance approaches to developing SEC in health education and other classrooms are worth continued investigation. The current results will be used to revise the curriculum and to develop supplemental materials.

Originality/Value - In sharing the processes and findings, the authors hope teachers seeking to foster their students’ SEC will replicate this work. Further, they hope health educators will gain recognition as the ideal professionals to deliver social-emotional learning instruction in schools.
Keywords – school health promotion, social-emotional health, curriculum development, action research, school health promotion, school mental health, teachers, adolescents

Paper type – Research paper

Introduction

Social-emotional competence (SEC) is comprised of interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies that manifest as patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors originating from one’s biological predisposition and environment (Assessment Work Group, 2019; Taylor et al., 2018). The acquisition of SEC during childhood and adolescence is correlated positively with academic performance, well-being, career, and life outcomes. This relationship holds true for students from different economic backgrounds, races, ethnicities, and genders (Abrahams et al., 2019; John and De Fruyt, 2015; Jones and Kahn, 2017).

Though the benefits SEC are well-recognized, measuring it and designing appropriately matched interventions remains elusive and methodologically challenging. Shifting paradigms, definitions, and frameworks, and the complexity of SEC due to its multiple contributors, are cited as reasons for the difficulty in SEC research (Abrahams et al., 2019; Marzano, 2015). In this article we present formative research that evaluates a young adult, fiction literature curriculum designed to foster and to measure SEC, while also developing health literacy skills, in a secondary school health education teacher’s classroom. We also explain how the results have informed her future curricular decisions. By sharing our processes, findings, and implications, we hope teachers seeking to foster the SEC among their students will benefit. Further, we hope school professionals will recognize health education teachers as ideal SEC educators.

Background
The Health Education Classroom: A Natural Setting for SEL Instruction

The health education classroom is a natural setting to develop students’ SEC. Health education forges personal values and beliefs that support healthy behaviors, shapes group norms that value a healthy lifestyle, and develops skills necessary to adopt, practice, and maintain health-enhancing behaviors (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). These aspects align perfectly with the efforts to develop SEC, otherwise known as social-emotional learning (SEL). Per Elias and Moceri, SEL is the “process of acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs to identify and manage emotions; to care about others; to make good decisions; to behave ethically and responsibly; to develop positive relationships; and to avoid negative behaviors,” (2012, p. 424).

The alignment between health education and SEL is visible when comparing the USA’s National Health Education Standards (NHES) (Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards, 2007) to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework competency areas. The NHES provide a framework of critical health literacy skills and learning expectations “to establish, promote, and support health-enhancing behaviors for students in all grade levels” (Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards, 2007). The CASEL framework consists of five interrelated competence areas and emphasizes a systematic approach to enhancing SEL (2017). Table 1 reveals how these frameworks overlap.

(Place Table 1 about here)

In addition to the NHES alignment with the CASEL framework, health teachers are the ideal education professional to lead SEL experiences. Per Marzano, “Social and emotional learning practitioners teach students to acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show
empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (2015, p. 337). In the USA, health teachers receive training in each of these areas (Society of Public Health Educators, 2019). Compared to other subject matter teachers, this unique training prepares health teachers to play a substantial role in developing students’ SEC.

**Bibliotherapy/Biblioguidance: A Natural Fit to Fostering SEC**

Methodologically, bibliotherapy is a literature-based approach to social-emotional learning. “The basic premise of bibliotherapy is that information, guidance, and solace can be found through reading” (McNicol and Brewster, 2018, p. xiii). In bibliotherapy’s early days, much focus was on self-help resources to address specific conditions among adults and primarily took place in clinical settings. In recent decades, its use has expanded to include fiction and poetry to improve mental health and wellbeing and in new settings, including schools.

In schools, bibliotherapy is sometimes referred to as biblioguidance (Gladding and Gladding, 1991). Within this context, biblioguidance is a structured curriculum during which students read selected books to identify with the characters and to observe how they transcend challenges. The way characters handle different situations can afford insight and helps students learn healthy ways to cope with difficult experiences (McPherson-Leitz, 2018; Rozalski et al., 2010; Thibault, 2004). For example, after Hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana in the USA, teachers used a fiction literature curriculum to help students cope with anxiety, displacement, and loss and to increase self-esteem, decrease levels of hopelessness, and improve academic engagement (Stewart and Ames, 2014).

In group settings, such as the classroom, reading shared literature also helps students to connect with each other, to analyze their thoughts and behaviors. These outcomes, in addition to those mentioned above, are central to SEL and support many of the NHES. Further, research
shows the best way to observe and understand students’ SEC is in context and books can provide that context. (Abrahams et al., 2019; Denham et al., 2016). This factor, along with the other benefits, made the use of fiction literature an ideal fit for our project.

**The Role of Formative Research in Designing Relevant SEL Curriculum**

To design relevant SEL curriculum, teachers need to be able to place learners along an SEC continuum. Formative research is an ideal way to gain this insight. Formative research is “research conducted during the development of a program to help decide on and describe target audience, understand the factors which influence their behavior, and determine the best ways to reach them” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016). In education, formative research is more commonly referred to as formative assessment and is defined as “a process used to guide, mentor, direct, and encourage student growth” (Tomlinson and Moon, 2013, p. 18).

There are two types of formative assessment, pre-assessment and on-going assessment. Pre-assessment can reveal students’ interests, learning preferences, and existing knowledge and skills. Educators can use this data to determine learners’ starting points in relation to a learning target and to guide curriculum and instructional decisions. Ongoing assessment allows educators to monitor knowledge and skills, providing a feedback loop for curricular and instructional modifications (Tomlinson and Moon, 2013). We regard both assessment types as essential to designing and fine-tuning an effective SEL curriculum.

**Formative Research Approach, Goals, and Questions**

For our project, we decided in-situ formative research was best. In-situ, or action research, means educational research jointly conducted by an educator and a researcher in a live instructional setting (Cobb et al., 2003). In a live setting, we could build a self-assessment into the curriculum’s introduction (i.e., pre-assessment) and gather data about students’ SEC in
practice by way of strategically designed learning activities (i.e., ongoing assessment) throughout
instruction. A pilot SEL curriculum could host these assessments and serve as a launching pad
for a more complete, refined curriculum. Figure 1 depicts our logic model.

(Place Figure 1 about here)

Our research goal was to establish an SEC learner audience profile that would inform one
health teacher’s SEL curricular decisions. Our research employed a mixed-method approach and
included both pre- and ongoing formative assessment to answer these questions:

1. Does the pilot curriculum support both the NHES and CASEL framework?
2. To what extent is the pilot curriculum a vehicle for SEL?
3. What is the range of students’ SEC?
4. Is students’ self-assessed SEC similar to or discordant with their expressed SEC?
5. Based on the teacher’s experience, what aspects of the curriculum were successful and
what revisions are needed?

Methods

The Curriculum

The pilot curriculum was 6-weeks long and overlaid an existing 10th grade mental and
emotional health unit. The curriculum involved students reading young adult fiction literature
from a curated selection and participating in activities intended to support SEC and health skills
development. This curated collection included literature whose themes focused on identity,
diversity, and/or social justice and whose characters’ behaviors afforded discussions about
NHES skills and CASEL framework competencies. We selected this literature from lists of
books recommended by international organizations (e.g., the International Literacy Association)
and local public libraries. With the assistance of the school librarian, we narrowed the choices on
the basis of reading level, content appropriateness, and availability to acquire copies at low or no-cost. Additionally, we informed the school counseling team about the curriculum in case any topics triggered students in a way that they might need support.

Over the six weeks, at staggered points of book completion, students journaled and participated in small-group discussions based on prompts aligned with the NHES and CASEL frameworks (see Appendix). Because being able to extract and analyze key ideas and details are literacy skills essential to experiencing literature, we phrased and sequenced the prompts to align with Wilhelm’s 10 dimensions of reader response, which are organized into three groups: evocative, connective, and reflective. Per Wilhelm, these dimensions are transactions that occur when “expert” readers engage with text (Wilhelm, 2016). Without this engagement, it is difficult to elaborate, evaluate, and use text in meaningful ways.

Setting and Participants

This study took place in five 10th grade health education classes taught by a secondary school health teacher in a small city outside of Chicago, Illinois in the USA. Data collection occurred in the fall 2019 semester. We chose to work with this teacher based on an existing research partnership, her willingness to engage, and the needs of her students. The Illinois Report Card website (2020) identified her school as underperforming. This means one or more student groups perform at or below all students in the lowest 5% of the state’s schools. The school’s graduation rate is 13% lower than the state average and chronic absenteeism is three times higher. Of the 4606 students, 59% are low income, 17% are English language learners, and 12% have special education plans (2019). Demographically, 80.2% identify as Latino/Hispanic, 12.2% identify as Black, and the remaining identify as White, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, other, or more than one race.
Informed consent

Data collection activities were part of regular classroom instruction and were evaluated by the teacher for grading or participation points. Only data from students who gave written assent and whose parents provided consent was analyzed for research. Students did not know which classmates were participants and they were neither penalized nor rewarded for participating.

Instrumentation, Sampling, and Analysis

Accurate assessment requires clearly defined constructs (Abrahams et al., 2019). Our study used the clearly defined constructs of the CASEL framework as the basis for measurement, analysis, and recommendations. We selected complementary instruments based on their ability to relay self-assessed or expressed SEC and to reveal similarities and differences between and within the student population. By between, we mean how students differed from each other; by within, we mean how students’ self-assessed SEC differed from their expressed SEC. For us, this required using both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods so the strengths of one method would offset the limitations of the other. In this section, we describe each instrument, our sampling approach, and the method of analysis.

Pilot Curriculum Matrix. We aligned the pilot curriculum with the NHES and CASEL frameworks and Wilhelm’s (2016) 10 dimensions of reader response (see Appendix). We used a three-phased approach to assure the matrix’s validity and reliability. First, we independently reviewed and aligned the prompts which were written by the lead researcher and the teacher. Then, we discussed differences in interpretation, established agreement, and re-aligned the prompts. Later, when evaluating student responses journals, we became aware of additional interpretations. After discussion, we re-aligned the prompts again.
**Self-Assessment.** As a pre-assessment to gain insight on students’ existing SEC, we administered an online survey one week before the curriculum. This assessment included demographic questions and a self-assessment called the Social Skills Improvement System Social Emotional Learning Edition (SSIS-SEL) Student Form (Gresham and Elliott, 2008). The SSIS-SEL includes 46 behavior statements aligned with the CASEL framework. For each statement, students note agreement on a 4-point scale. Both composite (i.e., total) and competency-level scores can be calculated. This instrument has been validated and tested for reliability (Gresham *et al*., 2018; Wilson-Ahlstrom *et al*., 2011). Further, scale-based, self-assessments like the SSIS-SEL are regarded as important SEC data sources (Abrahams *et al*., 2019).

To gather data, we employed non-probability, voluntary sampling. *Non-probability* sampling means we did not randomly select participants and/or their data. All students (n = 149) in the health teacher’s five classes completed the survey; however, we only studied data of students who provided assent to and whose parents provided consent. Based on this requirement, we removed 12 students’ surveys and an additional four that were partially complete. To protect the identity of the remaining 133 students, we removed their names from the self-assessments and applied codes. We applied the same code on their journal entries (described next) to match and compare data.

To prepare the self-assessment for analysis, and as intended by the creators of the SSIS-SEL (Gresham and Elliott, 2008), we created variables representing the five CASEL framework areas. To do this, we used SPSS software to combine the item responses for each area. We also created a composite SEC variable. To study the range of students’ SEC, we performed
descriptive statistics. We later used a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test to compare the self-assessment and journal entry results.

**Journal Entries**

Journal entries served as a learning activity and an ongoing formative assessment tool. The journal was a Google Doc pre-loaded with the prompts and electronically shared with the teacher. Students' responses to the prompts permitted us to evaluate whether the curriculum served as a vehicle for SEL, to describe the range of students’ SEC, and to compare students’ self-assessed versus expressed SEC. To evaluate the responses, we used the SSIS-SEL monitoring scales (Gresham and Elliott, 2008). Consisting of holistic rubrics aligned with the CASEL framework, these scales help to identify, describe, and differentiate students’ SEC and to monitor progress. Because they were developed by the same researchers who developed the SSIS-SEL student form, there was consistency in construct definition. One key difference is the scales consist of five levels and the form responses are based on four levels. To facilitate comparison, we modified the scales such that the bottom level was zero and we regarded it as an absence of SEC performance. Then, we labeled the levels as follows: 4 = high, 3 = middle, and 2 and 1 = low.

To select journals for analysis, we employed a nested sampling approach that blended maximum variation and random sampling. In mixed-methods research, nested means the qualitative sample is selected from the larger quantitative sample (Fetters, 2020). In our study, we divided the 133 journals into three groups based on the journal author’s overall SSIS-SEL score: high (>/= 3.25), medium (2.75-3.24), and low (<=< 2.74). These break-points were approximately 0.5 standard deviations above and below the mean. A visual inspection of the raw data and distribution curve shows these as natural breaks. Group-sizes were 30, 63, and 38,
respectively. From each group, we randomly selected 12 journals for a total of 36. This maximum variation sampling approach ensured document diversity, assisted with initial pattern identification, and supported qualitative and quantitative data combining.

To assure coding reliability, we used a multi-phased, triangulation of analysis (Patton, 2015). In the first phase, we sought to establish a $\geq 70$ kappa level to assure inter-rater reliability. We did this using the testing center built into Dedoose, a data analysis software. Next, we set coding rules: 1) code if an entry reflects one or more CASEL areas, and 2) rate the entry using the modified SSIS-SEL monitoring scales. Then, we independently coded and rated the journals, checked our inter-rater reliability, discussed differences, and continued to test until the requisite kappa level was achieved. Once the requisite kappa level was achieved, we equally divided the selected 36 journals and began coding. Upon completion, we used Dedoose to conduct descriptive statistics and to extract excerpts representing each competency and at each level.

**Book Discussions**

Like the journals, book discussions served as a learning activity and an ongoing formative assessment tool. And also like the journals, they permitted us to evaluate whether the curriculum served as a vehicle for SEL, to describe the range of students’ SEC, and to compare self-assessed versus expressed SEC. Data collection consisted of 15 small-group and five whole-class discussion observations. During observations, we noted when a competency was expressed, summarized that expression, and rated it using the modified SSIS-SEL monitoring scales. We did not count every incidence of SEC expression as we aimed to obtain a holistic understanding of the collective learner audiences’ SEC.

Sampling was based on a simple rotation. On three small-group discussion days, we observed a different group in each of the teacher’s five classes. Groups consisted of 3-4 students
reading the same book and most classes had 6-8 groups. This means we did not observe all
groups. On the whole-class discussion day, we observed everyone.

To analyze the observations, we reviewed each other’s notes, discussed differences,
reached agreement, and made revisions. Next, the lead researcher created a summary inclusive of
representative excerpts for each competency and at each level. Then, the other researchers
reviewed her work, made suggestions, and created a final version. Having performed this task
after journal coding, we did not conduct another inter-rater reliability test

Teacher Interview

The teacher interview took place after our initial data analysis. The researchers asked her
questions about students’ SEC, the curriculum’s alignment with the NHES and CASEL
frameworks, and the curricular revisions she thought to be necessary based on her experiences
and the findings. After the interview, the lead researcher summarized and interpreted the notes
and shared them with the teacher and other researchers for revisions and final approval. Not only
did the interview provide the researchers with another perspective, but it also served as a guided
reflection for the teacher. Reflective practice like this lies at the heart of formative research’s
evaluation stage and feedback loop.

Mixed-Method Analysis

At the beginning of this section, we indicated a benefit of mixed-method data collection
is the strengths of one method can offset the other’s limitations. Also, a mixed-method analysis
is more comprehensive and possibly more accurate. This is because researchers match, compare,
and combine results, which can afford new insights and even create ambiguity. This ambiguity
prevents researchers from making definitive statements based on one type of data (Fetters, 2020).
Figure 2 reveals our mixed-method analysis approach.
Results

Demographics

There were 133 student participants, aged 15- or 16-years old. Forty-six percent were female, 50% were male, and 4% preferred not to identify. Ethnically, 82% identified as Hispanic/Latino, 16% identified as not Hispanic, and 2% preferred to not identify.

RQ 1. Does the Pilot Curriculum Support both the NHES and CASEL framework?

The Appendix shows the curriculum supported the NHES and CASEL frameworks. This was not surprising as we wrote the journal and discussion prompts with this intention. We will update the matrix in subsequent iterations of the curriculum.

RQ 2. To What Extent Is the Pilot Curriculum a Vehicle for SEL?

To determine the extent to which the curriculum was a vehicle for SEL, we consulted the matrix and the two ongoing formative assessments.

Matrix. The matrix shows the curriculum served as a vehicle for SEL, but served some competencies more than others. There were more opportunities for students to practice social awareness (n = 16), self-awareness (n = 9), and decision-making (n = 6) than relationship skills (n = 3) and self-management (n = 1). In large part, this is the “fault” of fiction literature. Relating to characters and reflecting on situations necessitates perspective-taking and acknowledging thoughts and emotions, which are skills inherent to self-awareness and social awareness. To be more balanced, supplemental learning activities should require practicing other competencies.

Journals. In their journals, students expressed some competencies more than others. Again, we anticipated this based on the matrix. We applied the social awareness code 57% of the time, which was more than the total codes applied percentage for the remaining
competencies. We applied the self-awareness, decision-making, self-management, and relationship skills codes 22%, 9%, 9%, and 4% of the time, respectively.

**Book Discussions.** In their discussions, students more frequently expressed their social awareness competency (in eight of the 20 observed discussions) compared to the others, particularly self-management. This was not surprising given the journal findings; but, unlike the journals, the discussions provided a different mechanism for SEC expression by way of student interactions. For example, one student stated to another, “I like that you said, ‘How it is to us’ – that was very deep.” This statement revealed his respect for others, which is inherent to social awareness, and his communication skills, which is inherent to relationship skills. The discussions also provided students with new insights. When discussing the prompt “What have you learned about interpersonal communication?” one student said, “You can talk to people you feel comfortable around, like when Quinn talks to Jill. He doesn’t feel comfortable talking to others.” Another student said, “I learned it is important to speak up because it can positively affect you, the community, and the world.” In both instances, the group members nodded their heads in agreement and then shared their insights.

**RQ3. What Is the Range of Students’ SEC?**

To determine the range of SEC, we consulted the pre- and ongoing formative assessments.

**Self-Assessment.** Self-assessed SEC varied broadly. Scores ranged from 1 to 4 on the 4-point scale. Further, the overall distribution was not normal (i.e., non-parametric). For this reason, we present mean and median scores (see Table 2). Both the means and medians indicate students rated their self-awareness and social awareness as highest. The means show they rated
self-management as lowest; but the medians show they rated relationship skills as lowest. The
mean and median total SEC was similar, 2.93 and 2.95 respectively.

\textit{Journal Entries.} SEC expression varied broadly. Like the self-assessment, the
distribution was non-parametric. The means show self-awareness expression as highest (M =
2.46); the medians show self-awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making tied
for highest (Md = 2.50 each) (see Table 2). Both show self-management expression as lowest (M
= 1.93, Md = 2.0). The mean and median total SEC were similar, 2.40 and 2.47 respectively. For
examples of competency expression from high, middle, and low levels, see Table 3.

\textit{Book discussions.} Our discussion notes indicate the majority of SEC expression fell into
the middle range (a rating of “3”). The highest ratings were applied to self-awareness and social
awareness, and the lowest to self-management and relationship skills. Below appear examples
from each level to help readers understand what these levels look like.

\textit{High-level social awareness.} This excerpt came a small-group discussion about
\textit{American Boys} by Brendan Kiely and Jason Reynolds. Rashad is an African-American
secondary school student falsely charged with shoplifting and pinned down by a police
officer. Quinn is a White secondary school student who observed the event. The prompt
was: \textit{What do you think the main characters may be dealing with? What struggles might
they experience?}

Student 1: Confusion probably. Shock. [The situation] happened so fast. They
needed to process it. It wasn’t supposed to go down like that.
Student 2: Rashad was trying to tell his dad he didn’t do it; but his dad was just disappointed.

Student 3: I think Rashad’s angry at his dad. And Quinn, maybe he is angry with himself.

Student 3: My question is what if Rashad and Quinn were in each other’s situations? I feel Quinn wouldn’t have been in that situation. I feel like he’s really scared. [Also,] seeing stuff is different than it happening to you no matter what the situation. I feel Rashad’s going to be very paranoid. That kind of stuff can give you PTSD.

Student 2: What do you mean Quinn wouldn’t even be in that situation?

Student 3: They’re from different sides of the fence.

We regard this dialogue as high-level because students demonstrated exceptional ability to listen to each other's ideas and they consistently expressed empathy for others whose cultures or backgrounds were different from their own.

*Middle-level relationship skills.* This example comes from a small-group discussion about *Symptoms of Being Human* by Jeff Garvin. The prompt was, “So far what have you learned about interpersonal communication?” One student said, “Solo should not have shunned Riley in the cafeteria; he should have advocated for him.” We regard this statement as middle-level because the student understood when to offer help, but she did not offer a way to negotiate the conflict or manage the situation.

*Low-level self-awareness.* This example comes from a small-group discussion about the book *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas. The prompt was, “Has the book influenced what you believe in”? 
Student 1: I don’t think so. We live in similar situations or backgrounds, so it hasn’t changed.

Students 2, 3, and 4: No response

Another low-level example comes from the whole-class discussion for the prompt, “How has reading the book you selected helped you understand yourself better?” One student said, “For me no. I already know what can happen to me if I’m not careful.” We rated the latter and former responses as low-level because the students demonstrated limited recognition of their emotions and/or limited ability to describe their feelings and influences on their actions.

**RQ4. Is Students’ Self-Assessed SEC Similar to or Discordant with Their Expressed SEC?**

During our analysis, not only did we examine each set of results in its own right, but we also combined and reviewed them to look for concordance, discordance, complementarity, and expansion opportunities. This practice is a characteristic of mixed-method research.

We compared the SSIS-SEL scores of the 36 students whose journals we analyzed to the ratings we applied to their journals. Due to the non-parametric nature of the data, we used the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test instead of a t-test. This test revealed a significant difference between self-assessed and expressed total SEC; \( z = -3.566, p< .001 \), with a medium effect size (.42) (Cohen, 1988). The median *expressed* total SEC (Md = 2.46) was much lower than the *self-assessed* (Md = 3.17). This significant difference also held true for each competency \( (p \leq .01) \).

This discordance could mean students inflated their competency on the self-assessment or we were more critical of their expressed competency in the journals. Another explanation could be the instruments. The SSIS-SEL student form is a survey and SSIS-SEL monitoring scales are rubrics. Though developed by the same research team, they might reveal different results. Or, the
difference could relate to the modifications we made to the scales. It is beyond the scope of this article to explore these possibilities; however, we do recommend future research.

We did not compare the book discussion notes to either assessment because it was not possible to identify the 36 students due to the deidentification steps taken. However, in calculating an average total expressed SEC, the mean (M = 3.0) was more similar to the self-assessments (M = 2.93) than the journals (M = 2.40). This could mean students’ self-assessed and orally-expressed SEC are more closely aligned than their written-expressed SEC, a variation that could be attributed to differences in written versus oral skills.

**RQ 5.** Based on the teacher’s experience, what aspects of the curriculum were successful and what revisions are needed?

The interview with the teacher revealed recommendations that we grouped into four themes. First, recognize that some students might not be motivated to read a book. By way of an informal survey, the teacher learned that many of her students did not enjoy reading. Giving students choices on which books to read, starting off the project with book talks (a brief oral preview of the book), having students discuss their books with classmates, and providing a reading schedule were strategies she employed to motivate students and keep them on track. Second, direct students with lower-level reading skills towards books matched to their ability. We did not do this, but will next time. By consulting with school counselors or English language arts teachers, we can identify these students. Graphic novels might be another option. Third, do use fiction literature (or even mainstream movies) to provide context. The teacher found that both she and the students continued to reference book characters and situations during and outside of the curriculum unit. Students’ life experiences vary; some will have experienced events that others have not. Literature (or movies) can provide a point of reference. Fourth,
provide direct instruction on SEC. The teacher speculated some students might not have been familiar with some of the terminology or concepts in the assessments. Next time, she will begin the project with a CASEL framework overview and engage students in a discussion during which they must come up with examples for each framework area.

Discussion

Formative research supports teachers in creating a learner audience profile to guide curricular and instructional decisions (Taylor et al., 2018). In this section, we reflect on our results, acknowledge limitations, and offer suggestions for developing SEL curriculum.

Does the Curriculum Support the NHES and CASEL?

It was clear the curriculum served as a vehicle for SEL and was aligned with the NHES. The results indicate there were more frequent opportunities to practice social awareness and fewer opportunities to practice relationship skills and self-management. Future iterations should be more balanced. This can be achieved by way of supplemental learning activities catering to the competencies less frequently represented or by revising the prompts. Supplemental learning activities like role-plays and case studies could provide opportunities to practice decision-making and relationship skills. Behavior logs and personal reflections could develop self-awareness. Self-studies focusing on goal-setting, conflict resolution, or stress management could develop students’ self-management skills.

Despite the competency imbalance, we were pleased to see how the journals and discussions provided different venues for SEC expression. By nature, the journals allowed students time to reflect and to share thoughts privately; the discussions let students exchange ideas and practice SEC. In future iterations, we recommend teachers add online discussions.
These would students have time to reflect before responding, exposed them to others’ perspectives, and provide opportunities to practice their SEC, particularly relationship skills.

What Was Students’ SEC and Did Their Self-Assessed SEC Vary from Their Expressed?

Since we used the SSIS-SEL student form to evaluate self-assessed SEC and the SSIS-SEL monitoring scales to evaluate expressed SEC, we thought it would be best to reflect on the range of students’ SEC and to compare results using the terminology of those instruments.

Regarding similarities, students self-assessed and expressed moderate or high levels of social awareness and lower levels of self-management. Per the SSIS-SEL monitoring scales (Gresham and Elliott, 2008), a student with high or moderate social awareness competency can listen to how others feel and support their emotions. They also can demonstrate empathy for others, including those from different cultures or backgrounds. Students performing at these levels need minimal coaching to improve their skills. In contrast, students self-assessed and expressed moderately-low or low levels of self-management. Per the scales, someone with moderately-low or low-level self-management might have difficulty with motivation, setting and keeping goals, or staying calm when teased or disagreeing with others. Students at these levels need additional instruction to improve their competency.

In contrast to the similarities found between self-assessed and expressed social awareness and self-management, discordances were found for relationship skills, self-awareness, and responsible decision-making. The SSIS-SEL student form results revealed decision-making as one of the highest and relationship skills as one of the lowest, whereas the journal analysis results indicated self-awareness as highest and self-management as lowest. This discordance might stem the following reasons: 1) the instruments were designed to measure the same
constructs, but in different ways; 2) there was an actual difference between self-assessed and expressed SEC. Both reasons, and the exploration of others, would be worthy of future research.

Limitations

With any SEC assessment, there will always be some degree of uncertainty (Krachman et al., 2016). Limitations to our research were site-specific or inherent to our instruments.

1. Our participants attended a school identified as underperforming. It is possible poor literacy and writing skills impacted the data. It was evident in discussions that some students were behind in reading their books and it was apparent from journal entries that some students had poor writing skills. Further, some participants were English language learners and may have had difficulty with reading, writing, and orally expressing ideas. While we chose books with varying Lexile scores and wrote prompts with low-level readers in mind, some students still may have struggled.

2. Our study focused on the experiences of one teacher and data collected from only her students. This prevents us from generalizing the results to other populations. However, our research was designed to support this teacher and her students’ SEC.

3. The SSIS-SEL monitoring scales were designed for researchers seeking to observe SEC-related behaviors. We used the scales to “observe” students’ “behavior” as written in their journals entries and these entries might not reflect their actual behaviors.

4. The SSIS-SEL student form is a self-assessment. This leaves room for memory effects (i.e., respondents may not accurately recall actions) and social-desirability biases (i.e., respondents may provide answers they think are “correct,” rather than their actual beliefs or actions).
5. There were 13 students who did not assent or whose parents did not consent to this study and their data was excluded. It is possible their data could have changed some results. Despite these limitations, our assessments performed valuable functions. Our pre-assessment survey helped us to identify “where” students were along an SEC continuum and our ongoing assessments (the journal entries and book discussions) helped us to monitor students’ SEC knowledge and skills. Collectively, these assessments provided a feedback loop for curricular, instructional, and assessment modifications.

Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

Based on our findings and existing literature, we offer suggestions to teachers seeking to conduct action research directed towards developing their own SEL curriculum and to academic researchers collaborating with educators to develop SEL interventions and measurements.

1. Develop and utilize formative assessments. An SEL curriculum should not be “one-size-fits-all.” Students’ life experiences and needs will vary. Both pre and ongoing formative assessment is essential to ensuring an SEL curriculum meets learner’s needs in relevant ways. As expressed in the Background section, for teachers to design relevant SEL curriculum, they need to know “where” learners are along an SEC continuum. Ideal formative assessments should include descriptive learning progressions that provide feedback to teachers and learners as to where learners are in relation to the SEL goals. The SSIS-SEL monitoring scales (Gresham and Elliott, 2008) could be a starting point for developing these progressions.

2. Develop and utilize a summative assessment. Without a summative assessment, teachers cannot know the impact of curriculum (Taylor et al., 2018). One option could be to administer a modified version of the SSIS-SEL student form and
administer it as a pre/post-assessment. However, the form focuses on behaviors unlikely to significantly change over a 6-week curriculum. Instead, the form could be modified to focus on beliefs about and attitudes towards the behaviors. Per Boekaerts (2009), beliefs are a predictor of future behavior. Another option could be a final reflection assignment about one’s SEC growth and the curriculum components that contributed to that growth. While this would be subjective, it could provide valuable insight into students’ experiences with the curriculum and inform revisions.

3. Establish explicit SEC goals. Goals should be set before the selection or design of formative or summative assessments. In our study, we focused on all CASEL framework areas. Others may wish to hone in on fewer. Whichever areas are selected, goals should not only focus on an endpoint, but also the continuum along which students travel to get there. For guidance, we recommend the SEL progressions proposed by Marzano (2015).

4. Measure the impact of the curriculum in relation to the NHES or other health education standards. We did not measure the impact of the curriculum on students’ NHES skills; however, we are exploring options for a summative assessment like the reflection assignment described in suggestion #2 but with a focus on the NHES.

5. Use a mixed-method research approach. Not only does mixed-methodology improve the quality of findings by providing a broader perspective, but the limitations of one method can be offset the strengths of another. Also, per Denham (2016), mixed-methodology is better for diverse populations. A combination of student-generated assessments, such as self-assessments and classwork, coupled with unobtrusive
assessments, such as observations, can assure that data collection methods and analyses are culturally, linguistically inclusive, and developmentally appropriate.

6. Curate a relevant book selection. We selected fiction literature from various book lists. Informal feedback from students and observations of book discussions revealed that students enjoyed some books more than others. Surveying students about the topics about which they would like to read, finding those topics in current book lists, sharing the descriptions of those books with the students, and having them rank-order the books by interest-level could be a way to approach book selection.

7. Partner with a language arts teacher. Much of the curriculum employed literacy skills. While our teacher did consult with the English language arts teacher for some feedback, a shared curriculum would allow students to more deeply explore topics and practice SEC skills. Further, shared expertise between the two subject matter teachers could lead to an even more effective curriculum, particularly in terms of literacy strategies.

Conclusion

Given the known benefits of SEC (Abrahams et al., 2019; John and De Fruyt, 2015; Jones and Kahn, 2017), there is value for continued research directed towards developing appropriately-matched SEL curriculum. In this article, we demonstrated how to use formative research to uncover students’ SEC and to use the findings to support curriculum and instruction decisions. We also provided evidence that a fiction literature curriculum could support SEL.

In sharing our processes and findings and discussing their implications, we hope school teachers will feel inspired and empowered to develop their own SEL curriculum. Further, we encourage researchers to continue work towards developing and sharing assessments that
teachers can use to identify their students’ baseline SEC and to monitor their progress towards established SEL goals. Finally, we advocate for the health education classroom as an ideal setting for SEL and health education teachers as the ideal professional for this work.

References


Gresham, F. M., and Elliott, S. N. (2008), Social skills improvement system: rating scales, Pearson Assessments, Bloomington, MN.


Quantitative Purpose

To assess the range of students' self-assessed SIC and to facilitate journal selection process.

Procedure
Students completed a self-assessment survey consisting of 45 behavior statements aligned with the CARES framework. Students indicated agreement with the statements on a 4-point scale.

Qualitative Data Collection
Collected self-assessment surveys from 15 students who nominated and whose names connected to their study participation.

Outcome
Calculated students' average self-assessed SIC (total and individual competency areas) and the range of their SIC.

Quantitative Analysis
Average self-assessed SIC and range of SIC determined. Students rated SIC scores into high (≥ 3.75), medium (3.00-3.75), and low (< 2.50) to assist journal scoring process.

Qualitative Analysis
Students respond to prompts in journals and in small group and whole class discussions.

Qualitative Data Collection
Selected 26 journals for analysis (17 high, 9 medium), and low scores not included in analysis.

Qualitative Analysis
Assessed students' SIC performance in journals and during discussions.

Integrative Interpretation
Integrated notes from student interviews with the other analyses. Make recommendations for curricular revisions and supplemental activities to support students' SIC development.

Qualitative Purpose

To assess the ability of the curriculum to act as a vehicle for SIC expression and to assess the range of SIC expression.

Procedure
Align the journal and discussion prompts with the CARES framework areas and the NRECA.

Qualitative Data Collection
A curriculum matrix that records journal and discussion prompts alignment.

Outcome
Collected journals from 15 students. Observed 15 small group and whole class discussions.

Qualitative Analysis
Average expressed SIC and the range of SIC examined.
Table 1.
Alignment between National Health Education Standards and CASEL Framework Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Health Education Standard</th>
<th>CASEL Framework Area*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard 1: Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.</td>
<td><strong>Self-awareness:</strong> The ability to accurately recognize one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one’s strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a “growth mindset.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information, products, and services to enhance health.</td>
<td><strong>Self-management:</strong> The ability to successfully regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations — effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself. The ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.</td>
<td><strong>Relationship skills:</strong> The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed. <strong>Social awareness:</strong> The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.</td>
<td><strong>Responsible decision-making:</strong> The ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. The realistic evaluation of the consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the wellbeing of oneself and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 6: Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.</td>
<td><strong>Self-management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 7: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.</td>
<td><strong>Self-management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard 8: Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.</td>
<td><strong>Relationship skills</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*We provide descriptions of each CASEL area only once. CASEL areas in bold font are those we regard as tightly aligned; non-bold font signifies moderate alignment.
Table 2.
Self-assessed and Expressed SEC Descriptives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Md</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social awareness</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship skills</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>2.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SEL</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Md</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social-awareness</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship skills</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SEL</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.

Representative excerpts from journal entries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency / Level</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness; self-management</td>
<td>In all sincerity, we are nothing alike at all. First, I’m not easily influenced by my friends that have bad habits because I know what benefits me, what doesn’t, and how it will affect those around me. I don’t run or ignore my problems. I face them because facing them gets you farther and not stuck in the same place still problem solving it. Also, when I say I’m going to get my stuff together, I try even if it’s challenging. I continue. I don’t easily give up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship skills, social awareness</td>
<td>If I were friends with Riley, I would definitely be there for them and help them. I have also been bullied so I would not let Riley go through that alone, I would stick up for them. I know it is hard for Riley to open up, but even if they do not tell me anything, I would let them know that I’m there and that I want to help with whatever I can.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>I’ve learned that you need to think about things thoughtfully first and stay calm because I have noticed that Riley panics a lot when things happen to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness; social awareness</td>
<td>I found out that I’m not the only one dealing with the same problems. I feel like I can express myself like how Melinda expressed herself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social-awareness</td>
<td>I believe the character is dealing with not fitting in. They are having to change themselves when they are [at home] and at school. They can’t be herself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-management; self-awareness</td>
<td>Reading my novel has helped me understand myself better by speaking up, and talking to someone about what I’m going through.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social awareness</td>
<td>I don’t think my character is getting treated fairly because she has no friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship skills</td>
<td>If I was friends with the character all I could do for them is to be supportive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making</td>
<td>I have learned that good decision-makers are people who know what they want.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix – Pilot Curriculum Matrix

The matrix demonstrates how the journal and discussion prompts were rooted in Wilhelm’s (2016) 10 dimensions of reader response. Below appear the abbreviations used in the matrix to show the alignment between the prompts and the CASEL and NHES framework areas:

CASEL Framework: Self-awareness - SA; self-management - SM; social awareness - SOA; relationship skills - RS; responsible decision-making - RDM

NHES Framework: comprehend concepts - CC; analyze influences - AI; accessing valid and reliable information - AV; interpersonal communication - IC; decision-making - DM; goal-setting - GS; practice health-enhancing behaviors, avoid or reduce health risks HB; advocacy - A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evocative Dimensions and Prompts</th>
<th>CASEL</th>
<th>NHES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2: ~ 10-20% complete</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entering the Story World.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reader stimulates their prior knowledge.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. When you first saw the book, what do you think the book was going to be about?</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Showing Interest in the Story</strong></td>
<td>SA,</td>
<td>AI,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reader understands, makes predictions, and</td>
<td>RDM</td>
<td>DM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forms expectations about the plot of the story.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What do you think the main character(s) may be dealing with? What struggles or challenges do they have? What kinds of decisions will they need to make?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To what social groups do you think the main character(s) belongs? Consider racial, ethnic, cultural, income, religion, sports or clubs, gangs, etc. How might these groups influence the main character’s behaviors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3: ~ 20-30% complete</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relating to Characters.</strong></td>
<td>SA,</td>
<td>AI,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reader becomes a presence in the story and</td>
<td>SOA,</td>
<td>DM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forms the opinions of characters.</td>
<td>RDM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Describe the main character’s personality using examples. (If more than one main character, choose).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What problems or challenges does the main character have? (If more than one main character, choose).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. What feelings are you experiencing as you read? Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What personal experiences have you had that help you better understand these characters?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seeing the Story World.</strong></td>
<td>SA,</td>
<td>AI,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reader constructs mental images of characters,</td>
<td>SOA,</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>settings, and situations of the story.</td>
<td>RDM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Describe where the story takes place. Could the story also take place here?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. In what ways is the main character(s) like you? Different from you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. What stereotypes might others place on the main character(s)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Do you think the main character(s) is being treated fairly? Why/why not?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connective Dimensions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 4: ~ 50-60% complete</strong></td>
<td>RDM,</td>
<td>IC,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elaborating on the Story World.</strong></td>
<td>RS</td>
<td>DM,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reader’s role is as detective in which they</td>
<td></td>
<td>HB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generate meaning that goes beyond the surface of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the text.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. If you were friends with the main character(s), how would you help him/her with his/her problem(s) or challenge(s)? What would you say? What healthful advice would you give?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Reflective Dimensions

#### Week 5: ~ 60-80% complete

**Connecting Literature to Life.** The reader makes specific connections between their personal experience and the characters’ experience.

14. So far, what have you learned about communication, goal-setting, and decision-making?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RDM, RS</th>
<th>IC, DM, GS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Considering Significance.

15. Tell me about the parts of the story you like the most, the least, and why.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Recognizing Literary Conventions.

16. Select a character that is not the main character. If the story was told from that character’s perspective, how would it make a difference in the story?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOA</th>
<th>AI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Recognizing Reading as a Transaction.

17. Do you agree with how the main character(s) sees the world? Explain.

18. Who do you think is a role model? Why? Explain in terms of their decision-making, goal-setting, communication skills, or health behaviors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA, SOA, RS, RDM</th>
<th>AI, DM, IC, GS, HB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Week 6: ~ 80% -100% complete

**Evaluating an Author and the Self as Reader.** The reader assesses the author as an efficient writer as well as their own reading process and how it affects them as a reader.

19. Has the novel helped you to understand yourself better? Explain.

20. How have your attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, or behaviors changed because of this novel?

21. How could reading this novel (or novels, in general) help someone to feel less alone? Or help someone through a challenge or difficult situation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA, SOA, RDM</th>
<th>AI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### CASEL NHES

- **CASEL**
  - Reflective Dimension
  - Considering Significance
  - Recognizing Literary Conventions
  - Recognizing Reading as a Transaction

- **NHES**
  - Reflective Dimension
  - Reflections on the Selection
  - Historical and Social Context
  - Ethics and Values

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