





# Self-Awareness Handout 4b: Educator Vignettes Example Responses

## Directions

Read the vignettes and use what you have learned so far to brainstorm answers to the questions that follow. If completing this activity in a group, discuss your answers.

## Vignette: Mr. Rodriguez

Mr. Rodriguez teaches first grade students in all content areas. He has been focusing on SEL throughout the year and is currently helping his students develop awareness of their emotions in difficult situations and knowledge of actions that might help them feel better. Mr. Rodriguez uses his morning circle time to facilitate an activity in which students take turns acting out basic emotions — sad, angry, frustrated, and so on. He then has students identify instances in which they felt a particular emotion and why they felt the emotion. To practice, he has periodic checks throughout the school day in which students jot down the emotion they are feeling and why they are feeling it. During reflection time each day, he has students share one of the emotions they wrote down over the course of the day and a strategy they could use to manage that emotion (either repeat it more often if it is positive or overcome it if it is negative).

**How might this teacher build readiness and effectively introduce this activity and, following the activity, help students process what they learned?**

**Example:** The teacher can spend time teaching various emotions and their names, so students are prepared with the understanding and vocabulary they need to recognize and discuss emotions.

**Example**: Following the circle activity, the teacher can ask students if they had any new thoughts or learned any new emotions from the sharing of their peers.

**How might this teacher encourage active participation by all students?**

**Example:** The teacher could have the class sit in a circle, then go around the circle so that each student has a turn to speak and knows when their turn is coming.

**How might this teacher ensure that this activity is responsive to the cultures of his students?**

**Example:** The teacher can build his or her own awareness of how different emotions are perceived in the students’ cultures and respond accordingly. By listening with this lens while students describe particular situations, the teacher can learn more about their cultural contexts.

**How might this teacher build students’ understanding of why they are engaging in this activity?**

**Example:** The teacher can explicitly state why they are practicing noticing and speaking about their emotions, for example, so they can do this during difficult moments in their day as well.

## Vignette: Mrs. Wright

Mrs. Wright teaches high school mathematics. She wants to help her students identify their personal strengths and areas for growth related to their recent learning in math. To do this, she has her students examine a list of math skills they have learned in their current unit. She asks them to first mark the skill they feel they are most successful at and reflect in writing on why they are relatively successful at that skill. She then asks students to mark a skill they want to improve on or have not mastered *yet,* and she asks students to reflect in writing about what they could do to improve in that skill. She then asks them to pledge, in writing, one action they will take to improve their chosen skill during a given amount of free time in the class period. After that time period, Mrs. Wright leads a discussion, asking students why it is important to pause and identify strengths and areas for growth and how doing so might be helpful in other aspects of their lives.

**How might this teacher build readiness and effectively introduce this activity and, following the activity, help students process what they learned?**

**Example:** The teacher can build readiness by ensuring the students have learned the academic vocabulary related to the skills they have learned.

**Example:** She can create conditions for meaningful class discussions over time by modeling how to effectively listen to classmates and respond to their sharing in a way that is encouraging and makes them feel safe to share their ideas.

**Example**:The wrap-up discussion asking students why this kind of reflection is important is an example of how to help students process the activity. The teacher can ask thoughtful questions that help students connect the experience to other aspects of school and life.

**How might this teacher encourage active participation by all students?**

**Example:** The teacher might intentionally ask a student who does not usually share to do so and give the student a heads up and time to collect thoughts before being called on to speak.

**How might this teacher ensure that this activity is responsive to the cultures of her students?**

**Example**: The teacher can be thoughtfully attuned to how cultural differences, such as whether it is comfortable to discuss one’s “weaknesses” or areas for growth, impact this activity, and listen for signs of comfort level that would cause her to call on students more or less in discussion

**How might this teacher build students’ understanding of why they are engaging in this activity?**

**Example:** During the culminating discussion, the teacher might give her own example of how reflection on her skills led her to improve in areas related to her learning or her job.

**Example**: The teacher might make connections to certain content areas that she knows certain students really enjoy, such as sports or arts or other ways they spend their time, illustrating the importance of pausing to reflect when trying to improve at a given skill.

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