

# SEL Competencies for School, Work, and Life: Self-AwarenessModule Facilitation Guide

## Introduction

Administrators, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders can use this facilitation guide to provide school staff with professional development on social and emotional learning (SEL), specifically on the self-awareness competency. The guide is part of a larger online professional learning system, “SEL Competencies for School, Work, and Life,” which includes an “Introduction to Social and Emotional Learning” module as well as five other online modules, each focused on one of the five core SEL competencies: **self-awareness**, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills.

This guide provides facilitators with a script, facilitation notes, activities, and a PowerPoint deck that will help the educators with whom they work to understand what SEL is, why it is important, and how it supports student success in school, work, and life. The information, knowledge, and tools included here can be used by professional learning communities focused on SEL and by administrators or other leaders or coaches to support the social and emotional competencies of their educators and students. Facilitators can also use this guide in a group context. If individuals want to engage in this learning on their own, it is recommended they watch the online video version of the training, which can be found on the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE)'s [Keeping Our Kids Safe, Healthy & In School: Social and Emotional Learning](http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/sandp/sel/) webpage, (http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/sandp/sel/).

### Module Objectives

This module is the second of six in the series and focuses on a specific social and emotional competency: self-awareness. If you have not already engaged in the “Introduction to Social and Emotional Learning” module, you are encouraged to do so. The series is intended to be a source of professional learning about SEL so that participating educators, in turn, can support SEL for their students.

The objectives for participants in this self-awareness module are the following:

1. Define self-awareness and how self-awareness develops over time.
2. Highlight research on the importance of self-awareness.
3. Learn educator strategies to explicitly support student development of self-awareness.
4. Identify ways to embed support for self-awareness into general teaching practices.
5. Develop action steps to begin to implement practices that support student self-awareness.

### How to Use This Facilitation Guide

Given that SEL is intrinsically a social endeavor, this module is best used in a group context. Such group settings may include schoolwide professional learning sessions, grade-level or content-based team meetings, or professional learning communities. A facilitator may use this guide, including the embedded script and activity notes, along with the accompanying PowerPoint slide deck, to guide participants through the content, activities, and opportunities for reflection.

The online module can take between 30 minutes and three hours, depending on how you use the module: individually or in a group, completing all activities or not, and completing the entire module in one session or across multiple sessions. The module can be customized to fit the learners’ needs and school’s schedule. A facilitator can split the module into segments, completing them with the group as time allows. The facilitator can also modify the module to fit the schedule of the educators engaged in the learning experience. In addition, if there is an activity, slide, or discussion that does not seem relevant for a given context, or that is redundant or similar to the group’s prior learning, the facilitator can skip that section of the module. To help determine if and how to modify the module to meet the needs of participants, facilitators should complete the module first on their own, using the online version.

Furthermore, notes throughout this guide provide the facilitator with background information and guidance on how to facilitate the module’s activities. The guide also includes links to videos, describes activities, and provides discussion prompts to make the training in a group setting more interactive, which is especially important when facilitating professional learning opportunities related to SEL.

### Materials

Depending on whether participants will have access to computers during the session and be able to read handouts online, a facilitator may want to print copies of the handouts beforehand and share them with participants for the purpose of each activity.

* PowerPoint Slides: SEL Competencies for School, Work, and Life: Self-Awareness
* Self-Awareness Handout 1a: Developmental Indicators Activity
* Self-Awareness Handout 1b: Developmental Indicators Activity – Answer Key
* Self-Awareness Handout 2: Student Vignettes
* Self-Awareness Handout 3: Educator Self-Reflection
* Self-Awareness Handout 4a: Educator Vignettes
* Self-Awareness Handout 4b: Educator Vignettes – Example Responses (optional, for use by the facilitator)
* Self-Awareness Handout 5a: SEL Lesson Planning Tool
* Self-Awareness Handout 5b: SEL Lesson Planning Tool – Sample Indicators and Teaching Strategies
* Self-Awareness Handout 6: Academic Integration Lesson Planning Tool
* Self-Awareness Handout 7: Observing Teaching Practices
* Self-Awareness Handout 8: Action Planning
* Self-Awareness Handout 9: Resources and References
* Pen and paper for notes
* Internet, projector, audio speakers

As this module also includes links to online videos, facilitators will want to have the videos prepared prior to engaging in the facilitated session.

### About Terminology in This Module

The importance of students and adults being socially and emotionally competent — and, therefore, the importance of SEL — is widely accepted. However, even as the field matures, the terminology used in speaking and writing about this important concept continues to vary among and between educators, researchers, and policymakers. The two most commonly used terms for social and emotional strengths in the broadest sense are **skills** and **competencies***.* Each is used as an umbrella term for a particular set of related knowledge, skills, and attitudes that contribute to someone being socially and emotionally competent in particular dimensions. In this context, New Jersey uses **competency**as the broadest term. In the context of these modules, the term **skill** is reserved for use only in its most granular sense — as something that contributes, along with knowledge and attitudes, to an individual’s social and emotional competency. These contributing factors of skills, knowledge, and attitudes are referred to here as **sub-competencies,**also in line with terminology in New Jersey.

**A Note About Pronunciation:** SEL, the acronym for social and emotional learning, is pronounced in the field by its three individual letters — *S-E-L*, not “cell.”

**Assessment and Evaluation:** Throughout the module, participants will be expected to engage in self-assessment and self-reflection exercises to evaluate the effectiveness of their own practices and their impact on student engagement and outcomes. In addition, the module provides a link at the end to obtain participants’ feedback on the module.

**Audio Option:** The PowerPoint deck is available in two versions. The first version (available on the NJDOE website) has a voice-over narration that a facilitator may opt to use. The audio option does not include optional activities; however, the facilitator can still use them if desired. The second version has no voice-over and is intended for facilitators who wish to provide their own narration by following or adapting the script provided in the “Suggested Language for Facilitator” column in the following table.

## Self-Awareness Facilitation Guide

| **Slide Number/ Materials** | **Suggested Language for Facilitator** | **Time/Facilitation Notes** |
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| **Slide 1** | **SEL Competencies for School, Work, and Life: Self-Awareness** Every day in school, students engage in countless interactions — with new knowledge and with other individuals — that can spur growth and open the door to new learning possibilities.Yet, for each student, this learning process is layered upon a foundation of highly individual experiences, belief systems, personal strengths, and real challenges. The ability to look inward, to recognize these layers and how they impact every aspect of life and learning, is a valuable competency that can be taught and modeled in schools. But how does school support students to develop this sense of self-awareness? How do educators equip them with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to tap into their own belief systems, including their beliefs about how they interact with content and with the world around them?This module is designed to help educators as they help students develop their own self-awareness, an important social and emotional competency.  | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 2** | **Introduction to the Module Series**This professional learning module is the second in a series of six online professional learning modules supporting educators as they integrate academic, social, and emotional learning to support development of student competencies that are essential for school, work, and life. All modules in this series were created by NJDOE in collaboration with the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders and the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center.The NJDOE has adopted a framework of five core social and emotional competencies, including self-awareness, as well as self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills, modeled after the five core competencies developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Each competency is comprised of a set of sub-competencies — skills, knowledge, and attitudes — that guide student behavior.Research and practice demonstrate that when schools and educators intentionally promote the development of social and emotional competencies, students gain academically, become more engaged in classrooms, and form more meaningful relationships, thereby enhancing their learning experience and outcomes. The research base behind social and emotional learning or “SEL,” the key components of SEL, and strategies to support SEL in the classroom, including adult social and emotional competencies, are described in more detail in Module 1, “Competencies for School, Work, and Life: Introduction to Social and Emotional Learning.” | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 3** | **Objectives of This Module**In completing this module, you will define self-awareness, with special attention to how it develops over time, and you will learn about the research base for the importance of student and adult self-awareness.You will also explore teaching strategies to support students’ development of self-awareness, both through explicit instruction and by embedding self-awareness with academics and in general teaching practices. Lastly, you will develop action steps to begin to implement teaching practices that support student self-awareness. | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 4Activity** | **Activity: Thought Starter**Prior to digging into the material, we want you to do a quick reflection about how you think self-awareness is used in the classroom, both by educators and by students. Individually or in pairs, reflect on the following two questions:1. In what ways do you need self-awareness to be an effective educator?
2. In what ways do your students need self-awareness to be effective learners?
 | **3 minutes** **Facilitation note:** This activity is a warm-up for participants to start thinking about self-awareness and recognizing that it is needed not only for students but also for educators. The warm-up helps them begin thinking about what they and their students need to be aware of in a classroom context. Educators do not have to use the language of the competencies, as the warm-up is more to tap into their background knowledge. |

## Understanding Self-Awareness

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| **Slide Number/ Materials** | **Suggested Language for Facilitator** | **Time/Facilitation Notes** |
| **Slide 5** | **Understanding Self-Awareness**Self-awareness is our ability to understand who we are as individuals — the thoughts we have, the beliefs we hold, the emotions we encounter, and the behaviors and choices we exhibit. Developing self-awareness in and outside of the classroom can take a lot of work, and there are multiple ways we can support students as they develop their ideas about who they are throughout their school experience.Before we explore ways that educators can support student development of self-awareness in the classroom, let’s develop a common understanding about what self-awareness is and the importance of developing self-awareness.  | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 6** | **Defining Self-Awareness**The NJDOE defines self-awareness as the ability to accurately recognize one’s emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This ability includes accurately assessing one’s strengths and limitations in context and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.As an individual, whether a student or an adult, develops self-awareness, they develop a combination of underlying attitudes, knowledge, and skills, or what New Jersey calls “sub-competencies.” Based on available research, the NJDOE identified four self-awareness sub-competencies that individuals develop over time. These sub-competencies may be used differently depending on the context an individual is in and on the person’s cultural groups. The four sub-competencies include the following: * **Recognizing one’s feelings and thoughts,** which includes the ability to recognize and name emotions, identify sensations associated with both positive and negative emotions, and identify situations or “triggers” (whether personal, social, cultural, or environmental) that produce negative or positive emotional responses.
* **Recognizing the impact of one’s feelings and thoughts on one’s own behavior,** which includes the ability to match situations with likely emotional reactions, match appropriate consequences with positive or negative actions stemming from emotional responses, and evaluate how expressing one’s emotions impacts one’s self in various situations.
* **Recognizing one’s personal traits, strengths, and limitations,** which includesrecognizing one’s own interests and skills, identifying areas for personal improvement and support needed, and eventually translating interests into planning for one’s future.
* **Recognizing the importance of self-confidence in handling daily tasks and challenges**, which includes understanding the qualities of a positive and negative attitude, recognizing the impact of one’s attitude when facing challenges, and identifying strategies to overcome obstacles to one’s goals.
 |  **2 minutes** |
| **Slide 7** | **The Importance of Self-Awareness** As discussed in the introductory module, we know that extensive research demonstrates that when educators implement high-quality SEL programming with fidelity, students are more likely to be successful inside and outside of school (Durlak et al., 2011). Self-awareness is one core social and emotional competency that many SEL programs and practices focus on, providing students the necessary skills to help them successfully achieve important school and life outcomes. For example, Schonert-Reichl and colleagues found that teaching mindfulness skills that promote one’s awareness in the present moment, creating calm recognition and acceptance of one’s feelings and thoughts, was associated with multiple student outcomes in elementary and middle schools. For example, Schonert-Reichl found that mindfulness practices in middle school was associated with increased student optimism, self-concept, and prosocial behaviors (Schonert-Reichl & Lawlor, 2010) and, in elementary school, positive changes in measures of students’ empathy, perspective-taking, optimism, emotional control, and school self-concept (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015).In many respects, self-awareness is a building block for other important social, emotional, and academic competencies (Turnaround, 2019). For example, self-awareness offers insight into why we do the things we do. This cognizance of cause and effect allows us to better predict and manage our behaviors as we develop self-management. Gaining insight into our strengths and limitations is also key, equipping us to make choices that build off our strengths and address areas for improvement. In short, self-awareness provides important data for how we manage ourselves, interact with others, and make decisions. | **2 minutes** |
| **Slide 8** | **The Importance of Self-Awareness in the Learning Process**Research has demonstrated the importance of self-awareness for students in school, especially in light of increasingly rigorous college- and career-ready learning standards. For example, Brackett and colleagues have noted that throughout the day, students must continually acknowledge and navigate their emotional responses to stay focused on the task of learning (Brackett et al., 2012). School provides a rich environment full of stimuli and social interactions, and for students, self-awareness can help them successfully navigate these experiences. Self-awareness is important at all grade levels. For example, Gil-Olarte Marquez and colleagues (2006) analyzed academic outcomes of high school students and found that the ability to recognize, understand, and regulate emotions was positively correlated with prosocial behaviors and final grades in school.Ryan and colleagues found that student beliefs about their learning also correlated with whether or not they sought help when needed during the learning process (Ryan et al., 1998). In related research, Durlak and colleagues (1994) found that teaching specific strategies for acknowledging and communicating about one’s need for support was associated with higher levels of self-determination in a group of high school students with disabilities.Additionally, Zimmerman found that a student’s level of self-confidence in their ability to learn, often referred to as self-efficacy, was associated with the academic choices the student made and the extent to which the student persisted on rigorous tasks (Zimmerman, 2000).**Optional Activity: Self-Awareness and Self-Efficacy**Remember thatone sub-competency of self-awareness is the ability torecognize the importance of self-confidence in handling daily tasks and challenges.View the [video, Self-Efficacy in Students' Everyday Lives](https://youtu.be/r5zkCoe8vNM), from Transforming Education (youtu.be/r5zkCoe8vNM) of middle school children commenting on the importance of self-confidence in their ability to learn, referred to here as self-efficacy.* What do you hear students say that relates to self-awareness?

What are the various ways these students use self-awareness to aid their learning? | **1 minute****3 minutes****Facilitation note:** View video and have participants discuss the two accompanying questions as a group. |
| **Slide 9** | **The Importance of Self-Awareness in Learning Content**When students are engaged in the learning process, self-awareness provides the lens through which they both take in and share information. Consider reading, especially reading complex texts. The degree to which students understand how their own thoughts, feelings, and beliefs create a mental filter for the information they take in helps them to be more critical consumers of the text.Students can also benefit from understanding the impact of their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs when communicating their ideas, on any content matter, in writing or verbally. For example, current learning standards, more than ever before, call for student discussion and collaboration. Students who are aware of their own thoughts, feelings, and beliefs are better positioned to communicate these things when idea-sharing, providing constructive critique to or receiving it from peers, and contributing to group work. Yet the importance of self-awareness is not limited to reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Self-awareness is important to the completion of operations in math, science, and other technical subjects. For example, new learning standards require students to not only solve complex problems but explain their thought processes in detail. Doing so requires the ability to inwardly assess what one knows and needs to know, and why one chooses particular steps to complete an academic task.We will learn more about self-awareness related to academic content later in this module. | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 10** | **Developmental Nature of SEL Competencies**As discussed in the introductory module, individuals continually develop and refine social and emotional competencies, in context, over time. Let’s consider the developmental nature of self-awareness by discussing one of its sub-competencies: the ability to recognize one’s own emotions. At a young age, we learn this skill in simple terms, with adults’ help. We learn to identify and communicate when we are happy or sad, for instance. As we grow older, our vocabulary to describe emotions increases, and we are able to look inward to disentangle what we are feeling with more specificity. We also learn to identify, with increasing sophistication, *why* we feel the way we do*.* Ideally, this ability allows us to identify triggers that cause us to feel certain emotional responses, and then make choices to increase our exposure to triggers of positive emotions and decrease our exposure to triggers of negative emotions. Although we do not need adults’ help in the same way as when we were younger, in many instances and in many cultures, it is important to reach out to others, particularly elders, to identify ways to continue to navigate our emotional responses and how we interact with others.Of course, we may not use these exact terms to describe our decision-making as we learn to choose the experiences, people, places, and things that create a sense of emotional well-being. Yet these choices are based on a foundation of self-awareness. | **Slide 10** |
| **Slide 11****Activity:** Handouts 1a and 1b | **Activity: Developmental Progressions Related to Self-Awareness**Let’s consider in more depth how students’ skills, knowledge, and attitudes that comprise self-awareness might develop over time. Listed on Handout 1a are developmental indicators related to sub-competencies within the self-awareness competency. For each sub-competency, we have shuffled the order of developmental indicators, with each column representing a different grade band. Your task is to read each row and at the bottom of each column and mark which age band you believe the indicators in that column represent. The first sub-competency is already completed as an example. When finished filling in Handout 1a, use Handout 1b to check your answers. Your thoughts may differ from the answer key in some ways. That is okay! Note and/or discuss your thought processes. Also using Handout 1b, engage in the following reflections and, if in a group, discuss your responses:* Reflect on the developmental nature of the sub-competencies and their importance in the classroom.
* Identify how the developmental indicators may function differently depending on the context — at school versus at home versus with peers. How do you see your students differ in the use of these skills across contexts?
* Reflect on how students of varying cultures may develop, apply, or demonstrate the sub-competencies.

The purposes of this activity are to:1. Pause to reflect thoughtfully on the developmental progression of indicators of each self-awareness sub-competency;
2. Illustrate how the development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills related to self-awareness may progress as students grow;
3. Introduce the research-based SEL developmental indicators compiled by the NJDOE.

Remember, although social and emotional competencies have developmental indicators, individuals are constantly learning and re-learning competencies based on their context.  | **20 minutes****Facilitation Note:** The purposes of this activity are to:1. Pause to reflect thoughtfully on the developmental progression of indicators of each self-awareness sub-competency;
2. Illustrate how the development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills related to self-awareness may progress as students grow; and
3. Introduce Developmental Indicators: SEL in the K-12 Classroom compiled by the NJDOE.

Remember, although social and emotional competencies have developmental indicators, individuals are constantly learning and relearning competencies based on the context. |
| **Slide 12** | **Context Matters**While students develop self-awareness over time, as discussed in the previous activity, it is also important to recognize that individuals may exhibit their self-awareness skills, attitudes, and knowledge differently depending on the context in which they are in and the cultures to which they belong.We know that an individual may or may not exhibit a particular competency in one set of conditions, but that may not be a full representation of the individual’s knowledge, skills, and attitudes in another context. You can probably think of ways in which your students exhibit self-awareness differently in the classroom versus when relaxing with their friends, when participating in extracurricular activities, or, as parents may attest, at home. For example, a middle school student may show a high level of self-awareness in regard to their strengths, areas for improvement, and the personal impact of their actions academically, but at the same time, really struggle to recognize these things as they relate to their social interactions among peers. Similarly, a student may be aware of their strengths as a math student but not as clear about what they do and do not need to work on in a social science classroom.It is important for schools to consider how the development of any social and emotional competency depends, in part, on the extent to which one’s environment is safe and supportive, and the degree to which students demonstrate their self-awareness in different locations and in different content areas. | **3 minutes** |
| **Slide 13** | **Culture Matters**Culture, including the intersection of various cultures to which individuals belong, influences how students develop and apply self-awareness. Jagers and colleagues find that young people’s sense of self includes cultural values and orientation as well as collective identities, including ethnic and racial groups, socioeconomic status, and gender (Jagers et al., 2018). More specifically, Jagers and colleagues state that cultural orientations or values can “provide an alternative sense of self and are an important asset to some ethnic and racial groups, including Latino, Asian American, and African American youth. For example, a communal orientation toward one’s family, ethnic/racial group, or community reduces psychological distress and risky behaviors and promotes a range of positive socioemotional outcomes” (Jagers et al., 2018).Culture can impact the development of self-awareness sub-competencies in a myriad of ways. For example, how emotions are identified, whether they are positively or negatively connotated, and how they are expressed may vary depending on culture. One emotional response may be socially acceptable in one culture but seen as inappropriate in another. Culture might also influence how one perceives personal strengths and limitations — for example, individuality is often highly valued in Western cultures, but one’s ability to support the collective good may be more highly valued in Eastern cultures (Hecht & Shin, 2015).Cultural influences may be subtle and unknown to an individual, as culture represents a way of being and doing that is deeply ingrained and hard to recognize in one’s self. Thus, there exists a cyclical pattern, wherein culture impacts the development of one’s self-awareness and, simultaneously, self-awareness is needed to recognize the impacts of culture on one’s feelings, thoughts, behavior, and choices.To promote equity, it is critical that educators recognize the impact of culture on students’ self-awareness, as well as educators’ own sense of self-awareness, and teach in a way that draws upon students’ unique strengths while orienting learning in relation to their cultural contexts.  | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 14****Activity**Handout 2 | **Activity: Student Vignettes**Let’s consider student examples illustrating the ways in which students use their self-awareness skills, attitudes, and knowledge in different contexts. Remember that many social and emotional competencies relate to each other, and that we use multiple competencies in any single interaction. Accordingly, as you read the student vignettes provided on Handout 2, note that you will also probably see other social and emotional competencies at work — that is okay. Please pay specific attention to self-awareness and its sub-competencies in these examples. Use Handout 2 to consider the vignettes and answer the questions to reflect on your insights. | **10 minutes****Facilitation note:**In groups, ask participants to read each vignette individually and record their thoughts, then discuss as a group. Repeat for each vignette**.** |
| **Slide 15** | **Educators’** **Self-Awareness**Given the complexity of teaching and meeting the needs of all students from all backgrounds, educator self-awareness is crucial to not only promote effectiveness in the teaching and learning process, but also the self-care needed for an educator to sustain one’s own wellness as a professional doing difficult workAs noted in the introductory module, educator social and emotional competencies are critically important. Specifically, an educator’s self-awareness includes multiple factors, including the identification of emotions during the learning process, such as identifying those events that trigger strong emotions; a positive sense of self-efficacy, or the belief that one can have a positive impact on student’s learning; and recognition of professional strengths and limitations, or identifying those aspects of teaching that one is really good at and those that are areas in need of improvement (Yoder, 2014). Self-awareness is also essential for educator self-care. Educators must reflect inward to take note of their emotions, the causes of those emotional responses, and what they can do to actively care for their own physical, social, and emotional well-being.  | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 16****Activity** Handout 3 | **Activity: Educator Reflection**At this point, pause to reflect on your own sub-competencies related to self-awareness. Complete Handout 3. Revisit this tool periodically, updating your reflections and noting progress.There is a heavy amount of reflection represented in this activity. Do not feel compelled to fill in every box now. You can record your initial reflections now, then revisit the worksheet later when you have more time or new insights.When you are done, consider: What was the easiest sub-competency to reflect upon? The most difficult? What surprises did you encounter, leading to new kinds of awareness about the impact of self-awareness on your teaching?This self-reflection may uproot deep-held feelings about your work. Remember the importance of self-care as you balance the goals of continuously improving professionally while also staying attuned to your needs, personal well-being, and realistic expectations.  | **20 minutes****Facilitation note:**If working in a group, give participants time to complete the reflection on their own before discussing in a group. They can use the handout to record their initial reactions now, then revisit the handout later. When all participants finish, ask them to discuss their reflective process in small groups. What was the easiest sub-competency to reflect upon? The most difficult? What surprises did they encounter, leading to new awareness about the impact of self-awareness on their teaching? |

## Strategies to Support Student Self-Awareness

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| **Slide Number/ Materials** | **Suggested Language for Facilitator** | **Time/Facilitation Notes** |
| **Slide 17** | **Strategies to Support Student Self-Awareness**Educators can intentionally and effectively support student self-awareness by implementing practices that help students accurately perceive and communicate about their own emotions, thoughts, strengths, limitations, interests, and values, and reflect on the relationship between their emotions and behaviors. By incorporating instructional strategies that explicitly teach and model self-awareness, educators support students as they build a foundation of self-understanding that deepens their experiences and self-efficacy in the learning process.Educators can also support student self-awareness through practices and strategies that relate to, but are distinct from, SEL — for example, through character education, restorative practices, trauma-informed or healing-informed care, positive behavioral intervention supports (PBIS), and response to intervention (RTI). | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 18** | **Three Integrated Classroom Approaches** As noted previously, SEL is a process, and there are multiple ways to implement this learning process. As noted in the introductory module, there are three classroom-based approaches to SEL which can be implemented either through SEL programs or through teaching practices.First, you can provide instruction that explicitly targets specific social and emotional competencies, focusing on the underlying knowledge, attitudes, and skills that constitute each competency. SEL instruction can and should also be integrated with core academic content. And finally, you can help students develop social and emotional competencies through teacher pedagogy — in particular, regular teaching practices that encourage social and emotional learning within a safe and supportive learning environment. These approaches are not mutually exclusive; they can be integrated to reinforce each other, as each supports the development of knowledge, attitudes, and skills. For our learning purposes in this module, let’s engage in learning about each approach, one at a time.  | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 19** | **Teaching Strategies to Support Self-Awareness**First, let’s consider teaching strategies that explicitly target the development of student self-awareness and the corresponding sub-competencies. Multiple strategies exist that educators can use to teach and support student self-awareness, so we will not be all-encompassing in this module. The goal is to provide example strategies and a broad approach to implementing purposeful SEL practices. From research, we know that we have to be purposeful and planful in our SEL instruction. The introductory module discussed the “SAFE” approach to being systematic in SEL implementation. The SAFE approach to instruction is: * **Sequenced**: following a specific scope and sequence of when social and emotional competencies will be taught and reinforced;
* **Active**: with students engaging in activities that allow them to practice and apply the targeted social and emotional competencies;
* **Focused:** with instruction concentrating on only one or two social and emotional competencies, sub-competencies, or skills, at a time; and
* **Explicit:** with students made aware of, and able to identify, the specific social and emotional competencies, sub-competencies, or skills they are learning and using.

Social and emotional skills can be taught through whole-class instruction as well as individualized teaching and learning for those students who may need more support. | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 20** | **An Example Teaching Strategy**Let’s consider an example of an explicit teaching strategy to support the development of self-awareness.As you listen to the example of Mr. Allen’s class, consider the following questions:1. What does Mr. Allen do to support students’ development of self-awareness?
2. What do the students do to apply self-awareness?

Mr. Allen teaches sixth grade students in the English/language arts content area. He is working with his students to increase their emotional vocabulary, specifically terms used to identify complex emotions. He thinks doing so is important for two reasons: 1. He observes that his students often have trouble expressing their emotions when there are conflicts or frustrating situations in class.
2. He would like to enhance the literary discussion circles he is implementing, and he notices that students struggle to describe the emotions of literary characters in the fictional works they discuss.

Mr. Allen sets aside class time to practice naming and discussing emotions. He first provides his students with an introduction to this sub-competency and why it is important, making connections to the broader competency of self-awareness. He then provides written scenarios to small groups of students and asks them to discuss how they might feel in response to each scenario. He gives the students a written list of emotions and their definitions, encouraging them to use several different phrases in their descriptions. Last, Mr. Allen asks each student to identify a new word or phrase from the activity they don’t often use, and then write a short journal entry describing a time they have felt that emotion.Now, reflect on the following questions:1. What did Mr. Allen do to support students’ development of self-awareness?
2. What did the students do to apply self-awareness?
 | **2 minutes** |
| **Slide 21****Activity**Handouts 4a and 4b | **Activity: Educator Vignettes**You can find additional examples of teaching strategies at the elementary and high school levels in Handout 4a. Use the handout to consider the vignettes and answer the questions to reflect on your insights. | **10 minutes****Facilitation note:**Ask participants to read each vignette individually and record their thoughts on Handout 4a. After they finish, discuss as a group. You may choose to use Handout 4b as a resource document for more examples as they discuss as a group. Note that there is certainly more than one correct response for each question. |
| **Slide 22****Activity**Handouts 5a and 5b | **Activity: Design a Lesson to Support Student Self-Awareness**Now that you have considered examples of direct instruction supporting student self-awareness, brainstorm one way in which you might target support for student development of self-awareness in your classroom.Use Handout 5a for planning a lesson and Handout 5b to reference sample, grade-banded learning objectives and sample teaching strategies for each self-awareness sub-competency. For this activity, choose one sub-competency on Handout 5b and read through the column for your students’ age group. Choose a learning objective for a lesson. Then choose one of the strategies listed or another strategy you are aware of that will support the development of that skill. As you decide which objective and strategy to choose, keep in mind your students and the content that you teach, and think about how you would adapt the activity to meet the needs of your students and your class context.Using the chosen strategy as a starting point, design a lesson to explicitly teach the learning objective using the lesson plan template in Handout 5a. You can modify this template as you see fit to meet your context; its purpose is to prompt thinking on how to support student self-awareness.  | **10 minutes****Facilitation note:**If working in a group,have participants discuss their answers and share the lesson they designed. |

## Embedding Self-Awareness in Instruction

| **Slide Number/ Materials** | **Suggested Language for Facilitator** | **Time/Facilitation Notes** |
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| **Slide 23** | **Embedding Self-Awareness in Instruction**In the previous section, we learned that there are specific strategies that educators can use to support the development of self-awareness through explicit teaching of self-awareness skills, attitudes, and knowledge. In that section, we provided examples of activities that support student self-awareness. With those examples, we recognize that there are multiple and varied ways to teach self-awareness. For explicit skills instruction, using an SEL evidence-based program that is sequenced, active, focused, and explicit is beneficial. In this section, we will discuss two additional approaches to SEL instruction, integrating self-awareness into academic content and implementing general teaching practices that support self-awareness.  | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 24** | **Integrating Self-Awareness in Academic Learning**For all academic content, to some degree, learning the content requires students to demonstrate a variety of self-awareness skills and abilities, making it necessary to integrate self-awareness into academic content. Remember that New Jersey further defines self-awareness in terms of the following four sub-competencies:1. recognizing one’s feelings and thoughts
2. recognizing the impact of one’s feelings and thoughts on one’s own behavior
3. recognizing personal traits, strengths, and limitations
4. recognizing the importance of self-confidence to handle tasks and challenges

Let’s consider specific examples of ways in which these self-awareness sub-competencies support deeper engagement with academic content.  | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 25** | **Sample Strategies: English/Language Arts**The New Jersey Student Learning Standards in English and Language Arts (ELA) across grade bands include calling for students to be able to recall details from texts, analyze what the text says, and hold discussions about the text. To effectively engage with the ELA standards, students need to use self-awareness in a variety of ways. For example, students can reflect on how they see themselves and their life experiences in text, including how they connect with the text through personal experiences, feelings, or thoughts of the character.Furthermore, students must understand their own thought processes as they engage with the text. How do they draw on the text they read, their personal experiences, and other information to explore the topic? How do they ask questions of themselves and of others to check their own understanding of the text and their analysis of the text? How aware are the students of their own ideas and understanding of the text, in order to share their ideas with their teacher and their classmates?Given the importance of self-awareness in academic learning, educators can use multiple strategies to integrate self-awareness into ELA instruction. For example, ELA educators can:* Have students read a text and then have them identify the emotions that the character(s) felt in the story. Ask them to reflect on a time they felt similar emotions as the character(s) in the story.
* Have students read a text and identify how the actions of the character influenced the emotions or feelings of another character. Ask them to note when they have noticed their own actions could have influenced another person’s emotions or actions.
* After reading a common text, have students identify a character they related to in the story and why they related to that character. Have them identify how their personal experiences influenced their interpretation of the action of the character.
 | **2 minutes** |
| **Slide 26** | **Sample Strategies: Mathematics** Similar to the ELA standards, the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Mathematics across grade bands call for students to be able to engage in multiple mathematics practices that require self-awareness, including making sense of problems and persevering, constructing viable arguments, using appropriate tools strategically, and attending to precision, to name a few. To be able to engage in these practices, students need to be able to develop a sense of self-confidence. How are students able to know they are capable of solving difficult mathematics problems, and how do students recognize that mathematics is important for them?Furthermore, students need to be able to recognize their feelings, thoughts, strengths, and limitations in relation to mathematics. How do they recognize their thought patterns as they solve complex problems? Are they able to recognize frustration when they encounter something that is difficult? Do they know what aspects of mathematics they are able to solve relatively easily and what aspects they need additional assistance with?Given the importance of self-awareness in mathematics classrooms, educators can use multiple strategies to support self-awareness in math instruction. For example, mathematics educators can:* Help students become aware of the mathematical strategies they use to solve a problem. To do so, educators can ask students to reflect on each step of a mathematical problem to determine if the problem “makes sense” to students.
* Encourage students to mindfully tap into what they already know and do not know to break down complex problems and/or identify when students need assistance.
* Use mathematical principles to help students become more self-aware. For example, ask students to track their emotions over the course of the week, place the tally on a bar chart, and have students determine which emotion they felt the most often during the week.
 | **2 minutes** |
| **Slide 27** | **Self-Awareness Before Sharing Ideas**Early in the module, we learned that self-awareness can be an important building block for other learning skills. Consider this example. Self-awareness can be an important precursor to social interactions and collaborative work in any subject area, including math. Let’s pause to watch the first minute of this [video](https://www.edutopia.org/video/how-teach-math-social-activity) from Edutopia: [*How to Teach Math as a Social Activity*](https://www.edutopia.org/video/how-teach-math-social-activity) (https://www.edutopia.org/video/how-teach-math-social-activity), featuring a teacher who encourages “private think time” as a strategy to help his students become aware of their own thoughts before contributing to a group discussion.The rest of the video focuses on social interactions in learning, but for this module, we are focused on what is covered in the first part of the video, the practice of pausing to tune in to one’s self-awareness before sharing. | **2 minutes** |
| **Slide 28****Activity**Handout 6 | **Activity: Design a Lesson Integrating Self-Awareness**Use Handout 6 to think strategically about how you can integrate SEL within an academic lesson. You will use a lesson planning template that is nearly the same as the last activity, yet our purpose is different. While the last activity provided practice for designing a lesson that directly targets an SEL learning objective, this activity provides practice for designing a lesson that integrates SEL within an academic lesson.Note: The goal is not necessarily to use the exact lesson plan template provided, as you may have a template that you already use. Focus on the aspects of SEL integration encouraged by the template, rather than focusing on the template itself.You may want to also refer again to Handout 5b to refamiliarize yourself with sample learning objectives related to self-awareness competencies.To ensure alignment with learning objectives, refer to the New Jersey SEL standards and the New Jersey academic standards as you complete the handout. When you can, discuss your ideas with your grade-level or department team to identify ways in which you can create consistent structures to integrate self-awareness into your lessons.  | **20 minutes****Facilitation note:** If in a group, participants can complete the lesson planning template individually and then discuss or complete the activity together to collectively model the process. |
| **Slide 29** | **Implementing General Teaching Practices That Support Self-Awareness**A third way for educators to promote the development of social and emotional competencies in the classroom is by implementing general instructional practices that create a safe and supportive learning environment.As discussed in the introductory module, ten research-based teaching practices that promote SEL were compiled by content experts from the American Institutes for Research and reviewed by a panel of SEL experts. Implementation of these evidence-based teaching practices can help all students’ master academic standards while simultaneously helping them develop social and emotional competencies. An overview of the ten practices is offered on this slide. The next two slides offer examples of how specific social teaching practices and instructional teaching practices support, and are enhanced by, students’ development and application of self-awareness skills, attitudes, and knowledge.  | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 30** | **Social Teaching Practices That Promote Self-Awareness**Students are required to use a variety of self-awareness skills as their educators engage in social teaching practices. For example, for students to participate in student-centered discipline, which encourages educators to use practices that support students’ own ability to manage their behavior in the classrooms, students first need to develop a deep sense of self-awareness. As they engage in student-centered discipline, educators can help students reflect on those instances that trigger students to act out or misbehave. Students can also reflect on the thinking strategies they use as they engage in academic and non-academic tasks, such as thinking through the positive and negative consequences of the actions they take. In other words, it is critical that students have the time and space to become aware of themselves in schools and classrooms if we are going to ask students to begin to manage their own behavior in the classroom. In another example, students need to develop a keen sense of themselves as they engage in practices promoting responsibility and choice. One of the key features of effective responsibility and choice practices is providing authentic experiences that connect with students’ interests. For educators to effectively implement these practices and for students to engage, educators need to help students identify what their likes and dislikes are, as well as their strengths and limitations, to offer more authentic choices and responsible decisions. In addition, since students are just developing their sense of self in school, students may not always know what activities they may excel in or what their interests are. Thus, it is critical for educators to provide opportunities for students to explore who they are, so they can become more autonomous, competent learners in the classroom.  | **2 minutes** |
| **Slide 31** | **Instructional Teaching Practices That Promote Self-Awareness**Instructional teaching practices that promote SEL provide students opportunities to engage deeply with academic content with their peers and their teacher. Possessing self-awareness skills, knowledge, and attitudes is a driving force for students to be able to interact fully within these practices. For example, self-assessment and self-reflection provide students an opportunity to learn and apply a variety of self-awareness skills. According to Brooke and colleagues (2013) and Zubrzycki (2015), self-awareness and self-reflection allow students to:* Recognize information about the quality of their work, identifying both strengths and limitations;
* Assess the quality of their work against clear standards of performance;
* Identify strategies that will help them improve their learning and progress toward their goals;
* Revise their work based on the feedback and reflection process; and
* Monitor their thinking strategies and overall behavior.

Although not as obvious, cooperative learning also requires a degree of self-awareness. For example, there are multiple roles that one can take in cooperative learning, from leader to facilitator to reporter, to name a few. It will be helpful for students to be self-aware of the skills and competencies they possess that relate to each role — helping them to identify the relevant skills they currently have and those they need to work on. In addition, students typically have to share their knowledge or perspective with their peers. Thus, students need to be aware of their own perspective and analyze their own thoughts to be able to share their perspective and knowledge with others. | **2 minutes** |
| **Slide 32****Activity**Handout 7 | **Activity: Reflect on Teaching Practices**As you can easily see, the self-awareness competency is reflected not only in academic instruction but also in the interactions that educators have with their students inside schools and classrooms. We encourage you to review one or two classroom videos that focus on the ten teaching practices that promote SEL, which can be found on the [Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjoWr_wxMaSdShazWcer9Endr4MXDcews). (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjoWr\_wxMaSdShazWcer9Endr4MXDcews)For this activity, individually or in a group:1. Watch one or two videos focusing on different teaching practices that promote SEL.
2. Identify the self-awareness skills, attitudes, or knowledge that students are using.
3. Identify how teachers helped students develop or apply those skills in the video.

Use Handout 7 to record your thoughts. | **20 minutes****Facilitation note:**If working in a group, participants may complete the handout individually and then discuss as a group or complete the handout with a partner or small group*.* |

## Action Planning

| **Slide Number/ Materials** | **Suggested Language for Facilitator** | **Time/Facilitation Notes** |
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| **Slide 33** | **Action Planning**In this module we have:* Defined the self-awareness competency and sub-competencies;
* Highlighted the importance of student self-awareness in life and learning;
* Reflected on the importance of adult self-awareness; and
* Explored three approaches to support student self-awareness.

You can now plan for the incorporation of new knowledge you learned in this module into your teaching practice.  | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 34** | **Considerations for Action Planning**Important lenses to consider as you begin to take action to more strategically incorporate self-awareness into your teaching include the following:* Define the learning objectives. Determine which social awareness sub-competency(s) you want to target in your instruction, and why?
* Determine which educator competencies — social and emotional skills, knowledge, and attitudes — are necessary to teach the learning objectives well.

Integrate the three approaches to supporting self-awareness: explicit teaching strategies, integrating with academic content, and embedding through general teaching practices.Collect data to monitor progress of your SEL efforts.Determine ways to sustain this work so that it is effective over time.  |  |
| **Slide 35****Activity**Handout 8Handout 9 | **Activity: Action Planning**For today’s purposes, we’ve allowed time to plan for individual shifts in teaching practice, and if you are completing this module as a group, to plan together for a collective instructional approach to supporting students’ development of self-awareness. You’ll also want to think broadly about how this focus complements and enhances existing initiatives within your district and school, such as trauma-informed care, restorative practices, and positive behavior support in schools (PBIS). In addition, it is critical to think about how self-awareness and SEL broadly fit within your school improvement plans — the strategies and supports you have identified to purposefully support SEL school wide.To finish off the module, we provide an additional handout for action planning. Please refer to Handout 8 for a template to assist in the action planning process and Handout 9 for additional resources to review as you develop your action plan. You can engage in action planning on your own or in a team. As this planning exercise focuses on the classroom level, consider student and educator needs, as well as consistency and sustainability. | **15 minutes****Facilitation note:**This activity can be done individually or in a group. If in a group, allow adequate time for discussion. |
| **Slide 36** | **Evaluation**Thank you for participating in this social and emotional learning module focused on self-awareness. We hope you find the SEL learning modules useful and the suggestions they provide help you to enhance your practice and support the development of students’ social, emotional, and academic competencies. The NJDOE developed this online module in collaboration with the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders and the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center, which are funded through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Education. To learn more about SEL and the online modules, visit the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) [Keeping our Kids Safe, Healthy & In School](https://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/sandp/sel/) or contact the NJDOE Office of Student Support Services at SchoolClimate@doe.nj.gov. We ask that you now please complete the online evaluation of this learning module. We also encourage you to review the other online modules that provide knowledge, tools, resources, and strategies to embed social and emotional learning into your classroom. | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 37** | **General Resources to Support SEL** | **1 minute** |
| **Slides** **38–40** | **References** | **1 minute** |
| **Slide 41** | **Thank You**  | **1 minute** |

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