



Wings For Kids

Getting Started GUIDE

Bringing Words to Live By
To Life With Your Students

Table of Contents



3

What's in this Guide?

4

Words to Live By

5

Reading Routine

6

Open a Discussion

7

Speaking the Language

8-11

Games and Activities

12

Discover More Resources

13

About Us



What's in this Guide?

A Message To Educators

It takes more passion, patience, and resilience than ever before to help students learn at their highest level and become the best versions of themselves.

If you're inspired by Words to Live By, found in our book *I Soar With Wings*, we want to help you take the next step towards giving kids more of what they need to thrive socially and emotionally.

We've been using Words to Live By in our programs for years, and have evidence to prove a common language leads to more effective SEL. It's as simple as learning the language of Words to Live By.

Educators like you don't just teach—you prepare students for the road ahead. We are grateful for you and are here to help you reach your goals.

Want to learn more about how we help schools and organizations like yours soar with WINGS? [Connect with us.](#)



In this guide, we'll show you five simple ways to make Words to Live By part of your day:



Start a reading routine with *I Soar With Wings*



Enrich reading time with discussion prompts that focus on social emotional skills



Learn tips and examples for speaking a common language



Integrate engaging activities and games to make learning fun



Try our proven techniques to help you take SEL further



I soar with wings.
Let me tell you why.
I learn lots of skills
that help me reach the sky.

I LOVE AND ACCEPT
who I am on the inside
and know my **EMOTIONS**
ARE NOTHING TO HIDE.

LIFE'S FULL OF SURPRISES that
make me feel different ways.
If I can **CONTROL MYSELF**,
I'll have much better days.

Words to Live By

I understand the
CHOICES I MAKE should be
what's best for me to do,
and **WHAT HAPPENS IS ON ME**
and not any of you.

I understand **OTHERS ARE UNIQUE.**
I want to learn more about
everyone I meet. I want to
STEP INTO THEIR SHOES and
see what they are going through.



I am a friend.
I SUPPORT AND TRUST.
Working together is a must.
KIND AND CARING I will be.
I listen to you. You listen to me.

WINGS
helping kids soar®

I soar with wings.
I just told you why.
All of these things are
why I fly high.

Reading Routine



You know your students need social and emotional skills to thrive. Now you have the perfect medium—*I Soar With Wings*—to get them started on the path to learning about empathy, teamwork, resilience, and more. The best part: with colorful characters and playful rhymes, kids will have FUN learning these skills!

Read *I Soar With Wings* on your own, then read it again with your students. Read it as a group once a day, once a week, or as often as you can.

When you're ready to take your routine a step further:

- Give kids their own copy of *Words to Live By* to read along with you as you read from the book.
- Identify a central location in your classroom to hang a copy of *Words to Live By* so kids can see the *Words* and become more familiar with them.
- Use the conversation starters in the book to encourage students to dig deeper into the skills within each competency.

The more you read the book with students, the more opportunities you'll have to ask open-ended questions—prompting a discussion which allows students to share their thoughts and feelings. With each response, you can go deeper with follow-up questions and work to build connections to social emotional skills through meaningful conversation.

Open a Discussion



Using *Words to Live By*, students can learn different social emotional skills like understanding how someone feels, solving problems, handling big feelings, or being a friend. Use these thought starters to help formulate questions to ask the next time you read any book aloud:

1. Consider how the characters feel.
2. Discuss how a character could solve a problem and what that process might look like.
3. Talk about what a character might be thinking and how it is affecting their decision making.
4. Brainstorm the characteristics that makes someone a good friend.
5. Analyze what a character is doing that affects others positively or negatively.

Using conversation starters, you can open a dialogue with your students before, during, and after reading *I Soar With Wings*. Previewing the story with an introduction to SEL and asking questions to engage students will give you and them opportunities to make connections between *Words to Live By* and real situations that happen during their day.



Ready to take your reading routine to the next level? Check out the "Using This Book" section in *I Soar with Wings* for more discussion prompts.

Speaking the Language



Once you've read the book and have a grasp on the five competencies of SEL, try incorporating the language into everyday situations.

Here are a few examples to help you get started:



It starts to rain right before recess. You could say, "**Life is full of surprises!** I feel sad and disappointed that we won't get to play outside today, but we can find fun games to play indoors instead. That's a better choice than getting upset by something out of my control."



You notice a child looking frustrated in class. You might say, "**Let me step into your shoes** Alex. I can tell by the sound of your voice that you're feeling frustrated. If I were in your position, I would feel the same way."



Your class was able to easily get lined up at the door to go to lunch. You could say, "Since **my emotions are nothing to hide**, I wanted to let you all know how proud I am for how quickly and quietly we got ready to go to lunch."

Games & Activities



Games and activities help students connect concepts to action and give them a chance to display their own social emotional skills. Playing games and doing activities as a group helps promote a sense of community and friendship as they work together to start understanding emotions and building relationships.

Here are a few helpful tips to remember as you incorporate SEL games and activities into your routine:

- **Step into someone else's shoes.** Learning about what is important to others is a great way to develop empathy and learn how to build positive relationships with others. Pair or group kids together who may not already know each other or who come from different classrooms or schools.
- **Use kid-friendly language when describing social and emotional skills.** Use phrases like “understanding my feelings” instead of “self-awareness” or “being a good friend” instead of “relationship skills” to create a culture and language of SEL that everyone can be a part of.
- **Embrace the excitement of trying something new.** Encouraging kids to do something that's new to them is a great way to build self-confidence and self-awareness about what they like or are interested in.
- **Teach the power of positive feedback.** Giving positive feedback during a game or activity is an excellent way to build strong relationships, communicate well, and cooperate with others—all important aspects of SEL.

Emotional Charades

Allotted Time



Supplies

Letters A-Z written on individual slips of paper
Bowl or paper bag

Social Emotional Skill

Self-Awareness

How To Play

1. Prep work: Write or print out the alphabet and cut the letters out individually and put them in a bowl or brown paper bag.
2. Tell students today they are going to be acting out different emotions. The entire alphabet is inside of this bag/bowl.
3. Call students one at a time to reach in and pull out one letter. Once they pull out a letter they must think of an emotion that starts with that letter. They will whisper it into the leader's ear and then begin acting out that emotion.
4. After 30 seconds of acting, any student in the group who thinks they know the emotion word can raise their hand, wait to be called on, and then share their guess.
5. Explain that whichever student guesses what emotion was being acted out is the next actor/actress.
6. Remind the students when acting they can not say the emotion word they are acting but instead should think of a situation where they might experience that emotion and act it out or describe what might happen to their body when they experience that emotion.
7. This continues until all students have gone or time is up.

Activity Prompts For Reflection

- Are any letters harder to come up with emotion words for?
- Did anyone have a hard time controlling themselves and not shouting out their guess while other students were acting?
- Who can name and describe a unique emotion they felt during this activity?

Other Ways To Play

- Challenge students by partnering them and having them act out a scene together that portrays the emotion word they are acting out.
- If students are having a hard time guessing, you can offer them multiple-choice options to pick from as their guess.

Red Light, Green Light

Allotted Time



Supplies

No supplies
needed

Social Emotional Skill

Responsible
Decision-
Making

How To Play

1. Students line up one behind another.
2. Have each student to get into their "dream car." The leader can model this by pretending to open up a car door, buckling their seat belt, checking the mirrors, etc.
3. Call out different traffic signals as you transition to the next location.
4. Example traffic signals:
 - Red light- everyone must stop
 - Yellow light- everyone must drive slowly
 - Green light- everyone can drive regular speed
 - Speed bump- everyone must hop like they are going over a speed bump in their car
 - Railroad track- everyone must shake their car from side to side
5. If a student misses a traffic signal they move their car to the back of traffic (back of the line).

Activity Prompts For Reflection

- What is a strength of yours that made this activity easy for you?
- What is something new you learned about someone else in the group?
- Who is someone you'd like to give praise for this activity?
- What made this activity difficult?

Other Ways To Play

- For younger students show them an example round before beginning
- Give students time to write down their two truths and a fib so that they don't forget them.
- Have students keep score of how many fibs they guess correctly and announce the winner at the end.

Two Truths and A Fib

Allotted Time



Supplies

No supplies
needed

Social Emotional Skill

Self-
Awareness

How To Play

1. Have each student think of three things about themselves—two things should be true and one should be a fib.
2. For younger students, show them an example round before beginning the game. Your example two truths and a fib could be about people they are learning about, famous people, or people they are interested in.
3. Call on students one at a time to tell their three things.
4. Give the rest of the students some time to think.
5. Have the student say their three statements again, with students putting a thumbs up for what they think is true and a thumbs down for what they think is the fib.
6. Have the student announce which one was the fib.
7. Continue this providing each student the opportunity to tell their three things.

Activity Prompts For Reflection

- What is a strength of yours that made this activity easy for you?
- What is something new you learned about someone else in the group?
- Who is someone you'd like to give praise for this activity?
- What made this activity difficult?

Other Ways To Play

- Give students time to write down their two truths and a fib so that they don't forget them.
- Have students keep score of how many fibs they guess correctly and announce the winner at the end.

Discover More Resources



If you're looking for even more ways to support your students, sign up for our digital platform at my.soarwithwings.org. With our FREE version, you'll get access to:



15 SEL Games and Activities



5 Lesson Plans (K-5)



Video library with dozens of useful tips and techniques



More resources to build SEL into your day—complete with "how to" instructions and templates for use

Need a comprehensive approach to SEL? For schools and organizations that want engaging curriculum and customized professional services, check out our solutions wingsforkids.org.

About Us



In 1996, WINGS began as a summer camp for girls focusing on emotional intelligence. Back then, we understood the importance of social emotional skills, but had no idea of the impact teaching these skills would have. Today, we have a clear picture of the value these skills can bring to our children. We see it in the hearts of the kids we work with everyday.

The pandemic brought unexpected challenges to everyone: especially kids. Now, as we move forward from the aftermath of a world turned upside down, these skills are more critical than ever.

Our kids are resilient. And with SEL, we can fortify that resilience to help make them even stronger—emotionally and academically. After working with kids for 25 years, we have the evidence to prove it.

WINGS is committed to equipping kids with life skills like taking on challenges, learning from effort, building healthy relationships, and problem-solving. These lessons start at home, are practiced in the classroom, and reinforced after school so ALL kids can succeed and thrive.

Our Partnership with Discovery Education

You'll find standards-aligned activities, professional learning videos featuring SEL experts, and more helpful resources for your students at www.soarwithwings.com.

Contact Us

Have questions about bringing social emotional learning programs to your school or organization? Contact us through email at hello@wingsforkids.org.

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