

The SEL Interactive Read Aloud Lesson Plan Collection

Tulare County Office of Education

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Be A Friend by Salina Yoon

SEL Competencies:

Self-Awareness: Recognizing and reflecting on one's own emotions, strengths, and feelings.

Self-Management: Managing emotions and behaviors, especially when making choices in social interactions.

Social Awareness: Understanding and empathizing with the perspectives and feelings of others.

Relationship Skills: Building healthy, positive relationships with others through communication, empathy, and respect.

Responsible Decision-Making: Making positive choices in how to interact with others and showing kindness.

Background

Be a Friend by Salina Yoon is a heartwarming story about a young boy named Dennis, who struggles to fit in and make friends at school. Dennis is different from the other kids because he doesn't quite know how to act in social situations. He communicates differently, but he's kind and eager to connect with others. The story follows his journey to build a friendship with a classmate and shows how simple acts of kindness, patience, and understanding can foster true friendship. It highlights the importance of empathy, self-awareness, and understanding differences in social interactions, making it an ideal resource for teaching social-emotional learning (SEL) concepts.

Before You Read

What does it mean to be a friend? What qualities make someone a good friend?

(This encourages students to think about the attributes of friendship and what it means to connect with others.)

Can you think of a time when you had trouble making friends or understanding someone else? What did you do?

(This question helps students reflect on their own social experiences and opens the door to empathy.)

Why do you think it might be difficult for some people to make friends or feel like they fit in?

(This question promotes social awareness by encouraging students to think about challenges others might face.)

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	<p>What are some ways you could help someone who feels lonely or left out? (This question encourages students to think about how they can be supportive and inclusive of others.)</p> <p>What do you think might happen in the story? Do you think Dennis will make a friend? (This introduces the theme of the book and engages students' curiosity about how friendships can form.)</p>
<p>While You Read</p> <p>Guiding Questions</p>	<p>How does Dennis feel when he first tries to talk to the other kids? What do you think he might be thinking? (SEL Competency: Self-Awareness – Recognizing Dennis's emotions and internal thoughts as he faces social challenges.)</p> <p>Why do you think Dennis has trouble making friends? What might be different about how he communicates with others? (SEL Competency: Social Awareness – Understanding how differences in communication or behavior might affect social interactions.)</p> <p>What does Dennis do to try to connect with others, even though he is feeling left out? (SEL Competency: Self-Management – Reflecting on Dennis's perseverance and efforts to connect despite challenges.)</p> <p>How does Dennis use actions instead of words to express his feelings and try to make friends? How can we communicate with others even if we don't have the right words? (SEL Competency: Relationship Skills – Encouraging students to think about non-verbal communication and understanding emotions without words.)</p> <p>When Dennis shows kindness, how do the other children respond? How do you think they feel about him? (SEL Competency: Social Awareness – Reflecting on the reactions of others when kindness is shown and recognizing empathy.)</p> <p>How do you think Dennis is feeling when he starts to form a connection with someone? Can you relate to how he might be feeling? (SEL Competency: Self-Awareness – Exploring Dennis's feelings of hope and connection as he begins to make a friend.)</p> <p>What do you notice about the way Dennis and his new friend communicate?</p>

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	<p>How does their friendship grow? (SEL Competency: Relationship Skills – Understanding how friendship grows through mutual respect and understanding.)</p> <p>What does Dennis do to show his new friend that he cares? How does this act help strengthen their friendship? (SEL Competency: Relationship Skills – Focusing on the importance of caring actions and how they contribute to relationship building.)</p> <p>How do you think Dennis feels at the end of the story? What has changed for him? (SEL Competency: Self-Awareness – Reflecting on personal growth and feelings of accomplishment as Dennis forms a friendship.)</p> <p>What can we learn from Dennis’s story about being kind and making friends? How can we use these lessons in our own lives? (SEL Competency: Responsible Decision-Making – Discussing how kindness, empathy, and perseverance can help us build positive relationships.)</p>
After Reading	<p>Activity: "Friendship Tree"</p> <p>Objective: To encourage students to practice kindness, reflect on how to build and maintain friendships, and show appreciation for others.</p> <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construction paper or a large sheet of paper for the tree• Scissors, glue, and markers• Pre-cut "leaves" (or cut them out as a class) <p>Instructions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Discussion: After reading the story, have a class discussion about the importance of friendship and the ways Dennis was kind to make a new friend. Ask students to share examples of how they can be kind and supportive to others, just like Dennis.2. Create the Tree: On the large paper, draw the outline of a tree with branches. Each student will get a "leaf" where they will write or draw something kind they can do for a friend or how they can be a good friend.3. Write/Draw: Students will each write or draw one thing they can do to be a good friend on their "leaf" (e.g., "I will listen when my friend talks," or "I will invite someone to play"). They can also draw pictures or symbols to

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	<p>represent their ideas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Share: Allow each student to share their leaf with the class before they glue it to the tree. As they share, encourage them to explain how their action might help build friendships.5. Reflection: After all the leaves are on the tree, discuss how each student's kindness contributes to building a strong and healthy community. Talk about how the tree now represents the collective kindness of the class and the importance of friendship in their classroom. <p>Extension (Optional): Students can take their leaves home to show their families and commit to practicing kindness both at school and at home.</p>
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