

# The SEL Interactive Read Aloud Lesson Plan Collection

## Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

### Strictly No Elephants by Lisa Mantchev

SEL Competencies:

**Self-Awareness:** Understanding and reflecting on one's own emotions, strengths, and challenges.

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

**Social Awareness:** Understanding and empathizing with others' perspectives, particularly those who are different or excluded.

**Relationship Skills:** Building healthy, positive relationships through communication, empathy, and inclusion.

**Responsible Decision-Making:** Making ethical and constructive choices, considering the impact on others.

#### Background

*Strictly No Elephants* by Lisa Mantchev is a story about a young boy and his pet elephant who are excluded from a club because elephants are not allowed. The boy and his elephant, feeling hurt by the rejection, decide to start their own club, one that welcomes everyone, no matter how different they are. The book conveys a powerful message about inclusion, kindness, empathy, and how standing up for what is right can create a more welcoming environment for all. It teaches students about the importance of acceptance and making others feel valued.

#### Before You Read

1. **What do you think the title *Strictly No Elephants* means?**  
(This introduces the idea of exclusion and helps set the stage for the theme of the book.)
2. **Have you ever been left out or felt like you didn't belong somewhere? How did that make you feel?**  
(This encourages students to think about empathy and self-awareness, drawing from their personal experiences.)
3. **What makes a place or group a good place to be? What would make you feel welcome in a group?**  
(Prepares students to think about inclusivity and what it means to be kind and accepting.)
4. **What do you think might happen in the story when the elephant isn't allowed into the club?**  
(This question sparks curiosity and helps students predict what might happen in the book.)
5. **Why do you think it's important to include everyone, even if they are different from you?**

## The SEL Interactive Read Aloud Lesson Plan Collection

	(This sets up the theme of inclusion and encourages students to reflect on their values.)
<b>While You Read</b>  <b>Guiding Questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>How does the boy feel when he and his elephant are told they can't join the club?</b>            (SEL Competency: Self-Awareness – Recognizing feelings of exclusion and hurt.)         </li> <li> <b>What does the boy do when he is rejected? Why do you think he reacts this way?</b>            (SEL Competency: Self-Management – Reflecting on how the boy handles emotions in a challenging situation.)         </li> <li> <b>How do the other children feel when the boy and the elephant are excluded? Why do they want to change the rule?</b>            (SEL Competency: Social Awareness – Understanding others' feelings and the importance of empathy and inclusion.)         </li> <li> <b>What does the boy and his elephant do next after being excluded? How does their response show resilience?</b>            (SEL Competency: Self-Management – Reflecting on how the boy responds to adversity by choosing to act positively.)         </li> <li> <b>Why does the boy decide to start his own club? How does this show his ability to make responsible decisions?</b>            (SEL Competency: Responsible Decision-Making – Discussing how the boy chooses to make a positive change rather than giving up.)         </li> <li> <b>How does the boy's new club make others feel? What does this teach us about making others feel welcome?</b>            (SEL Competency: Social Awareness – Empathy and understanding the impact of inclusion on others.)         </li> <li> <b>How does the club change after the boy decides to make it more inclusive? What does this teach us about creating a welcoming environment?</b>            (SEL Competency: Relationship Skills – Encouraging positive behavior that fosters relationships based on inclusivity.)         </li> <li> <b>How does the boy's elephant contribute to the success of the new club? How does the elephant help others feel welcome?</b>            (SEL Competency: Relationship Skills – Demonstrating how teamwork and collaboration contribute to creating strong bonds.)         </li> <li> <b>What lesson do you think the boy and the elephant learn by the end</b> </li> </ol>

## The SEL Interactive Read Aloud Lesson Plan Collection

	<p><b>of the story?</b> (SEL Competency: Self-Awareness – Reflecting on the values of acceptance, kindness, and community.)</p> <p>10. <b>What do you think we can learn from this story about including others and standing up for what is right?</b> (SEL Competency: Responsible Decision-Making – Encouraging students to think about the impact of their own decisions on others.)</p>
After Reading	<p><b>K-2 Activity: "Inclusive Club Poster"</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> To create an environment that celebrates inclusion and friendship, reflecting the themes of the story.</p> <p><b>Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Large paper or poster board</li><li>• Markers, crayons, stickers</li><li>• Scissors, glue</li></ul> <p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Class Discussion:</b> Review the story's message of inclusion and kindness. Discuss what makes someone feel welcome and how we can be kind to others.</li><li>2. <b>Create the Poster:</b> Have students create a poster for a "Friendly Club" that includes everyone. They can draw pictures of different people, animals, and objects that might belong to the club.</li><li>3. <b>Add Words:</b> Encourage students to write words or phrases that promote inclusion (e.g., "Everyone is welcome," "Friends make us happy," etc.).</li><li>4. <b>Share:</b> After finishing, let students share their posters with the class and discuss how they created an environment where everyone feels welcome.</li></ol> <hr/> <p><b>3-5 Activity: "Kindness Pledge"</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> To reflect on the importance of kindness and inclusion and commit to specific actions that will promote a welcoming environment.</p> <p><b>Materials:</b></p>

## The SEL Interactive Read Aloud Lesson Plan Collection

- Paper
- Markers or colored pens

### Instructions:

1. **Class Discussion:** After discussing the story, have a conversation about the importance of kindness and how it makes people feel good when they are included.
  2. **Create a Pledge:** Have each student write their own "Kindness Pledge." In the pledge, they will write one or more ways they can help make others feel included and welcome.
  3. **Share:** Have students share their pledges with a partner or the class and then hang the pledges up in the classroom as a reminder of how everyone can contribute to a kind and inclusive environment.
- 

### 6-8 Activity: "Create Your Own Inclusive Club"

**Objective:** To foster deeper reflection on how to create an inclusive space and put those ideas into action.

### Materials:

- Paper
- Markers, colored pencils
- Chart paper (optional)

### Instructions:

1. **Class Discussion:** Begin with a discussion about the ways in which students can create more inclusive spaces at school, whether in clubs, activities, or even within the classroom.
2. **Design the Club:** Ask students to design their own inclusive club, similar to the one the boy creates in the story. What are the rules of the club? Who is allowed to join, and how does the club welcome everyone? What activities would the club do to make sure all voices are heard?
3. **Write a Mission Statement:** Students will also write a mission statement for their club, focusing on inclusion and kindness. What does the club stand for? How will it promote friendship and respect?
4. **Present:** Allow students to present their clubs to the class, explaining how they would foster inclusivity and what activities they would engage in to

## The SEL Interactive Read Aloud Lesson Plan Collection

	make others feel welcomed.
--	----------------------------