

# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

THEMATIC CURRICULUM SUPPLEMENT  
FOR AFLATOUN BOOKS 1-8



# Social Emotional Learning

Thematic Curriculum Supplement for Aflatoun Books 1 - 8

## Acknowledgements

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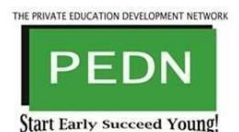
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# Introduction

## Welcome!

Welcome to the SEL Supplement! Aflatoun International created this booklet to respond to a key expectation of this time: developing **soft skills**, in particular social emotional skills, from the early age throughout life, to face current and upcoming day-to-day challenges. The 21st century is often described as an age of unprecedented pace of change and uncertainty related to technological evolution and climate change. Soft skills, or so-called *life skills*, will give children and youth personal and social dispositions to be resilient and successful.

You can already find some soft-skills sessions in Aflatoun's original content, as a support to social and financial fulfilment. The present SEL supplement will give you the opportunity to go further into it and boost practices with participants.

## What are SEAL and SEL exactly?

SEAL stands for Social Emotional Aspects of Learning, and will be referred to hereafter as Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

We here rely on the SEL competencies as defined by Casel (2017)<sup>1</sup>:

- **Self-Awareness**
- **Self-Management**
- **Social Awareness**
- **Relationship Skills**
- **Responsible Decision-Making**

All five competencies are embedded within the pedagogies and learning outcomes throughout curricula, as one session not only covers the SEL competency in focus but also supports the development of other SEL skills.

Casel (2017) further defines each competency as follows:

**Self-Awareness** The ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behaviour. The ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mind-set."

*Skill Set: Identifying emotions; Accurate self-perception; Recognizing strengths; Areas of self-improvement; Self-confidence; Self-efficacy*

**Self-Management** The ability to successfully regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours in different situations — effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself. The ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals.

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<sup>1</sup> SEL Model Casel (2017) taken from <https://casel.org/core-competencies/> on 24.01.2019

*Skill Set: Impulse control; Stress management; Self-discipline; Self-motivation; Goal-setting; Organizational skills*

**Social Awareness** The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behaviour and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

*Skill Set: Perspective-taking; Empathy; Appreciating diversity; Respect for others*

**Relationship Skills** The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.

*Skill Set: Communication; Social engagement; Relationship-building; Teamwork*

**Responsible Decision-Making** The ability to make constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. The realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others.

*Skill Set: Identifying problems; Analysing situations; Solving problems; Evaluating; Reflecting; Ethical responsibility; Citizenship*

## Who is the guide for?

### FACILITATORS

Facilitators are greatly encouraged to experience the sessions and activities for themselves first: to be a successful facilitator on that path to self-development, it is better to be clear first about your own emotions, self-confidence, behaviours and relations to others.

It means that facilitators are aware of their own personal qualities and points of improvement, and they are committed to lead teaching sessions in a patient, open-minded and non-violent way. They welcome learners' questions and answers, they give them age- and ability-based activities, they provide them with the support they need to achieve their goals.

The SEL supplement can be used in formal and non-formal education settings. It gives you a variety of tasks that you can adapt to your own context, and ideas to fuel creative sessions of your own because **a key of success to develop Soft-skills is Practice! Practice! Practice! Regularly.**

Activities pay close attention to promote cooperation between learners, and inclusion for all. As such, working groups mix genders, abilities, identities etc. and facilitators address their support and congratulations to each and every one.

Sessions involve interactive and playful learning methods and require the participants to engage in an inclusive manner. There is no place for lecturing.

## **PARTICIPANTS & CHILDREN**

For each session, age-specific advice is clearly mentioned with 3 stages.

**Stage 1:** 6 - 9 years old

**Stage 2:** 9 - 12 years old

**Stage 3:** 12 - 14 years old

**Stage 1, 2, 3:** all stages

## **FAMILIES**

Life skills do not stop at the school's gate! It is a matter of everyday life, from home to school and to work. And everyone is concerned, pupils as well as parents, facilitators, teachers. As a matter of fact, all adults surrounding children. A child will blossom through constant cheering. On the contrary, they will have a hard time if they are encouraged at school but denied support in their private life.

It means that encompassing families and communities is a key condition for the success of this programme. It is not easy, it takes time (and energy), but it is necessary. For this reason, some appropriate sessions include advice on activities to be carried out by children with their families.

Facilitators can also find useful advice to engage families and communities in Aflatoun's supplement: 'Community Engagement'.

*We hope that this curriculum takes you on a journey  
that you find stimulating and strengthening.*

# SESSION 1: Identifying and Praising My Personal Strengths

## Overall Outcome

This session is about human virtues and strengths. Participants will identify some qualities of their fellow mates, but also and foremost, they will here focus their attention on naming their own strengths and learning how to value them to fuel self-confidence.

## SESSION OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, participants will be able to:

1. Identify human virtues and strengths
2. Name virtues and strengths of others
3. Name their own virtues and strengths
4. Celebrate the amazing part of themselves.

## SEL COMPETENCY IN FOCUS

Self-awareness

## MATERIALS

Paper and pencils, Board, A basket or a hat, Mirrors

## METHODOLOGY

Start: Group Activity

Learn: Drawing and Poetry

Reflect: Group Discussion

## DURATION

65 minutes

## KEY WORDS

Strengths, Virtues, Cherishing, Self-confidence, Emotions

## INFORMATION FOR THE FACILITATOR

- We cheerfully encourage facilitators to follow the session for themselves first: is it easy to list qualities about yourself? Are you able to celebrate them repeating "I am amazing because



I am...”? How do you feel about it? Do you feel strong and self-confident? Are you ready to share this strength and positive mind-set with participants?

- Children and adolescents may have difficulties to find their own qualities, or qualities of their classmates. That does not mean they have no ideas, it is just that they are not used to do it. The role of the facilitator is to give help, suggesting different kinds of examples: “**I am** witty/ **She is** energetic / **He can** draw very well / **I can** run fast...”

## START

### Stage 1, 2, 3: Make a list of human virtues

Duration: 25 minutes

Materials: Paper and pencils, Board, A basket or hat

1. Announce the subject of the day: today we're going to talk about personal virtues and strengths, and we will start to list as many of them as we can.
2. First, ask participants to give a definition of the phrase 'personal virtues', relying on their own wording.
3. Point out the fact that personal virtues are **positive** characteristics promoting collective **and** individual greatness as personal virtues are beneficial to oneself **and** to others.
4. Inform participants that you are about to start a very sensitive session and that you will not accept any mockery or hurtful remarks.
5. Divide children into groups of 4, mixing abilities, and girls and boys. Make sure there is a good writer in each group.
6. Ask each group to find a funny name. And quickly write each name on a piece of paper that you fold and put into a basket or a hat.
7. Ask the most reserved member of each group to pick up a piece of paper.
8. Invite groups to unfold their paper and to discover the name on it: they will have to write down 8 to 10 human qualities to talk about the members of the other group. For example: “Tina is energetic and smart; Tony is selfless and meticulous; Liza can run fast...”
9. Give them paper and pencils, and 5-minute allocated time.
10. Float from group to group to give help, and check that the written virtues are indeed positive qualities.
11. At the end, bring all groups together and ask a participant to write down on the board all the quoted virtues, excluding duplicates.
12. Thank everyone for their hard work and invite all participants to applause to one another.

Here is below a list of personal virtues that you can use to fuel your first list and to give examples:

<b>A</b> Authentic	<b>B</b> Benevolent	<b>C</b> Clever	<b>D</b> Determined	<b>E</b> Enjoyable
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Amazing	Brave Bold Buoyant	Careful Caring Considerate Confident Courageous Creative Cheerful	Delicate Dynamic	Energetic Efficient
<b>F</b> Funny Friendly Fearless Faithful Fair	<b>G</b> Gentle Generous Good-nature Good	<b>H</b> Handy Helpful Honest Humble	<b>I</b> Ingenious Innovative Imaginative	<b>J</b> Joyful Jovial
<b>K</b> Kind	<b>L</b> Loving Lucky Loyal Lively Logical	<b>M</b> Modest Meticulous Mindful	<b>N</b> Nice	<b>O</b> Optimistic Open- minded Organized
<b>P</b> Pleasant Prudent Purposeful Playful Patient Polite Peaceful	<b>Q</b> Quiet	<b>R</b> Resourceful Reliable Rational Reasonable Reassuring	<b>S</b> Selfless Smart Strong Steadfast Sincere	<b>T</b> Tolerant Thoughtful Trustworthy Tactful Tidy Tenacious
<b>U</b> Understandin g	<b>V</b> Valiant Vigorous	<b>W</b> Wise		

## LEARN

### Stage 1, 2 and 3: draw your smiling self-portrait of personal virtues

Duration: 25 minutes

Materials: Paper and pencils, Mirrors

1. Give paper and pencils to each participant and invite them to draw their own self-portrait colourful and with a large smile.
2. Provide them with mirrors so that they can look at the details of their own face and draw it as much alike as they can (and, to be true, it is also a roundabout to accept to look at their own image and appreciate themselves).
3. When they are done, ask participants to write at least 4 to 5 of their personal virtues around their portrait. Please, help children who cannot write properly yet, or ask older children to do so.
4. If some participants are not able to name their personal virtues, ask a schoolmate to stand by them and tell them which virtues s/he appreciates in them.
5. When everyone is done, invite the participants to keep their self-portrait of personal virtues in a safe place (a notebook for example) so that they can have a look at it when they feel the need.

### Alternative for Stage 2 and 3: the acrostic poem

Duration: 25 minutes

Materials: Paper and pencils

The acrostic poem associates each letter of a name to a virtue. Let's give an example with Erica:

**E**nergetic

**R**eassuring

**I**ntense

**C**reative

**A**uthentic

1. Ask participants if they know acrostic poems.
2. Give an example (it can be with your own name or with the name of a highly-appreciated personality in your region or country).
3. Ask pupils to do the same with their names, **alone first** as it is very important to find your personal virtues by yourself.

4. Give help, or ask schoolmates to give help, if some participants cannot make it.
5. Invite children to write their acrostic poems properly and decorate it.
6. When everyone is done, invite participants to keep their self-portrait of personal virtues in a safe place (a notebook for example) so that they can have a look at it when they feel the need.

## REFLECT

### Stage 1, 2 and 3: I am amazing because...

Duration: 15 minutes

1. Invite each participant to claim their personal virtues in front of the whole group (or you can do it in smaller groups) saying **"I am amazing because..."** The voice has to be clear, the eyes up facing their comrades. Children can simply read their self-portrait or acrostic poem.
2. Encourage the most reserved.
3. Everyone applauds!
4. When is done, ask children the following questions:
  - What did we do today? Did you like it?
  - Is it easy to find and say out loud your personal virtues?
  - How do you feel about it?
  - How do you feel when your school mate's applause?
  - To what extent that activity can help you to achieve your goals in your life?
5. Addition information that you can bring to participants:
  - **Naming your own qualities is not arrogance or pride.** If you know your strengths, you can put them at the service of a better life and thoughtful choices: to do what you do well and what you like to do, what you want to cultivate is a way of making a positive contribution to the world and living happy.
  - **Having a personal strength does not mean that you can do it perfectly well all the time.** You can be a very patient person most of the time and lose your temper sometimes, you can be very funny but some of your jokes can drop flat...
  - **Everybody has virtues** and there is **no hierarchy** in qualities.
  - **Personal qualities are not fixed forever.** If you are interested in reinforcing or acquiring a quality, you can be encouraged to do so.

#### Activities with families

Participants are invited to bring back home what they learnt and to share with their family. They can show their self-portrait or poem, describe the personal strengths and virtues they identify for themselves, and how they feel about it. Then they encourage their parents, siblings, home relatives... to find 4 to 5 personal qualities for themselves and to celebrate saying **"I am amazing because..."** Tell children they have won if they draw a smile of gratitude and pleasure on people's face.