

# Assessing Through the Lens of Social and Emotional Learning

Do not copy, post, or distribute

Cynthia dedicates this work to all who have inspired her to pursue academic knowledge (dissertation committee members) and to the many colleagues who love making assessment work. She would also like to thank her mother and father who have instilled in her a SEL mindset and a “can do” attitude and her partner for always being her biggest cheerleader!

Dee (Darla) L. Fabry

# Assessing Through the Lens of Social and Emotional Learning

Tools and Strategies

Cynthia Sitek  
Dee L. Fabry

CORWIN

Copyright ©2024 by SAGE Publications, Inc.

This work may not be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means without express written permission of the publisher.

FOR INFORMATION:

Corwin  
A Sage Company  
2455 Teller Road  
Thousand Oaks, California 91320  
(800) 233-9936  
www.corwin.com

Sage Publications Ltd.  
1 Oliver's Yard  
55 City Road  
London EC1Y 1SP  
United Kingdom

Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd.  
Unit No 323-333, Third Floor, F-Block  
International Trade Tower Nehru Place  
New Delhi 110 019  
India

Sage Publications Asia-Pacific Pte. Ltd.  
18 Cross Street #10-10/11/12  
China Square Central  
Singapore 048423

---

Vice President and Editorial Director:

Monica Eckman

Publisher: Jessica Allan

Content Development Editor:

Mia Rodriguez

Editorial Intern: Lex Nunez

Production Editor: Melanie Birdsall

Copy Editor:

Typesetter: Exeter Premedia Services

Proofreader:

Indexer:

Cover Designer: Scott Van Atta

Marketing Manager: Olivia Bartlett

Copyright © 2024 by Corwin Press, Inc.

All rights reserved. Except as permitted by U.S. copyright law, no part of this work may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

When forms and sample documents appearing in this work are intended for reproduction, they will be marked as such. Reproduction of their use is authorized for educational use by educators, local school sites, and/or noncommercial or nonprofit entities that have purchased the book.

All third-party trademarks referenced or depicted herein are included solely for the purpose of illustration and are the property of their respective owners. Reference to these trademarks in no way indicates any relationship with, or endorsement by, the trademark owner.

Wondering icons courtesy of iStock.com/Aleksandr Kharitonov, iStock.com/amtitus, iStock.com/rambo182. Chapter 10 divider artwork courtesy of iStock.com/EllenM

Printed in the United States of America.

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

ISBN 978-1-0719-0741-2

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

23 24 25 26 27 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

DISCLAIMER: This book may direct you to access third-party content via web links, QR codes, or other scannable technologies, which are provided for your reference by the author(s). Corwin makes no guarantee that such third-party content will be available for your use and encourages you to review the terms and conditions of such third-party content. Corwin takes no responsibility and assumes no liability for your use of any third-party content, nor does Corwin approve, sponsor, endorse, verify, or certify such third-party content.

# Contents

Foreword by Nicholas Yoder	xxx
About the Authors	xxx
Acknowledgments	xxx
Introduction	000

1

## ASSESSMENT THROUGH THE LENS OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING 000

Why Apply SEL to Assessing Practices?	000
Social and Emotional Literacy Timeline	000
The Evolution of Social Emotional Learning	000
The Whole Child Emphasis: Historical and Contemporary SEL	000
Research Supporting Social Emotional Development	000
Social Emotional Learning Responsive Teaching and Learning Through SE SEL Assessing	000

2

## THE TEACHER ROLE AND THE STUDENT ROLE IN EVERYDAY SEL PRACTICE 000

Setting the Stage—The Role of the Teacher in the SEL Through Everyday Assessment Journey	000
The Power of Effective Daily SEL Assessment	000
Shifting Your Mindset	000
What Is “Assessment” and What Are the Traits of an Assessment Literate Person?	000
How Do I Know What the SEL Learning Competencies Are?	000
The Role of the Student in Integrating SEL Through Everyday Assessment	000
Setting the Stage—The Role of the Student in SEL Through Everyday Assessment Journey	000
Dream or Reality?	000

**4** ASSESSING AND ASSESSMENTS FOR RACIAL AND CULTURAL RELEVANCE 000

*Co-Authored With L. Erika Saito*

All Means All

Racism in Assessment: A Brief History

Measurement by Group

Examining Race in Grading Practices

**10** EVIDENCE-BASED SEL ASSESSMENT: PRACTITIONER ACTION RESEARCH 000

Assessment Tools, SEL, and Development 000

Case Studies in Action Research in T-K Through Grade 12 Classrooms 000

Assessing SEL Through Action Research in Early Childhood Education (ECE) 000

Transitioning From Preschool, Daycare, or Home to Kindergarten in the United States 000

Elementary Education Tools and Assessments 000

Appendix: Resources, Tools, Templates, and Ancillaries 000

Glossary of Terms 000

References 000

Index 000



Visit the companion website at  
[https://resources.corwin.com/AssessingThrough  
theLensofSEL](https://resources.corwin.com/AssessingThroughtheLensofSEL)  
for downloadable resources.

**Note From the Publisher:** The authors have provided video and web content throughout the book that is available to you through QR (quick response) codes. To read a QR code, you must have a smartphone or tablet with a camera. We recommend that you download a QR code reader app that is made specifically for your phone or tablet brand.

# Foreword

---

[to come]

—Nicholas Yoder

Do not copy, post, or distribute

Do not copy, post, or distribute

# About the Authors

---

**Cynthia Sistek**, EdD, (Dr. C) is a Professor in the Sanford College of Education for National University in San Diego, CA. Currently, she serves as the Academic Program Director for the Master of Arts in Social and Emotional Learning. In 2020, Cynthia co-developed MA SEL. In addition, Dr. Sistek-Chandler designed and edited the 10 Playbooks in Social Emotional Learning (<https://selplaybook.org>). For the 2022-2023 year, she served as the Chair of the SEL Special Interest Group for the American Education Research Association.



Cynthia is also a recognized leader in Educational Technology who in 2020, was awarded EdTech Digest's Higher Education Technology Leader of the Year. In 2019 she earned the prestigious ISTE and CUE Award for \*Making IT Happen\* as well as earning a Gold and Platinum Disk from (CUE) for her lifetime achievements and service to the educational technology community.

Cynthia is a pioneer in the area of online learning where she has designed and taught online courses since 1999. Her ongoing research focuses on the efficacy of online learning in higher education, the intersections of SEL in online environments, and how synchronous methods of online communication enhance teaching and learning. Her book, *Exploring Online Learning Through Synchronous and Asynchronous Methods*, was published in April 2020 and showcased many studies and practices that support online learning.

**Dee L. Fabry**, PhD, is professor emeritus, National University, Sanford College of Education, La Jolla, CA. She serves as adjunct faculty for the MA Social Emotional Learning teaching graduate level research courses and assessing for learning to impact both teaching and learning.



Dee served National University as the Associate Provost, University Academic Assessment Committee chair, Sanford College of Education Coordinator of Assessment Services, Department Chair, Teacher Education, and Program Lead for the Master of Science in Advanced Teaching Practices.

As Vice President, she led the test development department at Plato Learning and was the project manager for Kaplan Learning

in creating criterion-referenced tests. Dee was appointed to the National Assessment in Education Task Force where she contributed regularly to the blogs on effective formative assessment.

Her most recent publication is *Clarifying Learning Targets in Assessment Education: Bridging Research, Theory, and Practice to Promote Equity and Student Learning* (with M. L. Peterson, 2020).

## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTOR

---

**L. Erika Saito, PhD**, is the Director of Curriculum & Instruction at Teach Us, Versidi Inc., and former Assistant Professor and Academic Program Director of the Master of Education in Inspired Teaching and Learning (Single-Subject) and Course Lead in Social and Emotional Learning at National University. She is a California credentialed teacher with over 15 years in K-12 public and private schools. Dr. Saito is actively involved in the educational community, serving on school site councils for both an elementary and middle school, and working with local and international organizations in training and supporting classroom teachers in how to teach social and emotional learning with English learners and separately, Asian American Studies in K-12.



# Acknowledgments

---

## **PUBLISHER'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Corwin gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following reviewers:

Darilyn Gorton  
ELA/Business/Middle School Teacher  
Warwick Public Schools  
Warwick, Rhode Island

Louis Lim  
Principal  
Bur Oak Secondary School  
Markham, Ontario, Canada

Neil MacNeill, PhD, EdD  
Author, Educational Analyst  
Perth, Australia

Tanna Nicely  
Executive Principal  
South Knoxville Elementary/Knox County Schools  
Knoxville, Tennessee

Derek Peil  
Teacher  
Fremont County School District #1  
Lander, Wyoming

Jay Posick  
Retired Principal

Merton Intermediate School  
Merton, Wisconsin

Terri Serey  
Teacher  
Hacienda La Puente Unified School District  
City of Industry, California

Patricia Long Tucker  
Retired Regional Superintendent  
District of Columbia Public Schools  
Washington, DC

Crystal Wash  
Researcher  
Consortium for Educational Research and Advancement  
Chicago, Illinois

# Introduction

---

The authors of this book are both educators and researchers in a large college of education at a private, non-profit institution. Our book's focus stems from our work as and with practitioners. What are we seeing? Wrong question. What are we NOT seeing? We are not seeing content that aligns to the needs of classroom teachers and their students. We see SEL being taught for 20 minutes a day in a morning meeting and then not included for the rest of the school day. We see thousands upon thousands of dollars being spent on SEL programs without adequate professional development or classroom/schoolwide implementation. We want to see SEL every minute, every day, everywhere, and ongoing.

Our passion for assessment does not come from working at an assessment company or as a psychometrician although we have both run statistical data in our careers. While we love data, we primarily love qualitative data that tells a story, the numbers help show relevance. We have been drawn to using rubrics for our work in higher ed. As former practitioners in elementary, middle and high school, we have embraced other forms of assessment, other than standards based, norm referenced, bubble tests (no offense scantrons). As a Writing Project Fellow (of an affiliate of the National Writing Project), Cynthia discovered the power of writing as a means of expression and art, and as an award-winning educator in the field of technology, she has taught others how to integrate technology tools to facilitate learning and to support knowledge building through constructing podcasts, videos, and multimedia presentations.

In our 35+ years of being in education, we have seen thousands of commercially created assessments. In our Master of Arts in SEL program, our students analyze a variety of assessment assignments which are focused on *assessment for accountability*. The self-reports, observational checklists, teacher, student, and parent surveys are all created for the purpose of **collecting data** for accountability. While that information is needed by a specific audience, practitioners tell us that what they need are Student Empowered SEL formative assessments. When the student is at the center of the learning and at the center of the assessing, this provides a true SEL experience. .

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER AND STUDENTS?

---

So, why should you care? Why do we care? As the research on the effect of SEL deepens, there are many resources developed for assessing SEL programs, skills, and competencies. However, the literature is notably absent on assessment practices themselves that support learners **with** practices aligned with social and emotional learning. Assessment needs to be owned by the students as a developmental aspect of the process of learning progressions.

While data collected for accountability may be needed at the school, district or state level, practitioners tell us that what they need are the “whys” and “hows” in using SEL formative assessment for daily and weekly information to impact student SEL knowledge and skill acquisition.

This book blends assessment strategies commonly used in any classroom worldwide and contextualizes these tools and practices through the lens of SEL. We have compiled these assessing/assessment strategies which are primarily formative assessment tools, some paper based, some templates (from our companion website) and some have harnessed the power of digital tools to construct your own formative assessments. We have also included other forms of assessment, alternative assessments, authentic assessment portfolio-based assessment. Our masters level adult learners have been using ePortfolio’s for the last few decades to demonstrate competency and knowledge in various forms. They have come to understand that portfolios lead to self-assessment and reflection in their personal and professional growth—a highly effective SEL assessment tool.

You will find that you are already using some of these strategies, and through these chapters, you will learn why these tools work for assessing learning and how using the tools elicits an SEL skill or disposition. We sprinkle in solid research to justify why we need to be using formative assessment in all classrooms with all learners. Some focus on writing through reflection, others are performance-based checklists, and others are traditional quizzes and tests implemented in untraditional ways; we recommend ungraded **tests** for mastery. Applying everyday assessment strategies to measure improvement and learning is our primary objective.

Our goals for this book include learning how to think about assessing the “SEL Way,” how to use SEL assessing to provide feed-up, feedback, and feed forward to increase SEL competencies, and how to use SEL assessing FOR student learning to inform more effective SEL teaching. And that’s a lot of SEL! By assessing through the lens

of SEL we have embedded intentional SEL that appeals to everyone. As educators, we have embedded SEL into our practice, honoring the brilliance of all learners. SEL assessing will make learners feel more self-aware, more self-managed, more socially aware, and create learners who make intentional decisions as individuals and other times to build relationships with others.

The world organization for the promotion of SEL, Karanga, sums up our belief in SEL.

In a complex, fast-moving world, it is imperative that we equip all learners for new challenges and opportunities. Evidence shows multiple long-term benefits from embedding Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) opportunities in education in both formal and non-formal contexts. SEL can contribute to more inclusive, dynamic, and productive schools, communities, and workplaces, and can in the long term save governments money and accelerate productivity. (The Salzburg Statement for Social and Emotional Learning, Salzburg Global Seminar, Fellows, 2018, December, p. 1)

And by the way, Karanga also says, “SEL is life skills.” We should not politicize SEL. Social and Emotional teaching and learning it is a human right.

Do not copy, post, or distribute