

Read 1 - Ask 1 - Reflect

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Our group is made up of lower elementary teachers, a one-to-one who works alongside a second grade student and an EML (Emergent Multilingual Learner) support teacher working with students in Kindergarten-Second grade. We are mainly focusing on how we can instill independence and a self-starter mindset in our students (with academics and social emotional learning) in order to help them become active participants in their learning. Collectively, we understand how difficult and challenging it could be for students to begin the school year completing tasks independently. In thinking about our problem of practice, I got a deeper understanding on what outcomes a program like Second Step can bring to my class(es) and how to better my use of language around students by reading *“Preschool Teachers’ Opinions About Second Step Early Learning Curriculum”*. To name a few, students had a better contribution to emotional and behavioral reactions, grew in having confidence, asking for help and taking responsibility for their actions.

The author mentions “The collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines social-emotional learning as a process that develops five core areas of competence: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making (Bilir et al. 2022).” A connection I made from the reading to an interview I conducted with a former team teacher was when I asked them “How do you monitor yourself to make sure that you are setting up students for independent learning?”. She then said “By reviewing daily expectations and norms to foster independence and showing students how to respect materials. We then slowly take it away so students do that independently when looking at what the assignment they’ll be working on and how they will do it so that they are set up for success” (D.Powers, personal communication, September 18, 2023). I then asked her what were

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some strategies she implemented in her classroom to help her feel successful in setting up her students for independent learning. Desiree then continued to say, “By providing students with affirmations and giving them the right to reframe. At the beginning of the school year, students come in with a negative self-talk approach and by acknowledging them with yes it’s hard AND we can do hard things! For example, math and reading SHOULD challenge students in a healthy way and promote choosing healthy challenges.” I thanked Ms. Desiree for affirming students and acknowledging the challenges they later will overcome. I am inspired to incorporate a more positive response for students and hope it builds into the classroom community building as well.

### References

- Bilir, Z. T., Sop, A., Çavuş, Z. S., & Başaran, Y. (2022). Preschool Teachers' Opinions About Second Step Early Learning Curriculum. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 18(5), 105–121. <https://doi.org/10.29329/ijpe.2022.467.6>