THE BENEFITS OF INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS TO ADDRESS SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN CLASSROOMS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

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In this article, we describe how books addressing social-emotional topics can be used by teachers of young children during class read-alouds to enhance students' social-emotional development. Teachers of young children typically choose books for class read-alouds based on curriculum topics and student interest; however, they may not be aware of valuable books that can be used for class read-alouds to develop students' social-emotional skills. We provide examples of negative student behaviors that teachers may witness and recommend books that can be used to address those behaviors. We also discuss the essential components of read-alouds and provide examples of questions to ask before, during, and after reading books, as well as activities teachers can implement to ensure students grow from the read-aloud experience, both in their literacy skills and social-emotional learning.

Social-emotional learning is a critical aspect of the school curriculum for young children. Social competence and the ability to negotiate and cooperate with others are essential skills for children's early development as well as their later academic success (Carman & Chapparo, 2012; Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Welsh, Parke, Widaman, & O'Neil, 2001). When children act inconsiderately or engage in inappropriate behavior towards peers, it creates a negative classroom climate in which both victims and aggressors can experience social and emotional struggles (Heydenberk & Heydenberk, 2007; Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2004). In order to promote the well-being of all students, it is therefore critical that teachers of young children incorporate social-emotional learning into the curriculum.

Although researchers have explored a variety of interventions to address children's nega-

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tive behaviors in the classroom, one easily integrated but commonly overlooked practice is the use of class read-alouds with books that address social-emotional topics. A search for peer-reviewed journal articles using the terms "read aloud" and "social emotional learning" in five electronic databases (Academic Search Complete, Academic Search Premier, Education Full Text, ERIC, and PsycINFO) returned just 10 articles published between 1990 and 2015. Only one of the articles focused on the use of read-alouds for young children to address social-emotional skills. Due to this shallow research base, there is limited understanding among teachers of how literature can be used to develop children's social skills (McTigue, Douglass, Wright, Hodges, & Franks, 2015).

Class read-alouds are a typical feature of early childhood and elementary classrooms; they are used to introduce children to the joys of reading and to develop children's listening skills, experiential backgrounds, vocabulary, and concepts of print and story (Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey, 2004). Doyle and Bramwell (2006) aptly propose that reading books with social-emotional content along with strategic questioning and responding provides opportunities for children to develop both social-emotional skills and emergent literacy. Students' academic progress can be severely compromised when students have weak literacy skills with comorbid negative behaviors (Kamps et al., 2003). Therefore, simultaneously addressing behavior and literacy through class read-alouds increases young children's chances of success in school.

McTigue et al. (2015) propose that fiction can be used as a springboard for students to practice taking perspectives and analyzing conflict. Through insights gained from discussions around literature, children can develop interpersonal skills that prepare them to effectively resolve conflicts in their own lives. The use of literature to help children deal with emotional and personal problems stems from the field of bibliotherapy (Womack, Marchant, & Borders, 2011). In bibliotherapy, literature is used to help students learn how to manage their behaviors and replace inappropriate behaviors (Yuskevich & Doyle, 2005). The presuppositions underlying bibiliotherapy are that when readers relate to a character's struggle, they become emotionally involved in the story and as the character works through their problems, readers gain insight about their own situations (Myracle, 1995). When teachers conduct interactive read-alouds to address social-emotional skills, they can lead students in discussions that help them relate to characters and issues presented in the story, as would be done in bibliotherapy.

TEXT RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to find appropriate books for read-alouds, we searched on Amazon for children's books focusing on a range of social and emotional skills. After reading book descriptions and reader reviews, we obtained a selection of books and narrowed our recommendations for teachers to seven books with straightforward messages for young children. Although teachers may try to integrate books with moral messages in the classroom, they may not be aware of some valuable books written at levels appropriate for young children that address common classroom behaviors. Our recommendations are based on our experiences in kindergarten, first, and third grade classrooms.

While conducting field experiences as part of their early childhood education degrees, the first two authors read books with social-emotional themes to individual kindergarten students and conducted observations of students' responses. When the authors began teaching in a kindergarten and first grade classroom, they read books as whole group read-alouds and implemented class activities related to the readings. They documented conversations between students during the read-alouds and noted behavioral changes after the post-reading activities. Because *The Energy Bus* was more appropriate for older students, we collab-

orated with a third grade teacher to read that book with her students. The teacher shared feedback about student responses with us, which we incorporated in Table 1. Throughout the process of reading books to students, all four authors collaborated on selecting appropriate activities to supplement the read-alouds and analyzing anecdotal records of student responses.

Descriptions of our seven recommended books and situations in which they would be beneficial for read-alouds are provided in Table 1. We also provide examples of student responses to the read-alouds based on our classrooms experiences. In Table 2, we suggest before, during, and after the reading questions for each book, along with enrichment activities that can be used to supplement the read-alouds.

In the following section, we give an overview of the theoretical background on read-alouds and the importance of selecting developmentally appropriate texts. After reviewing research on students' use of conflict-resolution strategies and problems associated with poor emotion regulation, we describe some literacy-based curriculum programs. Finally, we review best practices in read-aloud procedures, illustrated with specific examples from our recommended books.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND ON READ-ALOUDS

A significant way that students increase their thinking, understanding, and comprehension of the world is through the intentional reading of books in the classroom setting. In particular, children's literacy development, expressive language, vocabulary, and background knowledge is expanded and strengthened through the process of teacher and student interactive read-alouds. Read-alouds can be used to teach content through the use of modeling, guiding, monitoring, and the incorporation of effective questioning techniques that stimulate high rates of student responses. Theoretical under-

pinnings from a variety of researchers (e.g., Clay, 2004; Fountas & Pinnell, 2006; Lennox, 2013; Shanahan et al., 2010; Wiseman, 2011) shed light on the power of teacher-student exchanges that are intentional and purposely focused. As students' knowledge systems are expanded through authentic interactions with the teacher, students are able to relate new insights and information to their own lives. According to Fountas and Pinell (2006): "Hearing written texts read aloud daily provides many opportunities for students to think inferentially, making connections between their own lives and what they read in books" (p. 218).

Rosenblatt's (1976) theory of transactional reading and writing supports the benefits of student-teacher interaction through the shared reading of books. Once students grasp concepts addressed in the interactive read-aloud, a transference takes place that can be molded and capitalized on by the teacher through practical applications. This transference is particularly pertinent when discussing the application of social-emotional learning introduced through interactive read-alouds. As young children respond to stories and hear the views of classmates, they negotiate new reactions and social decisions. Subsequently, students can apply their learning to interactions with peers and their approach to classroom conflicts (McTigue et al., 2015). The intentional focus on specific skills through read-alouds increases the likelihood that the targeted skills will generalize to other people and contexts (Womack et al., 2011).

TEXT-READER MATCH

Narvaez (2001) points out that just because a student has been exposed to a good story with a clear moral lesson, it cannot be assumed they will take away the intended lesson; what students remember is what made sense and was meaningful to them. This situation highlights the importance of the interactive nature of read-alouds in which teachers guide students

in their understandings and provide students frequent opportunities for practical applications of the desired behaviors. To help students understand different, conflicting perspectives, Narvaez (2001) recommends asking questions such as, "Were there differences in what people thought, felt and wanted? What were the differences?" (p. 8) Teachers can also promote the concept of sacrifice for a greater good by asking questions such as, "How did the action affect each character in the story?" and "How did the action affect the community (e.g. classroom)?" (p. 8) Students' ability to respond to these questions will depend on their developmental levels, which, as Narvaez (2001) points out, underscores the importance of careful selection of texts for read-alouds.

The first author conducted an interactive read-aloud in her first-grade classroom that some students struggled to comprehend due to their inability to view situations from other perspectives and to understand metaphoric concepts. Students' responses to the read-aloud and related activities are presented in Figure 1. These examples demonstrate the importance of selecting developmentally appropriate texts for young children when introducing social-emotional topics through read-alouds.

Despite the first author's experiences of students struggling to provide examples of nice things they could do for others, the second author read the book with a kindergarten student and found that the student was able to share many examples of how she could influence the feelings of others and provided several instances of how she had made others feel better. An important finding from previous research is that children's generosity increased after children recalled a specific instance in which they were nice to someone (Tasimi & Young, 2016). Tasimi and Young (2016) shared how the psychological phenomenon of moral reinforcement explains why recounting prior good deeds increases subsequent prosocial behavior. Therefore, when conducting read-alouds to develop prosocial behaviors, teachers should prompt children to recall spe-

cific instances when they acted in the desired manner. In the following section, we describe previous research related to social-emotional skills and conflict-resolution strategies used by children.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Social-emotional learning encompasses skills related to conflict-resolution, emotion regulation, and social competence. Research on social-emotional learning indicates numerous benefits for children, including improved conflict-resolution skills, social skills, and academic performance (Heydenberk & Heydenberk, 2007). The following section outlines research on social and emotional skills that some students lack, how the lack of social and emotional skills contributes to negative outcomes, and the role of teachers in facilitating conflict-resolution and emotion regulation. Throughout this section, we provide book recommendations related to the social-emotional skills discussed in the studies.

In a comparison of boys from a special education school for children with disruptive behavior disorders and typically developing boys, it was found that the number of conflicts boys engaged in was similar. However, children differed in their reconciliatory behavior; typically developing boys demonstrated reconciliation behaviors, whereas aggressive boys rejected post-conflict affiliation from peers. The researchers proposed that aggressive conflicts may escalate when children with aggressive behavior problems lack the ability to restore relationships after a conflict (Kempes, Orobio de Castro, & Sterck, 2008).

In another study on conflict-resolution, Hartup, Laursen, Stewart, and Eastenson (1988) found that friends more frequently used strategies involving disengagement (mutual turning away or distraction) than strategies such as standing firm. When friends resolved conflicts through disengagement, it typically resulted in an outcome involving equality. On the other hand, standing firm resulted in a win-

Figure 1
"How Full is Your Bucket?": Example from a First Grade Classroom

Ms. Britt began her introduction to a read-aloud of *How Full is Your Bucket?* with a discussion of ways students could be nice and show respect for one another. The students were able to discuss how they felt when a classmate said something pleasant to them or did something nice for them. However, students struggled when asked to give examples of nice things they could do for other people.

During the read-aloud, students were engaged in the story and answered a variety of questions. Most students were able to make connections to the boy and his sister fighting over his toys. When students identify with book characters and conflicts, they have concrete examples to reflect on during instruction and draw from during similar situations in real life (Womack et al., 2011). Therefore, being able to relate to the characters and conflict in the story contributed to students' comprehension.

Although students understood the message that being nice fills up their "bucket" as well as someone else's, some students were unable to understand that the bucket shown in the illustrations represented a metaphoric bucket to be filled. However, because the concept of filling someone's bucket is an abstract concept, it can best be taught to first grade students through a concrete representation.

After the read-aloud, students created "buckets" out of paper bags which were hung in the classroom. In order to engage in a simulation of filling someone's bucket, students wrote "bucket fillers" for three different classmates. Ms. Britt modeled how to write a bucket filler using the examples of "I like how hard you work in class" and "I like to play with you at recess."

The students' "buckets" remained in the classroom and students were supposed to fill them on an ongoing basis whenever they felt the need to fill someone else's bucket, and by extension, their own bucket. However, students did not write bucket-fillers after the initial activity unless prompted by the teacher. The students enjoyed filling each other's buckets and asked for more fillers to write after completing the initial one; however, they did not seem to understand the psychological concept of filling their own buckets (achieving a sense of satisfaction from being kind) as they filled their classmates' buckets.

ner-loser outcome. Standing firm and other responses to conflict, such as striking back, have been identified as not only ineffective, but as contributing to the likelihood of future victimization (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1997; Perry, Williard & Perry, 1990; Schwartz, Dodge, & Coie, 1993).

Using scenarios involving examples of peer victimization, Kochenderfer-Ladd (2004) analyzed different coping strategies that children reported using. She found that anger was associated with revenge-seeking whereas advice-seeking was predictive of children's attempts to stop the abuse by confronting their harassers cordially. A significant finding was that children experienced peer victimization with decreased frequency when they actively sought out conflict-resolution strategies and attempted to restore relationships.

Roseth et al. (2008) explored the impact of teacher intervention on the likelihood of preschoolers' independently resolving conflicts. They found that when teachers intervened in episodes involving physical aggression, chil-

dren's physically aggressive conflict increased, but when teachers intervened in verbally aggressive episodes, children's verbally aggressive conflict decreased. However, when students separated after a conflict, they later reconciled with one another regardless of whether the teacher intervened. Although this finding indicates that preschoolers may independently reconcile after aggressive conflicts, teachers should aim to prevent children's aggressive behaviors from occurring in the first place though modeling of desired behaviors, opportunities to practice desired behaviors, and praise for displaying desired behaviors.

When teachers observe students engaging in post-conflict behaviors that indicate students lack appropriate reconciliation strategies (e.g., revenge-seeking, standing firm, or rejecting attempts to restore relationships), it would be beneficial to conduct a read-aloud using a book such as *Zach Apologizes* (Mulcahy & McKee, 2012a). This book teaches children how to reconcile after acting inappropriately towards others. We found that kindergarten

students were willing to apologize to others after reading this book (see Table 1).

Many children benefit from not only explicit conflict-resolution strategies but also emotional coaching to explore their feelings and to develop socially appropriate emotional responses to social situations (Smith & Sandhu, 2004). Based on a comparison of aggressive and nonaggressive children, Priddis, Landy, Moroney, and Kane (2014) found that aggressive children were more likely to lack empathy; they scored significantly higher than nonaggressive children on measures of callous, uncaring, unemotional, and narcissistic behaviors. In addition to struggling with social skills and social competence, aggressive children were also more likely than nonaggressive children to exhibit symptoms of internalizing and affective problems, indicating problems with emotion regulation.

If teachers notice children displaying inconsiderate or hurtful behavior stemming from a lack of empathy for others, books that focus on perspective-taking would be beneficial. A book such as *Stand in My Shoes* (Sornson, 2013) would be an appropriate read-aloud selection to encourage students to consider the world from the perspective of someone else. Books that encourage perspective-taking also invoke critical literacy skills that prompt students to consider questions such as, "What view of the world is put forth by the ideas in this text? What views are not?" (Cervetti, Pardales, & Damico, 2001). Such challenging questions require children to consider the goals of other people. Research indicates that students' comprehension can be enhanced through taking other perspectives while reading (McTigue et al., 2015).

It has been found that experiencing intense emotional reactions and being unable to control one's emotions are the most significant risk factors for peer victimization (Schwartz, Proctor, & Chien, 2001). Therefore, teachers should pay close attention to students' ability to regulate their emotions. If they notice students exhibiting negative emotions and perceiving themselves as victims, it may be beneficial to conduct a read-aloud of the book, *Zach Gets Frustrated* (Mulcahy & McKee, 2012b; see Table 1). Teachers of very young students who struggle with managing their emotions may find it helpful to teach self-regulation strategies through a read-aloud of the book *Calm Down Time* (Verdick, 2010; see Table 1).

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL PROGRAMS

Research on social-emotional programs indicates numerous benefits for students. For example, Heydenberk and Heydenberk (2007) conducted a year-long bully prevention study in which kindergarten and first-grade students learned social skills and conflict-resolution strategies. Students shared their feelings in a group setting, which served to increase empathy for, and interest in, their classmates. They also provided examples of negative behaviors and alternative positive behaviors, which were displayed in the classroom as a daily reminder. It was found that students' prosocial behaviors improved after participating in the program and students were able to transfer their newly learned skills to situations outside the classroom.

In one of the few studies on an intervention designed to develop both social-emotional skills and literacy skills, Jones, Brown, and Lawrence Aber (2011) implemented the *4Rs Program: Reading, Writing, Respect, and Resolution* with third grade students in nine intervention and nine control schools. High quality children's literature was used as a catalyst for teaching students how to effectively manage anger, listen, cooperate, and negotiate with others. The results of this study indicated that compared to students in control schools, students in intervention schools displayed increased social competence and conflict-resolution skills.

In another study of a program designed to address both social-emotional skills and academic skills, Blair and Raver (2014) conducted research on the kindergarten version of *Tools of*

the Mind, which integrates activities to improve self-regulation and social-emotional development with instructional activities in literacy, mathematics, and science. In order to promote metacognitive strategies and reflective thinking, children met with the teacher weekly to review learning goals and reflect on their mistakes. In addition, intentional pretend play was used to develop students' text comprehension, language skills, and creativity. Findings from the study indicated that the program had a positive influence on children's executive functions, attention, and stress responses, indicating positive outcomes regarding students' self-regulation skills.

There are several other programs that incorporate literacy skills and social-emotional learning. For example, Zaner-Bloser's *Language- and Literacy-Driven Social-Emotional Learning Program,* for students in kindergarten through sixth grade, focuses on social skills and character traits needed for communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution in the 21st century workplace. The curriculum incorporates literacy goals, such as developing deep comprehension skills, learning to write for authentic purposes, and using oral language skills to resolve conflicts.

Another literacy-based social skills program is The Center for the Collaborative Classroom's *Collaborative Literacy* program for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. High-quality authentic literature is incorporated with children's daily experiences to create a community of learners who support one another's reading and social development. Students read, write, and discuss texts in lessons that provide opportunities for students to work cooperatively and learn to respect different views.

Although integrated approaches to social-emotional and literacy skill development among kindergarten and elementary-aged students are promising, many of these programs require intensive professional development, training, and coaching for teachers (Jones et al., 2011). Read-alouds, however, involve little preparation and are routinely incorporated into classrooms for young children. Teachers may therefore find it preferable to conduct interactive read-alouds that address social-emotional learning when inappropriate behaviors are exhibited in the classroom. Such an approach will help to improve students' literacy skills as well as their social-emotional behaviors.

There are many high-quality children's books, including *The Invisible Boy, How Full is Your Bucket?* and *The Energy Bus* that are effective for helping children learn how to adopt positive attitudes, handle adversity, and interact with and treat others. Our experiences with students in kindergarten, first-, and third-grade classrooms indicate that children can learn essential skills related to managing their emotions and treating others with respect through participating in interactive read-alouds (see Table 1). In the following section, we provide guidelines for using books that address social-emotional learning in class read-alouds.

CONDUCTING CLASS READ-ALOUDS

Fisher et al. (2004) identified seven essential components of effective read-alouds: (a) selecting books based on students' interests and developmental, emotional, and social levels; (b) previewing and practicing books; (c) establishing a clear purpose for the read-aloud; (d) modeling fluent reading; (e) being animated and reading with expression; (f) stopping periodically while reading to ask meaningful questions; and (g) making connections to independent reading and writing. In the following section, we provide examples of how each of these components can be addressed when conducting read-alouds to promote social-emotional learning.

Text Selection

Traditionally, teachers select books for read-alouds based on students' interests, but

Table 1
Book Descriptions and Classroom Implementation

Book	Content	When to Use	Implementation	Examples of Student Responses
Calm Down Time (Verdick, 2010)	Explores several strategies children can use when they are feeling sad, angry, or are unable to express their emotions. Recommended strategies include taking a break from the situation to calm down, deep breathing, and asking for help from others.	When teachers notice children becoming frustrated in the classroom.	Teachers can prompt children to use one of the self-calming strategies described in the book.	Kindergarten students were able to provide a variety of examples of things they could do to calm themselves down, including: "tell the teacher you're upset," "say nice things," and "get some peace and quiet."
The Energy Bus (Gordon & Scott, 2012)	Provides students with strategies for focusing on positive situations in their lives. Students learn slogans that help them develop positive attitudes and deal with a variety of challenging circumstances and people. The central message is that children should share their positive energy and be kind to others.	When teachers notice children struggling with a challenge.	Teachers can prompt students to adopt a more positive mindset toward themselves and others.	Third grade students emphasized the importance of not being a bully and demonstrated an understanding that, "if you don't treat people nice, they won't treat you nice," and you should "never let anyone bring you down."
How Full is Your Bucket? (Rath & Reckmeyer, 2009)	Outlines the importance of treating others in a positive manner and helps children understand ways in which they can demonstrate care toward others. The underlying theme is that people must have positive emotional energy within themselves in order to exhibit acts of kindness towards others.	When teachers observe students expressing negative emotions and acting inconsiderately towards others.	Teachers can encourage students to demonstrate thoughtful actions toward others and pay attention to their own state of mind.	Kindergarten student stated that after she was mean to someone, she felt "ashamed and ungrateful," indicating that she was developing appropriate emotions in response to her own negative behaviors.
The Invisible Boy (Ludwig & Barton, 2013)	Explores how children feel when they are not included by others. Children see the transformation the main character experiences as he forms friendships with peers, and they learn the importance of developing relationships outside of their immediate group of friends.	When certain students are not included in group activities.	When engaged in group activities, teachers can prompt students to include children who are not part of their social circle.	First grade students were able to empathize with main character who was being ignored. They said they would be sad if they were him and expressed negative sentiments about the classmates who were ignoring him.

(Table continues on next page)

in the case of books used to address social-emotional learning, books should be chosen based on needs of students in the classroom. For example, if teachers feel students are being uncooperative and creating a negative classroom climate, they may choose a book such as *How Full is Your Bucket?* (Rath & Reckmeyer, 2009). The book

Table 1
(Continued)

Book	Content	When to Use	Implementation	Examples of Student Responses
Stand in My Shoes (Sornson, 2013)	Teaches children about empathy by describing the value of paying attention to other people's feelings and expressing concern for their emotions. The book also emphasizes the importance of standing up for children who are being treated unfairly.	When students are acting inconsiderately or appear oblivious to the feelings of others.	Teacher can encourage students to be attentive to how other people are feeling and to respond appropriately by saying or doing something considerate for them.	First grade students were able to give examples of questions they would ask to see how others were feeling and identified several people, such as parents, teachers, and friends, that they could ask.
Zach Apologizes (Mulcahy & McKee, 2012)	Outlines a four-square apology model, which involves children identifying what they did that hurt someone, how they think that person felt, what they could do differently next time, and how they might make it up to the person.	When students fail to reconcile after a conflict.	Students can complete the four-square apology model and identify appropriate reconciliation behaviors.	Kindergarten student who displayed frequent anti-social behaviors was involved in a conflict with another student. Even though she claimed her aggressive behavior was an accident, she apologized to the victim, which she had previously been unwilling to do when engaged in conflicts.
Zach Gets Frustrated (Mulcahy & McKee, 2012)	Provides children with suggestions for positive reframing to help them employ an optimistic outlook when faced with negative situations. Children are encouraged to develop a mindset that helps them move beyond perceiving themselves as victims.	When teachers notice children focusing on experiences that affect them in a negative way.	Teachers can encourage students to consider alternative ways of viewing the situation.	First grade students were able to identify situations in which they got frustrated, such as during math class, when students wouldn't share with them, and when siblings were mean to them. They were also able to describe strategies they could use to calm themselves down in negative situations, such as taking deep breaths.

teaches students the value of kindness and emphasizes how performing kind acts not only helps others, but promotes a positive internal mindset.

Narvaez's (2001) research on moral text comprehension indicates that background knowledge and previous experiences influence how readers make meaning from texts. Just as teachers attempt to match the reading levels of texts with students' reading levels, Narvaez proposes that in moral and social education programs, teachers should match the moral reasoning level of texts with students' moral reasoning capacity. If students are able to analyze situations from multiple vantage points, they would benefit from a read-aloud of *The Invisible Boy* (Ludwig & Barton, 2013) in which the main character's invisibility represents both how he feels and how he is treated by others.

Previewing and Practicing

Before conducting the read-aloud, teachers should preview the text and plan specific questions and discussion points by deciding where they want to focus students' attention. Sticky notes with guiding questions strategically placed on pages can help teachers remember where to pause for questioning as they read. Teachers should also focus on specific vocabulary that will contribute to students' social-emotional understanding. Young children often do not have the language skills or vocabulary knowledge to effectively communicate how they are feeling. Significantly, Jones et al. (2011) found that preschool students who learned social skills and expressive language had fewer behavior problems and conflicts with peers in later school years.

Teachers need to help students learn vocabulary that will contribute to their ability to express their emotions. With a book such as *Zach Gets Frustrated* (Mulcahy & McKee, 2012b), it would be beneficial to discuss vocabulary such as "frustrated" and "tension." When previewing the text, teachers can encourage students to share how they feel when they experience these emotions. The second author found that kindergarten students were able to identify situations that frustrated them, such as, "When my mom doesn't let me play outside," as well as strategies they could implement to calm themselves down when frustrated, such as, "Think about my dog."

Establishing a Purpose

Books should be selected with a specific purpose in mind and teachers need to convey this purpose to students. Before conducting the read-aloud, teachers may tell students to pay attention to characters' faces, the dialogue, illustrations, or a repetitive text pattern such as the slogan "No bullies allowed!" (*The Energy Bus*; Gordon & Scott, 2012). In addition, teachers may display an anchor chart in the classroom addressing the skill being taught to which they can direct students' attention. *The Invisible Boy* (Ludwig & Barton, 2013) provides a variety of opportunities for teachers to address the purpose of the story. For example, the illustrations work in conjunction with the text, progressing from black and white to color to correspond with changes in the main character's emotional state and how he is perceived by others.

Modeling Fluent Reading

Becoming familiar with the story is an essential step for any successful read-aloud. Teachers should practice the text before conducting a read-aloud to minimize their likelihood of making errors while reading. The more fluently the teacher reads the book, the more engaged students will be in the story as their concentration will not be disrupted by the teacher's mistakes. A book such as *Calm Down Time* (Verdick, 2010), which is written in a rhythmic style, lends itself to reading with a cadence that demonstrates fluent reading. Fluency can also be promoted by asking students to repeat key phrases in choral fashion, such as "One, two, three … I'm calm as can be. I'm taking care of me" (*Calm Down Time*; Verdick, 2010).

Animation and Expression

Teachers' use of animation and expression will help captivate students in the book. Changing voices to match different characters' expressions and using a tone that reflects the author's mood creates a dynamic read-aloud. Students are more likely to enjoy listening to their teachers read if teachers engage them through dramatic facial expressions, hand gestures, and movement. In the book, *Stand in My Shoes* (Sornson, 2013), there are numerous dialogue exchanges between characters, and using a variety of voices and inflections while reading will help to gain students' attention and enhance their comprehension of the story. In addition to the value of student engagement, is the element of dynamic teacher modeling. As teachers read aloud to students, children

learn how story elements such as quotations, punctuation, and illustrations work to support the meaning of the text.

Discussing the Text

Strategic questions and discussion prompts before, during, and after the read-aloud must be clearly presented by the teacher. For books focusing on social-emotional learning, discussions should incorporate open-ended questions that emphasize characters' thoughts and feelings. McTigue et al. (2015) point out the importance of asking questions that prompt multiple interpretations to ensure that discussions go beyond simple retellings of the story. A combination of efferent and aesthetic questions during the read-aloud will contribute to students' comprehension of the story. Efferent questions help students understand information and details presented in the text and aesthetic questions help students engage with the text and make text-to-self connections (see Table 2 for examples of questions). The focus should be on students using text evidence, making text-to-self or text-to-text connections, and demonstrating clear understanding of ideas, particularly with regards to emotions (McTigue et al., 2015).

Independent Reading and Writing

Connecting writing activities to ideas presented in the read-aloud provides opportunities for students to process the story and enhances the lesson being taught. Teachers may provide students with a specific prompt related to the social-emotional area addressed that can be completed immediately following the read-aloud or later that day. To further extend the lesson, teachers can set up learning centers with related activities that focus on the central theme of the book. The example activity in the book *Zach Apologizes* (Mulcahy & McKee, 2012a), in which students complete a four-square apology organizer, is an independent activity that would be appropriate for a learning center. Additional activities may include writing sentences using new vocabulary and describing acceptable ways of responding in social situations.

CONCLUSION

Loneliness, anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem have all been associated with peer victimization (Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Hawker & Boulton, 2000; Kochenderfer-Ladd & Wardrop, 2001). Without early intervention, young children who demonstrate adverse behaviors are likely to continue to exhibit conduct problems throughout adolescence and adulthood (Dodge, Greenberg, & Malone, 2008). Curriculum developers recognize the need for instruction in social-emotional development and have developed a variety of packaged programs to improve students' competencies. However, obtaining and implementing packaged programs involve finances, training, and time that may not be available to those in the school setting.

Interactive read-alouds combined with strategic questioning and enrichment activities provide opportunities for teachers to incorporate social-emotional learning into the regular school day. Tasimi and Young's (2016) findings that children can be motivated to do good by recalling times when they did good deeds in the past demonstrate the importance of purposeful discussions and questioning. When teachers are proactive rather than reactive in addressing children's social-emotional needs it will create a constructive classroom environment that promotes positive social-emotional behaviors and interactions between students.

Through interactive read-aloud experiences, young children can learn essential life-long competencies related to being sensitive to the needs of others, becoming active problem-solvers, and seeing themselves as having control over their own life circumstances. Students' academic and social-emotional development are integrally linked; therefore, providing students with opportunities to simultaneously develop literacy skills and

Table 2.
Read-Aloud Questions and Enrichment Activities

Book	Social-Emotional Skills Addressed	Before the Reading Questions	During the Reading Questions	After the Reading Questions	Postreading Activities
Calm Down Time (Verdick, 2010)	Strategies for calming down when emotionally triggered.	• What does it mean to be calm? • What can you do to help yourself feel calm?	• Give your body a squeeze. How do you feel? • Can you ask for hug?	• Which of the calm down activities would you try?	• Practice how to take deep breaths, role play going to time out/cozy spot.
The Energy Bus (Gordon & Scott, 2012)	Overcoming adversity and staying positive.	• Can you think of a time when you had a bad day? • What were some things that happened when you had a bad day?	• What are some ways we can put "fuel" in our minds? • How does Joy, the bus driver, help the children?	• How can you show kindness to others?	• Draw a picture of a bullying experience and a positive vision picture.
How Full is Your Bucket? (Rath & Reckmeyer, 2009)	Developing a positive outlook toward self and others.	• How do you feel when people say mean things to you? • How do you feel when people say nice things to you?	• How did Felix "dip" from his sister's bucket? • What are some ways that Felix's bucket dripped? • What put drops back into Felix's bucket? • What happened when Felix's bucket was full?	• What could you do to fill other people's buckets? • What are some ways you can fill your own bucket?	• Create a class bucket for students to place statements of positive feelings towards others.
The Invisible Boy (Ludwig & Barton, 2013)	Feeling like you don't fit in / learning to include others.	• How would you feel if you were being ignored? • Do you ever feel afraid to join in and play with others?	• How is Brian different from the other children? • What happened to help Brian feel included? • How does Brian change throughout story?	• When you want to play with someone, what are some things you can do? • How can you include other people in your activities?	• Participate in class bonding activity, e.g., expressing gratitude for classmates, writing positive statements about peers, or sharing a favorite game or activity.
Stand in My Shoes (Sornson, 2013)	How to show empathy.	• What are some different feelings you know?	• What does it mean to have empathy? • How does empathy help us connect with other people?	• What are some new feelings you have learned?	• Teacher think-aloud of scenarios involving different feelings that allow students to share personal connections.

(Table continues on next page)

Table 2 (Continued)

Book	Social-Emotional Skills Addressed	Before the Reading Questions	During the Reading Questions	After the Reading Questions	Postreading Activities
Zach Apologizes (Mulcahy & McKee, 2012)	How to reconcile with others.	• What does it mean to apologize? • Have you ever apologized to someone?	• Why does Zach think he's right? (p. 2) • How does Zach look after he apologizes (p. 20) compared to how he looked earlier? (p. 2).	• How does apologizing help you feel better?	• Create a four square apology based on a recent conflict.
Zach Gets Frustrated (Mulcahy & McKee, 2012)	How to identify triggers and manage frustration through positive reframing.	• What does "frustrated" mean to you? • Name one thing that makes you frustrated.	• What was Zach's real problem? (p. 2) • How did Zach connect his kite problem to another problem he had experienced?	• How can you make yourself feel better when you are frustrated? • What are some good thoughts that help you when you are frustrated?	• Complete frustration triangle. • Practice chill skills.

social-emotional skills increases students' chances of success in school and throughout adulthood.

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