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There isnt just one way to be a great leader. Leadership comes in many forms and no single approach is the right way. By understanding different leadership styles, students can explore what works best for them and build confidence at the same time. Well share a few different approaches to leadership and tips for helping your students discover which one suits them best! Different Leadership Styles in Action No leader is exactly the same and thats okay! There are multiple approaches to leadership, including: Collaborative Leaders Excel in teamwork and ensure every voice is heard. Directive Leaders Organized and strategic, they excel at planning and structuring activities. Supportive Leaders Focus on encouragement, making others feel valued and included. Helping Students Discover Their Leadership Style Self-reflection is a powerful tool for identifying leadership strengths. Students can participate in elementary leadership activities such as: Proudest Leadership Moment Have students reflect on a time when they successfully led a group or helped a peer. Core Values Reflection Encourage students to think about what qualities are most important to them as leaders (e.g., honesty, kindness, problem-solving). What Are You Known For? Ask students how their peers would describe them and their strengths. Leadership Lessons for Elementary Students We understand it can be daunting coming up with new and creative leadership lesson plans for elementary students that keep them engaged. Thats what were here for! 1. Interactive Leadership Lessons for Elementary Students Stories of Great Literary Leaders Read books about famous leaders or characters who demonstrate leadership qualities. Books like The Lorax by Dr. Seuss are a great example of characters who took initiative and made a difference. After reading, engage your students in a discussion about the characters leadership qualities. Ask them questions like, What challenges did the character face? and How did they overcome those challenges using leadership skills? Team-Building Games Incorporate fun games that get students moving and working together, like Pass the Hula Hoop or The Human Knot. These games encourage communication, collaboration and problem-solving. After the game, ask students to reflect on what leadership strategies they used and how those strategies contributed to the teams success. Click here to read our blog and discover more group activities that foster teamwork in the classroom. 2. Long-Term Leadership Projects Classroom Event Planning Have students take ownership of planning a classroom celebration, reading challenge or another special event. Assign leadership roles such as coordinator, decorator or scheduler and encourage students to collaborate and manage different aspects of the project. Creating a Classbook Task students with organizing and compiling classwork into a professionally bound book, giving them a sense of responsibility and accomplishment. Not only does this help students develop leadership and organizational skills, but it also provides them with a tangible representation of their teamwork and effort. Tips on how to get started here! 3. Encourage Elementary Leadership Activities at Home Household Leadership Roles Encourage students to take the lead on simple tasks at home, such as clearing the dinner table, organizing a family game night or helping younger siblings with homework. These elementary student leadership activities build responsibility and initiative. Observing Leadership in Action Ask students to observe their parents or guardians and note ways they display leadership at home. Do their parents make schedules, delegate chores or help family members when needed? Have students reflect on these leadership actions and write about how they can apply similar leadership qualities in their own lives. Elementary Student Leadership Activities If youre looking for additional activities to add to your leadership lesson plans for elementary students, weve got a few more for you! Visual Leadership Activities Allow your students to tap into their artistic abilities and get creative! Weve come up with three elementary leadership activities that encourage students to express themselves while honing their leadership abilities. Creating a Vision Board Have students create a vision board that represents their leadership goals. Afterward, allow students to present their vision boards to the class, explaining what leadership qualities they want to develop and how they plan to achieve them. Leadership Comic Strips Ask students to create a short comic strip featuring a character who overcomes obstacles and leads others to success. This activity not only reinforces leadership traits but also helps students understand how leaders make decisions and inspire others. Team Banner Divide the class into small groups and have each group create a team banner that represents their collective leadership values. They can write words or draw pictures that symbolize their strengths. Have each group present their banner to the class, explaining what each design element represents. Classroom Jobs As mentioned earlier, assigning students leadership roles in the classroom promotes responsibility, builds confidence and encourages collaboration. Here are a few roles you can assign your students to help them develop leadership skills while keeping the classroom running smoothly: Attendance Taker Assign a student to keep track of daily attendance and report absences. Board Cleaner A student responsible for erasing the board and keeping the classroom tidy. Hall Monitor This student ensures that classmates walk quietly and safely in the hallways. Lunch Leader The lunch leader helps organize the lunch line and ensures classmates follow cafeteria rules. Supply Manager Assign a student to keep classroom supplies organized and distribute materials when needed. Role-Playing Leadership Scenarios Divide students into small groups and assign them different leadership scenarios. Have them perform short skits that showcase leadership in action. You can use these examples: The Team Captain Challenge Students act as members of a sports team preparing for a big game. One student is assigned the role of team captain and must encourage their teammates, make a game plan and ensure everyone is involved. Helping a New Student Assign students to role-play a situation where a new student joins the class. One student acts as the class helper, welcoming the new student, showing them around and making sure they feel included. Fire Drill Leadership Students act out a scenario where they are the class leader during a fire drill. One student is assigned the role of the emergency leader and must ensure their classmates follow procedures, stay calm and line up quickly and safely. Writing Prompts About Leadership While nurturing your class leadership skills, you can also use this as an opportunity to enhance their writing abilities! Weve found that the following writing prompts about leadership keep students engaged and eager to learn. Writing Prompts to Reflect on Leadership Skills Have your students work on self-awareness by asking them to reflect on their personal experiences with leadership. What does being a leader mean to you? Describe a time when you showed leadership in your classroom or at home. If you could lead your class in one activity, what would it be and why? What leadership qualities do you think are the most important and why? Write about a leader you admire and explain what makes them a good leader. What is one challenge leaders face, and how do they overcome it? Imaginative Leadership Writing Prompts Get those imaginations going with the following prompts: Imagine you are the leader of a new team. How would you make everyone feel included? Write a story about a character who becomes a great leader by helping others. If you could change one rule in the classroom as a leader, what would it be and how would it help your class? Create a superhero with leadership powerswhat are their abilities, and how do they use them to help others? Write a letter to a younger student explaining what you have learned about being a leader. Create a Leadership Classbook As your students grow their leadership skills, a project that showcases all of their hard work over the year would be an amazing keepsake! Collect students work throughout the year to create a leadership-themed classbook that highlights their growth, celebrates their achievements and encourages them to take pride in their contributions. Steps to Creating a Leadership Classbook Step 1: Order Your Free Classbook Kit Start by ordering your FREE classbook publishing kit, where you can choose a layout and format for your book. This makes it easy to organize your class work into a professionally bound keepsake. Step 2: Collect Students Leadership Work Throughout the year, gather writing pieces, illustrations and reflections from leadership lessons and activities. These materials will form the foundation of your classbook and showcase students growth. Step 3: Assemble and Submit Once your class pages are complete, arrange them in the chosen format, then submit the completed kit to have their hard work transformed into a beautifully bound hardcover book! Step 4: Share and Celebrate! Once your classbook arrives, share it with your students, their families and your school community. Parents can order copies and you can host a classroom reading event to celebrate your students achievements in leadership! Benefits of a Leadership Classbook Motivates students to do their best work Makes teaching writing and leadership skills easy and fun Inspires creativity and hands-on learning Encourages teamwork and collaboration Builds a sense of pride and accomplishment Teaches perseverance and showcases student progress Provides a cherished keepsake for students and parents Developing leadership skills isnt just about creating leaders. Its about building confidence, promoting collaboration, and learning to take initiative. Whether youre an administrator who wants want to develop leadership skills in your staff or a teacher who wants to nurture these important skills in your students, there are plenty of age-appropriate leadership activities to take part in. The activities below are learning in disguise because they provide fun opportunities for both adults and kids to step into roles where they support others and make meaningful decisions while developing essential leadership skills. Jump to: Leadership Activities for Educators Leadership Activities for Students Strong, confident educators lead by example, inspiring students to follow suit. These activities are designed to help teachers develop qualities like adaptability, communication, decision-making, and collaboration, all of which are essential to guiding students toward their leadership growth. Set up a peer observation system where teachers observe each others classes, focusing on leadership qualities like classroom management and communication. Afterward, teachers give and receive feedback, helping to identify areas for growth and improvement. Organize monthly roundtable discussions with fellow teachers to discuss leadership challenges in the classroom. Educators can share insights, offer support, and brainstorm solutions for leading students more effectively. Undertake an action research project where you identify a challenge in your classroom or school, research best practices, and implement new leadership techniques to address the issue. Reflect on the results and share your findings with colleagues. We Are Teachers; Amazon Form a leadership book study group with fellow educators to explore texts about leadership in education. This will provide new insights into leading effectively in the classroom and inspire innovative ways to guide students. Attend or organize professional development workshops focused on leadership within education. Workshops can cover topics like decision-making, leading change, conflict resolution, or mentoring students toward leadership. Take on the role of mentor for a new teacher at your school. Not only will this help you develop your leadership and communication skills, but it will also strengthen your ability to guide othersboth students and colleagues. Volunteer to lead a school-wide project, like organizing a fundraiser or planning a special event. This allows you to practice leadership skills such as organization, collaboration, and communication, all while making a positive impact on the school community. We Are Teachers Attend leadership conferences specifically for educators. These conferences often offer workshops, keynote speakers, and networking opportunities focused on leadership growth in education. Take a leadership self-assessment to identify your strengths and areas for growth as a leader. Based on your results, set specific goals to improve your leadership abilities over the school year. Create a leadership vision statement that outlines your goals as an educator-leader. This can include how you plan to foster leadership among your students and how you will continue to grow in your leadership role. Create small, collaborative working groups with fellow educators to plan lessons, solve classroom challenges, or work on shared projects. Take turns leading these sessions, and practicing leadership skills while collaborating on meaningful work. If your school doesnt already have a coaching program, propose one where experienced teachers coach newer or struggling teachers. As a coach, youll practice leadership by offering guidance, sharing strategies, and providing support. Volunteer to lead a professional learning community at your school. This is an opportunity to guide your peers through focused discussions on improving teaching practices and student outcomes. Expand your leadership skills by networking with educators outside of your immediate school. This can include joining local or online educator groups, participating in forums, or attending cross-district meetings to share ideas and challenges related to leadership. Incorporating leadership games and activities into the classroom is important for developing essential skills in young learners.These exercises are designed to help students practice key leadership skills in a fun and engaging way, encouraging them to take initiative and grow as effective communicators and collaborators. Each activity creates an environment where students can experience leadership in action, setting the foundation for future success both in and outside the classroom. Every week, assign a student to be the Leader of the Week. This student will be responsible for managing simple classroom tasks like organizing materials, giving directions, and leading group discussions. Rotate the role regularly so that all students get leadership practice. Present your class with a problem that needs solving (e.g., how to get to a local field trip locale via public transportation). Divide them into groups and encourage students to work together to come up with the best solutions. Each group presents its ideas and the class votes on the winning solution. Have students research a famous leader from history or their local community. Then, have them present to the class, sharing key leadership qualities they admire in that individual and how they can apply those traits to their own lives. Allow students to lead their parent-teacher conferences by presenting their work, reflecting on their strengths, and discussing areas where theyd like to improve. This activity helps build self-awareness and initiative. Create classroom committees responsible for different areas of classroom management (such as a supply committee or a recess committee). Each committee should be led by a student who reports back to the teacher, encouraging collaboration and decision-making. Pose real-world leadership scenarios to your class (e.g., What if a classmate isnt contributing to a group project?). Let students brainstorm how they would handle these situations as leaders, and then discuss how their responses reflect leadership values like empathy and communication. Introduce a weekly quote about leadership or responsibility, and have students reflect on it. Engage them in a class discussion about how the quote relates to their leadership journeys and how they can apply it to daily life. Pair up students and assign them the task of teaching each other something they are good at. This activity encourages them to take initiative, practice communication, and develop patience. Allow students to take turns leading morning meetings. They can decide the topic of discussion, manage the schedule, and ensure the meeting stays on track, building organization and leadership skills in the process. We Are Teachers; Animal Humane Society via animalhumanesociety.org and PepsiCo Recycle Rally via pepsicorecyclerally.com Organize a class service learning project where students lead the planning and execution. Whether its a school fundraiser or a community cleanup event, the students take ownership of each step, learning leadership through service. Let students collaboratively tell a story, with one student starting and the next continuing the narrative. The twist? Each student must direct the story in a leadership-focused direction, guiding how characters display leadership traits in challenging situations. We Are Teachers Assign leadership-related titles to regular classroom jobs (e.g., Resource Manager instead of Paper Passer, Chair of the Chairs instead of Chair Stacker, or Sanitization Manager for the student responsible for keeping hand soap stocked). This helps students take ownership of their responsibilities and builds confidence in their ability to lead. Create leadership role-playing scenarios in which students must act as a leader in specific situations (e.g., resolving a conflict between team members in a sport). This encourages quick thinking, empathy, and decision-making. Create a leadership badge system where students earn badges or stickers for demonstrating leadership qualities like initiative, collaboration, and communication. They can proudly wear these badges or display the stickers on a notebook, motivating them to regularly exhibit leadership skills. Once a month, host a Team Leadership Workshop where students participate in various team-building activities. Focus on specific leadership qualities, such as communication, trust, or problem-solving, and reflect on how each skill contributes to effective leadership. Pair older students with younger students in a mentorship program. The older students guide the younger ones through a specific project, helping to build their leadership and coaching skills. Give each student a leadership journal and carve out time for them to reflect on their leadership experiences at the end of the week. Prompt them with questions like, When did I take initiative? or How did I lead by example this week? Create a problem-solving committee in the class. When issues arise (such as arguments during recess), the committee discusses the problem and presents solutions to the class. Through this activity, students will gain experience in conflict resolution and decision-making. Encourage students to start their own clubs that meet before or after school. Theyll take responsibility for finding a supervising teacher, organizing meetings, planning activities, and leading their peersdeveloping their organizational and leadership skills throughout the process. Assign students leadership roles in long-term class projects where they oversee specific tasks (e.g., project manager for a science fair or editor-in-chief for a classroom newsletter). They are responsible for coordinating the efforts of their peers, setting deadlines, and ensuring the projects success, helping to build leadership and time-management skills. Each student presents a leadership topic of their choice, teaching the class about a particular leadership trait and why its important. This helps develop confidence and leadership communication skills. In a physical education class, have students take turns being the coach of their group. The student leader is responsible for giving directions, ensuring participation, and helping teammates stay motivated. In group projects, assign a different student to lead during each stageplanning, execution, and presenting. This way, every student gets the chance to experience leadership in various parts of the project. Allow students to create their own classroom news channel where they produce and report weekly on important classroom updates. Each week, a different student acts as the news director, taking on a leadership role by deciding what to report and how to present it. The role rotates weekly so that every student gets the opportunity to lead. Present students with real-world problems, like environmental issues or school-wide challenges. Divide them into groups to create action plans, which they present to the class, focusing on leadership, initiative, and collaboration. Organize class debates where students take on leadership roles by guiding their teams in building strong arguments and presenting ideas. The team leaders are responsible for coordinating research, assigning roles, and ensuring the debate runs smoothly. This activity helps students develop leadership, public speaking, and critical thinking skills, while also fostering teamwork. The role of team captain isnt just for PE class! Rotate this leadership role in any classroom group activity, and have one student take charge by leading the group, delegating tasks, and ensuring everyone has a chance to contribute. Team captains are responsible for keeping the group on track, solving conflicts, and motivating their peers. After completing group work, have students provide constructive feedback to their peers on how they demonstrated leadership. Encourage them to offer specific, positive comments as well as gentle suggestions for improvement. This process helps students become more aware of their leadership styles and areas for growth and also teaches them the importance of giving and receiving constructive criticism. Even if theres no formal student council, you can create a mock version within the classroom. Students campaign for leadership roles, such as president, vice president, treasurer, or secretary, and then work together to make decisions on classroom projects or improvements. This exercise allows students to experience the democratic process, develop their public speaking and negotiation skills, and understand the responsibilities of leadership roles. Assign one student as the project manager during group projects. The manager is responsible for delegating tasks, setting deadlines, and overseeing group communication to ensure the project progresses smoothly. Additionally, the project manager will facilitate meetings, resolve any conflicts, and provide guidance to team members. This role helps students develop essential leadership and organizational skills while learning how to effectively manage a team and drive a project to completion. At the end of each week, hold a reflection circle where students share moments when they took on leadership roles or admired leadership in others. This encourages peer recognition and personal reflection. Challenge students to lead a fundraising campaign or organize a charity event. This activity helps students develop leadership skills while engaging in meaningful, community-oriented projects. Additionally, it teaches them valuable lessons in project management, teamwork, and the impact of their efforts on the community, fostering a sense of responsibility and empathy. Start a classroom book club focused on leadership themes, such as teamwork and decision-making. Rotate the role of discussion leader among students, where each leader guides conversations, asks questions, and highlights key lessons from the readings. This activity promotes critical thinking and communication and allows students to practice leadership by facilitating group discussions and encouraging deeper reflection. @WendatVillagePS via Instagram Assign students to take turns as class pet-care leaders, where each student is responsible for the care of a class or school pet for the week. The leaders duties include feeding the pet, ensuring it has a clean living space, and attending to any special needs. In addition to these tasks, the leader is responsible for creating a care schedule, tracking the pets well-being, and communicating with the class about any important updates or issues. This role teaches students responsibility, initiative, and time management while fostering empathy and a sense of accountability. We Are Teachers; Art Class With LMJ; Christy Ferrell via Pinterest Allow students to express leadership qualities through creative projects, such as designing posters that highlight traits like integrity and empathy, or collaborating on an art piece that symbolizes teamwork. Have students reflect on these qualities and present their work to the class, explaining their artistic choices and the leadership principles they represent. Learn more: Collaborative Art Projects That Bring Out Kids Creative Side After a significant school event or classroom project, facilitate a class reflection where students lead a discussion about their experiences. Encourage them to share their thoughts on what went well, what challenges they faced, and the lessons they learned. This process helps students develop leadership skills by engaging with their peers through reflective conversations and promoting a deeper understanding of their collective experiences. Organize field trips where students can observe leadership in action, such as visiting a local business or meeting a community leader. During the trip, have students note specific leadership traits they observe and engage in discussions about how these qualities contribute to effective leadership. Afterward, facilitate a reflection session where students share their insights and consider how they can apply these leadership traits in their own lives. Have students prepare and deliver TED Talk-style presentations on leadership topics they are passionate about. They should focus on engaging storytelling, impactful delivery, and clear messaging. After the presentations, encourage peer evaluations and discussions on the effectiveness of their delivery and content. Set up a class idea box where students can submit suggestions for activities or improvements. Appoint a student as the Idea Box Leader, a role that rotates weekly, to review the submitted ideas, organize them, and present the top suggestions to the class for discussion and decision-making. This rotating leadership role helps students develop skills in organization, evaluation, and public speaking while fostering a sense of ownership and participation in class improvements. Plan outdoor activities such as scavenger hunts or obstacle courses where students take turns leading their group through various challenges. Each student leader is responsible for guiding their team, making strategic decisions, and ensuring effective collaboration. These adventures not only build teamwork and decision-making skills but also provide students with opportunities to practice leadership in dynamic, real-world settings, enhancing their ability to inspire and direct their peers. Create a classroom business simulation where students take on various leadership roles such as CEO, Marketing Director, and Team Leader. For example, they could run a hot-lunch service once a week where students manage the menu, handle logistics, and oversee customer service. Alternatively, they could operate a used-book store where teams are responsible for inventory management, marketing, and customer interactions. This hands-on activity provides real-world experience in leadership and management, helping students develop skills in teamwork, decision-making, and problem-solving while understanding the complexities of running different types of businesses. This series teaches students the same essential principles teachers learn in 7 Habits training, with content and examples geared specifically toward young teens. Each level addresses key leadership concepts, ensuring a years worth of lessons designed to help every student engage and participate in their schools leadership culture.The 7 Habits key concepts can be integrated into just about any subject or activityduring class lessons, at assemblies, in morning announcements, Family Nights, or at extracurricular events, ensuring a culture of leadership is woven into every aspect of a students learning community.7 Habits of Happy Kids7 Habits We are committed to bringing our education leadership community together through our two podcast series! THE EMPOWERING TEACHERCHANGE STARTS HERE Introduction:Leadership skills are crucial for the personal and professional growth of individuals. Nurturing these skills from an early age can set the stage for childrens future success. Elementary schools play a vital role in fostering leadership qualities amongst students. Here are 15 Leader in Me activities that can be implemented in elementary schools to help students reach their full potential.1.Classroom JobsAssign each student a specific responsibility in the classroom, such as being a line leader or door holder. Rotate the jobs regularly so that everyone gets an opportunity to practice various leadership roles.2.Collaborative Group ProjectsEncourage teamwork and collaborative problem-solving by assigning group projects. Monitor each group to ensure that every member is participating and contributing their ideas and skills.3.Student-led ConferencesAllow students to take charge of their parent-teacher conferences by presenting their academic progress, goals, and achievements. This activity promotes self-reflection, communication skills, and accountability.4.Goal Setting and TrackingTeach students to set SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) for themselves and track their progress throughout the school year.5.Peer Mentorship ProgramsPair older or more experienced students with younger or less experienced ones to provide guidance, support, and encouragement.6.Public Speakers ClubCreate a space where students can practice speaking in front of an audience to improve their public speaking skills, increase self-esteem, and build confidence.7.Leadership LibraryInclude books about leadership skills and real-life inspirational leaders in the school library or your classroom collection for students to explore.8.Service-Learning ProjectsIntegrate service-learning projects into the curriculum to teach students about community service while also addressing academic standards.9.Morning Meeting GreetingsHave students greet each other at the beginning of each day by shaking hands and maintaining eye contact promoting respect, inclusion, and a positive classroom environment.10.Conflict Resolution Role-PlaysGuide students through role-playing exercises that help develop skills in effective communication, active listening, and empathy when dealing with conflicts.11.Classroom MeetingsHold regular classroom meetings where students can discuss their feelings, ideas, and concerns while practicing their listening and speaking skills.12.The Leadership Wall of FameCreate a dedicated space to recognize the achievements and positive behaviors of students. Encourage students to nominate their peers for their leadership qualities.13.Daily Leadership QuotesShare a daily quote or proverb about leadership with the class to spark reflection and discussion.14.The 7 Habits Student JournalIntroduce a journaling activity where students reflect on their actions in light of the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (by Stephen Covey).15.Debate ClubEstablish a debate club to teach students about critical thinking, persuasive communication, listening, and research skills by defending a viewpoint on various topics.Conclusion:Incorporating leadership-building activities into an elementary school curriculum teaches children essential life skills that pave their way for future success. These activities offer engaging ways to inspire todays elementary students to become inclusive, accountable, and exceptional leaders of tomorrow. Leadership isnt just for CEOsit starts in the classroom! Incorporating leadership skills activities for students in the classroom is a great way to transform abstract concepts into hands-on learning, empowering teachers to foster resilience, teamwork, and decision-making. Thats why we have gathered this big list of engaging activities to teach leadership for students. Designed for educators, these ideas blend creativity with real-world application to prepare students for success beyond school. Check now!What are leadership skills?What are leadership skills?Leadership skills refer to the abilities and qualities that help an individual guide, influence, and inspire others. These skills include communication, empathy, decision-making, problem-solving, and teamwork. For students, developing leadership helps shape their behavior both inside and outside the classroom.Some core leadership skills for students include:Effective communicationActive listeningResponsibility and accountabilityConflict resolutionCritical thinkingCollaborationAre leadership skills important for students?Absolutely. Building leadership skills early prepares students for academic success, extracurricular involvement, and real-world challenges.Heres why leadership skills are essential:Boosts confidence: Students learn to express their ideas and take initiative.Enhances collaboration: Team activities foster cooperation and respect.Foster critical thinking through problem-solving scenarios and ethical dilemmasPrepares for the future: These skills are transferable to college, work, and community roles.10 leadership skills activities for studentsLooking for leadership activities that actually make an impact? These carefully selected exercises span different formatsfrom games to group projectsdesigned to help students practice real leadership in a hands-on way.1. Silent Line-Up ChallengeSilent Line-Up ChallengeSilence can speak volumesespecially in this team-based challenge! The Silent Line-Up activity is a fun and surprisingly effective way to help students develop leadership through creative problem-solving and non-verbal communication. It requires collaboration, patience, and strategy, all without saying a word.Materials: How to do it:Assign a category (e.g., birthdays).Students must line up in order without talking.Debrief afterward on what strategies they used.2. Marshmallow TowerMarshmallow TowerLooking for a leadership challenge that also taps into engineering and innovation? The Marshmallow Tower challenge does just that. Its a fantastic way to teach students how to delegate, communicate under pressure, and manage timeplus, its hands-on and super fun!Materials:Spaghetti sticksTapeStringMarshmallowsHow to do it:Set a time limit (10-15 minutes).Groups build a tower with a marshmallow on top.Reflect on team roles and communication.3. Class Council SimulationClass Council SimulationGive your students a taste of real-world leadership through this structured simulation. The Class Council activity encourages students to step into leadership roles, debate ideas respectfully, and make decisions that affect the whole group, just like real leaders do.Materials:Agenda templateWhiteboard or digital boardHow to do it:Assign roles: chair, secretary, members.Present a topic or issue to discuss.Facilitate a structured debate and vote.4. Survival Scenario ChallengeSurvival Scenario ChallengeStudents work in teams to prioritize survival items (e.g., matches, compass) in hypothetical scenarios like a desert stranding. This activity sharpens critical thinking, consensus-building, and ethical decision-making under pressureMaterials:Scenario cards, item lists, and timers.How to do it:Divide students into groups of 45.Provide a survival scenario and 1015 item options.Teams debate and rank items by importance.Present justifications and compare strategies.5. Blindfold Obstacle CourseBlindfold Obstacle CourseTrust, patience, and clear communication are the keys to success in this lively activity. The Blindfold Obstacle Course places students in a situation where they must rely on each other, giving and receiving instructions without sight. Its a memorable way to build trust and leadership under pressure.Materials:BlindfoldsClassroom-safe obstaclesHow to do it:Set up a course with chairs, cones, etc.Students pair up; one leads verbally, and one is blindfolded.Rotate roles.6. Community Service ProjectsCommunity Service ProjectsDownload this Community Service Project Planning sheet for your students!What better way to lead than by making a difference? A Service Learning Project helps students identify real issues in their community and take action. Through brainstorming, planning, and teamwork, students experience the impact of leadership in the real world.Materials:Planning sheetsCommunity contact infoHow to do it:Brainstorm local issues.Plan an outreach or service project.Execute and present results.7. Team PuzzlesTeam PuzzlesPuzzles are more than just gamestheyre leadership tests in disguise! Team Puzzles require communication, critical thinking, and a clear team strategy. Its a great way to see how students naturally step into leadership roles while working under a time crunch.Materials:Jigsaw puzzles or logic challengesHow to do it:Divide into small teams.Assign a time limit.Debrief about what strategies worked.8. One-Minute SpeechesOne-Minute SpeechesSpeaking up can be tough, but its a powerful leadership skill. One-Minute Speeches help students find their voice, organize their thoughts quickly, and speak with confidence. With just 60 seconds, theyll learn how to make every word count.Materials: How to do it:Pick a card.Give a 60-second speech.Encourage peer feedback.9. If I Were PresidentIf I Were PresidentUse this If I Were President worksheet to promote civic engagement and creative leadership visioning.Unleash imagination and spark civic thinking with this creative leadership prompt. In If I Were President, students get to dream big, express their ideas, and envision themselves in powerful roles. Its a fun way to build empathy and explore big-picture thinking.Materials:Paper, crayons, or digital slidesHow to do it:Prompt students to imagine being a leader.They write or present their vision.Discuss as a group.10. Peer Mentoring CirclesPeer Mentoring CirclesStudents often learn best from each other. Peer Mentoring Circles give older or more experienced students the opportunity to lead, support, and connect with younger peers. It builds confidence in both mentors and mentees, while fostering a leadership culture in your classroom.Materials:Meeting guidelinesSpace to gatherHow to do it:Match mentors and mentees.Create structured meetings.Reflect after sessions.FAQs1. How do you teach leadership to students?Heres how you can effectively build leadership skills in a classroom setting:Incorporate leadership into daily routines: Assign classroom jobs and rotate roles to give every student a chance to lead.Use project-based learning: Encourage students to take initiative, make decisions, and collaborate on group tasks.Model leadership behaviors: Demonstrate active listening, empathy, and clear communication so students can mirror those traits.Reflect and discuss: Use journals or group discussions to help students process leadership experiences and challenges.Provide leadership opportunities: From student council roles to leading warm-up exercises, allow students to take the lead in age-appropriate ways.2. What are the three main team leadership activities?Some activities are especially effective at developing leadership within teams. The outstanding includes:Marshmallow Tower: Engineering + leadership in one.Blindfold Obstacle Course: Trust and verbal communication.Team Puzzle Challenge: Strategic collaboration under pressure.Final thoughtsIntegrating leadership skills activities for students into your lesson plans isnt just a bonusits a game-changer. These hands-on experiences empower kids to take initiative, collaborate effectively, and build the confidence theyll carry for life. Start small, stay consistent, and youll be amazed at how quickly your students step into leadership rolesboth inside and outside the classroom. Looking to help your students grow as leaders and develop leadership skills? As students grow older, there is a certain amount of responsibility placed on their shoulders. Whether they have official leadership positions or are simply the oldest cohort on campus, they need to understand the importance of their roles asstudent leaders and the qualities they need to possess.Thats where leadership activities come into play as part of social and emotional learning in elementary school. We could debate all day about whether good leaders are born or made, but the teachers on the Teach Starter team have all seen students grow into leaders throughout the school year!What Makes a Good Leader?Being a student leader is about more than just showing a new kid the ropes in the classroom. It is about becoming an independent thinker who understands how to work as part of a team and positively affect those around them.While leadership skills can come naturally to some, research shows that anyone, even young children, can learn and develop leadership qualities when they are explicitly taught and given opportunities to lead. If you subscribe to the idea of constructivism (which our teacher team does!), then you believe that kids can develop their leadership skills over time by applying past knowledge into new ways of understanding the world.So, what should we be teaching our students to unlock their leadership potential?ThisLeadership Qualities Poster Packincludes posters highlighting 9 qualities that make a great leader. Print your own copies and post them in the classroom to help your students understand how they can be at their best as school leaders.It includes the following qualities of a good leader:Communication Skills and a Trustworthy NatureCommunicating isnt just about being a confident speaker! A good leader knows when to speak, how to speak, and also how to listen effectively. In order to inspire trust in others, students must speak with good intentions.This means speaking with honesty and kindness.Download a traits of a good citizen matching activity for your classroom!Creative and FlexibleModeling a creative and flexible mindset is important as a student leader. A good leader is able to evaluate a situation quickly and come up with the best course of action. And if that action doesnt provide the best results, a good leader is able to adapt and change their course to incorporate new ideas and innovations.ResponsibleGood leadership is not about being in charge; its about supporting those you are leading. Student leaders take responsibility for their actions and choices. If something goes wrong, they dont blame others or make excuses. Instead, they take responsibility, learn from it, correct it, and continue moving forward. When leaders succeed, they are humble, recognizing the efforts of those around them.Motivated and PositiveHaving a positive mindset is integral to inspiring and leading others! As educators, it is important that we instill in our students a belief that whatever goal has been set can and should be accomplished, even if it seems impossible at first. This type of confidence inspires others to be positive! Talk to your students about having a growth mindset (or use some of our fun resources!) and encourage your class to motivate each other towards common goals. Being motivated and motivating others is a big part of what makes a good leader.Committed and Leads By ExampleThis is perhaps the most important quality of all! A great leader leads by example. Younger students often look up to older students with awe and admiration! They closely watch and copy the behaviors of the older students. A good student leader understands their responsibility as a role model to the younger students.Not only do they recognize this responsibility, but a good leader is excited about the opportunity to lead and guide others! They would never ask anyone to do anything that they are not willing to do themselves.Leadership Activities for KidsSo you know what makes a good leader but how do we help our students develop all these great leadership skills? Here are some of our favorite social and emotional activities that are all about leadership.All About MeAt the beginning of the school year, you may have handed your students a template to fill out about themselves and encouraged them to trade with a classmate to learn about their similarities and difference. Did you realize this common icebreaker activity was a leadership activity too?Simply getting kids to sit down and think about describing themselves is a means to get them more comfortable with their own identity, an important part of being a strong leader. You might opt to try it again, only this time ask your students to focus less on material items and more on adjectives to describe themselves.This self-perception worksheet can be a great scaffold, or you can give each student a positive self-talk writing prompt to get them started.Responding to Stress Group SkitThis social-emotional lesson requires students to be broken out into groups to perform a skit thatdemonstrates how to respond to stress. The students will work together to brainstorm, write, and act out their skit, giving your students a chance to practice being team players and finding their strengths in group work.Reaction CharadesLearning to evaluate a situation and respond in kind isnt the easiest thing for many kids. These reaction charades are a fun way to help kids develop their understanding of social cues and improve their leadership skills. Students pull direction cards and act out various reactions while their classmates guess what the student is doing.What Makes a Leader?In this What Makes a Leader? worksheet designed for second- and third-graders, students explain the words and actions they see leaders use and list examples of how they might model leadership at home and in school.Looking for more ways to encourage leadership skills in the classroom? Try these resources to encourage collaboration and working as a group:[resource:2656666][resource:4724789] [resource:4825381]Banner image via Shutterstock/David Tadevosian Access alignments between FranklinCovey Educations offerings and various grant priorities.Full-Service Community Schools21st Century Community Learning CentersMagnet School Assistance Programs Culture CoachPhil Boyte wants your school to be a place so fun, encouraging and safe you have to beg students and teachers to leave at the end of the day.Des Moines, IA | Los Angeles, CA Leader in Me Global AmbassadorAs former principal of A.B. Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary School, Muriel Summers and her staff created the first leadership elementary school in the nation using FranklinCoveys The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People as a foundation.Des Moines, IA | Orlando, FL | Los Angeles, CA FranklinCovey Education Practice Leader & Executive Vice President of Global Solutions and PartnershipsOrlando, FL | Los Angeles, CA Senior Consultant at FranklinCovey & Author of Change: How to Turn Uncertainty into Opportunity.Orlando, FL Change Starts Here Podcast Host, Managing Director FranklinCoveyDes Moines, IA Leader in Me Coach and Consultant for FranklinCovey Education.Des Moines, IA | Orlando, FL | Los Angeles, CA Senior Consultant & Coach FranklinCoveyOrlando, FL Elementary leadership activities in the classroom assist students to develop skills necessary as they prepare for junior high and high school. Laying the foundation for developing leadership skills involves critical thinking and exploring solutions to problems that sidetrack team projects and other group activities.Here are three tips on activities that can be used to examine leadership with elementary school students.Elementary leadership activity #1: Who makes a good leader?Perhaps the best place to start with elementary leadership activities into the classroom is with a solid definition of what leadership is. One project that helps students grasp the overall concept involves brainstorming. This activity also includes key components related to language arts, technology, health (emotional components), mathematics and critical thinking. Follow these steps:Create a diagramUse critical thinking skills from students to add details to the diagramHave students organize details to write their own short narrative answering the question, What makes a good leader?Discuss the skills and attributes that define a good leader with the class. Encourage students to add their own perceptions about what makes a good leader. Encourage students to take notes. After discussing leadership roles and skills, explain the concept of brainstorming to the class. Ask students to create their own lists for individuals diagrams and essays.Elementary leadership activity #2: Communication barriersEffective communication is a primary characteristic of a good leader. Educators and students must develop effective communication styles and use available tools that overcome obstacles that hinder communication among team members. Communication is vital to our existence; elementary leadership activities can address four common barriers to communication.Language barriersLeaders must speak in a commonly understood language or find alternative ways to communicate using pictures, expressions and vocal intonation. Have children communicate with flashcards, colored flags or hand signals during a group activity to show how language barriers limit understanding.Physical barriersSometimes not being face-to-face can create communication barriers. Activities that create and eliminate barriers demonstrate how physical separation limits personal expression.Perceived barriersSome barriers are self-imposed. Stereotyping and past experience play a huge role in the development of perceived barriers. With guidance from the instructor, students can explore how stereotypes develop and what perpetuates those perceptions. Discussions about how to overcome these imaginary boundaries will lead students to a better understanding of how and why emotions impact communication.Interpersonal barriersPersonality differences often inhibit communication. Conflict resolution techniques are necessary to set aside personal differences to support team efforts. Elementary leadership activities to help students understand different personality types lead to better understand of the various forms of expressionfacial, vocal, behavioral, physical and emotional.Elementary leadership activity #3: Ethical decision makingAlmost every leadership decision affects people directly and indirectly. Ethics is a difficult concept for many primary school students to grasp; however, understanding the difference between right and wrong actions gives even first and second graders a foundation for developing strong leadership skills.Making good decisions for a group or team involves exploring how decisions will impact everyone, including people that will interact directly and indirectly with the team. For elementary students this group of stakeholders will include other students, teachers, parents, cafeteria workers, administrators, family members and others.Ask students to list as many people as they can that they come in contact with in a week. Then have students list how their decisions affect other people. As the students share their lists, they will see how some people on the lists overlap and some are only on one list. This gives the teacher an opportunity to explain how everyone influences some common groups.Explore the outcomes for positive, effective decisions that consider the consequences and people involved against decisions made in haste without considering the ripple effects.You may also like to read Leadership activities help students to develop essential leadership skills as they prepare for their future roles in society.Leadership activities can help students communicate effectively, collaborate with others, solve problems creatively, and take responsibility for their actions.They are also a great way to build student leadership culture.Heres a list of 10 leadership activities that develop leadership skills in primary school students with each outlined below:Student Leadership Activities in Primary School:1. Human Knot2. Blindfold Sketch3. Balloon Race4. Flip the tarp5. The Great Puzzle Race6. Paper Bag Dramatics7. Build the Milky Way8. Wheel Art9. Marshmallow Speghetti Tower10. Leadership BingoLeadership Activity Outlines 1. Human KnotIn this activity students stand in a circle and grab the hand of someone from across the circle with their right hand, and then grab the hand of a different person with their left hand.The goal is to untangle the human knot without letting go of the hands.This leadership activity teaches students how to work as a team, listen to each other, and find creative solutions. 2. Blindfolded FetchThis activity requires one student to be blindfolded and another student to guide them verbally to fetch an object from a designated area.The team that retrieves the object first wins.Clear communication, trust and following instructions are the aims of this fun leadership activity. 3. Balloon RaceIn teams of 4 or 5, students place a balloon between each of them on their backs and stomachs, with one leader at the front.The leader must communicate when to move as they race against other teams.This leadership activity teaches students how to coordinate their movements, listen to their leader, and cooperate with their teammates. 4. Flip the TarpIn this leadership activity teams of 3-4 students stand on a tarp and flip it over without stepping off it.The team that flips the tarp first wins.