



# INTRODUCING LEADERSHIP

*Students find quotes that reflect their own ideas of leadership and articulate which aspects of leadership are important to them.*

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will examine their own ideas on leadership
- Students will consider other's perspectives on leadership
- Students will articulate leadership characteristics that are most important to them

## MATERIALS

- Leadership Quotes (printed to place around the room)
- Poster paper or whiteboard

## TIME

30 min

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## LESSON INTRO

Understanding our collective idea of leadership is a vital place to begin. Analyzing our own ideas and experiences with leadership, as well as looking at the lives of leaders from the past, helps us to frame our way forward. When we have a clear idea of where we are headed in developing our leadership skills as individuals and groups, we will make great progress toward realizing our leadership goals!

But leadership is a big topic! This lesson gets students just starting to articulate their initial ideas about what leadership means to them. In the process, they'll hear new and divergent ideas from their peers.

If you're starting a series of lessons on leadership with this lesson. Consider choosing a GUIDING QUESTION from the list in the Leadership Roundtable lesson. .

## LESSON STEP BY STEP

1. Display the array of quotes around the room.
2. Tell students that they will be walking around the room silently reading the quotes and taking notes.
3. As they circulate, students should consider the question: *Which quote best defines leadership? Why?*
4. Allow time for silent walking, reading, and reflection.
5. Students should be prepared to share out once they return to their seats.

6. Students can take pictures of the quote they pick, or—once all students have finished, gather the quotes and lay them out in the student circle.
7. Ask students to read their quote to the group and explain why that quote in particular stood out to them. Some students may be willing to share a personal story or reason why they picked that quote.
8. Consider using the stems below to elicit the logic behind the students' choice of language:

"I picked this quote because \_\_\_\_\_."

"In my opinion, this quote communicates \_\_\_\_\_ when it says \_\_\_\_\_."

9. Allow time for all students to share.
10. Follow up this student discussion on leadership by asking students to summarize their ideas into one word. You are looking to gather a list of leadership characteristics based on students' ideas.

Use this stem if necessary, "Leaders are \_\_\_\_\_."

11. Create a "Leaders are..." list from student-generated characteristics. You will use this list as a reference throughout subsequent sessions.

## VARIATIONS

1. Have students Pair-Share their ideas about leadership rather than sharing out to the entire group.
2. Instead of discussing and sharing, students can draw/sketch pictorial representations of their chosen quote to promote thinking and conversation in a new way.
3. Choose different quotes that speak to issues currently facing your class/ school/ community. This way, you can easily change the activity to focus on themes or values other than leadership such as integrity, generosity, etc...

## FACILITATOR TIPS AND NOTES

If you're using this as a jumping off place, keep the quotes and Leaders Are list posted. Refer back to these ideas as you progress through the unit.

## REFLECTION & WRAP UP

1. Invite students to PAIR-SHARE about someone personally connected to them who they see as a leader. Have them explain why!

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## NOTES

- **Educational Standards:** CASEL: Self-Awareness, CASEL: Social-Awareness, P21: Communication and Collaboration, P21: Leadership and Responsibility, CCRS:SL1 Have Diverse Conversations

"The mediocre teacher tells.  
The good teacher explains.  
The superior teacher  
demonstrates. The great  
teacher inspires."

- William Arthur Ward

“Good leaders organize and align people around what the team needs to do. Great leaders motivate and inspire people with why they’re doing it.”

—Marillyn Hewson

"Keep your fears to yourself,  
but share your courage with  
others."

- Robert Louis Stevenson

"Example is not the main  
thing in influencing others.  
It is the only thing."  
- Albert Schweitzer

"A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be."

—Rosalynn Carter

"Being responsible  
sometimes means pissing  
people off."

- Colin Powell

"There is a difference between being a leader and being a boss. Both are based on authority. A boss demands blind obedience; a leader earns his authority through understanding and trust."

- Klaus Balkenhol

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

—Maya Angelou

"If you want to build a ship,  
don't drum up the men to  
gather wood, divide the work,  
and give orders. Instead,  
teach them to yearn for the  
vast and endless sea."

- Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

“Power isn't control at all—power is strength, and giving that strength to others.”

-Beth Revis

"Leadership is an action, not  
a position."

- Donald McGannon

"Become the kind of leader  
that people would follow  
voluntarily, even if you had  
no title or position."

- Brian Tracy

“Anyone can hold the helm  
when the sea is calm.”

- Publilius Syrus



# SILENT LINE UP

*Group activity that requires the use of various SEL skills.*

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will practice various SEL skills.
- Students will evaluate on their own and group's skills in action.

## MATERIALS

- None

## TIME

15 min

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## LESSON INTRO

This activity pairs well with most of the other lessons. If you are looking to extend time on any lesson, or get students up and moving, this is your ticket!

The objective of this activity is for students to complete a mildly difficult task (lining up in birth-month order). In order for students to complete it successfully, they will need to utilize skills such as creative communication, group organization, seeking to understand others, and moments of followership.

Students should be allowed to work through the activity without teacher intervention in order for student skills to emerge and struggle to naturally occur.

The reflection of this activity is where the facilitator can guide student learning.

## LESSON STEP BY STEP

1. The goal of this activity is for students to line up in order of their birth-month, starting with January and ending with December. The rule imposed is that students cannot talk, and must figure out how to complete the task silently.
2. Explain that this activity is meant for students to practice the skills that they have been discussing in previous sessions.
3. Introduce the activity to the students with the goal and the rule.  
GOAL: Line up in birth-month order.      RULE: No talking.

4. Once everyone understands the rules, begin!
5. Allow time for students to work through the task.
6. If students are continuing to struggle with completing the line-up, give them a time limit to finish.
7. Once students have finished the birthday line-up, ask the group to check their work by saying the month in which they were born.
8. If students are very successful the first go around, give them a harder challenge and have them do it again!

## FACILITATOR TIPS AND NOTES

1. The facilitator should only insert themselves in the student process to enforce the “no talking” rule.
2. Be observant of student’s process as they go through the activity. There are often teachable moments that can be brought up in the reflection.

## VARIATIONS

1. If students are quick and successful with the activity the first time, have them do it again with a higher level of difficulty such as:
  - Alphabetical order by middle name. Be aware that some students do not have middle names.
  - Largest to smallest by animal size. For this version, the facilitator would secretly assign a different animal to each student.

## REFLECTION & WRAP UP

1. Guide students to reflect on their role in this activity and how they helped achieve success. Link the discussion back to previous conversations on leadership or other skills, and what evidence they saw of those skills in themselves or their classmates.
2. Use these questions for reflection:
  - What did you notice as the line was forming?
  - Do you think the group was successful? Why or why not?
  - If you would give the group a letter grade (A, B, C, D, F) for how you completed this activity, what would it be, and why?
  - What strategies were helpful for you or the group?
  - What strategies were least helpful?
  - What principles of leadership/assertiveness/problem-solving, etc... did you see?
  - Who did you see “being a leader” during this activity? What specifically did they do?

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## NOTES

**Educational Standards:** CASEL: Self-Awareness, CASEL: Relationship Skills, P21: Creativity and Innovation, P21: Social and Cross-Cultural Skills, P21: Leadership and Responsibility, CCRS:SL3 Evaluate Perspective and Evidence