

Demystifying SEL Assessment, Part I: Why, What and How

Clark McKown

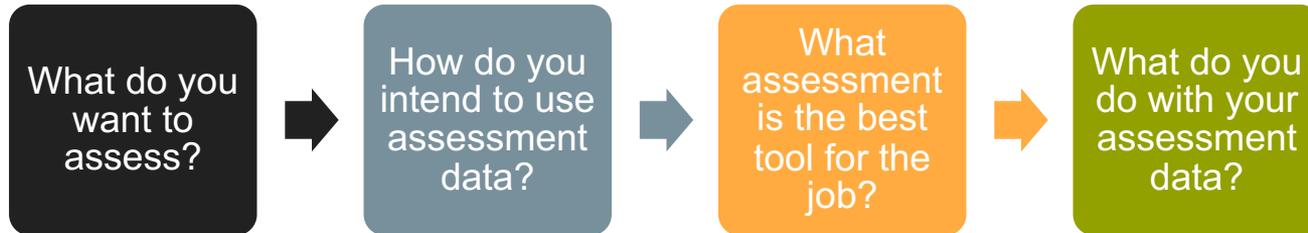


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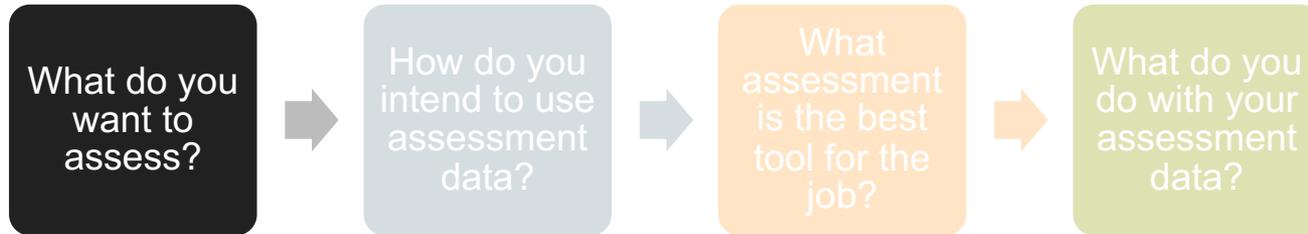
Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to describe the goals, risks, and benefits of assessing SEL.
- Participants will be able to describe four methods of assessing SEL.
- Participants will be able to describe four ways they can use SEL assessment data to guide practice.

The Elements of SEL Assessment



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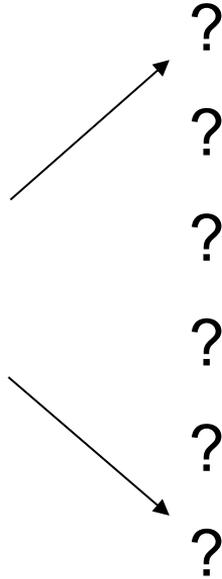


First: What is SEL?

- ? Skills
- ? Behaviors
- ? Beliefs
- ? Environment
- ? Symptoms
- ? Mental health

What is SEL?

Let's compare
the assessment
implications of
these two:



- ?
- ?
- ?
- ?
- ?
- ?
- ?

Skills

Behaviors

Beliefs

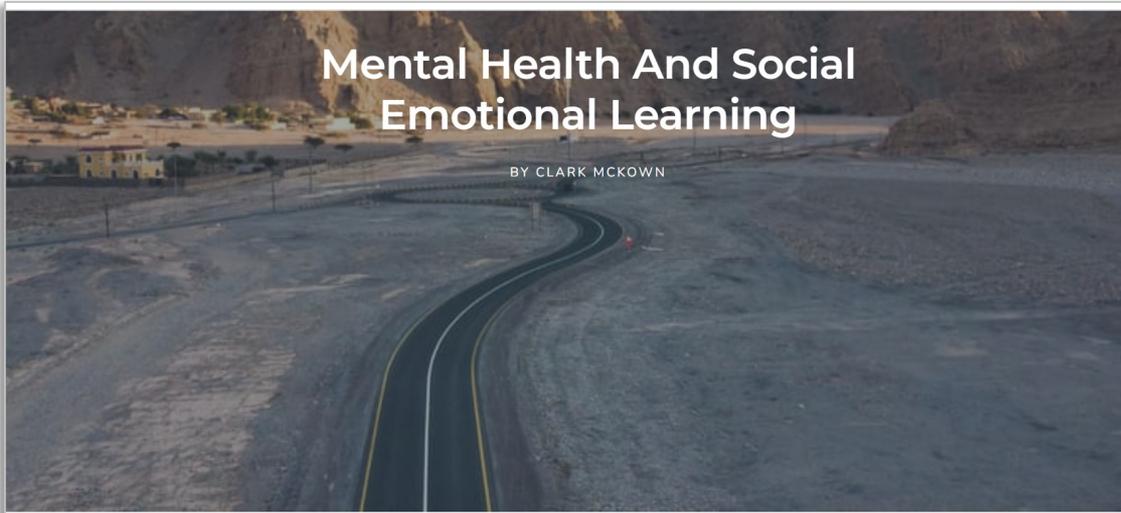
Environment

Symptoms

Mental health

Mental Health And Social Emotional Learning

BY CLARK MCKOWN



<https://xsel-labs.com/blog/>



Social Emotional Learning: Playing the Long Game

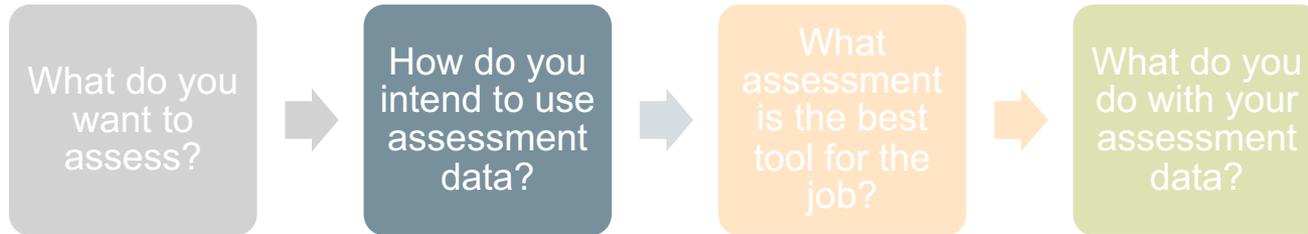
These are difficult days for most residents of planet Earth.

Because of all we have been through together, educators and parents are rightly concerned about the social and emotional well-being of students. [As I have discussed elsewhere](#), conversations about children's "social and emotion well-being" are really about two largely distinct topics: mental health and social emotional learning.

I am trained as a clinical psychologist *and* I am deeply involved in the SEL world, so I am a respector of both perspectives. But I would argue that it is really important to be clear about what we're talking about when we talk about social and emotional well-being. Are we putting out fires or playing the long game?

Defining the Two Meanings of "Social and Emotional Well-Being"

The Elements of SEL Assessment



Starting with intended use/why:

- Characterize students before instruction/benchmark
- Measure student learning in response to instruction
- Decide what to teach to whom (differentiation)
- Evaluate program effectiveness
- Screen to identify children with problems
- Diagnose presence of a condition or disorder
- Fulfill compliance requirement
- Focus on problems or focus on strengths



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Can *one* assessment do both?

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Risk Screening Example: SRSS

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Steals	1	2	3
Lies, Cheats, Sneaks	1	2	3
Has behavior problems	1	2	3
Rejected by peers	1	2	3
Low academic achievement	1	2	3
Negative attitude	1	2	3
Aggressive	1	2	3

> Cut score = Screen positive
< Cut score = Screen negative

The Concept of Risk Screening

	Has Condition	Doesn't Have Condition
Screens Positive	True Positive	False Positive
Screens Negative	False Negative	True Negative

Base rate = $TP / (TP + FP + FN + TN)$

Sensitivity = $TP / (TP + FN)$

Specificity = $NP / (TN + FP)$

Positive Predictive Value = $TP / (TP + FP)$

Negative Predictive Value = $NP / (TN + FN)$

Risk Screening to Catch Everyone

STUDENT RISK SCREENING SCALE — INTERNALIZING AND EXTERNALIZING (SRSS-IE)

Elementary School		Middle and High School	
SRSS-E7	SRSS-I5	SRSS-E7	SRSS-I6
(1) steal; (2) lie, cheat, sneak; (3) behavior problem; (4) peer rejection; (5) low academic achievement; (6) negative attitude; (7) aggressive behavior	(8) emotionally flat; (9) shy, withdrawn; (10) sad, depressed; (11) anxious; (12) lonely	(1) steal; (2) lie, cheat, sneak; (3) behavior problem; (4) peer rejection; (5) low academic achievement; (6) negative attitude; (7) aggressive behavior	(4) peer rejection; (8) emotionally flat; (9) shy, withdrawn; (10) sad, depressed; (11) anxious; (12) lonely
0-3 = low risk 4-8 = moderate risk 9-21 = high risk	0-1 = low risk 2-3 = moderate risk 4-15 = high risk	0-3 = low risk 4-8 = moderate risk 9-21 = high risk	0-3 = low risk 4-5 = moderate risk 6-18 = high risk

Priority: Catch Everyone! (cut score >8)

	Has Condition	Doesn't Have Condition
Screens Positive	90	400
Screens Negative	10	400

Base rate = .11

Sensitivity = .90

Specificity = .50

Positive Predictive Value = .10

Negative Predictive Value = .98



(Fictitious data for illustration only)

Risk Screening to Avoid Over-Identification!

STUDENT RISK SCREENING SCALE — INTERNALIZING AND EXTERNALIZING (SRSS-IE)

Elementary School		Middle and High School	
SRSS-E7	SRSS-I5	SRSS-E7	SRSS-I6
(1) steal; (2) lie, cheat, sneak; (3) behavior problem; (4) peer rejection; (5) low academic achievement; (6) negative attitude; (7) aggressive behavior	(8) emotionally flat; (9) shy, withdrawn; (10) sad, depressed; (11) anxious; (12) lonely	(1) steal; (2) lie, cheat, sneak; (3) behavior problem; (4) peer rejection; (5) low academic achievement; (6) negative attitude; (7) aggressive behavior	(4) peer rejection; (8) emotionally flat; (9) shy, withdrawn; (10) sad, depressed; (11) anxious; (12) lonely
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Priority: Don't Over-Identify! (cut score >18)

	Has Condition	Doesn't Have Condition
Screens Positive	50	10
Screens Negative	50	790

Base rate = .11

Sensitivity = .50

Specificity = .99

Positive Predictive Value = .83

Negative Predictive Value = .94



(Fictitious data for illustration only)

What question(s) did you answer with the SRSS?

What question(s) did you not answer with the SRSS?

What are the risks and benefits?

Can *one* assessment do both?

- Characterize students before instruction/benchmark
- Measure student learning in response to instruction
- **Decide what to teach to whom (differentiation)**
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Strengths Assessment Example: SELweb

K to 3rd

Understanding Others' Emotions



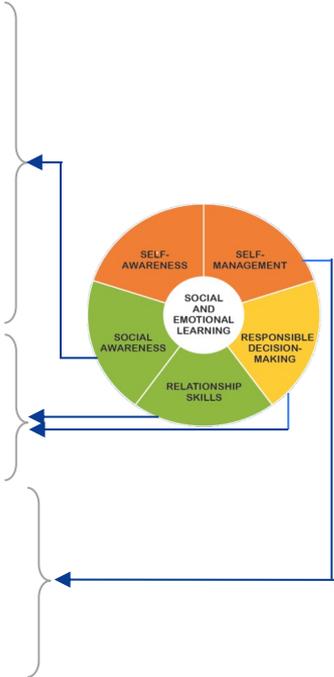
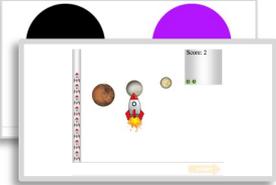
Understanding Others' Perspectives



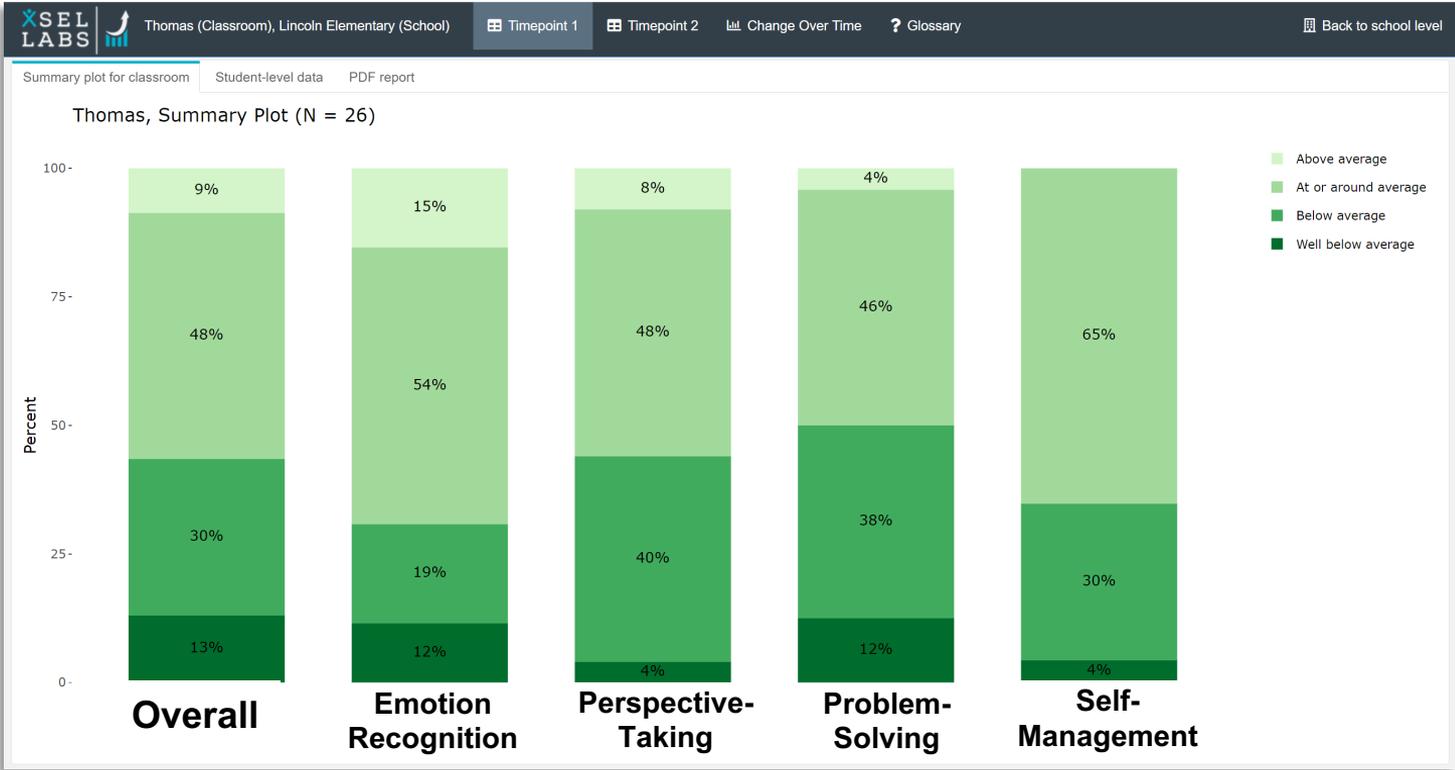
Social Problem-Solving



Self Management

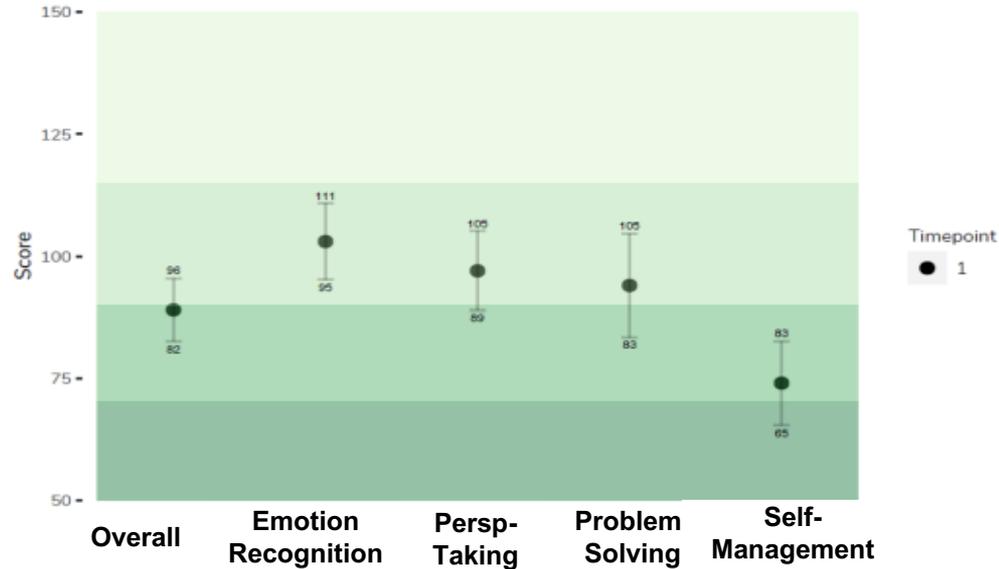


What is an area of strength? An area of need?





Individual student report



This is a report of student's performance on SELweb EE Scores from different timepoints are represented by different symbols. The report shows the student's overall SELweb performance, as well as performance on each of the SELweb EE competencies.

Scores on all assessments contain some uncertainty. That means that the score a student achieves on an assessment is an estimate of his or her true ability. The error bars indicate the range of scores within which the student's true score is 85% likely to fall.

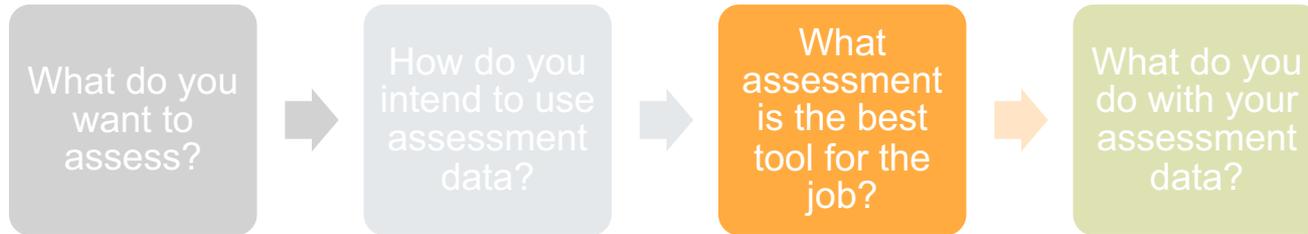
Shades of green correspond to each of the 4 performance levels (lighter colors indicating higher performance). The attached appendix provides more information about SELweb EE competencies, standard scores, and performance levels.

What question(s) did you answer with SELweb?

What question(s) did you not answer with SELweb?

What are the risks and benefits?

The Elements of SEL Assessment



Kinds of Assessments

Self-Report:

I know how to calm down when I'm mad.

Not At All
True

A Little
True

Pretty
True

Very
True

Extremely
True

Direct Assessment:



What
does this
girl feel?

Happy

Sad

Angry

Scared

Just OK

Teacher Report:

Can calm down when upset.

Almost
Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Often

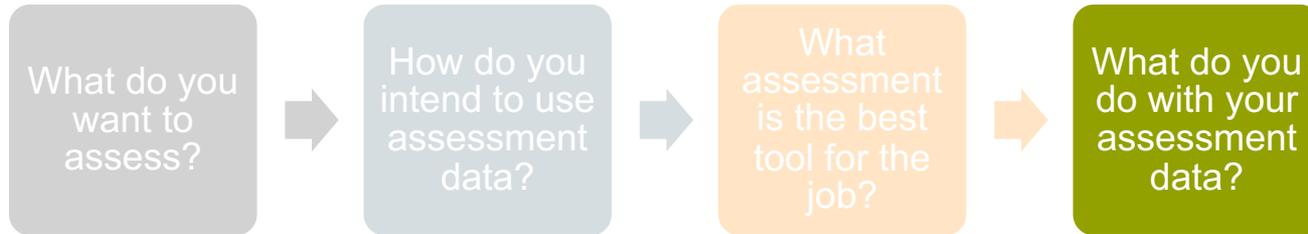
Almost
Always

Administrative records.

More Important Than the Form

How do you know the assessment is capable of doing its job?

The Elements of SEL Assessment



Practice Implications

Risk screener:

- Identify students with or at-risk of a specified problem
- Assess students who screen positive further
- Plan intervention for students who need it
- Overall goal: Reduce symptoms and barriers to functioning

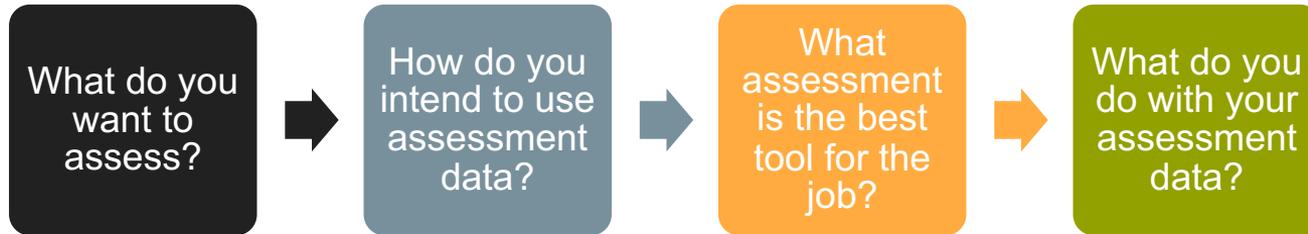
Strengths assessment:

- Identify skills to teach
- Use SEL curriculum
- Academic integration
- Coaching students through conflict
- Teaching collaborative learning
- Overall goal: Support effective instruction

Take-Home

- Be clear about your assessment goal, where the goal describes the decisions you will make about the data.
- Assessments are purpose-built and valid for some purposes and not others.
- Assessments can therefore guide a specific set of practices.
- Check that your assessment (the tool itself) is capable of meeting your assessment goals.

The Elements of SEL Assessment



Assessing Students' Social and Emotional Learning



A GUIDE TO MEANINGFUL MEASUREMENT

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