

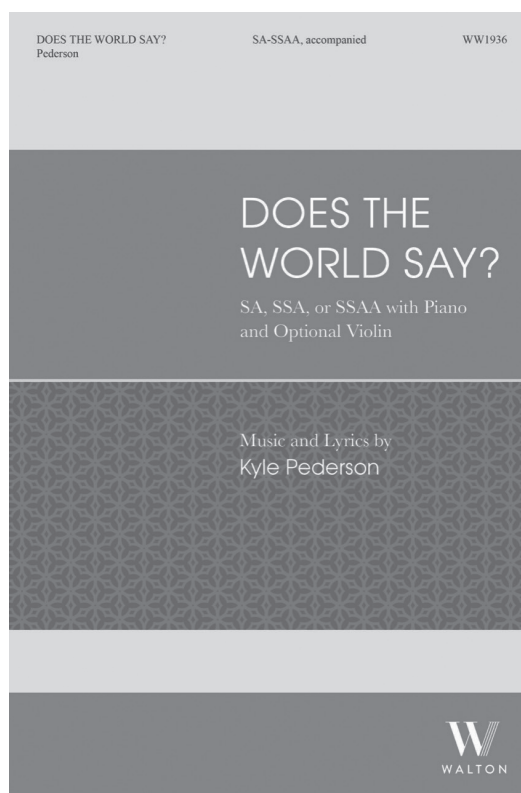


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DOES THE WORLD SAY?

MUSIC & LYRICS BY KYLE PEDERSON
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SOCIAL
EMOTIONAL
LEARNING
(SEL) GUIDE

COMPOSER NOTE

Too many times I allowed myself to be unduly influenced by the opinions and expectations of others. As a middle and high school teacher and athletic coach I saw this pressure play out daily on my students. And now as a father of young children, I watch as they, too, struggle with expectations the world throws at them. *Does the World Say?* names some of these pressures, hoping that by naming them they might hold a bit less power over us. The piece then affirms the importance and power of friendship to help us overcome these pressures—and the gift available to us to walk alongside somebody buckling under the weight of expectation to remind them that they are not alone, and to remind them that others do not get to define who they are.

KYLE PEDERSON



OVERVIEW FOR TEACHER

In crafting this supplement, I had the opportunity to collaborate with Dr. Scott Edgar, Director of Practice & Research at The Center for Arts Education and SEL. This SEL supplement guide is meant to provide a menu of options as you dig into *Does the World Say?* and connect this content deeply with your students. Depending on your goals/objectives, you may wish to focus on specific areas, or explore the entire spectrum of questions/educational experiences. For discussions, here are a few different options to consider to help engage more students' voices fully:

- Journaling/Short response/Exit ticket: pose a question and ask each student to reflect and write their response. Written responses may be shared with you, or perhaps they become simply a log of confidential student reflection.
- Small group discussion: discussing in groups of 2-3 can support more students' voices. If students journaled first, they may share these responses, if comfortable, in these small groups.
- Large group discussion: whole class discussion can engage all students. Select students could share journal responses.

Creative products: Throughout this guide, options for students to create tangible artifacts will be provided. The questions/experiences are structured into categories that reflect specific SEL objectives (which are listed with each category) and themes explored in *Does the World Say?*

I. WHAT THE WORLD SAYS...(PRESSURES AND EXPECTATIONS)

SEL OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCIES:

- IDENTITY: Recognize one's feelings and thoughts
- IDENTITY: Recognize the impact of one's feelings and thoughts on one's own behavior
- IDENTITY: Understand and practice strategies for managing one's own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors
- IDENTITY: Recognize the skills needed to establish and achieve personal and educational goals
- IDENTITY: Identify ways to resist inappropriate social pressure
- IDENTITY: Recognize strengths, needs, and values

1. **REFLECTION PROMPT:** The text of this piece consistently asks, "Does the world say?" Who or what does "the world" represent for you in this text? Specific people or social media, for example?

2a. **REFLECTION PROMPT:** Are there specific pressures you feel the world is putting on you? Have those pressures changed over time? Are there pressures you used to feel but no longer do? In what ways have you felt "not enough?" You may wish to consider the following quotation from Brene Brown as you reflect on these questions:

*"We live in a culture of never enough: Never good enough, skinny enough, popular enough, never enough Twitter followers. And there's only one way out of scarcity and that is **enoughness**. At some point, we just need to say "enough": **I am enough**. What I'm doing is enough. It's about waking up in the morning and saying: **No matter what gets done and how much is done and how it's done, I'm enough** and I'm worthy of belonging and love and joy." -Brene Brown*

2b. **CREATE:** Rewrite the following lyrics to make it even more personal to you. Seek to make it relevant to the specific challenges you experience. What is the world saying to YOU? Bonus: sing these new lyrics for your group.

Does the world say
that you don't look the right way?
Does the world say
that you're just not enough?

Does the world say
that this isn't the right spot?
When it wants you there but not here
and tells you all the things you are not.

3. **REFLECTION PROMPT:** Consider the following quotation as you explore question 3:

"My message for everyone is the same: that if we can learn to identify, express, and harness our feelings, even the most challenging ones, we can use those emotions to help us create positive, satisfying lives"
-Marc Brackett

The text of *Does the World Say?* invites you to acknowledge those pressures the world puts on you... and by recognizing them, perhaps taking away some of their power. Identify times in your life where you have "named it"—clearly identified something that you found challenging, or frustrating, or stressful—and, as a result, it's become easier to cope with. Why do you think that is the case?

- 4a. REFLECTION PROMPT:** What are some strategies you have used to resist the pressures the world throws at you? What worked? What hasn't worked as well?
- 4b. CREATE:** Create a Strength Wall or Resilience Board. This could be an individual artifact or the product of group/class effort. On this wall, post your strengths and/or moments when you have been resilient—when you have overcome the pressures/expectations the world has thrown at you. What are your individual and collective strengths or “super powers”? These posts could include written descriptions, pictures, drawings, or anything else that helps you tell the story.
- 5a. REFLECTION PROMPT:** Think about the ways you bend to pressure/expectation...what would you do differently if you could really be who you are? How would life look or feel different for you? What is one small step you could commit to taking that would help you lean more into being yourself?
- 5b. CREATE:** Create a two-part collage (magazine clippings, digital elements, etc). Part 1 of the collage will represent the worldly messages/pressures you experience. Who/what does the world want you to be? What does the world want you to look, feel, and act like? Part 2 will represent various aspects of who you really are. If the expectations of others weren't constantly pressing upon you, who are you? Include as many facets of your personality/values/sense of self as you can.
- 5c. CREATE:** Compose a short original melody, entitled “Who I Really Am.” Write the lyrics to reflect who you really are. It doesn't have to be a full song...it could simply be a short verse, or a chorus, or a breakdown section of an existing song you already know resonates with you. If possible, share your song with the group. It could be an original melody or rewriting the text to an existing song.

II. SO TAKE MY HAND...(UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU NEED FROM OTHERS)

SEL OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCIES:

- BELONGING: Recognize one's feelings and thoughts
 - IDENTITY: Understand and practice strategies for managing one's own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors
 - IDENTITY: Recognize the skills needed to establish and achieve personal and educational goals
 - BELONGING: Establish and maintain healthy relationships
 - BELONGING: Utilize positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others
 - BELONGING: Identify who, when, where, or how to seek help for oneself or others when needed
 - AGENCY: Develop, implement and model effective problem solving and critical thinking skills
- 6. REFLECTION PROMPT:** “I've been there, too...so take my hand.” Notice the text isn't “and I'll fix you...or I'll make it all better...or I'll solve all your problems.” It's that, “I'll be here for you, and with you.” Share a time in your life where someone tried to fix a problem for you....and it ended up making you even more frustrated, or lonely, or upset.
- 7a. REFLECTION PROMPT:** “Take my hand, don't let go.” What would this look like to you? If you were reaching out for support...what support is most helpful for you? Words of advice? Encouragement? Just sitting with you in silence? Shoulder to cry on?

- 7b. CREATE:** Craft a dialogue between you and another person illustrating the kind of support you'd find most beneficial. You may want to include how you might approach somebody for help/support and how you'd most desire that conversation unfolding. This could be acted out or scripted.
- 7c. ACTION STEP:** Time to put the dialogue you crafted in (b) above to action; communicate the kind of support you find most helpful with someone who's in a position to give you the support you need.

III. I'VE BEEN THERE TOO...(SUPPORTING OTHERS)

SEL OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCIES:

- **IDENTITY:** Understand and practice strategies for managing one's own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors
- **BELONGING:** Recognize and identify the thoughts, feelings and perspectives of others
- **BELONGING:** Demonstrate an awareness of the expectations for social interactions in a variety of settings
- **BELONGING:** Establish and maintain healthy relationships
- **AGENCY:** Utilize positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others
- **AGENCY:** Demonstrate the ability to prevent and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways
- **AGENCY:** Identify who, when, where, or how to seek help for oneself or others when needed
- **AGENCY:** Develop, implement and model effective problem solving and critical thinking skills
- **AGENCY:** Identify the consequences associated with one's actions in order to make constructive choices

- 8. REFLECTION PROMPT:** Consider the following quotation:

"You don't build a bond without being present" -James Earl Jones

To whom in your life can YOU be the friend who is present...who reaches out their hand? Who needs YOUR support? In what specific ways can you be a voice of support for that person(s) who may be buckling under the pressures the world is throwing at them? (not by fixing their challenge...but by being a hand/voice of support.)

- 9a. REFLECTION PROMPT:** It's hard to know what other people need when they are clearly hurting. How might you approach such a situation to make sure you are helping? Share a time when the kind of support you were offering was not the kind of support the person needed—maybe a time when you tried to fix something for somebody else and it seemed to make a bigger mess of things?
- 9b. CREATE:** Create a sketch, cartoon bubble, or simple dialogue reflecting a time when you "made a mess of things" by trying to fix a problem for somebody else rather than providing the kind of support they really needed.

- 10a. REFLECTION PROMPT:** Is there a way your choir, or school more broadly, can be supportive of people being themselves? Is there a way your choir/school can stand together and commit to not putting unhelpful pressure on others?
- 10b. ACTION STEP:** Create a “Classroom Charter”, set of guidelines, or a commitment to help make this vision a reality. This charter could be a mission/vision statement, or a set of statements that encourages the kind of classroom culture you wish to create. An extension of this might be to put these statements into an original or existing melody, or create an original poem/spoken word piece.
- 11a. REFLECTION QUESTION:** When have YOU placed pressure on others? When have you represented “the world” and created undue stress on another? Why do you think you acted in this way? How might you repair any damage you may have caused, or make things right with that person(s)?
- 11b. ACTION STEP:** If you’re up for the challenge, you’re encouraged to go make this repair/apology happen. Perhaps this takes the form of an apology note, or a conversation, or some other manner of communicating your intent.

IV. BRINGING MUSIC TO LIFE

SEL OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCIES:

- BELONGING: Recognize and identify the thoughts, feelings and perspectives of others
 - BELONGING: Demonstrate an understanding of the need for mutual respect when viewpoints differ
 - BELONGING: Utilize positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others
 - BELONGING: Demonstrate an understanding of the need for mutual respect when viewpoints differ
 - AGENCY: Utilize positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others
 - AGENCY: Develop, implement and model effective problem solving and critical thinking skills
- 12. REFLECTION PROMPT:** “I don’t stand a chance” is first sung in measures 32-33. Do you think this is from the same voice/perspective as earlier measures? Or do you think somebody new is entering the conversation and offering this perspective? Is there anything in the score that supports your view?
- 13a. REFLECTION PROMPT:** What emotion is conveyed in the chorus (m32-42?) Desperation? Anger? Joy? Relief? Hope? Sadness? Something else? What leads you to think so?
- 13b. PERFORM:** As a full choir, sing this section a few different ways with a particular emotion in mind... how does this change the sound you hear? What did you do to bring those emotions to life musically? Did you adjust your tone? Body/facial language? Articulation? What emotion do you think most aligned with the message of the piece?
- 14a. REFLECTION PROMPT:** Choral music generally has long, flowing phrases that often go several measures without a rest or breath mark. This piece is intentionally different in that way; rests are intentionally placed all over the music. Why do you suppose this is the case? What does it communicate?

- 14b. PERFORM:** Try singing measures 9-15 without the rests; discuss your reaction, does it have a different feel? Does it communicate something different? Do the same thing with measures 17-23, and finally measures 89-93. Discuss how this changes the feel and message of the text.
- 15a. REFLECTION PROMPT:** The ending: I toyed with getting big (fuller, louder), but kept returning to the idea of getting small (softer, less motion). What does ending small in this way communicate to you? Would a big ending work from your perspective?
- 15b. CREATE/PERFORM:** For a challenge, modify the ending of the piece so it ends BIG. Options include simply describing how this big ending would happen, or actually working with the choir to bring your big ending to life—instructing each voice part what to sing and then giving it a shot. Have a discussion after about whether such a big ending was resonating with you and the singers.
- 16. REFLECTION PROMPT:** Please watch the animated lyric video I created for this piece. What reactions do you have? What animation elements do you think were most effective? Were there elements that you found ineffective? What would you change if you were the video director?
- 17a. REFLECTION PROMPT:** In many of my past music videos, I include actual video footage to communicate the story I hope to tell (see my video for Bend or Come by Here as examples). I intentionally did not include actual footage in this music video because I wanted the viewer to be able to imagine their own scenes unfolding. If you were the video director for a new music video of *Does the World Say?*, what scenes come to mind?
- 17b. CREATE:** create a storyboard (rough sketches outlining the scenes) of the video you'd create.
- 18. REFLECTION PROMPT:** For me, this piece has the feeling of a Broadway musical; I can easily envision this unfolding on the stage. Take on the role of the producer/director of *Does the World Say?: The Musical*. Share a bit of your vision. The following prompts might help guide your scheming/dreaming:
- * What happened on stage just before this piece begins?
 - * How many people are on stage? Just one person singing to the audience? One person singing to another person? Who is singing to whom? Does the number of people of stage change throughout the piece?
 - * What is the set like? A room in a house? A school? Someplace else?
 - * How does this particular piece further the general plot of the musical? Is there a big revelation? Does a new relationship emerge? Are we rooting for (or against) a new character in any particular way?
 - * What does the ending look like?

FULL LYRICS:

Does the world say
that you don't look the right way?
Does the world say
that you're just not enough?

Does the world say
that this isn't the right spot?
When it wants you there but not here
and tells you all the things you are not.

I've been there, too
It's hard to shut my ears to the noise.

I don't stand a chance if it's me in this world all alone
The chatter is deafening, too overwhelming
it's hard to find my way home.

So take my hand...don't let go.

Does the world say
that you don't think the right things?
Does the world say
that you're not worth the time?

Does the world laugh
when you fall, when you cry?
Does it turn the other way
every time you walk by?

I'm growing, learning,
loving, becoming.

So take my hand...don't let go.

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