

# **MITCHY THE MONKEY: DREAM A DREAM**

## **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) & CASEL Competency Guide**

### **Professional Educator Edition**

#### **Prepared for:**

Teachers • Counselors • SEL Coordinators • Reading Specialists • Families

#### **Created by:**

**DJ Michel** Author of *Mitchy the Monkey: Dream a Dream*

#### **Purpose of This Guide**

This resource provides a comprehensive overview of how *Mitchy the Monkey: Dream a Dream* supports CASEL'S 5 social-emotional learning competencies. It includes discussion prompts, extension activities, and classroom-ready tools designed to help educators integrate the story into SEL instruction, bibliotherapy, morning meetings, and family engagement.

#### **Book Summary**

*Mitchy the Monkey: Dream a Dream* is a lyrical, heartfelt picture book about hope, belonging, family, and the dreams we carry. Through gentle storytelling and symbolic imagery, the book helps children explore emotions, understand diverse families, build empathy, and develop resilience.

#### **For More Information**

**[www.MitchyTheMonkey.com](http://www.MitchyTheMonkey.com)**

# MITCHY THE MONKEY: DREAM A DREAM

## Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) & CASEL Competency Guide

Professional Educator Edition

---

### 1. SELF-AWARENESS

*Understanding emotions, recognizing hopes and dreams, and identifying personal strengths.*

#### How the Story Supports This Competency

- Characters experience longing, hope, excitement, sadness, and joy — explicitly modeled.
- Mitchy expresses a deep desire for belonging and family.
- Jack and Diane openly acknowledge their dream of starting a family.
- Children see emotions expressed in healthy, relatable ways.

#### Why It Matters

Self-awareness helps children:

- build emotional vocabulary
- understand their own feelings
- recognize that complex emotions are normal
- develop confidence in expressing themselves

#### Discussion Prompts

- What emotions do Jack and Diane feel at the beginning of the story?
- How does Mitchy feel when he first arrives in Small Town?
- Have you ever had a dream or wish like Mitchy?
- What does “hope” mean to you?

#### Extension Activities

- **Emotion Mapping:** Draw Mitchy at different points in the story and label his feelings.
  - **Dream Journals:** Write or draw one dream you have for yourself.
  - **Feelings Chart:** Match scenes from the book to emotions on a chart or visual.
- 

### 2. SELF-MANAGEMENT

*Managing emotions, persevering through challenges, and staying hopeful.*

#### How the Story Supports This Competency

- Jack and Diane cope with uncertainty and waiting.
- Mitchy stays hopeful even when he feels lonely or unsure.
- The story models resilience through setbacks (the bumpy ride, the fall, the waiting).
- Characters regulate emotions through connection, not avoidance.

### Why It Matters

Self-management helps children:

- build resilience
- handle frustration
- stay calm during challenges
- develop patience and perseverance

### Discussion Prompts

- What challenges do the characters face?
- How do they stay hopeful even when things are hard?
- What helps Mitchy feel better when he's sad?
- What do you do when you feel worried or unsure?

### Extension Activities

- **Hope Tree:** Students write dreams or goals on leaves and add them to a class tree.
  - **Calm-Down Strategies:** Identify moments where characters pause, breathe, or reflect.
  - **Resilience Role Play:** Act out scenarios where students practice staying calm and hopeful.
- 

## 3. SOCIAL AWARENESS

*Understanding others' feelings, showing empathy, and appreciating diverse families.*

### How the Story Supports This Competency

- Jack and Diane understand each other's unspoken emotions.
- Mitchy empathizes with his friends and misses them deeply.
- The story celebrates that families can be formed in many ways.
- Characters show compassion and understanding throughout.

### Why It Matters

Social awareness helps children:

- build empathy
- understand different perspectives
- appreciate diverse family structures
- develop kindness and compassion

### Discussion Prompts

- How do Jack and Diane show they care about each other?
- Why does Mitchy miss his friends?
- What does the story teach us about different kinds of families?
- How can we show empathy to someone who feels lonely?

### Extension Activities

- **Family Diversity Collage:** Draw different types of families.
  - **Empathy Circle:** Share a time you helped someone or were helped.
  - **Perspective Taking:** Discuss how the story feels from Mitchy's point of view.
-

## 4. RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

*Building friendships, communicating clearly, and supporting one another.*

### How the Story Supports This Competency

- Mitchy forms friendships with Chloe, Callie, and Willie.
- Jack and Diane communicate openly and lovingly.
- The store owner shows kindness and support.
- Jack and Diane help Mitchy reconnect with his friends — a powerful model of relational care.

### Why It Matters

Relationship skills help children:

- make friends
- resolve conflicts
- communicate wants and needs
- build trust and cooperation

### Discussion Prompts

- How does Mitchy make new friends at New Beginnings?
- What does Jack do to show he cares about Diane?
- How do Jack and Diane help Mitchy at the end?
- What makes a good friend?

### Extension Activities

- **Friendship Web:** Share qualities you value in friends.
  - **Kindness Challenge:** Track acts of kindness inspired by the book.
  - **Communication Practice:** Role play asking for help or offering support.
- 

## 5. RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

*Making caring, thoughtful choices that consider others' feelings.*

### How the Story Supports This Competency

- Jack chooses to bring Mitchy home as a symbol of hope.
- Jack and Diane decide to help Mitchy reunite with his friends.
- Characters consistently choose compassion over convenience.
- The story models thoughtful, empathetic decision-making.

### Why It Matters

Responsible decision-making helps children:

- think before acting
- consider consequences
- make choices rooted in empathy
- understand how actions affect others

### Discussion Prompts

- Why does Jack decide to bring Mitchy home?
- What choices do Jack and Diane make when they see Mitchy is sad?
- How do their decisions help others?

- What is a responsible choice you've made recently?

#### **Extension Activities**

- **Choice Scenarios:** Discuss what you would do in different story-inspired situations.
  - **Cause & Effect Chart:** Map decisions in the story to their outcomes.
  - **Compassion Cards:** Write notes of encouragement to classmates.
- 

## **ADDITIONAL SEL THEMES IN MITCHY THE MONKEY**

### **Belonging**

Mitchy's journey centers on finding a place where he is loved.

### **Family Diversity**

"Families don't have to look the same..." — essential for inclusive classrooms.

### **Hope & Perseverance**

The emotional backbone of the story.

### **Identity & Purpose**

Mitchy discovering where he fits and who he is to others.

### **Emotional Expression**

Characters express longing, joy, sadness, excitement — all in healthy ways.

### **Community & Connection**

Small Town, New Beginnings, friendships — all reinforce community support.

---