

Teaching the Foundation

Leadership



Project TEAM
Are you in the house?

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.”

~John Quincy Adams (6th President of the United States)

Leadership is a process of interactions where the leader and followers are interdependent on each other, since you can't lead without positive interactions with followers. Studies of elementary school students have found that both primary and supporting leadership roles are essential to overall community strength (Li, Anderson, Nguyen-Jahiel, & others, 2007). Speaking up, offering good ideas, and listening skills are critical leadership skills for children in order for them to lead discussions, have good questions, piggyback off others' ideas, role model, help others, take turns, and cooperate (Certo, 2011).

Project TEAM recognizes how leadership is important to creating and maintaining a strong school community and that schools need a wider variety of students to take various leadership roles. The program seeks to identify leadership behaviors in many children and particularly those who are often not recognized as leaders. The system rewards both primary leaders and supportive leaders, and helps to increase student knowledge and initiative in leadership behaviors.

Overview of how teachers can teach *Leadership*

Research has shown that students are less likely to be a bully or have behavior problems when they are confident in their abilities to be a leader amongst their peers. Project TEAM provides the opportunity for schools to look at leadership in a different way. All students have the ability to be a leader by using their own strengths to help their TEAM. Too often, leadership is viewed only as the ability to be in control of others. It's not that simple. Through Project TEAM, students will become aware of just how important their strengths are and given an opportunity to understand how everyone is a unique leader who is a crucial part of the TEAM.

An educator has the special opportunity to help a student understand his or her value and worth in this world. Educators are leaders and it's important to understand how you can foster leadership in ALL students in your classroom. Use the bullet points below to help create a classroom where leaders come to life.

- **“See” Leadership in Your Classroom** - have a vision that works for you for how leadership can be incorporated into your classroom. Share your goals and dreams with your students so they see how you are a leader in your profession. Our world is so fast paced that we often forget the power of story sharing with students. You might even inspire students to share their dreams and goals with you!
- **Show Your Passion** - There are a variety of reasons we end up in our chosen careers. Typically, one of the major reasons is passion for the job. Teaching our youth is one of the most important jobs on the planet. You want your students to see how passionate you are about teaching and about them. Be enthusiastic in your lessons and teach them about how passionate leaders can be.

- **Be Confident** - Students will be challenging on a day-to-day basis. They will test boundaries and push you to your limit. You must remain confident in your abilities to deal with the vast variety of students coming to you. Consistent confidence will help students feel safe and secure in the classroom, which is a sign of a true leader. Being confident in your abilities as a teacher translates into your students being confident in their abilities to learn.

- **Be Trustworthy** - One of the most common issues with students who have problematic behavior is that they are repeatedly let down in their lives. Many students coming into your classroom do not have a person in their life on whom they can constantly rely. Great leaders create an environment where being honest and trustworthy is key to their everyday practice and work.

- **Exude Resilience** - Being an educator can be challenging. There are high demands and not enough resources and time to do everything that needs to be done. Educators are expected to do the impossible and there are days when it seems impossible. One of the most important traits you can teach your students as a leader is the power of resilience. Project TEAM believes resiliency is so important that we highlight the concept as a foundation in Project TEAM. Great leaders understand the power of picking yourself up and becoming stronger in the face of adversity. When your students see you pushing through with them, and maintaining a positive outlook on the toughest of days, you are sending a strong message of the power of resiliency. Take opportunities to tell stories of your difficult times and how you came out on top.

Introduce Lamar

Use the Lamar poster and the following questions to introduce students to Lamar.

- 1 - What do you notice about Lamar?
- 2 - How do you think Lamar is feeling?
- 3 - What do you think it means when we say Lamar has special powers in Leadership?
- 4 - How might Lamar treat the rest of the Project TEAMmates?
- 5 - What do you think Lamar will teach us about Leadership?



Breaking down Leadership

Teaching leadership to elementary-age students can be done best by engaging the discussion based on grade level. Below you will see some examples of grade level clusters that can help as you begin teaching this foundation.

Kindergarten - 1st Grade

What is Leadership?

Take a minute and ask students, “What is a leader?” or “What is leadership?” Most likely you will hear answers such as “the person in charge” or “someone who leads people.” Many students don’t realize their abilities to be a leader. In the very primary grades, Project TEAM just aims to have students understand they are all capable of being leaders in their own ways.

2nd-3rd Grade

Why is Leadership important?

Openly ask your students the reasons they believe leadership is important. You will hear a variety of answers. When students begin understanding reasons leaders are important, they are already becoming leaders themselves. Everyday respect and courtesy for others is a simple way to show leadership and it creates an environment where people want to be. Teaching students the value of leadership now will prepare them to be successful students, siblings, friends, and eventually citizens.

4th-5th Grade

How can I be a Leader?

Talking with students about how they are developing as leaders can be so much fun. You are giving students the confidence to see themselves as the leaders they have the potential to be.

Kindergarten – 1st Grade

Defining Leadership

Leadership

In Project TEAM we define **Leadership as the ability to use your strengths to help others or yourself in a positive way.**

What is a Leader?

We want all students to see their abilities to be a leader. Leaders use their strengths to help others or themselves in a variety of situations. Some examples of a student leader:

- A student who volunteers to help a teacher clean up the room at the beginning of recess
- A student who shares her crayons
- A student who asks if a friend is okay if he or she looks sad or upset
- A student who stands up to a bully
- A student who follows the rules

Write “Leader” where all students in your class can see it. Have students give you examples of what a leader is.

Say to students, “We are going to talk about what being a leader is. Who can give me an example of what a leader is or who a leader is?” *(As long as answers are appropriate, use them all as you create a Leader web on the board.)*

Ask students, “Do you know you are all capable of being a leader?” Go on to say, “Think about all of the things we learned in Project TEAM this year...Helping Others, Positive Change, Anti-Bullying, Problem Solving/Conflict Resolution, and Resiliency. When you are using all of these foundations, you ARE being a LEADER!”

Let’s meet Lamar!

Use the Lamar poster and following questions to introduce Lamar:

- What are some things you see on Lamar that might tell you he has special leadership powers?
- How do you think Lamar treats others?
- What are two ways you think Lamar might show Leadership in school?
- How do you think Lamar might help his Project TEAMmate friends?

Leadership Train

A simple and fun way to wrap up Leadership is to have students jump on the Leadership Train. Students will need to give one example of a positive way they are or can be a leader to jump on the train. Students will chug around the classroom, as the train gets larger and larger with students jumping on board.

2nd – 3rd Grade

Review the Definition of Leadership

Leadership

In Project TEAM we define **Leadership** as the ability to use your strengths to help others or yourself in a positive way.

Review-What is a Leader?

We want all students to see their abilities to be a Leader. Leaders use their strengths to help others or themselves in a variety of situations. Some examples of a student leader:

- A student who helps a friend in need
- A student who does his/her homework everyday
- A student who apologizes when he/she is wrong
- A student who stands up to a bully
- A student who bounces back when something bad happens

Why is leadership important?

Using the [Why is Leadership Important?](#) worksheet, ask students to think about how leadership is important in school, at home, in their community, and beyond. Tell them to think about what school would be like without leadership. What does leadership look like at home? Why is it important there? Think about why it's so important for people to use leadership in the community. What happens when people don't use leadership?

You are a Leader because...

Have students get in small groups and go around the circle telling their TEAMmates why they are a good leader.

Before the activity, remind students of the examples you discussed earlier. Students can be leaders by using their strengths to help others or themselves in a positive way.

4th – 5th Grade

Review the Definition of Leadership

Leadership

In Project TEAM we define **Leadership** as the ability to use your strengths to help others or yourself in a positive way.

Review-What is a Leader?

We want all students to see their abilities to be a Leader. Leaders use their strengths to help others or themselves in a variety of situations. Examples of a student leader:

- A student who stops a rumor when he or she hears one.
- A student who volunteers to do community service or other projects at the school.
- A student who makes a positive change.
- A student who accepts others.
- A student who figures out a solution to a problem without giving up.

“You don’t have to hold a position to be a Leader.” ~Henry Ford

It is important for students to understand leadership can be more than just the person in charge. Write the Henry Ford quote (above) on the board where all of your students can see. Break students into small TEAMS and have them come up with 3 ways a person can be a leader outside of just being the person in charge. If you have time, give students the opportunity to come up with why those ways define leadership.

Bring students back together as a whole TEAM. Give students the opportunity to share what they discussed in their small TEAMS.

Say to students, “You all have the ability to show your leadership in lots of different ways. Lamar promotes Leadership. He is going to help us understand what it takes to be a great leader amongst others.”

Lamar's Three "E's" of Leadership

Use the [Lamar's Three "E's" of Leadership](#) poster as you discuss Encouragement, Empowerment, and Embrace.

Write the three words on the board (see below for example).

Ask students, "Do any of these words look familiar? Give me some words you might use to describe Encourage, Empower, and Embrace."

Encourage	Empower	Embrace
Example: Tell a friend, "Good job!"	Example: Say to a friend, "You are a great reader!"	Example: Include all students in a game at recess, even if they are different from you.

After students have provided words to describe Lamar's three "E's," give the following definitions:

- 1) Encourage - Lift others up and motivate forward.
- 2) Empower - Build others up to help them be the best they can be.
- 3) Embrace - Accept others for who they are and appreciate differences.

Ask students, "What do you think these words have to do with Leadership?"

Lamar's role amongst the Project TEAMmates is Leadership. He has a responsibility to encourage the rest of the TEAMmates to be their best and do their best. He empowers them by giving them compliments and making them feel valued as his friends. And he embraces their differences. Because of how he treats others, the Project TEAMmates respect him and trust him as a true leader.

Say to students, "Think about your friends and family. What are some ways you encourage, empower, and embrace them?"

How can I be a Leader?

Empowering students to embrace their strengths and to allow others to help them work on their weaknesses can have a huge impact on the culture of your school. When students know they have the ability to help others and be a leader, their confidence and self-esteem will sky-rocket. Have students work together as partners to discuss their plans for how they can be leaders in the school.