



CELL DREAMER
A C A D E M Y

Freedom Starts Here Teacher's Guide.®

SAMPLE

Letter from Michy E. Morillo

It is my pleasure to partner with you to share my story with your students and use it for their good. This course provides a trauma-informed, project-based learning approach to exploring topics that impact everyone's personal development and is designed to help your students begin the work to become the best version of themselves. This guide empowers you to be a facilitator along that journey.

It is my desire that Freedom Starts Here will make a lasting impact on your students' ability to grow and lead. Focusing on eight specific areas that can make a lasting difference in their personal growth and acquisition of life skills, Freedom Starts Here takes students inward as they explore the topics of Self-Reflection, Self-Awareness, Self-Sabotage, Self-Doubt, Self-Esteem, Self-Discipline, Self-Discovery and Self-Motivation. The course culminates in supporting students in looking outward through Self-Actualization.

These areas are a challenge to anyone wanting to grow, and while some may not be ready to change in the beginning, it is my goal that together we'll help students grow significantly in each area explored in the book.

I want to equip you to be the strongest leader possible. Through the Freedom Starts Here course, I'm here to partner with you, as you help the youth in your life pursue personal excellence.

If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to send an email to info@celldreamer.com and a team member will get back to you within 24 hours.

Congratulations on being an integral part of your students' journeys and for making a defining difference in their lives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michy E. Morillo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "M".

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Section 1: Freedom Starts Here Course Overview

Personal development is ongoing. It begins before we can even remember and continues throughout our lives. Grounded in the core competencies of social emotional learning (SEL) and using a project-based learning (PBL) framework, this trauma-informed high school course takes a personalized approach to exploring topics that impact everyone's growth and development. During Milestones 1-8, students will focus on self-reflection, self-awareness, self-sabotage, self-doubt, self-esteem, self-discipline, self-discovery, and self-motivation using Michy E. Morillo's book, *Cell Dreamer: Freedom Starts Here, Student Version* as a guide. During Milestone 9, students will embrace self-actualization as they create and display their Dream Boards with the larger community through a Dreamers Gallery exhibition of learning and privately with their self-selected Dreamer's Circle.

Learning Goals

The nine major learning goals are listed below.

1. Students discover the thoughts they have about themselves and take inventory of how they are showing up in life.
2. Students identify healthy and unhealthy patterns as they explore their emotions and discover how their thoughts about situations impact both their behavior and the outcome.
3. Students take their power back by transforming negative self-talk into positive affirmations.
4. Students begin repairing relationships through forgiving, apologizing, and expressing gratitude to themselves and others.
5. Students identify people who add and subtract value from their lives, make and keep promises to themselves, and create personal SMART goals.
6. Students train their minds to focus and redirect their thoughts through meditation practice and written reflection.
7. Students look inward in search of their purpose and passion by identifying core values and strengths, improving weaknesses, and engaging in aspirational thinking.
8. Students establish and maintain healthy habits.
9. Students clarify, concentrate, and maintain focus on their goals.

Five SEL competencies have been identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). They are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. The Freedom Starts

Here course addresses these in depth through the accompanying text, *Cell Dreamer: Freedom Starts Here, SV* and through the use of classroom Circles. SEL competencies related to each Milestone are listed in *Section 4: Leading Freedom Starts Here*.

Major Products

In PBL, products are student-produced artifacts created as a part of engaging in project-based learning tasks. These artifacts are either presented to you, as the teacher, for feedback and assessment, or to a larger audience.

- Milestone Products: (1) *Cell Dreamer: Freedom Starts Here, Student Version* activities, (2) Dream Boards, and (3) Dreamer's Circle Design
- Making It Public: (1) Dreamers Gallery and (2) Dreamer's Circles



Flow Options

The following options can be completely customized by you to meet the needs of your students. If used as a stand alone course, the 9 Milestones can easily be implemented in a variety of ways over the course of a school year. The number of weeks it will take to complete the course will vary depending on how *Freedom Starts Here* is implemented, the session length, and the number of sessions per week.

Weekly Flow: over the course of a **high school quarter**, 1 Milestone per week.

Milestone	Class Session 1	Class Session 2	As needed
45-90 Minutes	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3

SemiMonthly Flow: over the course of a **high school semester**, 1 Milestones per 2 weeks

Milestone	Class Session 1	Class Session 2	Class Session 3	Class Session 4	As needed
45-90 Minutes	Part 1		Part 2		Part 3

Monthly Flow: over the course of a **high school year**, one Milestone per month

Milestone	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4+
45-90 Minutes	Part 1	Part 2		Part 3

Section 3: Leading Freedom Starts Here

Part 1: Introspection

Milestone 1: Self-Reflection

Discovering who I have demonstrated myself to be.

- **Minimum Duration:** 2 class sessions
- **Learning Goal:** Students discover the thoughts they have about themselves and take inventory of how they are showing up in life.
- **Driving Question:** Who have I demonstrated myself to be?
- **SEL Competencies:** self-awareness in Part 1; self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making in Part 2
- **Milestone Product(s):** Self-Reflection responses, Cell Dreamer Student Version (CDSV) pages 7-13 and 15-19.
- **Vocabulary:** anxiety, conscious, triumph, incarcerated, school-to-prison pipeline, expelled, adhere, destructive, trauma, eviction, compassion, consistent, potential, corrupt, confront, emotions, opportunity, version, affected
- **Teacher Preparation:** gather materials, create *Illumination* and *Interaction* activities related to self-reflection for Day 2

Your Thoughts & Ideas:



Milestone 1: Self-Reflection, Part 1

Activity	Description	Materials & Environment
Intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share today's purpose with students verbally and visually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whiteboard Markers <p>(or another way of posting the intention)</p>
Inspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show students the book and explain that the author of <i>Cell Dreamer</i> was recently on the news. Encourage students to make predictions as to why. Play news clip featuring Michy Morillo: Expelled-student-turned-life coach talks to Haverhill High in wake of school violence 	A copy of <i>Cell Dreamer: Freedom Starts Here, SV</i> for each student.
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read aloud pages 1-2. Lead an open discussion about the commitments. Guide students to sign. *If students hesitate to sign, allow the time and space to consider further. Explain that together they will be considering very personal ideas and engaging and that it's important to establish the classroom community as a safe place to do that. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Cell Dreamer: Freedom Starts, Here SV</i> for each student.
Illumination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the talking piece. Model writing a value that is important to you (ex. respect, authenticity, patience, etc.) on a paper plate and placing it in the Circle. Lead students to do the same with values that they plan to bring to the Circle. Record any questions for the "parking lot" on chart paper to be revisited. Students record their value on paper plates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange chairs in a circle Chart paper Markers Paper plates Markers

Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display Visual #1: <i>In the Palm of My Hand</i> • Model the In the Palm of Your Hand Activity by sharing your completed handout with the class. • Lead students to think about and then record what they see as (1) their area of growth, (2) a commitment, (3) something they are letting go of, (4) a direction they are headed, (5) help they need, and (5) a gift they are willing to offer. • Lead students to share their areas of growth one at a time and to stand up silently when others share an area of growth that they have experienced, someone they love has experienced, or that they can relate to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual #1 • Model Handout 1 • Copies of Handout 1 • Pens, pencils
Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead discussion about independent work expectations and timelines. • Thank students for their work and participation. • Set Section 1 completion goals with students. • Students read and complete Section 1 at their own pace outside of class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cell Dreamer: Freedom Starts Here, SV</i> • Pen or pencil

Your Thoughts & Ideas:



Milestone 1: Self-Reflection, Part 2

Activity	Description	Materials & Environment
Intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share today's purpose with students verbally and visually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whiteboard (or another way of posting the intention)
Inspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display Visual #1: <i>In the Palm of My Hand</i> Lead a discussion about how this Part 1 activity speaks to self-reflection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual #1
Illumination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate mini-lesson (ML) exploring an aspect of self-reflection that emerged from the circle on Day 1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your mini-lesson materials
Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate prosocial interaction activity related to your ML. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your interaction materials
Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct individual mini-conferences with students. Students continue to read and complete Section 1 at their own pace during class. Close class with a preview of next week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Cell Dreamer: Freedom Starts Here, SV</i> Pen or pencil

Your Thoughts & Ideas: