

**One thing that really needs to hit home when transitioning to middle or high school is that your role as a student is changing. You are becoming more and more independent each day, and with that comes challenges. You need to have self-awareness and self-advocacy skills so you are better able to deal with any situations or challenges that come up in everyday life. By having you partake in self-advocacy activities, you are ensuring that you will be your own successful advocate.**

## Self-Advocacy Part 1

### Understanding How to Self-Advocate

Any easy way to teach students how to self-advocate is to give them a real-life scenario that they can connect to and understand. This will help students understand what self-advocacy really is all about. Here is an example that you can share.

Alexa just got a pair of glasses to help her see far away. However, Alexa is still getting used to them and feels she needs to sit in the front of the classroom. One day Alexa came to school and her teacher had switched her seat to the back of classroom. Alexa stayed after class to talk to her teacher about moving her seat to the front of the classroom.

After you have read this scenario to your students, ask them the following questions to make sure they are understanding why Alexa had to speak up for herself.

- Why was it important for Alexa to talk to her teacher after class?
- Did Alexa do the right thing?
- What would you have done if you were in Alexa's situation? Why?
- Have you ever been in a situation where you had to self-advocate?
- Did you find it difficult to speak yourself? Why or why not?
- How did standing up for yourself impact your future?

Once you discuss these questions with students, have them gather into small groups to discuss self-advocacy. Challenge groups to come up with 3 places or situations where they would have to self-advocate. Once students are finished discussing, invite each group to share aloud.

3 situations where you have to self-advocate

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Self-Advocacy Part 2

### Implementing What Students Learned About Self-Advocacy

Now that students understand a little bit more about themselves, and what self-advocacy is, you can have them refer back to the questions that they answered about themselves in the beginning of the lesson. Challenge students to figure out a few ways that they can improve upon their weaknesses and the things they don't like in school.

Next, place students with a partner and challenge them to create a story about someone who needs to self-advocate for themselves. Make sure that when they are creating this story that they are able to answer the following questions.

•What is your character's name? \_\_\_\_\_

•What does your character do well? What do they not do so well at?

---

---

---

---

•What does your character struggle with at school?

---

---

What are they doing to help themselves?

---

---

---

Students may draw a picture to go along with their story or even a short comic strip. Once they have completed their task, invite the groups to share with the class and answer any questions their classmates have for them about their story.