

Holocaust Education Lesson Plan

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Topic/Era: Bullying/Caring

Lesson Title: Creating Empathy

Subject: Social Studies

Grade Level: first grade, can be adapted to other levels

Length of Lesson:

This lesson will take three approximately 30- to 45-minute blocks depending on the level and extent of the probing, critical thinking questions and resulting discussion. The lesson can be extended to five 30-minute blocks if the reading, discussion, or activities are done on separate days.

Introduction:

Bullying has been identified as a serious problem in many schools. This behavior is often downplayed. Adults will respond to concerns with “boys will be boys” remarks or will themselves consider the victim deserving of the behavior or “wimpy” and in need of “getting tough.” Adults sometimes also view bullying behaviors as simple playfulness, especially when the victim seems to be or to want to be friends with the bully/bullies. An adult’s ambivalence can confuse a child who is already feeling hurt or afraid.

How a child perceives a bully depends on how the adults react and deals with the bully. If the adults have strong anti-bully reactions, bullying will be understood as unacceptable behavior. In order for that to exist, the adult(s) must clearly define bullying for the children and help them to shape a means of recognizing hurtful actions. This can be especially trying for a primary educator. This lesson is intended to clarify and raise awareness regarding bullying for students as well as provide them an opportunity and means to deal with bullying behaviors, both directed at themselves and directed towards others.

Objectives:

- Students will recognize the varieties of bullying including but not limited to physical harassment, verbal intimidation, exclusion, ostracism, gossip and rumors.
- Students will evaluate the causes of bullying.
- Students will recognize the effects of bullying.
- Students will recognize the effects of apathy regarding bullying.
- Students will understand the importance of taking a stand.
- Students will be able to use listening skills to facilitate understanding and problem solving.

Standards:

Content Standard H2.0 - Nation Building and Development - Students understand the people, events, ideas, and conflicts that lead to the evolution of nations, empires, distinctive cultures, and political and economic ideas.

H2.1.1 Identify ways that sharing can resolve problems in the classroom and school.

Content Standard H3.0 - Social Responsibility & Change - Students understand how social ideas and individual action lead to social, political, economic, and technological change.

H3.1.4 Demonstrate respect for each other and people in the neighborhood.

Content Standard C13.0 - Citizenship and the Law - Students know why society needs rules, laws, and government and understand the roles, rights, and responsibilities of citizens.

C13.1.2 Identify an individual's rights within the classroom.

C13.1.3 Participate in class decision making, i.e. individual responsibilities in the classroom and school.

Materials List:

- Angel Child, Dragon Child by Michele Maria Surat
- Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes
- outline of a person, gingerbread man or heart in small individual copies or one large copy for the whole group; a heart can be cut from regular or construction paper; the shape of a person or gingerbread man can be drawn by hand or printed from one of these sites:
 - <http://familycrafts.about.com/od/paperdolls/ig/Paper-Doll-Accessories/Paper-Doll-Body.htm>
 - http://www.kidssoup.com/Gingerbreadman/a_gingermanblankbw.pdf

In Class Activities:

Day One:

1. Teacher will give each student a person, gingerbread man, or heart; or teacher will have a large person, gingerbread man, or heart posted at the front of the room.
2. Teacher will lead discussion of hurtful words they've heard others say, excluding profanity.
3. Students will write the hurtful words on their individual papers or take turns writing it on the large paper using pencil.
4. Teacher will then lead the discussion toward ways to "take back" the words, probably towards apology.
5. Students will erase the words from their papers or take turns erasing them from the large paper as a demonstration of apologizing.

6. Teacher will point out to the students that the pencil marks are not truly gone, but can still be faintly seen. This imparts the point that apologies are good, but do not erase all the hurt.
7. Teacher will then facilitate a discussion of respect and kindness with students, brainstorming the attributes of each and, if desired, act as a scribe.

Day Two:

8. When the students have a clear idea of caring characteristics, introduce and read the book Chrysanthemum.
9. Teacher will help the students notice that Chrysanthemum is a normal, active, happy child.
10. Teacher will help the students notice that Chrysanthemum's classmates in the story are not demonstrating the characteristics they listed earlier.
11. Teacher will help the students note the apathy of the classroom teacher.
12. Students will identify the causes and discuss the merits of the bullying behaviors as given by Chrysanthemum's parents.
13. Students will notice that the bullying has effects on Chrysanthemum outside of the classroom.
14. Teacher can lead discussion on possible ways to stop the bullying. Teacher should try to promote options other than strictly punishment of the bullies.
15. The bullying is finally thwarted when a respected teacher validates Chrysanthemum. Discussion can include whether this provides a true resolution to the problem, as the bullying is never identified as such nor directly dealt with.

Day Three:

16. Read Angel Child, Dragon Child.
17. Based on previous discussions, students should recognize the teasing and name calling as bullying.
18. Teacher will facilitate the merits of fighting back, as Ut did when she threw the snowball at Raymond. They should discuss whether it is not worth getting into trouble or is important to take a stand.
19. The story has the characters talk, leading to a friendship. Students should discuss the how listening can lead to understanding.
20. After the story, students will practice listening for understanding by listening to a partner's stories and writing or drawing what was told. Ideally, the partners will be students who are not "pals."
21. The students will share what they've learned about their partners.

Evaluation/Assessment:

Evaluation of this lesson will be through anecdotal observation and teacher awareness. Students should demonstrate caring and listening on a daily basis and in a variety of situations, i.e. the regular classroom, recess, specials classes, and extra-curricular activities. Students should be praised when they use those attributes to solve problems.

Bibliography/Citations:

Anti-Defamation League, <http://www.adl.org>; ADL Curriculum Connections, http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/Default.asp. I used the following links from this website:

Words That Heal: Using Children's Literature to Address Bullying, Using Children's Literature to Increase Empathy and Help Students Cope with Bullying, http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/winter_2005/Words_that_Heal1.asp?cc_section=Words_that_Heal1.

Words That Heal: Using Children's Literature to Address Bullying, Annotated Bibliography of Children's Fiction on Bullying, http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/winter_2005/bibliography.asp?cc_section=biblio.

Words That Heal: Using Children's Literature to Address Bullying, Chrysanthemum, http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/winter_2005/Chrysanthemum.asp?cc_section=Chrysanthemum.

Chrysanthemum Focus Activity: Story Time and Dramatic Play, http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/winter_2005/Chrysanthemum_focus_activity.asp; This link has discussion questions.

Character Counts!: Character Education Lesson Plans; <http://charactercounts.org>; Tell Me; I'll Listen Lesson, <http://charactercounts.org/lesson-plans/character-education-lesson.php?id=33>.

Discovery Education, <http://discoveryeducation.com>; Assignment Discovery Online Curriculum, Lesson Title: Understanding Stereotypes, <http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/pdf/stereotypes/stereotypes.pdf>.

No name-calling week, <http://www.nonamecallingweek.org/cgi-bin/iowa/home.html>; No Name-Calling Week Elementary Lesson Plans, http://www.nonamecallingweek.org/binary-data/NoNameCalling_ATTACHMENTS/file/78-1.pdf; Adobe acrobat is required as lesson plans open in a pdf file.

Teaching Tolerance, <http://www.tolerance.org>; 'Back to School, Back to Community' submitted by Tim Lockette on August 14, 2009, <http://www.tolerance.org/blog/back-school-back-community>.