

Anne Frank: Courage and Responsibility

Summary

Quotation:

'And whoever is happy will make others happy, too. People who have courage and faith will never perish in misery!'

--Anne Frank (March 7, 1944)

Time Frame

9 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Small Groups

Life Skills

Communication, Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl

The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman by Ernest Gaines

Farewell to Manzanar by Jeanne Houston

The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boom

Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

Profiles in Courage by John F. Kennedy

They Fought Back: The story of Jewish Resistance in Nazi Europe by Yuri Suhl

Other books, stories, articles, or videos that describe people who exhibited courage or responsibility by taking a stand.

Optional: computer hardware and software for word processing

Background for Teachers

See first step for background information.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will examine/identify attitudes toward discrimination. Students will increase their sensitivity to diversity.

Instructional Procedures

See preface material from 'Anne Frank in the World, 1929 - 1945 Teacher Workbook.'

Ask students to think about the concepts of courage and responsibility. Use one or more techniques to elicit characteristics of courage. These might include cognitive mapping or webbing, brainstorming, word associations, or having students spell out the words down the left side of the piece of paper and assigning a descriptive word to each letter. C= character, O=opportunity, U=unselfishness, etc.

Students can also brainstorm a list of people they know from literature or real-life stories who exemplify these ideals. Choose a selection for an entire class to read, or have students select a book from the reading list or locate another book, short story, newspaper, magazine article, or video that describes a person who exhibited courage or responsibility by taking a stand at a critical time.

Students may use this same reading/viewing assignment for another class or purpose. As they read,

they should watch for examples of people who exhibit courage or show responsibility. Students who are reading the same selection may want to work together. Classes or students who are reading different selections may want to form small groups to compare and contrast the 'heroes' they discover. After students have read and discussed the selections, they should prepare to write their own stories.

Have students choose from among these formats:

Description of two characters in the selection they read - one who showed courage/responsibility and one who did not - and of the event that provoked the decision to act or not to act.

Description of two characters in a selection they did not read but heard discussed - one who showed courage/responsibility and one who did not - and of the event that provoked the decision to act or not to act.

Description of two people in a media report - one who showed courage/responsibility and one who did not - and of the event that provoked the decision to act or not to act. The media report may only describe the event and the person who showed courage/responsibility; the student writer may have to imagine/create the second person. If so, this should be clear to the reader.

Description of two characters in a fictional setting of the writer's creation - one who showed courage/responsibility and one who did not - and of the event that provoked the decision to act or not to act.

Diary written from the point of view of one of two characters - one who showed courage/responsibility and one who did not - and of the event that provoked the decision to act or not to act.

Students may share their stories with the class orally or by posting them in the classroom. The final version of the story should be submitted for evaluation by the teacher. Some students may wish to place this story in their writing journal.

Closure: Compile the students' stories into a class version of 'Profiles in Courage.' Offer this set of readings to other classes in middle or elementary schools. Discuss the quote from Anne Frank. Do students agree with her? Do they know people whose happiness makes others happy? Do they know of people with courage and faith who perished in misery - or survived?

Extensions

Ask school media personnel to help arrange a 'scavenger hunt' for students to become acquainted with a wide range of books appropriate for this lesson. Provide students with a list of books to hunt for, for example:

Find a book written by a teenager.

Find a book by a European author.

Find a book of art works by prisoners or children of the Holocaust.

Have students visit a display of available books in the media center or listen to book talks by the media generalist/librarian, then fill in their scavenger hunt forms.

Have students role play the people in the reading selections or their own stories.

Short plays could be performed for other classes, a great way of sharing reading with others.

Have students write book reviews that focus on the characters who showed courage/responsibility. Reviews may be submitted for publication in the school newspaper or literary magazine or in another publication in the community.

Authors

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