

High School Lesson 2

Narrative Essay: Me and My Community

Students will write a narrative essay focused on how they view their connection to their community and how their philanthropic efforts can impact their community.



Essential Questions for Students

- Why is it important for members of a community to extend themselves into philanthropic projects?
- What kind of impact can an individual have on society?

Outcomes

- Students will examine their ability to impact society through service.
- Students will demonstrate ability to work as a team.
- Students will demonstrate ability to plan, edit, and publish written works.

Targeted Content Standards

- Language Arts – Standard 1
Uses the general skills and knowledge of the writing process.
- Language Arts – Standard 8
Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes.
- Life Skills – Working with Others – Standard 1
Contributes to the overall effect of a group.

Timeline

- One to two class periods to create and present definitions.
- One to three class periods to plan and create essay, depending on homework assigned.

Advanced Preparation/Materials Needed

- Determine number of teams and team members. This activity works well with 4 to 8 teams, depending on class size and time available for presentations. Teams should include 2 to 4 students. Ensure that each team has a confident writer.
- Decide how definitions will be presented (i.e. large sheets of paper or overhead projector). Have necessary materials ready for each team.
- Timer (optional).
- Copy of a Writing Web for demonstration and a copy for each student. See resource 7.

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Key Vocabulary

(Definitions taken from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary)

- Community
a unified body of individuals; an interacting population of various kinds of individuals in a common location
- Impact
the power to bring about a result on another
- Choice
an act of selection
- Philanthropy
works or endeavors, such as charitable aid or endowments, intended to increase the well-being of humanity

Lesson

Part I

- Write Key Vocabulary words on the board before class starts (Community, Impact, Choice, and Philanthropy).
- Explain that students will be split into teams. Each team will define one of the words on the board and present their definition to the class. They will have 5 to 10 minutes to develop their definition.
- Ensure that students realize their definitions should grow from personal experience and understanding. Students should NOT look up definitions in a dictionary.
- Divide the class into teams and distribute materials necessary for their presentation.
- If using a timer, let the students know that the timer will serve as their two-minute warning to finish up.
- Once teams have created their definitions, have each team present them to the class. After the presentations, ask students how they feel these words apply to them. How do these definitions apply to the Read for the Record campaign?

Part II

- Assign each student the task of writing an essay answering the question: *How could I make a positive impact through a philanthropic project?*
- To help students plan for their essays, model completing a Writing Web for your own essay.
- Pass out Writing Webs and have students begin planning.

Portfolio Development Project

- This essay is one of the foundations for the student's portfolio and should be completed after the Research Paper lesson. It is an opportunity for students to explore their interests and express ideas on how to make a positive impact on humanity through volunteer and philanthropic efforts.

Extension Activities

- Interview a family member, neighbor, teacher, or coach about their experience as a volunteer.
- Conduct a school survey focusing on how many students volunteer and how their efforts impacted the community.
- Assemble essays into a notebook and have them available to read at school events.

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Accommodations/Modifications

- Modify the length and/or due date if appropriate.
- The main objective of this lesson is to encourage all students to begin to see their ability to have an impact. Consider allowing students to answer the question by recording their thoughts, giving an oral presentation, using a scribe, or presenting in a different art form if appropriate.

Family Connection

- This is a fantastic question for students to discuss with their families over a meal. Encourage students to ask family members how they impact the community. How do their jobs impact the community? Do family members volunteer? Where could they find family volunteer opportunities?