

Do the Write Thing Lesson Plans
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Objective:

SWBAT identify instances of violence and its effects on themselves and others.

SWBAT write an essay about youth violence which includes their experiences and possible solutions to the problem of youth violence.

Materials:

Do The Write Thing Book of Writings; pictures from Lansing and Washington, DC

Bullying-Don't Be Such a Nerd (YouTube video)

Procedures:

DAY 1:

If possible, present in an assembly including the entire grade level to introduce the program. If not, present to my own class.

Open by sharing with students that young people are making strides in many areas that in the past was not the case. (Examples: Young people raising money to help those who are sick or less fortunate; young people starting businesses to earn money for college; young adults running for and winning political offices).

Continue by discussing how many young people are taking responsibility for improving their school and community environments by taking a stand against violence. Introduce the Do the Write Thing program as a way that they can be a part of that movement.

Show the slide show of the students they know who have been recognized as National Ambassadors in the Do the Write Thing essay challenge and tell them that they will have the opportunity to participate as well. Share with students the questions they will write about.

Respond to student questions about the program before closing.

DAY 2:

Show video in class, stopping before the resolution is revealed and allow students to discuss, first with a partner or small group and then with the group at large, what they think they would do in the position of the characters.

Possible discussion starters:

What do you think each student (the bully, the victim & the bystander) is thinking or feeling?

What do you think you would do in each person's place?

After the group discussion, remind students that bullying, even if no one is physically hit, is an act of violence. Allow students to share other examples of violence and start a list of students' contributions. Close by asking students to think about how we perceive violence with our senses.

DAY 3:

Open the session with the previous day's question: How do we perceive violence with our senses?

In the past, students have been able to readily cite that we can see someone being hit or we feel pain when someone hits us, so give one or two examples of how the other senses are involved when violence occurs. (Perhaps a person might remember the smell of the gravel on the playground when someone was picking on them; they might remember the sound of voices calling them mean names, etc.)

Again allow a few minutes for group discussion and then time for students to share their responses with the entire class.

DAY 4

On this day, students will be asked to think about their own personal experiences or the experiences of someone they may know with violence. Because, the subject can be upsetting to students, remind students they are not required to share aloud. If a student doesn't have/doesn't want to revisit a personal experience, allow them to think of an image they have seen from a movie or just on the street that elicited a feeling from them.

What were the circumstances that led to the violence?

Who was involved?

Did anyone intervene to try to stop the violence? If so, how?

What was the outcome?

Focus the day's discussion more on what led to resulting violence. Allow students to have "free reign" in terms of describing why violence occurred. Also allow students to respond to each other and ask each other questions. Record student responses.

DAY 5

Students will focus on one incident or period of violence that they have experienced or witnessed for the purpose of writing about the situation. Students will be assured that their writing will go no further than the teacher if they do not want to submit for the DTWT essay challenge. Students will begin their essays in class and may assist each other as they write. Students will be given the weekend to complete their essays if they do not finish in class.

Those students who would like to, may read their essays to the class before they are submitted.