

Classroom Lesson Plan 9

The Giver

Teacher: Linda Rief, Oyster River Middle School, Durham, New Hampshire

Grade Level: Eighth

Topic: *The Giver*

Materials Needed:

- Class set of *The Giver*
- Writer's notebooks
- Sticky notes
- Art materials
- Handmade bookmarks (use the Teacher Tool "Bookmark Forms")
- Student Activity Sheet:
 - Class set of "Passage for Student Response"
- Teacher Tools:
 - Using Personal Writing To Extend Literary Envisionments
 - Suggestions for Integrating Vocabulary Study
 - Responding to Specific Passages in a Literary Text
 - Using Personal Writing To Extend Literary Envisionments
 - Visualizing Literary Language
 - Writing About Literature: Producing a Polished Piece
 - Responding Visually to Literature
 - Assessment and Evaluation: Some Useful Principles

Background Information:

Ms. Rief's students have been choosing their own reading—from an extensive classroom library, the school library, or other sources—and using their writer's notebooks to respond to their reading. They are accustomed to choosing their own writing topics. In addition, they have experienced whole-group discussion in their work with both film and earlier readings. Ms. Rief used Rodman Philbrick's *Freak the Mighty* to introduce students to Reader's Theater by asking several students to assume the role of a particular character and be prepared to read aloud in that role throughout the class's study of the novel.

Ms. Rief uses *The Giver* to introduce the idea of choices, both those we make for ourselves and those made for us. She asks them to use *The Giver* to examine what makes a choice good or bad while exploring the implications of a world in which there is no choice. She leads the class to think about the world of *The Giver* in the context of their own society by asking them to consider if such a society could ever develop, and if so, how.

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Lesson Objectives:

Students will:

- read and enjoy literature.
- use their writer's notebooks to record their personal responses to their reading. See the Teacher Tool "Using Personal Writing To Extend Literary Envisionments" for ways to help students respond to their reading.
- develop fuller understandings of the reading and the issues it raises through reflective writing, class discussion, visual transmediation and various other activities.
- use language effectively to create knowledge, make meaning, challenge thinking, and expand their literary envisionments.
- use language to develop as a classroom community of thinkers and learners, respectful of views other than their own.
- make and trust their own choices as independent learners.
- develop vocabulary in the context of their reading. See the Teacher Tool "Suggestions for Integrating Vocabulary Study" for suggestions about teaching vocabulary from literature.

Expected Products From Lesson:

- Regular quick writes in response to class questions and/or specific passages: the Teacher Tool "Responding to Specific Passages in a Literary Text" offers suggestions for ways to do this
- Regular response entries in writer's notebooks: the Teacher Tool "Using Personal Writing To Extend Literary Envisionments" offers useful strategies
- Regular use of sticky notes for comments, questions, and identification of specific passages
- A collaborative drawing (done with a partner) based on a significant scene from the book: see the Teacher Tool "Visualizing Literary Language" for directions for this activity as well as some samples of student work from Ms. Rief's class
- A polished final paper on an incident, passage, or idea that is important to the student: the Teacher Tool "Writing About Literature: Producing a Polished Piece" offers some helpful hints for organizing this assignment

Instructional Strategies Implemented:

- Class discussion
- Writing as a tool for making meaning
- Dramatic presentation of ideas
- Artistic transmediation of ideas: see the Teacher Tool "Responding Visually to Literature" for further explanation of transmediation
- Drafting, receiving and giving collaborative feedback, revising, and editing a polished written text based on a literary work

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Collaborative Structure of Class:

Students work individually, in pairs, in small groups, or as an entire class depending on the purposes and needs of a particular activity. Desks are arranged in clusters of four and rearranged as needed.

Lesson Procedures/Activities:

- Reading independently
- Presenting Reader's Theater readings of text passages
- Listening to Reader's Theater presentations of passages and scenes
- Writing quick writes or response in writer's notebooks
- Group discussion of the literature and the human issues it presents
- Creating visual projects based on the literature
- Developing vocabulary through the context of literature
- Engaging in various writing processes

Follow-Up or Culminating Activities:

Students write a polished essay in response to a self-selected aspect of *The Giver* (see the Teacher Tool "Writing About Literature: Producing a Polished Piece" for suggestions). In addition, Ms. Rief uses the novel to introduce students to read, research, and write about the Holocaust and other human rights issues. They read pieces by and about Anne Frank and Elie Wiesel along with other, self-selected texts, watch several topical films, choose a related issue to read about, and use writing and discussion to share what they have learned with classmates.

Assessment:

Students may be assessed on a daily basis through:

- preparation and participation, and
- writer's notebook entries.

The following activities might receive holistic or scaled evaluation (see the Teacher Tool "Assessment and Evaluation: Some Useful Principles" for a detailed explanation of holistic and scaled evaluation).

- Responses to specific passages
- Quality and quantity of writer's notebook entries
- Visual representation of passage or scene
- Vocabulary activity
- Polished paper in response to *The Giver*