



A Lesson on A Garden in Lawndale by Mistie Meditz

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 2 hours 30 minutes

Lesson Keywords: Community involvement, making a difference

Lesson Description: Students in this lesson will do a close read about how students made a difference in their community and their school. Your students will read closely the passage and then apply the information by making real world connections.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.3: Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2c: Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2e: Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

Instructions: Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

A Garden in Lawndale

by

Content: A catalyst is a spark. It is the start of a change. As you read this report, think what the spark was.

Eighth grade students at a school in Lawndale saw new buildings. Families were moving into the community. But they saw vacant lots, too. They saw trash there. Even when they picked up the trash, the lots did not stay clean. Wind blew trash there from the street. No one can do anything about this, said one student. Yes, we can, said another. Their teacher agreed. They would plant a garden in a vacant lot.

Their teacher showed them pictures of the community long ago. She showed them that it used to have great gardens. The students said they could make this change. It was after Barack Obama had been elected. His slogan had been Yes, we can. They believed it. They would prove it.

The students met with the principal. They asked if they could create a community garden in the vacant lot closest to the school. She told them that was a great idea, but they would have to volunteer their own time and work on it every week. The students agreed. They promised they would donate their time every Saturday until it snowed. Even then they would keep the sidewalk cleared near the lot.

The students needed to collaborate with the community. They wanted to be sure that everyone in the community wanted the garden. They met with block clubs and told them their plan. The block clubs applauded the project. They said they would help.

The students went on the Internet to learn about plants. They looked for plants that would grow well in Chicago. They chose some evergreen plants. They chose some bulbs, too. They learned a lot about plants and gardening.

The students needed money to get the bulbs and plants. They needed tools, too. They made a budget. They sent that budget and their plan to get funding. A Foundation funded their plan. The students got \$300 to buy what they needed.

They are 8th graders, so this spring they will meet with the seventh grade. They will ask them to take over the garden. It will be their legacy to the school community.

Task 1: Vocabulary

Instructions: Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

Q: 1 WordPhrase: community **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: The students checked with the community to make sure they wanted a garden. What does the word community mean in this sentence?

- A: their parents
- B: the people who live by the vacant lot
- C: the principal and other school staff
- D: their friends

Question: Which one of the sentences below uses the word "community" correctly?

- A: I went and swam in the community.
- B: Community is a small town in Virginia.
- C: All the community members came to the meeting to discuss the garden.
- D: At the mall my favorite store is The Community.

Q: 2 WordPhrase: volunteer **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: The principal told the students they must volunteer their time every week to work on the garden. What does the word "volunteer" mean in this sentence?

- A: to work with pay
- B: to work for food
- C: to work for free
- D: to spend money

Question: Which sentence below uses the word "volunteer" correctly?

- A: I volunteered at Lowe's for several hours and in return I got a paycheck at the end of the week.
- B: I ran my volunteer down the block to get to school.
- C: When I got up Saturday morning, I volunteered my time to help feed others.
- D: The cake had 3 volunteers decorated beautifully.

Q: 3 WordPhrase: budget **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: The author in the story says, "the students needed money for plants and tools so they made a budget." What does the word "budget" mean in this sentence?

- A: money needed for a project
- B: plan of action
- C: garden shed
- D: trip to the store

Question: Which one of the sentences below uses the word "budget" correctly?

- A: I had to make a budget so I didn't over spend for the weekend.
- B: I ran to the budget car rental to pick up a car while mine was being fixed.
- C: The students went to budget to pick up supplies for the garden.
- D: I had to budget the plants to grow.

Q: 4 WordPhrase: legacy **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: The author in our story says "It will be their legacy to the school." What does the word "legacy" mean in this sentence?

- A: a reward given to someone
- B: to complete a project
- C: a prank
- D: something passed down by someone

Question: Which one of the sentences below uses the word "legacy" correctly?

- A: The fathers' legacy to his son was his boat.
- B: I pulled a legacy on my little sister.
- C: I was so happy I finally received a legacy.
- D: I pulled up in the drive way in my brand new Legacy.

Task 2: Forum Discussion

Instructions: This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

1 - Why does the principal say "you will need.."

The principal told the students that was a great idea, but they would have to volunteer their own time and work on it every week.? Why would the principal make the students commit to working on the garden every week and for free??

2 - The community..

The author writes,?the students wanted to make sure everyone in the community wanted? a garden.? Explain why it is important to check with the community members first before creating a garden???

3 - The budget..

In the story the students created a budget for the garden.??They sent that budget and their plan to get?funding. A Foundation funded their plan. The students got \$300 to buy what?they needed.? ?What would have happened if the students project wasn't funded?? What could the students have done?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: You are to write and post here 500 words essay on what type of project would you implement in your community?? Tell about the project in detail, why?would you implement this project and what would be your plan of action?? Make sure to describe in depth your plan and reasoning for the project.

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