



A Lesson on A New Day by Elise Whittle

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 2 hours

Lesson Keywords: Reading, Civil Rights, Fiction

Lesson Description: The goal of this lesson is for students to read and understand a fiction passage and use its contents to find the meaning and significance of new and domain-specific vocabulary words. Students will also be able to discuss the effects of historical events and write about the main idea and details of a fiction passage.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

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.4.2: Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize 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.L.4.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4a: Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

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 New Day

by

Content: I visit my grandparents in Mississippi in the summers. It is hot there, but it is fun. And it was hot in Chicago, too. I liked the change. I listen to my grandfather tell stories about the way things were. He had met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He tells about the marches he joined. He tells about the changes he had seen.

My grandmother says to me, and my cousins, Your grandfather was a hero. He stood up for civil rights. It was dangerous. But he went to the marches. He was one of the first African Americans to register to vote in this county. At first I was so worried that I would start to cry if he was not home by nighttime. But I joined him. I marched, too.

My grandfather is humble, though. He doesn't take credit for being brave. He says,

It was Dr. King who was the hero. We all did it together. He was the man who brought all the change. He inspired the freedom marches.

When I went to last summer, my grandparents kept us busy. They took me, and my cousins into town every day. We would go door to door to check that people were registered to vote. If they weren't registered, we would ask if we could get them to register. If they said yes, then my grandfather would come to drive them to the office to register. Everyone said yes. So we got a lot of people to register.

When we came back to Chicago, there were signs all over about the election. It was exciting. My teacher said that this was an unprecedented time. Never before had an African American been nominated by a major political party to be President of the United States. I felt proud that I had been part of the election.

Then it was election day. We were watching the news on the TV. One by one the states were counting the votes and reporting who won. It was getting clear that Barack Obama was going to be elected.

At 9:00 pm, my grandfather called from Mississippi. He said, Jerome, now it is a new country. We have made the really big change. I heard my grandmother in the background. She was crying. I asked if she was sad. No, he said, those are tears of joy.

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: unprecedented **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: The author says, "It was exciting. My teacher said this was an unprecedented time. Never before..." What does the word "unprecedented" mean in this sentence?

- A: common
- B: exceptional
- C: poor
- D: frequent

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

- A: It was unprecedented for Sarah to achieve good grades this year because she has always been a straight A student.
- B: Gary said that Richard Nixon was going to get unprecedented when he committed a crime while in office.
- C: The damage caused by the wildfire was unprecedented and has never been seen before in the United States.
- D: When the restaurant sold the same amount of hamburgers as it usually does, people said it was unprecedented.

Q: 2 WordPhrase: humble **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: The text states, "My grandfather is humble, though. He doesn't take credit for being brave." Based on the passage, what does the word "humble" mean in this sentence?

- A: excited
- B: selfish
- C: upset
- D: modest

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

- A: Richard, a professional chef, was acting humble when he said he was an average cook.
- B: Chris humbled something to his friend under his breath.
- C: She told her friend she was feeling humble after her dog ran away.
- D: The man was being humble when he was boasting about his career.

Q: 3 WordPhrase: civil rights **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: The story says, "Your grandfather was a hero. He stood up for civil rights. It was dangerous." Based on the information in the text, what does "civil rights" mean in this sentence?

- A: things that restrict people
- B: freedoms that protect citizens
- C: people who fight others
- D: something someone can purchase

Question: Which one of the sentences below uses "civil rights" correctly?

- A: Rosa Parks fought for civil rights when she refused to sit in the back of a bus because of the color of her skin.
- B: Today I went to the store and bought some civil rights.
- C: Civil Rights showed me the way to the ice cream shop.
- D: Brenda went to civil rights to find out more information about her appointment.

Q: 4 WordPhrase: registered **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: The author of the story says, "We would go door to door to check that people were registered to vote. If they weren't registered..." What does the word "registered" mean in this sentence?

- A: bartered
- B: unaccepted
- C: recorded
- D: beautified

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

- A: My mom gets registered at the grocery store after she is finished shopping.
- B: Julie was looking especially registered before the school dance.
- C: I was registered when my best friend told me she couldn't come over to my house today.
- D: Danny's parents had not registered him to play soccer this year, so he was unable to play.

=====

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 and two peer responses for each topic.

1 - What was so dangerous?

Jerome's grandmother?says, Your grandfather was a hero. He stood up for civil rights. It was dangerous. Explain how and why Jerome's grandfather might have been in danger when standing up for civil rights.

2 - "A new country"

Jerome's grandfather says, Jerome, now it is a new country. We have made the really big change. What does he mean by this statement? In your opinion, how did this election change our country?

3 - Author's purpose

What do you think the author's purpose was in writing this story?

=====

=====

Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: In at least 500 words, explain the main idea of this story. What are some major details that support the main idea? Make sure to include specific examples from the text in your response.

=====