



A Lesson on A Garden in Lawndale by Denise Lukacik

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 1 hour

Lesson Keywords: A Garden in Lawndale

Lesson Description: In this lesson students will read a brief passage that describes how a group of students working together made a positive change in their community. Students will learn and define new vocabulary words, answer questions based on contextual clues, and present their ideas and points of views on how they can become positively involved in their community. This lesson provides the student with the opportunity in which to practice their reading comprehension, critical thinking, and informative writing skills. This lesson is aligned with Common Core State Standards.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.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.4.1: 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.4.4: 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.RF.4.4: Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4a: Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.

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.4.1a: Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1b: Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2b: Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.5c: Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).

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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.

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Task 1: Forum Discussion

Instructions:

1 - What does the author mean by the term "block clubs"?

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. Using context clues from the passage, describe and define block clubs in a community.

2 - A catalyst is a spark.....

A catalyst is a spark. It is the start of a change. As you read this report, think what the spark was. After re-reading the passage, explain why the students decided to plant the garden.

3 - The teacher tells the students "it used to have great gardens."

Their teacher showed them pictures of the community long ago. She showed them that it used to have great gardens. Explain why the teacher felt it was important to show the students what the community used to look like and what may have caused it to have changed.

Task 2: 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: collaborate **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: After deciding to plant the garden in the empty lot, the author states "The students needed to collaborate with the community. They wanted to be sure that everyone in the community wanted the garden." What does the word "collaborate" mean in this sentence?

- A: disagree
- B: ignore
- C: communicate
- D: disassociate

Question: Choose the sentence below that uses the word "collaborate" correctly.

- A: I can't collaborate while you are being so noisy!
- B: We must collaborate the groceries.
- C: If you want to collaborate you must go to bed early.
- D: Students will collaborate with one another while researching facts on animal adaptations.

Q: 2 WordPhrase: applauded **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: After the students met with the community, the author tells us "The block clubs applauded the project." Define the usage of "applauded" in this sentence.

- A: clapped
- B: approved
- C: booed
- D: did not like

Question: Choose the sentence below that uses the word "applauded" correctly.

- A: She was applauded when she fell down.
- B: My mother applauded after dinner.
- C: They applauded her decision to go to college.
- D: The teacher was applauded at the students behavior.

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

Question: "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". What word does NOT have the same meaning as "legacy"?

- A: gift
- B: present
- C: loss
- D: tradition

Question: Choose the sentence below that uses the word "legacy" correctly.

- A: His legacy was broken after the accident.
- B: May I have more legacy please?
- C: They took more legacy than usual.
- D: She left us a legacy of a million dollars.

Q: 4 WordPhrase: catalyst **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: At the beginning of the passage, the author tells us that "A catalyst is a spark. It is the start of a change". What is meant by catalyst?

- A: obstacle
- B: cause
- C: stopped
- D: prevents from happening

Question: Choose the sentence below that uses the word "catalyst" correctly.

- A: The disagreement between countries was the catalyst that started the war.
- B: I have two catalysts; one is black and the other is brown and white.
- C: She loved to catalyst in the shower.
- D: If we could only find more catalyst, we could make a fire.

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: You are to write and post here a 500 word?essay on two ways that you can help make a difference in your community. ?Make sure to provide specific examples of the activity, how you would obtain the supplies and money needed for each activity and?explain why each activity is important to the community.

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