



A Lesson on My Sister, the Soldier by Paige Rodriguez

Grade Level: Grade 8

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 1 hour

Lesson Keywords: #8grade #ELA #Lessonplan

Lesson Description: This reading follows the narrative of a girl and her sister that joined the Army at a young age. Students are responsible for reading the passage titled "My Sister, The Soldier" and gain some insight into the perspective of the young girl watching her sister go off to the military. Students will learn and define certain vocabulary terms from the reading. Students will then use the information from the passage, as well as their own knowledge and experience, to tell a personal story of their own. Finally, the students will write an extensive response into the literary tools used in the passage and whether the tools had the desired affect to them personally.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.6: Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.9: Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1d : Establish and maintain a formal style.

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using : Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.2: Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually,

quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.2c: Spell correctly.

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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.

My Sister, the Soldier

by

Content: My sister is a soldier. I remember when she came home and announced to our mother that she was going to enlist in the army. My mother replied, You're terribly young. It's too difficult, challenging, and dangerous, you really should reconsider.

My sister Darlene said, I'm 18, which is old enough, and through the army I'll be able to make progress. Right now, all I can get is part-time work while I go to community college. I need to have a career, not a part-time job, I need a college education, and the army will pay for that when I've finished my tour of duty, so this is about my future.

My mother cried and said, There is a war, you will be in dangerous situations.

I said, Don't worry. They don't send women to fight on the front lines in wars, so they are not in great danger. If it was me that would be a different situation.

Darlene said, Don't worry, I'm cautious, I won't take unnecessary risks.

Despite that assurance, my mother stayed worried. My sister went to training camp for three months, and when she returned, she said, I'm glad I enlisted, it was a wise decision. Training was challenging, we have to get up at 5:00 every morning, the work was demanding, we drilled a lot, but we learned skills. You have to be on time, and you have to follow all the directions, but they keep you occupied, so you don't get bored. I like the other recruits in my platoon, we all supported each other in the exercises.

My mother said, I'm proud of you, but I'm still concerned about your safety.

Don't worry, Mom. If I do get sent to the war zone, I'll be extremely careful.

My sister did go to the war zone when her unit was sent to Iraq. I had no idea where that was, so I looked it up on the Internet. Iraq is on the other side of the world.

My sister purchased a computer before she departed, and she showed us how to use it to send email. I'm glad she did because we sent notes to her on it every day, then when she could she responded, but usually not immediately. She reported the weather and the people, but she didn't describe her activities. Here's what she wrote in one note.

It's extremely hot here, and we have to wear heavy clothes, which makes it really challenging, though, they are bulletproof for protection. Most of the local people here are supportive, and the soldiers are great companions. Don't worry, you can rely on me to be careful, I know how important it is to be cautious. See you in September.

She would end every communication that way: don't worry, see you in September. But then September came and she communicated a disappointing message, We have to stay longer; I'm not sure how soon I'll be returning. Don't be discouraged, I'll be there.

My mother checked the email every day for the next week and didn't get a message. She was increasingly concerned, and then she got a reassuring note: I'm fine, sorry I couldn't email for some time, we were on assignment. Don't worry. I'm being careful.

So it went on. We waited and waited, and I worried, too. The news reports on the war on TV looked dangerous, and my mother would cry when we saw those reports.

October went by; then November; then it was December. My mother bought some presents for my sister and dispatched them by mail. She said, I really wish Darlene could return for Christmas. Every time the phone rang or someone knocked on the door, she hoped it might be Darlene coming home by surprise. But she didn't get her wish, so Christmas was uniquely sad this year, not the holiday we had appreciated in the past.

Then on New Year's eve, the doorbell rang, and we rushed to open it. My mother said later she was a little afraid every time the doorbell rang that it might be someone to announce bad news, that there was a problem with Darlene. But this was the opposite, this was the best news we could have received. It was Darlene! We'll have a really happy new year now.

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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: Cautious **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: The passage states "Don't worry, I'm cautious, I won't take unnecessary risks." Based on context clues, what does the word 'cautious' mean?

- A:** strong
- B:** rebellious
- C:** careful
- D:** small

Question: Which example below is the best use of the word "cautious"?

- A:** I looked in the mirror on my way out the door and realized how cautious my hair looked.
 - B:** While wandering around in the dark, I made sure to be cautious so I wouldn't trip over anything.
 - C:** The bed was cautious when I sat on it.
 - D:** The water on the lake was cautious that night.
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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 style is this passage written in?

What writing style (expository, descriptive, persuasive and?narrative)?is this passage written in? Identify, distinguish, and define the specific writing style used with this passage.

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: The mother in this passage feels very strong dislike of her eldest daughter's choice to join the military, however, she continues to show an extreme amount of support for her during times of uncertainty in her life. Please describe a time when you were feeling uncertain or went through a difficult time and the support of someone around you helped get you through the rough patch. Be creative and be sure to go into detail about your feelings and actions in response to this support.?

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