

LESSON PLAN #10

RIGHT #9

THE RIGHT TO EXPRESS THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS



WELCOME

Welcome the students back.

Give each student the opportunity to recite the Day Nine Personal Affirmation to his or her Team – Every child has the right to have thoughts and beliefs.

Have the Team Leaders give 1 Token to each team member that recites the Day Two Personal Affirmation correctly.

Have the Team Leaders give 1 additional Token to each team member that recites the former Personal Affirmations correctly.

BASIC CONCEPT

Every child has the right to belong to express feelings and opinions.

DISCUSSION STARTER

Ask the students a controversial question such as;

What happens to people after they die?

Should children be spanked if they misbehave?

What should happen to a person who kills another person?

Should children get to decide whether or not they go to school?

Is there life on other planets?

What should happen to people who bully others?

Allow the students to discuss the question.

Tell the students:

The thoughts that many of you just expressed are called “opinions.”

You have the right to have and express an opinion about any subject.

MESSAGE

You will need:

Kids for Global Peace Graphic Novel for each student

Instructions:

Divide the group into teams.

Instruct each team to sit in a circle.

Review the Graphic Novel content from Day Nine: Right #8 – The Right to Have Thoughts and Beliefs (via Pages 30 - 31) or have one of the students provide the review.

Reintroduce Terrasita, the character who is explaining Right #9. Explain why it makes sense for her to choose to explain this Right.

Instruct the students in each circle to take turns reading the graphic novel aloud. Have them read the page that features the heading “Right #9 – The Right to Express Feelings” (Page 32).

Have a discussion with the entire group about what was read in the Graphic Novel.

Have the team leaders distribute one Token to each student for reading the Graphic Novel.

Tell the students:

In 1989 the United Nations put together a document called The Convention on the Rights of the Child. The document puts forth all of the Human Rights to which all children are entitled. (A person younger than 18 years of age is considered to be a child.)

According to Articles 12 and 13 of The Convention on the Rights of the Child:

Every child has the right to express feelings and opinions. This means:

Every child has the right to express feelings and opinions

orally,
in writing,
in print,
in the form of art, or
through any other medium that the child chooses.

Every child has the right to have his or her feelings and opinions acknowledged and respected, especially when the feelings and opinions pertain to matters that affect the child.

STORY

Tell the students:

Here is a JUNKROOM BAND story that might help you better understand Right #9.

Instructions:

Read aloud to the entire group the story below.

Ask the students:

How does this story pertain to Right #9?

Give 1 Token to any student who provides a viable answer to the question.

THE UNCONVENTIONAL FASHION STATEMENT

By Joy Berry

A Story about Human Right for Kids #9 THE RIGHT TO EXPRESS FEELINGS AND OPINIONS

More than anyone else in the Junkroom Band, Lashan Franklin had a true passion for fashion. Indeed, the other band members argued that Lashan was always more concerned about the way the band looked, rather than the way the band sounded. Consequently, it was a real surprise when Lashan latched onto a new girl in school who couldn't care less about fashion. The girl's name was Kayla Bartlett.

Were it not for the benefactors that helped sponsor her parents' Peace Corps work in Africa, Kayla Bartlett would not be living among the rich families in town. As it was, the benefactors knew for some time about Kayla's parents' commitment to return to the states when Kayla turned 15 so that she could attend High School in America. To that end, the Bartlett family was invited to take over the benefactor's home when they decided to move to a much bigger mansion.

Kayla's mom and dad were doctors and had dedicated their lives to providing basic medical care to people whose best hope for recovering from serious injuries and sicknesses had been an itinerant medicine man or woman who circulated among the rural villages in Africa. Back in America, the two doctors planned to support their family by working for government-sponsored medical programs for the less fortunate.

Like everything else in the U.S., the Bartlett's new home was a far cry from the thatched huts that they had called, "home." It wasn't as though the Bartletts didn't like their previous remote-location accommodations. Indeed, they all felt that there is a lot to be said for the advantages of living in places where there isn't even a word for "toilet"—much less an actual toilet, where the term "running water" refers to the water in rivers and streams, and where the little bit of electricity utilized by make-shift medical clinics comes from run-down, overworked generators.

For one thing, all of the Bartletts developed superb outdoor skills—skills that came in handy for both survival and recreational purposes. They also became experts at games like chess that require high levels of intelligence and mental concentration. In short, the simple, straightforward village life seemed to suit them perfectly.

As a result, Kayla was the personification of a well-rounded person. In addition to a likable person-

ality, punctuated by overt kindness and compassion, she functioned at an intellectual level far beyond her actual age. But what really set her apart from her peers was her physical beauty that included a perfectly proportioned, gazelle-like body, a thick mane of long shiny brown hair, and facial features that could rival any top model in the world.

So, it was no wonder that Kayla was an automatic shoe-in for any one of the myriad cliques that made up the high school's student body. But Kayla was not used to focusing all of her time and energy on a small portion of the population. She was used to circulating among as many people as she had access to so that she could absorb the best interaction that every person had to offer her. Of course, her highly developed tolerance for everyone, no matter who they were or where they came from, as well as and her sincere appreciation for every person's uniqueness and potential made her social strategy successful.

It was automatically assumed that because Kayla's parents were doctors and her family lived in the upscale part of town, the Bartletts were rich enough to buy Kayla whatever clothes she wanted. So, while in the beginning, everyone cut Kayla a little bit of slack, it didn't take long for them to begin commenting on the well-worn, no-nonsense jeans, tee-shirts and tennis shoes that Kayla wore to school every day. Most of the snide comments about Kayla's lackluster wardrobe were made behind her back. But some outspoken individuals, including Lashan, made comments directly to Kayla.

The comments surprised Kayla. She wasn't used to anyone paying attention to what she was wearing. As long as certain parts of the body were covered, no one cared about what anyone wore in the villages where she grew up. She couldn't help but wonder why it mattered to anyone else what she wore, and so she began to ask around. The answers that she received were as varied as the clothing styles that each small group of kids wore.

Lashan did her best to explain her thoughts and feelings about fashion to Kayla and was relieved when other kids weighed in on the subject.

A fellow member of the Chess Club explained, "Kids who hang out together like the same things including the same kind of clothes. So, you can tell what group kids belong to by the clothes they wear."

The quarterback on the football team who sat next to Kayla in Chemistry class told her, "Your clothes show whether or not you're cool."

A cheerleader who overheard Kayla's conversation with the quarterback weighed in with her opinion. "Popular kids have an image to maintain and they can't maintain their image unless they dress a cut above everyone else."

While flipping through a People magazine, a girl considered by her peers to be the best dressed person on campus told Kayla, "No kid wants to be out of date and the only way to be up-to-date is to wear the up-to-date clothes that all of the movie stars, rock stars, and famous athletes wear."

A rich-kid-wannabe in Kayla's gym class lamented, "Because rich people can afford better clothes, you know without even knowing them that they are a cut above the rest of us"

The girl's position was later validated by someone who lived in Kayla's upscale neighborhood.

"People who don't look good are usually are lowlife."

Kayla thought that the most unique answer to her inquiries came from a guy who looked like he would just as soon punch you in the face as talk to you. "I like to wear bad-ass clothes because bad-ass clothes tell everyone that they had better not mess with me!"

Absolutely none of this made any sense to Kayla. And she began to struggle with the ever-increasing number of dire warnings that were coming at her from every direction. In no uncertain terms Kayla was assured that that if she did not get with the program, she was going to become a permanent outcast that no group would ever take in.

It didn't take long for the friendly advice to turn into mean-spirited criticism, and soon Kayla's My Space account was jammed with judgmental, offensive emails that disparaged her inferior fashion sense and style.

Never one to walk away from a challenge, Kayla decided to take action. First, she began paying attention to what the people around her were wearing. At the same time, she began accessing every teen website available, and studying every popular magazine that she could get her hands on. When she was finally certain about what kind of clothes she wanted to wear, she started researching stores that carried exactly what she was looking for.

Kayla determined that she needed to start with at least five tops and bottoms—one for every school day of the week. She put together a budget for her project and presented it to her parents. Delighted that Kayla was finally taking more interest in her overall appearance, her mom and dad enthusiastically agreed to provide the necessary funding.

The next Saturday, Kayla went to the mall early and had her clothes purchased within two hours after the stores had opened their doors. Her next stop was a specialty shop that silk-screened custom designs on fabric.

On Monday morning, Kayla excitedly wore her first new outfit to school. It consisted of black tennis shoes, a black pair of pants, and a black tee-shirt with bold white letters on the front that read, "I am not my clothes!"

For the following four days Kayla wore the same pair of tennis shoes with a new pair of black pants and a new black tee-shirt. The only thing that was different with each outfit was the statement spelled out in the white letters on the front of each tee-shirt.

Tuesday's statement read, "What I am wearing is not who I am?"

Wednesday's statement read, "Look beyond the clothes!"

Thursday's statement read, "You are not your clothes!"

Friday's statement read, "Break free from fashion prison!"

Over the weekend, Kayla laundered her new clothes. Then, on Monday morning, she began her fashion statement all over again.

The campus buzz that had begun the prior week turned into heated debates throughout the school. At the same time something interesting started to occur. All-black outfits began cropping up everywhere. At first there were only a few, but, by end of the third week, anyone who had a bird's eye view of the campus would have seen an ocean of black clothes.

Unintentionally, Kayla had set a quiet revolution into motion. And while it would not last forever, the student council deemed Kayla's message to be important enough to declared Friday as Black-Clothes Day. It was their hope that Black-Clothes-Day would remind everyone of the importance of not judging people by what they wear.

As for Kayla—although she was proud to have contributed to a new school tradition, the main benefit that she derived from her fashion statement was being able to assert her right to express her feelings and opinions by wearing whatever she darn well pleased.

MAIN ACTIVITY – MOVING POLL ACTIVITY

You will need:

Placard that reads "FOR"

Placard that reads "AGAINST"

Placard that reads "NEUTRAL"

Placard that reads "UNDECIDED"

Instructions:

Display the four signs in four different areas of the room.

Tell the students:

An opinion is what a person thinks about something.

Whatever a person has an opinion about is called an issue.

If you agree with an issue, you have an opinion that is for the issue. (Point to the FOR sign.)

If you disagree with an issue, you have an opinion that is against the issue. (Point to the AGAINST sign.)

If you do not agree or disagree with an issue, your opinion is neither for nor against the issue. Your opinion is neutral. (Point to the NEUTRAL sign.)

If you have not decided whether you agree or disagree with an issue, your opinion is undecided. (Point to the "Undecided" sign.)

Further Instructions:

Explain that you are going to read aloud several issues.

Instruct the students to register their opinions about each issue by moving to the sign that represents their opinion.

After you have presented all of the issues, discuss how the students felt about expressing an opinion that was shared by others, as well as expressing an opinion that was not shared by others.

Below is a list of issues to present to the students:

A snake would make a good pet.

Kids should be able to watch as much TV as they want.

Ghosts really do exist.

School stinks.

Boys are stronger than girls.

Going shopping is a lot of fun.

Having brothers and sisters is better than being an only child.

Extremely scary movies are the best ones to watch.

Girls are smarter than boys.

Playing computer games is more fun than playing sports.

Spiders are not frightening.

Dogs are better than cats.

Note: This activity can be extremely effective when the students create the issues to be considered.

SONG REVIEW

You will need:

Sound System

Poster featuring the song lyrics for Human Rights

Poster featuring the song lyrics for Mine and Yours

Poster featuring the song lyrics for Kids Have Human Rights

Poster featuring the song lyrics for Remember Johnny

Poster featuring the song lyrics for The Right to Have an Identity

Poster featuring the song lyrics for The Right to Have an Adequate Standard of Living

Instructions:

Have the students practice singing and performing the six songs, Human Rights, Mine and Yours, Kids Have Human Rights, Remember Johnny, The Right to Have an Identity, and The Rights to Have an Adequate Standard of Living.

Add unique sound/rhythmic elements to the practice session. These can be “rhythm instruments” that can be compiled quickly and easily out of easy-to-access, everyday materials (i.e. paper wads, Styrofoam cups, dowel sticks, empty bottle or can shakers, etc.)

Have the team leaders distribute 1 Token to each student for singing and performing the two songs.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY – EMOTIONAL CHARADES

You will need:

12 cards with one of the following emotions written on each one.

Anger
Anxiety
Defeat
Disappointment
Fear
Frustration
Grief
Guilt
Humiliation
Jealousy
Loneliness
Rejection

Paper bag or another container

12 blank cards per team

1 Pencil per team

Instructions:

Divide the group into teams.

Place the cards face down in the container.

Give each team 12 blank cards and a pencil.

Ask one representative from each team to join you.

Draw one card or slip of paper from the container and secretly show it to the four representatives.

Have the representatives return to their teams and wait until you say, “Go.”

Instruct the representatives to begin acting out the assigned emotion after you say, "Go!"

Instruct the remaining team members to secretly confer with each other and write on a blank card the emotion that the representative is dramatizing.

Award two points when a team writes down the correct emotion.

The winning team is the one that scores the most points.

Give 1 Token to each student for participating in the activity.

Give an additional Token to each student on the winning team.

After the game, remind the students that they have the right to express whatever emotions they experience as long as they do so in ways that do not hurt themselves or others.

HOMEPLAY ASSIGNMENT

Distribute to each student a slip of paper containing the Personal Affirmation Every child has the right to express feelings and opinions.

Instruct the students to take the slips of paper home and memorize the Personal Affirmation.

Explain that each student will be given 2 Tokens the next day for being able to recite the Personal Affirmation.

Distribute to each student a printed flier that includes the details for the Closing Performance.

Encourage the students to share the flier with family members and friends who might want to attend the Closing Performance.

NOTE: At the end of the morning session, have the team leaders collect and store the graphic novels and coin purses until they are redistributed to their students the next day.
