

BRINGING VOCABULARY TO LIFE: USING OUR WORDS TO HELP HOMELESS CHILDREN BYNIKINI FRAZIER, SARAH MILLS HODGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Unit Overview

This unit plan – Bringing Vocabulary to Life: Using Our Words to Help Homeless Children – engages students in explicit and systematic vocabulary instruction which strengthens their abilities to construct meaning of robust vocabulary. Throughout the unit plan, students embody the meanings of the words concerned, support, and compassionate by completing a service learning project. The core of the unit plan involves students learning about homelessness, and working on initiatives which both support homeless children, and help students master English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics and social studies standards. The unit is taught over a series of about five sessions. While the materials for this unit focus specifically on homelessness in Savannah, this unit can be adapted to address homelessness in your own town, city, county or state.

Standards Addressed

1. **ELA.1.L.6:** Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using frequently occurring conjunctions to signal simple relationships.
2. **ELA.1.RF.2:** Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).
3. **ELA.1.RF.3:** Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
4. **ELA.1.W.5:** With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.
5. **ELA.1.W.6:** With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.
6. **ELACCIW7:** Participate in shared research and writing projects
7. **ELA.1.W.8:** With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
8. **ELA.1.SL.1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade one topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

9. **ELA.1.L.2:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
10. **M.1.NBT.1:** Count to 120, starting at any number less than 120. In this range, read and write numerals and represent a number of objects with a written numeral.
11. **M.1.NBT.2:** Understand that the two digits of a two-digit number represent amounts of tens and ones.
12. **M.1.MD.2:** Express the length of an object as a whole number of length units, by laying multiple copies of a shorter object (the length unit) end to end; understand that the length measurement of an object is the number of same-size length units that span it with no gaps or overlaps.
13. **M.1.MD.4:** Organize, represent, and interpret data with up to three categories; ask and answer questions about the total number of data points, how many in each category, and how many more or less are in one category than in another.
14. **SS1E1:** The student will identify goods that people make and services that people provide for each other.

Days One and Two

Standards Addressed: 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8

Lesson Logistics/Materials:

Management Considerations: Have materials for the day's lesson ready. Review whole group expectations with class to minimize disruptions. Review and practice transitions in order to maximize instructional time.

Materials: blank Mimio notebook chart or chart paper, space for whole group discussion time, vocabulary notes, **How Can we Help Homeless Children in Savannah PowerPoint**, "Word Wizard" props (i.e. hats, sunglasses, pointers, drum, rhythm sticks)

Opening/Hook/Initial Focus:

Teacher will introduce herself/himself as a magical "Word Wizard." Teacher will explain that she/he can make words come to life with the help of wonderful and excited little first graders! [Be animated and excited to encourage students to be energetic during this process.]

Teacher will seek volunteers to help with the "Word Wizard" fun. Volunteers will receive "Word Wizard"

hats and props (i.e. word drum and magic wand) to help teach the words for the lesson.

Teacher and students will introduce the vocabulary for the session. Using the **How Can We Help Homeless Children in Savannah? PowerPoint** with real life photos to display the meaning of each word, teacher and students will spell, drum, clap, and identify each word. Word introductions will also be a time for phonics review. Students will identify letters, letter sounds, vowels, consonants, and learned vowel patterns. During this session, you can also review syllables and sight words as students take apart the words to understand meaning. Use **Vocabulary Cards** to display words.

Teacher will explain, discuss, and summarize each vocabulary word. Teacher will connect word meaning to the texts and to real life. Teacher and students will work together to create a gesture for each word to help students remember the word's meaning.

Words for the Lesson:

concerned: interested in something

support: to help someone or something

compassion: a feeling of care about people in need

Work Session:

Situations and Examples: Teacher will ask students to use the vocabulary words in different ways.

Teacher will explain that he/she will give examples, and that the students will also have an opportunity to create examples. As children provide examples, the teacher will state the connection between the word and its meaning.

Examples:

If you and a friend cheered for your favorite team at a football game, you might say, "My friend and I showed **support** for the team." When else might someone show **support**?

If you knew that someone in your class was sick, you might say, "I am **concerned** about my friend Zach. I hope he is feeling better." What is something that you may be **concerned** about?

You can show **compassion** by helping others. You may show **compassion** by sharing a snack with a friend who does not have one. How can you show **compassion** at school? At home? In your community?

What's The Word: Teacher will say a sentence that has a word missing. For each sentence, students will determine the missing word and explain why their word correctly completes the sentence.

Examples:

My mom was _____ when I told her I fell on the playground. (concerned)

I showed _____ when I helped my friend pick up her dropped toys. (compassion)

I can _____ my school by giving money for Kiss a Pig. (support)

Closing:

Using All the Words: Teacher will provide a simple review using the Classroom Response System* to check for student understanding. Use the data you collect during this activity to guide further instruction.

**If a Classroom Response System is not available, the teacher may create a multiple choice test on chart paper or as a short paper quiz.*

Example Questions:

Which word is about showing love and care about a person in need? (compassion)

Which word is about expressing interest in something? (concerned)

Which word is about helping someone? (support)

Word Game Extension: Students will play the Splat! Game in pairs. Place word flash cards on a table. One student will call out a word and/or word meaning. The other student will swat the word with a fly swatter. Continue to game and be sure partners have time to switch roles.

Day Three

Standards Addressed: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 14

Lesson Logistics/Materials:

Management Considerations: Have materials for the day's lesson ready. Review whole group expectations with class to minimize disruptions. Review and practice transitions in order to maximize instructional time.

Materials: **How Can we Help Homeless Children in Savannah PowerPoint**, Mimio notebook or blank chart paper

Opening/Hook/Initial Focus:

Using **How Can We Help Homeless Children in Savannah? PowerPoint** presentation, teacher will lead students through a detailed lesson about homelessness.

Teacher will teach students what it means to be homeless, if children can be homeless, and the possible causes of homelessness. Teacher will share statistical data about homeless families and children in the city of Savannah. Teacher will share that there are even homeless students at their school.

Teacher will allow students to have an open discussion about the topic and will lead students into the main focus of the service learning project.

Work Session:

Concept Chart: Students will work with each other to list ways that they can support homeless children in Savannah. Ideas will be written and posted on the Mimio Notebook Chart or on the chart paper. Use **MimioStudio Notebook Chart** for examples.

During this discussion, the teacher can talk with students about which of the ideas are goods and which of the ideas are services – allowing students to address social studies standards.

Example:

Ways to Support Homeless Children
donate toys
make blankets

Closing:

Teacher will work with students to choose which supportive projects the class will actually engage in to help homeless children in Savannah. Students will use **What Are Some Ways That You Can Support the Homeless Sheet**.

Teacher will lead students in a review of service learning focus words using the following activity:

Illustrate a Word: Students will write each word, and illustrate each word using **Illustrate a Word Sheet**. Students will share work with table groups and classmates during share time.

Days Four and Five

Standards Addressed: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13

Lesson Logistics/Materials:

Management Considerations: Have materials for the day’s lesson ready. Review whole group expectations with class to minimize disruptions. Review and practice transitions in order to maximize instructional time.

Materials: clothes for clothing drive, construction paper, coloring materials, computers, blanket fabric, scissors, iPad or digital camera, friendly letter templates, reading small group materials

Opening/Hook/Initial Focus:

Teacher will review service learning project goals and will set up work stations around the classroom.

Teacher will monitor work flow and ensure that all students are engaged and on task at all times.

Work Session:

Students will work at assigned stations while teacher meets and works with targeted small reading group.

Teacher Station: Students will rotate to the teacher table to work in small groups on targeted reading skills using direct and explicit reading intervention methods.

Clothing Station: Students will work as a group to sort and fold donated school uniforms and play clothes for homeless students. Students will collect data on types of clothing collected and how many clothing items were collected in all. They can collect the data using a tally chart, bar graph, or other method of displaying data that they are currently learning.

Card Station: Students will work to write and create bright and supportive cards and books for homeless children. Students can integrate the vocabulary words they have learned throughout this unit into their cards.

iPad Station: Students will brainstorm images to be photographed and used to make greeting cards and photo stories using iPad apps. Ideas will be recorded on the iPad and groups will work around the school campus to use the iPad and photograph selected shots.

Letter Station: Students will work to write and type letters to homeless children using the **Letter Writing Template**. Students can add clipart and other images to make the letters more personal and complete. Students will analyze their letters using a **Student Letter Writing Checklist**. You can use these letters as an assessment by grading them with the **Friendly Letter Checklist (for teachers)**.

Blanket Station: Students will work to make no-sew lap blankets using fabric pieces. Students will use nonstandard units of measurement to measure blanket portions.

Directions for No Sew Blanket:

www.projectlinus.org/patterns/pdf/NoSewFB.pdf

<http://familycrafts.about.com/od/nosewfleeceprojects/ss/fleecetieblank.htm>

Closing:

Vocabulary Wrap Up: Teacher will provide a simple review of the vocabulary words by asking students questions about the vocabulary words in context.

Example:

- What are two issues in our community that you are **concerned** about?
- What might a person do to **support** a sick friend?
- How does our service learning project involve **compassion**? How do you know?

Literature Connection: Teacher will read aloud a text that connects to helping others in the community.

Students will listen to text and discuss the story elements. Students will also discuss lessons that can be learned from the text.

Example:

Berenstain Bears: Think of Those in Need:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUhXNVW9hPw>

Extensions:

- Once completed, all donated and created items can be donated to a homeless shelter in your community.
- Students will work in cooperative groups to make vocabulary videos using the iPad. Videos can be compiled into a class movie and presented during a special parent night.
- Students will work to research homelessness in the state of Georgia. Student findings will be presented to the class in a report and with a creative project of the student's choice.