

Character and Life Skills: **Togetherness**

Lesson Title: **Team Story**

Grade Level: **3-5**



Project and Purpose

Students demonstrate understanding of togetherness by working within a group to create a story.

Essential Question

How can we show togetherness?

Materials

- Chart Paper (at least 5 or 6 pieces)
- Markers

Procedure

Introduction

1. Have the whole class sit together in a circle.
2. Ask students what they know about togetherness. Call on a few students to share their ideas.
3. Have students pair and share with a neighbor a time when they had to work together as part of a team. Call on a few students to share aloud.
4. Explain that during this session, students will work together in teams to create a story.

Direct Instruction (I do)

1. Display a blank piece of chart paper so everyone can see it.
2. Explain that the class will work together to write a funny/scary/silly story and then the students will write their own stories in small groups. Review the elements of stories and how each story needs a good beginning, middle, and end.
3. Start by brainstorming a few ideas aloud for the theme of the story and the first sentence of the story. Choose one opening sentence and write it on the chart paper. (Ex. One time, my family went on a trip to the rain forest.)
4. Explain that the marker will then be passed to the next person in the circle who will write the next sentence of the story. If the next writer is "stumped," the members of the class will be asked to work together and offer suggestions for the next sentence. The person with the marker gets to choose the sentence to add to the story. (Ex. I saw a creature with big wings and a huge nose.) Pretend to be that person and write the next sentence.

5. Talk through how the marker will go to the next person in the circle and that person will write the next sentence on the chart paper. Again, the class can be asked to work together and offer ideas if the writer needs support or inspiration. This process continues until everyone in the circle has had a chance to write a sentence and the story has a beginning, a middle, and a satisfying ending.

Guided Exploration (We do)

1. Display a new piece of chart paper. Make sure everyone can see it.
2. Explain that now the class will experiment with the process of creating a group story.
3. Brainstorm a few ideas for the first sentence aloud and choose one to write on the chart paper. (Ex. Last night I had the weirdest dream.)
4. Before passing the marker, encourage students to use their imaginations to make the story interesting.
5. Pass the marker to the next student in the circle to add a sentence to the chart paper that continues the story.
6. Have the writer pass the marker to the next student to add a sentence to the chart paper.
7. Continue this process until at least five students have added to the story.
8. Brainstorm an ending sentence for the story together. Ask students to consider what they should do if the group disagrees. Remind them that the goal is to work together. Choose one to write on the chart paper.
9. Read the story aloud together.

Independent Practice (You do)

1. Split the students into groups of five or six and have them sit together in a circle.
2. Pass out a piece of chart paper and one marker to each group.
3. Give the students two minutes to brainstorm an idea for the theme and first sentence of their group's story.
4. When time is up, have one student write the first sentence to their story on the chart paper.
5. After the student has finished writing, they should pass the marker to the next student in the group circle to add a sentence to the story.
6. The process continues until every student in each group has had a chance to contribute to the story.
7. Give students two minutes to work together to brainstorm and select an ending sentence for their stories. Have one student in each group write the chosen sentence on the chart paper.
8. Tell groups to figure out a way they can present their story together to the class. Does that mean they all read at the same time? Do they take turns? How will they work together to present their story to the class?

Conclusion

Ask students: What does “togetherness” mean? How did we practice togetherness today? What was easy/hard when working together with your group? Why? Is togetherness easy to practice? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

togetherness (n.)

Definition: the state of being part of a group; the feeling a person has when he or she is a part of a group of people who have a close relationship with each other

Context: Inez says that being a part of the student council and spending time with people she can relate to gives her a real sense of togetherness and belonging.

teamwork (n.)

Definition: the ability of a group of people to work together

Context: Because of their teamwork, the firefighters were able to extinguish the blaze quickly.

Teacher Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.