

PROJECT-BASED LESSON: ENCOURAGING OTHERS

Summary

Students will understand the positive impact that an education can have on a girl's life. After viewing the film chapter(s), they will reflect on their ability to support and encourage others through music and poetry.

Objective

Students will explore how they can encourage and support others to focus on, and reach, their goals.

Subjects

Language Arts, Writing, Social Studies

Common Core State Standards

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.5: With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.6: Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when appropriate to task and situation. (See grade 5 Language standards 1 and 3 here for specific expectations.)

Student Skill Building

- Communicating thoughts and ideas effectively through written song lyrics or poetry

- Working with the writing process and creating a published piece of writing or song
- Connecting one's life and experiences to the lives of others

Resources and Materials

- Film chapter for Wadley from Haiti
- Film chapter for Ruksana from India
- Poster board for each group of four to five students
- See Additional Resources Guide in Resources section for additional videos.

Time Needed

Three to five class periods; 50 minutes each

Essential Questions

1. How can we influence and support others?
2. How does encouragement and support help others to reach their goals?
3. What role do the arts, including music and poetry, play in our lives?
4. Why are the goals of others important?

Content Question Ideas

1. Why did Wadley's teacher say she could stay at the school?
2. How would you define determination? How does Wadley's life reflect this attribute? How does Ruksana's life reflect determination?
3. How did Ruksana's father encourage her to do better in school?
4. How did Ruksana's parents help and encourage each other?

Building a Foundation and Making Connections

- Let students know that they will be learning about the challenges faced by girls living in developing countries and how they are meeting the specific challenge of staying in school.
- As a class, make a list of student accomplishments – specific things they have had to work hard to accomplish or earn. As a suggested homework assignment, have students interview their parents or caregivers. Encourage students to find out what their own parents or caregivers had to work hard to accomplish. Were they the first in their family to graduate from high school? Did they work through college? Did they practice and learn how to play an instrument, or put effort into mastering a new language? Did their parents or caregivers struggle to learn a new skill for their job? What was their motivation? How did they accomplish their goal?
- Before students watch the film chapters, ask them to pay special attention to the specific challenges Wadley and Ruksana face to attend school. What supports do they have?
- Watch the film chapters for Wadley from Haiti and Ruksana from India.
- After watching the film chapters, have students make a list of all the challenges each girl faced. What similarities do they notice? How will Wadley and Ruksana's commitment to their education, as well as the encouragement, commitment, and determination of their families, influence their future?
- Ask students what they use, or do, to encourage themselves or their friends. Can music and poetry be used to inspire and encourage others? How? What songs or poems do they find motivating?
- Review the Educating Girls Issue Fact Sheet with students. What information surprises students the most? What do students find most interesting?

Poems and Song

- Have students work in small groups to make a poster explaining/showing the role songs and poems play in their culture. Do they inspire? Motivate? Tell stories? Connect to our emotions? Have groups share their posters with the class.
- Let students know that they will be creating an original song or poem. Their creative work should focus on encouraging others to reach their goals despite hard circumstances.
- As a class, brainstorm ideas and vocabulary words that are encouraging to others. Have students decide how they would like to complete their final projects. Do they want to work in groups or individually? How do they want to share their work? With their class? As part of a larger awareness project?

Note about the final project:

The objective of the lesson is not to create a specific type of poetry or song, but to engage in the creative process and gain an understanding of our connections to others and of the role music and poetry play in our lives. The arts are powerful agents of change in the world. Encourage students to use the medium to motivate others.

Ideas for Encouraging All Learners

English Language Learners

- Have students create a song or poem as a group or in their native language.
- Have students bring to class, and recite, poems or songs in their native language.

Support Services

- Have students create awards for each other based on their work. Students can focus on a peer's determination, a classmate's hard work on an assignment, or how he or she has helped and supported others.
- Allow students to create a song or poem as a small group. Encourage students to create their work in different mediums, such recordings or videos.

Gifted and Talented

- Encourage students to create a video of their song, perform their work for others, or create a class book of their work to share with others.

Additional Resources

- Girl Rising partners:
 - A New Day Cambodia www.anewdaycambodia.org
 - CARE www.care.org
 - Partners In Health www.pih.org
 - Room to Read www.roomtoread.org
 - Girl Up www.girlup.org
 - Plan www.planusa.org or www.plan-international.org
 - World Vision www.worldvision.org
- Picture books that examine the impact of development programs:
 - **Beatrice's Goat** by Page McBrier and Lori Lohstoeter
 - **One Hen: How One Small Loan Made a Big Difference** by Katie Smith Milway and Eugenie Fernandes
 - **The Good Garden: How One Family Went from Hunger to Having Enough** by Katie Smith Milway and Sylvie Daigneault
 - **The Mangrove Tree: Planting Trees to Feed Families** by Susan L. Roth and Cindy Trumbore
 - **Wangari's Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa** by Jeanette Winter