

### **Ohio Standards Connections:**

-People in Societies: Students use knowledge of perspectives, practices and products of cultural, ethnic and social groups to analyze the impact of their commonality and diversity within local, national, regional, and global settings.

Identify practices and products of diverse cultures.

2. Describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expression of culture and influence the behavior of people living in a particular culture.

-Writing Application Standard: Students need to understand that various types of writing require different language, formatting and special vocabulary. Writing serves many purposes across the curriculum and takes various forms. Beginning writers learn about the various purposes of writing; they attempt and use a small range of familiar forms (e.g., letters). Developing writers are able to select text forms to suit purpose and audience. They can explain why some text forms are more suited to a purpose than others and begin to use content-specific vocabulary to achieve their communication goals. Proficient writers control effectively the language and structural features of a large repertoire of text forms. They deliberately choose vocabulary to enhance text and structure their writing according to audience and purpose.

C. Write friendly letters and invitation complete with date, salutation, body, closing and signature.

3. Write letter or invitation that include relevant information and follow letter format (e.g., date, proper salutation, body, closing and signature).

### **Lesson Summary:**

In the lesson the class will read a passage from Growing Season. As a class, the students will discuss what the story tells about the culture of the migrant workers. The students will also recognize the similarities and differences between their own culture and the culture of a migrant worker. After reviewing the elements of punctuation, the students will learn how to properly compose a friendly letter. Their letters will be sent to a classroom of migrant children.

Throughout the lesson the students are going to be learning cognitively and developing their thinking skills. The student's emotional and social development will grow through the writing of the letters to potential friends from another culture. Physical development will be incorporated in the unit as well, by working with small objects, which will aid in the development of small muscle skills. Artistically, the students will advance through creative writing and art work.

### **Estimated Duration:**

50 minutes

***Commentary:*** Before the lesson the students will have already read several passages from the Growing Season book. As a class we decided to read the passage on the migrant wedding. The letter they write will be based off of the passage we read in class. The students have already been put into their groups for this assignment (groups of 2 or 3). The teacher needs to keep a watchful eye on Sarah, who has dysgraphia. The students know that she is sometimes accommodated with a computer to aid in her writing. The teacher should give out special paper that enables her to focus on the spatial aspect of writing (i.e., bigger lines). This paper can be found in the second drawer of my desk.

To help the students prepare for writing a friendly letter, they have been keeping a journal to practice their writing. The journals consist of what the students learned in class each day, as well as an illustration. I have already read their journals so far as a pre-assessment. I found they need to review how to properly use punctuation (specifically commas). The teacher should take time to review punctuation. The students should know and recognize symbols such as periods and commas. The teacher will need to explain how to write a friendly letter in the proper format. The example friendly letter can be found in the second drawer of my desk. The students will have a take home quiz covering vocabulary from Growing Season, identifying punctuation marks, and identifying the proper location of elements of a friendly letter (i.e., heading, greeting, body, closing, and signature.) The students have already covered what is going to be on the take home quiz. The teacher needs to distribute the quiz at the end of class. The quiz can also be found in the second drawer of my

desk.

**Pre-Assessment:** At the beginning of class the teacher will lead a group discussion about culture, where she or he can assess what the students already know. Example questions:

What is culture?

What are some traditions in your family?

Based off of the several stories we have already read, what

aspects of their culture did you notice? How are they different from your culture?

As mentioned in my commentary, the students need to review proper use of punctuation.

### **Scoring Guidelines:**

The teacher needs to use his or her judgment to evaluate where the students stand. I have already discovered the students need to review punctuation. The pre-assessment questions should give the teacher a good idea of what exactly they need to focus on when discussing culture. The teacher needs to find out if the students understand what culture is before they can write about their own in a letter. If the students show they know little about culture and what it is, the teacher needs to explain the main concept of culture. The teacher can do this by giving the students examples of traditions.

**Post-Assessment:** To find out student learning from the lesson the teacher should distribute a take home quiz on vocabulary from Growing Season. The take home quiz will also be covering punctuation and proper format of writing a friendly letter. Along with the take home quiz the teacher will need to collect the students' letters at the end of class. The letters will be graded and mailed to the migrant classroom.

### **Scoring Guidelines:**

Take home Quiz: (worth 15 points)

Grading criteria for take home quiz: The quiz will consist of 5 vocabulary terms based off of Growing Season.

The quiz will also have 2 sentences that use wrong punctuation. The students will need to recognize the wrong punctuation and fix it. The quiz will have an example of a friendly letter. The example will have the basic format of a friendly letter and the students will need to identify what part of the letter is which.

- The students show they understand the basic format in writing a friendly letter.

- The students understand each part of the letter: heading, greeting, body, closing, and signature.

- The students will show they understand proper punctuation.

- The students will show they know all 5 vocabulary words from Growing Season.

The quiz will be graded on accuracy: If they get all the questions correct they will receive full credit.

- The vocabulary portion of the quiz will be worth 5 Points (one point per vocabulary word).

- The basic format of a friendly letter will be worth 5 points.

- The punctuation portion will be worth 5 points.

As a Vygotskian approach to learning, the students will have the opportunity to collaborate with family members to complete this take home quiz. The students are encouraged to ask questions to learn more about the topics.

Letter to Migrant worker: (45 points)

The letter to the migrant worker will be graded primarily on punctuation and proper format of the friendly letter. The teacher needs to take off one point for every two punctuation

mistakes. The content within the letter will not only be graded on punctuation. They should write what they learned about the migrant culture as well as what they are eager to learn more about. After reading the passage about the migrant wedding the students should be able to acknowledge that culture is very diverse. They should be able to demonstrate how much they learned about the culture of migrant workers.

Grading:

- The proper format of the friendly letter will be worth 10 points.
- The proper use of punctuation and spelling will be worth 10 points.
- The body of the letter:
  - Do they show they understand culture in their writing. (worth 5 points)
  - Do they explain some of their traditions. ( 5 points)
  - Do they explain how their traditions are different from those of a migrant worker. They understand that cultures are diverse( 5 points).
  - They name specific practices of culture for a migrant worker such as language ,stories , folktales, music, and art. (5 points)
- Neatness of the letter. (5 points)

Side Note: Spelling and neatness shouldn't be regarded as highly when grading Sarah's friendly letter. (accommodation to dysgraphia)

**Instructional Procedures:** 50 minutes total

Pre-assessment: When the students come into the classroom they will take their seats and wait quietly for instruction. Be sure not to start until the entire class is quite and paying attention. The pre-assessment should consist of questions to see what the students already know about culture. The teacher can ask questions like...

What is culture?

What are some traditions in your family?

Based off of the several stories we have already read,

what aspects of their culture did you notice? How are they different from your culture?

Another way to get the students involved is to pass around artifacts from the migrant culture, such as tools. This is an interesting and fun way for the students to learn more about the migrant life. This should take no longer then 5 minutes. But if the students show they know little about culture then be sure to brush up on the basic concept before moving on.

The teacher needs to explain to the students the proper format of a friendly letter. She or he needs to go over the heading, greeting, body, closing, and signature as well as where they all belong in a friendly letter. After explaining each part of the friendly letter the teacher needs to use the example letter to visually show the students the different parts (use overhead projector). This should take 8 minutes. After teaching the students the format of a friendly letter the teacher needs to briefly go over punctuation rules. I found it necessary to specifically focus on commas after reading their journals. This portion of the lesson should take no longer then 2 minutes.

After teaching the proper format of a letter and reviewing punctuation the teacher needs to read them the wedding passage from Growing Season. The teacher should instruct the students to quietly get up out of their seats and get a carpet square. The students will sit in a circle around the teacher with their carpet squares. We have a reading circle activity every week so the students should be familiar with what to do. (This should take 5 minutes)

The students will go back to their seats and as a class we will discuss what types of culture they noticed in the passage. For example, music, language, stories, and art. As a class we will also talk about our culture and how it is different from the migrant workers. ( This should take 5 minutes)

After the class discussion the students will meet with their groups. The groups will have already been assigned. The teacher should explain that the students will be writing a letter to a classroom of migrant workers. After students fully understand what the content of the letters should consist of they should begin working and composing their letters. ( This should take 20 minutes)

The students need to hand in their letters. If Sarah needs extended time for her letter she could receive it during this time. ( This should take 5 minutes)

### **Differentiated Instructional Support**

Sarah is one student in our classroom who struggles with the learning disability, dysgraphia. Hamstra-Bletz and Blote (1993) define dysgraphia as a writing disability evident in children of at least average intelligence who do not have a distinct neurological disability and/or an overt perceptual-motor handicap. Common signs to watch for when identifying dysgraphic handwriting would include poor quality of student's script, or legibility, special characteristics, such as the amount of space between letters and words, and also the shape and size of the letters (Rosenblum, Weiss, & Parush, 2004). We accommodate Sarah with spatially divided paper because she often writes bigger. We do normally allow Sarah more time to copy notes, but for this lesson we will provide her with a skeleton outline of the proper format of a friendly letter. Sarah will just have to fill in the blanks instead of writing down all the notes. We are also going to give Sarah the option of typing her friendly letter as another accommodation.

### **Extension**

In cooperation with the migrant classroom teacher, our students will become pen-pals with migrant students. They will both gain social relationships by keeping in touch through their letters. They will progressively learn more about each others culture by writing back and forth. The students will be required to continue writing in their journals everyday to help reinforce punctuation rules and letter format.

### **Homework Options and Home Connections**

The students should get their parents involved by reading passages from Growing Season together at home. Also the students will have a take home quiz to be completed at home. The quiz is in my test folder on my desk.

### **Interdisciplinary Connections**

This lesson plan integrates the subject areas of Social Studies and English Language Arts. In the lesson the students will be reading a passage from Growing Season. As a class the students will discuss what these stories tell about the culture of the migrant workers. The students will then write letters to a migrant classroom. Social Studies will be incorporated by discussing the stories in Growing Season that express the migrant worker's culture. Also, the English Language Art standard will be accomplished through the composing of friendly letters.

### **Materials and Resources:**

#### *For teachers*

- Growing Season book
- dysgraphia paper for Sarah
- take home quiz
- Envelopes, stamps, address of migrant classroom
- Chalkboard, chalk
- overhead projector
- Example friendly letter
- text book ( to help teach punctuation)
- pen to grade letter and quiz
- migrant artifacts ( tools)

#### *For students*

- Paper, pencil
- computers
- internet access
- Growing Season book
- journals

### **Key Vocabulary**

Culture  
Body of a friendly letter  
Greeting of a friendly letter  
Closing of a friendly letter  
Commas  
Period

## **Technology Connections**

HYPERLINK "http://pbskids.org/berenstainbears/games/story/index.html" [Share a story](http://pbskids.org/berenstainbears/games/story/index.html): This child friendly link allows the students to hear a story online and then write about it. This activity can be done with the parents at home

HYPERLINK "http://pbskids.org/berenstainbears/games/story/index.html" <http://pbskids.org/berenstainbears/games/story/index.html>

HYPERLINK "http://www.elbalero.gob.mx/kids/games/html/home.html" [Coloring a Postcard](http://www.elbalero.gob.mx/kids/games/html/home.html): This is a print and color activity. This link includes two black and white cultural postcards that the students will be able to print and color. When the students get to the webpage they need to click on print and color to start the activity.

HYPERLINK "http://www.elbalero.gob.mx/kids/games/html/home.html" <http://www.elbalero.gob.mx/kids/games/html/home.html>

## **Research Connections** (Vygotsky)

Lev Vygotsky's approach to education has proven to be both greatly effective and widely influential. In fact, Kozulin

(2004) stated that the Vygotskian approach is probably one of the theory-based educational paradigms most consistently

implemented in the classroom. Moreover, Tappan (1998) acknowledged that Vygotsky's work highlights the social,

cultural, and historical foundations of educational and developmental processes. A concept that Vygotsky believed in was

cooperative learning. By working in groups, students can share their thoughts with one another, allowing more

knowledge to be gained. In our lesson the students will be working in groups to write their friendly letters. We also get

together in a circle to read a passage from Growing Season.

## **General Tips**

It would be a good idea to make sure you have extra paper on hand in case the students mess up on their friendly letter or need to take extra notes.

Make sure students are in either groups of 2 or 3

Write websites on the chalkboard for students to copy down and explore later!

## **Attachments**

HYPERLINK "Take%20home%20quiz.htm" [Take home quiz](#)

HYPERLINK "overhead.htm" [Overhead projection of friendly letter](#)



Growing Season Lesson Plan

**Laura Delfre**

**Samantha Christoff**