



SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

FOUNDATIONS DINNER PARTY

By Robert Sieger

Activity Description

As a *Foundations of Democracy* (primary level) culminating activity, student groups representing the book's four concepts (authority, responsibility, justice, and privacy) will create then perform a short skit of a dinner-party conversation between characters. An assessment tool for their performances follows.

Modification for Upper Elementary *Foundations of Democracy* Materials

This strategy can be modified to upper elementary *Foundations of Democracy* simply by replacing the primary characters in the stories with the characters in the upper elementary stories. Instead of puppets, students can use name tags with the character names on it.

Suggested Grade Level

K–4; This activity is especially suited to English Language Development for English Speakers of Other Languages, a.k.a. ESOL students) or modified as indicated above.

Estimated Time to Complete

Two 40-minute class periods

Content objective

Students will demonstrate knowledge learned during their exposure to the concepts of *Authority*, *Responsibility*, *Privacy* and *Justice* contained in the *Foundations of Democracy* curricula. They will create a short skit to present what they have learned about the four concepts.

Language objective

Students will be able to use content vocabulary in simple or complex sentences to demonstrate learning about authority, responsibility, privacy, and justice.

Materials

- Set of hand puppets portraying main characters
- A previously-drawn backdrop showing the interior of a house readied for a dinner party
- Audience Feedback and Teacher Observation Rubric (follows)

First class period

PROCEDURE	PACING
Review hand puppets, names and roles, one by one, used in the series.	10 minutes
<p>Class Assignment</p> <p>Explain to students that they will be grouped into “conversation pods” consisting of representatives of the four big book stories which formed the backbone of the curricula. They will be given time to create a short skit of a conversation between the characters where each asks questions in order to get acquainted with each other and to see what they have in common.</p> <p>Examples: “Hello, my name is Orb. I am a leader in Bubble Land. What’s your name?” “Hi, I’m Worm. Is it just me, or is it really crowded in here?” Ask for a volunteer to introduce him/herself as Jessica Fish and indicate what Jessica likes (privacy).</p> <p>Full class discussion</p> <p>Brainstorm dinner party “icebreaker” questions. Example: “Hello, I’m _____, I _____. What do you do?”</p>	10 minutes
<p>Cooperative Grouping</p> <p>Create groups of six or twelve students depending on class size and assign characters using the hand puppets familiar to the Big Book Stories.</p>	5–10 minutes
<p>Cooperative Group Work Time</p> <p>Allow students time in their group to create a scenario of a conversation during a dinner party where all characters have something to share about themselves (hopefully pertinent to the Big Book theme they were a part of).</p> <p>Extension/Modification</p> <p>If they are able, students may write a script.</p>	15–20 minutes

Second class period

1. Review the assignment. Explain to students that they will take turns performing their skits for their classmates. Reassure students that all of the groups will have the next ten minutes to rehearse their skits before the performances begin.
2. Break into existing cooperative groups and allow 10 min. to rehearse and finalize their presentations.

Performances

1. Remind the group of appropriate audience behavior and showing *respect* to all of their peers. Also remind them that all are expected to participate in some way so that everyone will be “on stage.”
2. Allow each group to complete their skit. Encourage applause.
3. Present feedback to the group in a positive fashion, and correct errors in a positive way. For example: “Your Jessica was played very well, but I would suggest that the next time you play her role to remember that Jessica actually did the following...”

**ASSESSMENT:
AUDIENCE FEEDBACK AND TEACHER OBSERVATION RUBRIC**

Observation Criteria	YES ✓	NO ✓
Were all students engaged in the “dinner party” conversation? (If any student a “no,” write their name in the NO column.)		
Were main ideas about <i>authority</i> , <i>responsibility</i> , <i>privacy</i> and <i>justice</i> brought up in conversation, alluded to or demonstrated non-verbally during the skit? (If any student a “no,” write their name in the NO column.)		
Were some students able to demonstrate higher-order thinking by assimilating <i>Foundations of Democracy</i> vocabulary into their speaking parts? (Name students in the YES column.)		
Were the characters portrayed accurately?		
Were students loud enough to be heard by the audience? (If any student a “no,” write their name in the NO column.)		
Was their pronunciation and diction clear and understandable? (If any student a “no,” write their name in the NO column.)		
Comments		