

¡Si, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!: Janitor Strike in L.A.

Lesson Plan by Danielle Neill

Lesson: *¡Si, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!: Janitor Strike in L.A.*

Length: 2 sessions of 50 minutes

Age or Grade Intended: 3rd grade

Lesson Plan Idea: Original

Academic Standard(s):

3.1.5

Demonstrate knowledge of grade-level-appropriate words to speak specifically about different issues.

3.5.6

Write persuasive pieces that ask for an action or response. (Core Standard).

3.5.4

Use varied word choices to make writing interesting. (Core Standard).

Performance Objectives:

Using grade-level appropriate words, the student will verbally explain what the problem was in the book *¡Si, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!: Janitor Strike in L.A* accurately.

After reading the book as a class, the students will write a persuasive letter to the teacher about a rule in the classroom that they do not agree.

When writing their letters, the students will use a variety of words accurately.

Assessment:

- A checklist with all of the students' names in the class on it
- This checklist will be used to make sure that each student correctly explains the problem in the book *¡Si, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!: Janitor Strike in L.A.*
- A persuasive letter about a rule that you think needs to be changed

Advanced Preparation by Teacher:

- The book *¡Si, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!: Janitor Strike in L.A*
- Paper, pens and pencils
- Other supplies for letter: markers, crayons, colored pencils, different color construction paper
- Explain what a strike is, if needed
- Make a checklist
- Make a list of what group each student will be in for group discussion
- Teach how to write persuasive letters with students

- Review parts of a letter
- Teach what makes a letter persuasive
- Review synonyms
 - Pictures/ note cards of examples

Procedure:

Introduction/Motivation: Ask students if there has ever been a time in their life when someone did something that they have not agreed with. Has there ever been a rule that you did not agree with? Have you ever felt unfairly treated? How did it make you feel? What did you do about it? Did you say something to someone about it? Did you write a letter to someone to try to change that problem? Did you tell a person that was involved why you did not agree? Did you try to find a way to make things fair? Give the students time to think about these questions. Well, we are going to read a book where a group of people were treated unfairly. They did not receive the money they deserved for cleaning office buildings. One day, they could not take it anymore. They decided to go on strike. Does anyone know what a strike is? A strike is when a group of people decide to stop working in order to try and get employers to give them the wages and benefits that they believe they deserve.

Step-by-Step Plan:

- 1.) Read the book *¡Si, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!: Janitor Strike in L.A.* by Diana Cohn.
Gardner's Linguistic and Visual/Spatial
- 2.) The class will have a discussion about the book. **Bloom's Synthesis** We will discuss the multiple viewpoints about the book. For example, we will discuss the viewpoint of the janitors and also the viewpoint of the business workers that the janitors work for. The janitors wanted to receive the wages that they deserved. The business workers, however, wanted to get their buildings as clean as possible for as cheap as possible. They thought if they had minorities working for them they could get away with not paying them the same wages. How do you feel about this class? Do you think this is fair? **Bloom's Synthesis and Evaluation**
- 3.) Have each student come back to your desk and have them explain what the problem of the story is. **Bloom's Comprehension** While they are coming back to your desk, have the other students discuss the topic in small groups that you have predetermined. **Gardner's Interpersonal**

Session Two

- 4.) Review story. Have some students retell the story to the class. **Gardner's Linguistic Bloom's Comprehension**
- 5.) Ask the students how they felt about the janitors being treated unfairly.
- 6.) Okay class, what I want you to do is write a letter to me explaining a rule in our classroom that you think is not fair. Write to me why you think it is unfair and how you think we should change it. **Bloom's Synthesis Gardner's Linguistic** Remember to be persuasive, which means to prove so that I will take action and change the rule that you do not agree with. If any one of your letters are persuasive enough I may change that rule that you think is unfair. If you want you can put your letter on construction paper, use markers, colored pencils, etc. to decorate your letter however you would like to. Put music on while the students work. Be careful about what type of music it is. **Gardner's Musical**

- 7.) Encourage the students to use variety in their words when they write their letters. Review synonyms with the class. Talk about some examples of synonyms. Gardner's Have pictures up on the board of examples of synonyms. **Gardner's Visual-Spatial** This should happen after you explain the assignment of writing a letter. Have some volunteers act out some examples of synonyms. **Gardner's Bodily-Kinesthetic**

Closure: The class will finish their letters. After, they finish their letters we will come back together as a class. Ask for volunteers to explain what a persuasive letter is. Ask for volunteers to share their letters. Encourage students to read letters. Make sure they understand that it is not a requirement to read the letters out loud.

Adaptations/Enrichment:

Allow students with disabilities to have more time to work on their letters.

Use the language experience approach with those students that need it due to a learning disability. Some students struggle with writing and thinking about the topic at the same time.

These students might struggle putting their thoughts and opinions on paper. Therefore, if you use this approach you can isolate the problem as well.

Self-Reflection:

Did the students understand what a persuasive letter was?

Should I have had them practice persuasive writing in another way?

Did the students seem to like this activity?

What did I teach well in this lesson?

What could I have made clearer in my directions?

What could I have done to make this lesson more interesting?

How could I improve this lesson next time I teach it?

How can I better teach this lesson next time?