

Voices in the Park: An Introduction to Perspective Taking

Timing of Presentation: Day 1, Afternoon, "Understanding"

Purpose:

- Students will be introduced to the idea of perspective taking through the book Voices in the Park. Students will start to think about perspectives represented in texts, their own writing, history, television, movies, and their own lives by reflecting in their perspective journal.

Materials:

- Voices in the Park by Anthony Browne
- 2-4 pairs of sunglasses, each with a different lens color
- Perspective Journal Guide Questions
- Chart paper
- Plain, white paper
- Notebook for each child

Instruction:

1. Ask for student volunteers (as many volunteers as you have different colors of glasses).
2. Ask the students to put on the glasses and close their eyes.
3. Hold up a plain, white piece of paper.
4. Tell the students that on the count of three you want them to open their eyes and tell you what color the piece of paper is.
 - a. Students will say different colors because they are seeing different colors through different lenses.
5. Ask student volunteers why they all said different answers. Were they looking at the same piece of paper? If so, why did they say that they saw different colors?
6. Thank the volunteers and have them return to their seats after giving back the glasses.
7. Open up a discussion to the entire class about this experience.
 - a. What questions do you have about what happened?
 - b. What does this make you think of?
 - c. What do we call it when people see the same situation different ways?
8. Read the book Voices in the Park.
 - a. Use chart paper to list different perspectives presented.
 - b. Ask students if all books present multiple perspectives; encourage examples.
 - c. Ask students why they think that authors write from a certain perspective.

- d. Ask students to discuss why recognizing different perspectives could be important in their lives.
 - e. Remind the students about your morning discussion about the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. How can perspective taking help us understand this and other historical events? How can understanding different perspectives build understanding?
9. Introduce the Perspective Journal.
- a. Explain the task to the students.
 - b. Introduce them to the Perspective Journal Guide Questions; attach these to the front inside of the journal.
 - c. Ask students if they have any questions about the Perspective Journal.
 - d. Model using the Guide Questions to write the journal entries.
 - e. Explain how this type of journal writing is different than simply writing a descriptive entry about an event. The goal is to write about an event, but then look at it from the perspective of other key characters in the event. Give examples of the difference.

Assessment:

- Ask students to write their first practice Perspective Journal entry about today's experience using the guide questions. Look over journals to see if students understand looking at different perspectives.

Extensions and Alternatives:

- Another book to use for perspective taking is Zoom by Istvan Banyai
- Videotape a football game. Show a section of it to the class. Discuss the different angles from which the game is shot and how the different perspectives affect what viewers think happened in the game.
- Use a hologram as an example of perspective. Ask a student what they see and then move the hologram so that they see a different image. Discuss perspective.

Perspective Journal Guide Questions

Beginning this week, you are encouraged to examine the world around you. Notice experiences in which different perspectives exist and then think about which perspectives are represented and which ones aren't. Take note of these experiences in your Perspective Journal. These experiences can be from books you are reading, interactions you have with others, television shows, movies, your own writing etc. Use your creativity and imagination! These guide questions can help you organize your thinking. You are not limited to these questions. They exist only to help you.

1. Summarize the experience.
2. Describe the people involved in the experience (all the players in the game, all the characters). Share each of their perspectives.
3. Which perspectives were heard and which were unheard?
4. What does this make you think?
5. How does this make you feel?
6. What does this make you want to do?
7. What does this remind you of?

