

Upstanders, Not Bystanders: Blending Genres in Editorial Writing

A Common Core Lesson
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Lesson Overview

- In this lesson sequence, students will read and discuss a variety of texts, including fiction, literary non-fiction, newspaper articles, and video clips that focus on the topic of bullying, and/or on what it means to be an upstander, one who chooses to play an active role in solving a perceived problem. Students will then conduct a brief inquiry into the genre of editorials, with the purpose of discovering the basic structure and content of an editorial. Finally, students will write editorials for the school newspaper explaining the concept of being an upstander, and encouraging their peers to consider becoming upstanders.

Foundations

- Grade level - 7 (could be adapted for 6 through 12)
- Depth Of Knowledge Levels: 3 & 4
- Bloom's: Analyze, Evaluate, Create

ELA Literacy Claims

- ❑ Claim # 1: Students can read closely and critically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts
- ❑ Claim #2: Students can produce effective writing for a range of purposes and audiences.

Common Core Standards

- 7th Grade Writing:
- 1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information through the selection, organization and analysis of relevant content.
- 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

Essential Question

- ❑ What does it take to be an “upstander?”

Lesson Objectives

- After reading and analyzing a variety of texts, students will write an editorial for the school newspaper, encouraging fellow students to consider becoming upstanders.

Previously, in Room 13...

- ❑ Students had become familiar with a "thinking routine" called "See, Think, Wonder."
- ❑ Students had done a close reading and written analysis of an editorial, "Bring Back the Tasty Tomatoes."
- ❑ Students had read and analyzed the short story "All Summer in a Day."

Beginning the Discussion

- ❑ video clip: Did You See It?
- ❑ Think/Pair/Share, followed by class discussion.
- ❑ Introduce concept of upstanders vs bystanders

Gathering Information

□ Reading:

Core text:

"Eleanor Roosevelt" by William Jay Jacobs
(In The Language of Literature)

Gathering Information

- Supplementary texts:
- "All Summer in a Day" by Ray Bradbury
- Video: "Kids React to Bullying" (YouTube)
- Website: biographyonline.net
- Infographic on bullying

Gathering Information

- News articles:
- "Caltech is on NCAA probation. No, really" LA Times, July 15, 2012
- "Doing the right thing adds polish to women's volleyball silver" LA Times, Sept. 14, 2012
- "U.S. Speedskater Admits To Sabotaging Rival's Skates" NPR, Oct. 5, 2012
- "14-Year-Old Girl Becomes Female Face of NHL Video Game" ABC News, Nov. 21, 2011

Moving to Writing

- ☐ Mini-inquiry: What is an editorial?
- ☐ Read "Go with the Floe"
- ☐ Discuss content of article: what do we notice?

Moving to Writing

- ☐ Compare with previously read editorial, "Bring Back the Tasty Tomatoes."
- ☐ Highlight facts and opinions in both editorials.
- ☐ What do we notice?

Moving to Writing

- ☐ Read 3rd editorial, "The Getty Is Getting It Right."
- ☐ Highlight facts and opinions in this article.
- ☐ Compare all three editorials, and notice the pattern of ideas.
- ☐ Create a list of observations about editorials.

What We Noticed

- ❑ Both expository and persuasive writing.
- ❑ More information than opinion.
- ❑ Information tends to be at the beginning
- ❑ Opinions tend to be toward the end.
- ❑ Title used as hook.
- ❑ A "gist" sentence that summarizes the article.

The Prompt

- What does it mean to be an “upstander?” Based on what you have learned from the texts you have read and viewed recently, write an editorial for the school newspaper in which you explain to your fellow students what an upstander is, and how our school would benefit from having more upstanders on campus. Include both facts and well supported opinions in your editorial, as well as examples of people who are or have been upstanders. Your editorial should be no more than 500 words in length.

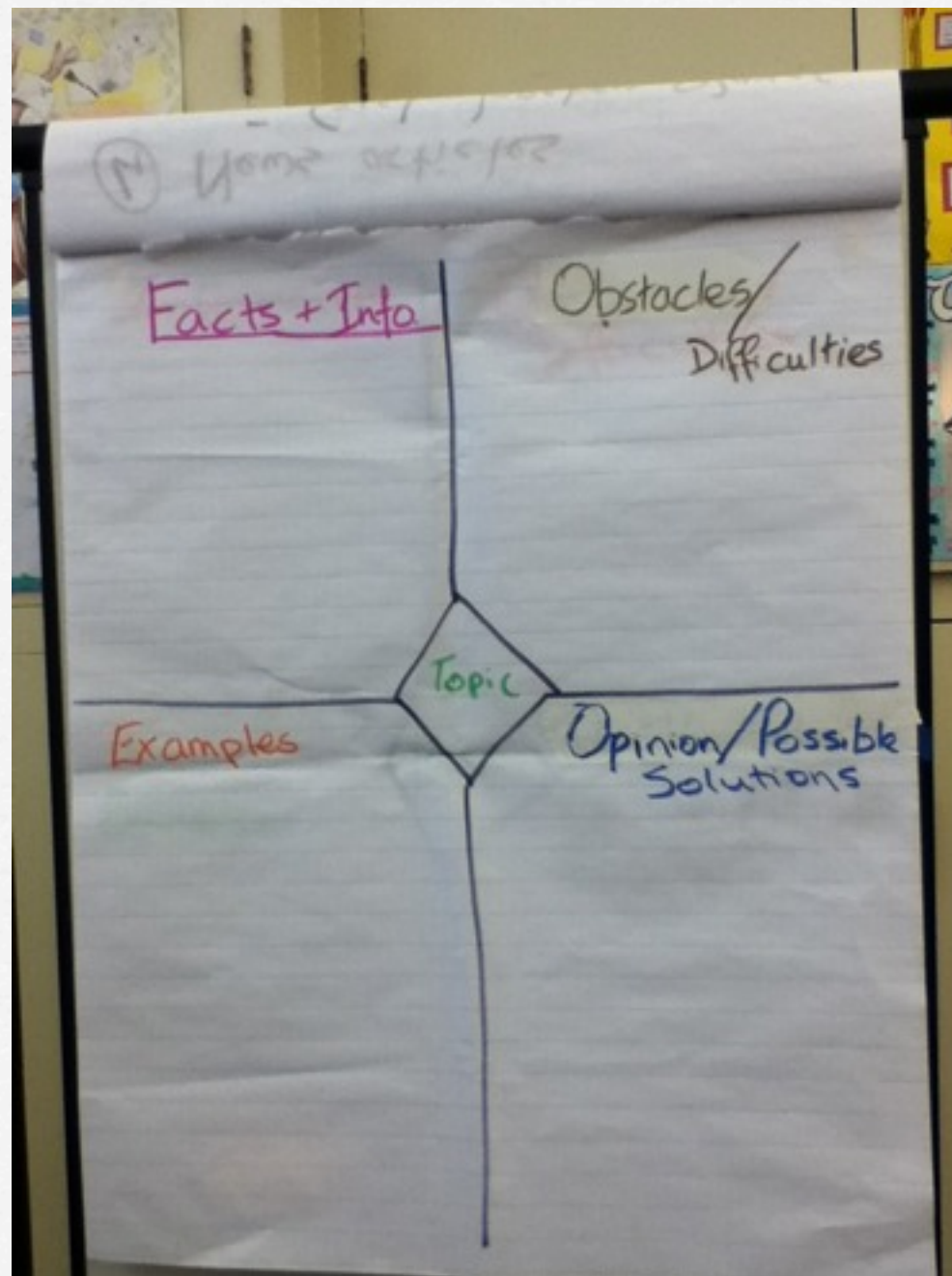
Finding a Focus

- ❑ The class brainstormed a list of problems within the school community
- ❑ Each student selected one topic as a focus for his/her editorial.

Prewriting

- ❑ Students reviewed their notes and Writer's Notebook entries, highlighting information and ideas that they might use.
- ❑ Students also reviewed the various texts that they had read or watched.
- ❑ Several students decided to conduct additional research.
- ❑ Students completed a graphic organizer.

Graphic Organizer



Drafting

- ❑ Students received a set of guidelines for writing an editorial, based on the observations they had made as a class.
- ❑ Students typed a rough draft in the computer lab, using the word count tool.

Revising

- ☐ Students gave each other written feedback in peer review groups.
- ☐ They wrote second drafts based on the feedback
- ☐ They received written feedback on the second draft.
- ☐ They revised, and submitted final drafts based on the feedback they had received.

And Finally...

- ☐ Students in each class read the editorials of the other class.
- ☐ They voted for the most effective editorial in each class.
- ☐ These pieces were published in the school newspaper.