

Arts Infused Lesson Suggestions for the Great Textbook War

Dr. Joy Faini Saab

2011

1. Visual Art-Critical Observation: Carefully examine selected photos from the textbook war documentary panels. Respond to the following questions as you examine and re-examine each photo:
 - a. Describe the clothing worn by the citizens, school board, and students.
 - b. Describe the hairstyles on students and adults.
 - c. Describe the types of transportation found in the photos.
 - d. Describe the architecture of the buildings shown in the pictures.
 - e. Identify cultural items related to the decade of the 70's and why these items are identified with the 70's.
 - f. Describe the emotions shown on the faces of the students and adults in the photos. Why do you think their expressions communicate these emotions?
 - g. Describe the body stance of adults and students in the pictures. What emotions are depicted in their body stances?

2. Creative Drama-Monologues: Carefully examine selected photos from the great textbook war resources. Choose one character depicted in the photo. Carefully examine everything about this character, expression, body stance, dress, position in relation to others, items belonging to the character, age, and role in the controversy. Write a 5 minute monologue in the character of this person expressing his/her reactions to the events of the Kanawha County textbook controversy of 1974. Read this monologue to the group to elicit validation to the facts and emotions that you include.

3. Music-Lyrics as Message: Choose from the list of 70's era protest songs, listen to the songs, study the lyrics. Talk with two classmates as you discuss the meaning of the lyrics. Develop a report from your small group to describe what the lyrics in these songs were trying to communicate. Listen to the style and instrumentation of the band and the vocalizations. Describe the effects of the musical instrumentation, arrangements, and vocalizations and the contributions they make to the effectiveness of the protest message. Sample protest songs from the seventies: *Imagine* by John Lennon; *Blowin' in the Wind* by Bob Dylan; *The Wall* by Pink Floyd; *We Shall Overcome*; *This Land is Your Land* by Woody Guthrie; *People Have the Power* by Patti Smith; *Give Peace a Chance* by John Lennon; *If I Had a Hammer* by Pete Seeger.

4. Music-Lyrics as Message: Once you have analyzed the protest songs from the 70's in your small group, decide upon a major protest message from one group represented in the Great Textbook War events. In your small group take an existing protest song, like *Give*

Peace a Chance by John Lennon, and rewrite the lyrics to communicate a protest message from the Great Textbook War. Your small group can record your own version of your protest song on a smart phone or on this website: <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>

5. Creative Drama-Guided Improvisation: Once you have listened to the radio documentary and viewed the photo records and read the news accounts regarding the Great Textbook War, choose your small group and create a creative drama improvisation built around one of the following situations:
 - a. A protestor meets a school board member leaving church on Sunday and enters into an explanation of his/her point of view.
 - b. A student finds one of the controversial books at the public library, checks it out and is found reading the book at home by his/her parent.
 - c. A parent requests time at a school board meeting to discuss controversial readings in the new textbooks.
 - d. A principal encounters a teacher reading one of the controversial books in preparation for teaching the next day.
 - e. A teacher sits next to a parent at a community dinner and the parent raises questions about how the teacher intends to use the controversial textbooks in his/her son's class.
 - f. A student, visiting a classmate, finds a controversial book at his/her friend's home.
 - g. Students, whose parents decide to keep them away from school until the textbooks are withdrawn, don't want to miss school events during this critical time and express this to their parents.

6. Visual Art-Design: After examining the photo documentary of the Great Textbook War, create a protest poster using images and words to communicate your message of protest. Explain why you chose the images, colors, design, and words used to create your protest poster.