

Problematic Situation Strategy

My Name is Asher Lev

Purpose of Strategy

The idea behind this activity is to help students better relate with Asher's situation and understand the significance of his decisions. Because many students may struggle to relate with Asher's desire to draw, this activity allows them to consider themselves in similar situations and therefore better empathize with him. Everyone dreams to succeed in some field or other, but what people don't consider are the sacrifices necessary to achieve success.

Rationale

This activity should work especially well as a pre-reading activity to get students thinking about some of the major themes the text. Following the activity, teachers could then introduce the students to the text itself.

Directions

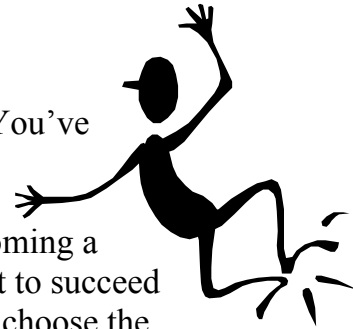
1. Hand this assignment out as a pre-class activity so that as students come to their seats, they begin to work on the worksheet right away. Teachers should explain the activity briefly and in general terms so students won't prejudge their responses to what they think teachers want.
2. Give the class ten to fifteen minutes to complete the activity and respond to the follow-up questions. If the class is on task, the teacher should consider completing the activity as well so that he/she can better direct discussion.
3. Then initiate a classroom discussion in response to the follow-up questions. Make sure to discuss each question and allow students to share their own observations and judgements. Because the questions assess values, responses should not be judged as either right or wrong.
4. If teachers choose to use this strategy as a pre-reading activity, they might consider introducing the students to the book directly following the problematic situation.

Assessment

This problematic situation allows you to assess student's work in different ways. The initial activity assesses student's ability to make decisions according to their priorities and values. Then, the written/discussion response to the activity assesses their ability to apply their activity to their own lives.

Problematic Situation:
My Name is Asher Lev

One of your greatest dreams is about to come true! You've always hoped to aspire at something, be it sports, music, science, or what not. You've pictured yourself succeeding in your dreams, and now those dreams are becoming a reality. For no apparent reason, you have been given a gift to succeed in any single thing you want to do, and you simply have to choose the area of success.



Please write your gift here: _____

Now comes the catch.

You can't get something for nothing, and that applies to your new gift as well. In order to receive your gift, there are a number of things you will have to give up. Below is a list of things you must choose from. Please rank the different items in order of greatest importance (#1 = greatest importance). The items given the least value will be taken first.



- _____ Religion
- _____ Family relationships
- _____ Friends
- _____ Free time
- _____ Health
- _____ Other talents/abilities
- _____ Education
- _____ Money
- _____ Location (where you live)
- _____ Intelligence
- _____ Popularity
- _____ Television/video games/entertainment
- _____ Modern conveniences

Now respond to the following questions and come prepared to discuss your responses tomorrow in class.

- How has this activity changed your perspective on your gift?
- Is your gift worth the things you had to sacrifice?
- How does having to sacrifice things change the value of your gift?
- Do you think people who have special gifts have to give things up?
- What are some examples of things you've had to give up to develop your current talents?

