

Character and Life Skills

Video Title: **Courtesy: Colt's Story**

Lesson Title: **Courtesy in Two Voices**

Grade Level: **Middle School**



Project and Purpose

Students consider some of the reasons it might be difficult to be courteous and write a poem for two voices.

Essential Question

When and why is it difficult to be courteous?

Pre-Viewing: Before watching the video...

Discuss with a partner or as a full group:

1. Are there different rules of courtesy for adults and for children? Explain your answer.
2. Are there different rules of courtesy for different cultures? Explain your answer.
3. What are some simple rules of courtesy? Why do they exist?
4. When is it easy to be courteous?
5. When is it difficult to be courteous?

Discussion Questions: After watching the video...

1. What stood out from this video?
2. One of the students says, referring to the behavior of the adults, "Even kids don't do that." Is that true? When do young people behave in this way?
3. The phrase "It's just a game" comes up several times. Why might someone feel it's not 'just' a game? Why might they feel it's very important?
4. Do you think people behave more poorly in crowds than they do one on one? Why?
5. Why do you think this video is called Courtesy? What does courtesy have to do with sportsmanship?
6. When is it appropriate but difficult to be courteous? Why is it difficult?

Materials

- Video and projector/screen
- Chart paper or black/Smartboard
- Discussion questions copied, posted, or projected

Procedure

1. Explain how students will use *Poems for Two Voices* by Paul Fleischman to explore the concept of courtesy.
2. Post and/or distribute Fleischman's poem "Honeybees."
3. Point out that the way a poem for two voices works is that one voice or one person reads the left column, while one reads the right. Sometimes words overlap and are spoken together - sometimes those overlapping words are the same and sometimes they differ.
4. Have students select a partner and in their pairs, prepare a reading of the poem.
5. After rehearsing, ask a volunteer pair to read the poem out loud.
6. Ask students what the format brings out in each poem? When and how are overlapping words used?
7. Tell students they will write their own poem for two voices, titled "The Difficulty of Courtesy." They may work independently or with a partner. When writing the courtesy poem for two voices, one voice believes it's 'just a game' and one does not. Possible examples of poems might be:
 - A dialogue between the two voices
 - Questions and answers
 - The two voices talking about themselves
 - Students might consider:
 - Overlapping words
 - Similarities and differences between the two voices

Conclusion

Have students share their poems, first with a partner, and then in groups of four. Ask students to write a brief explication of how their original poems answer the question: When and why is it difficult to be courteous?

Notes

Handout: "Honeybees" by Paul Fleischman

Being a bee

is a pain.

I'm a worker
I'll gladly explain.

I'm up at dawn, guarding
the hive's narrow entrance

then I take out
the hive's morning trash

then I put in an hour
making wax,
without two minutes' time
to sit still and relax.

Then I might collect nectar
from the field
three miles north

or perhaps I'm on
larva detail

feeding the grubs
in the cells,
wishing that I were still
helpless and pale.

Then I pack combs with
pollen — not my idea of fun.

Then, weary, I strive

to patch up any cracks
in the hive.

Then I build some new cells,
slaving away at
enlarging this Hell,
dreading the sight
of another sunrise,
wondering why we don't
all unionize.
Truly, a bee's is the
worst
of all lives.

Being a bee
is a joy

I'm a queen

I'll gladly explain.
Upon rising, I'm fed
by my royal attendants,

I'm bathed

then I'm groomed.

The rest of my day
is quite simply set forth:

I lay eggs,

by the hundred.

I'm loved and I'm lauded,

I'm outranked by none.

When I've done
enough laying

I retire

for the rest of the day.

Truly, a bee's is the
best
of all lives.