

## Title: Facing Darkness

### Two day Lesson Plan

Submitted by Lizzie Adelman

#### Essential Question: What do you do when life feels difficult?

**Purpose:** To motivate scholars to think about what inner resources they already possess and/or can develop to help them build resiliency through life's struggles.

**Warm up/Do now:** Table-group turn & talk (the group can choose 2-3 topics from the list below)

- a. Describe a time when felt...
  - i. really stressed out
  - ii. really sad
  - iii. really angry
  - iv. Helpless or lost/confused
- b. Padlet: What do YOU do when life feels difficult? (Anonymous answers on Padlet or Nearpod Collab. board)

Have a student volunteer read the essential question

**Vocab brainstorm organizer:** In table groups, the kids will brainstorm at least 5 words per category (graphic organizer) revolving around the essential question: What do you do when life feels difficult?

1. What **emotions** do you feel during difficult times?
2. What **life events** do you consider difficult to deal with?
3. Who/what **do you turn to** when feeling overwhelmed?
4. **Then**, student groups can look up synonyms of the words they gathered to increase academic vocabulary and rigor

#### Poem reading/writing:

Possible texts:

"The Rainy Day" (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

"Still Here" (Langston Hughes)

"Life is a challenge" (Gurjas Singh Nerula)\*This is not a classic poet, but the format of his poem might be a good format to use with younger students. Life is a \_\_\_\_\_-...

(UDL/STUDENT CHOICE!)

1. Students will read the poem (individually or volunteers aloud)
2. Students will work together to identify the challenges the author faced and the ways they overcame the challenges: this is a great chance for the kids to come up with some Assumptions and Inferences. What do they think the poet went through? What might have caused them to feel this way?
3. Students will write their own poem in a similar style about a challenging time in their lives
4. Volunteers can share out

### Group product: "6 Strategies Seminars"

- Students will work in groups to come up with a mini slide show showcasing 6 strategies for coping with stress, sadness, anger, lack of motivation, being overwhelmed, confusion, helplessness (each group should have a different topic)
- Pre-evaluation google form: Students will determine the purpose, audience, key concepts, and tone of their presentation together
- Presentation creation time!
- Present to the group
- Feedback google form, Poll Everyone, or Nearpod Poll: Audience members will take a brief survey on which presentations they found most effective, which strategies they connected with most, etc.

Next steps...students will then engage in some cultural investigation about how different cultures respond to challenging times. Kids can look at machismo in certain cultures (tons of readings, articles, poems, shortfilms about that).

- Kids can look at how different cultures respond to emotion, trauma, sadness, etc. There are fascinating articles about how culture can shape emotion and emotional response
- Kids can then tie this into language: how there are different words for certain emotions depending on the language, for example the German Schadenfreude (Sha-den-froy-deh) or "pleasure derived by someone from another person's misfortune." While many cultures and individuals may experience this pleasure (hello, Youtube "Epic fails" videos!), German is the only language that I'm aware of that has a special word for it.
- Another example are the Hawaiian words Ohana, which some loosely translate to "family" but it really is more of a concept or idea describe one's entire community of friends, family, extended family, neighbors, race, tribe, etc. This word says a lot about the emotional mindset of many Hawaiian people. Words are more concept based, less literal black and white.
- Students can break up into groups to look at psychology articles about "emotions across cultures and cultures impact on emotions" While investigating this, student groups can create a short vocabulary list of these glorious words in languages other than english that demonstrate how culture shapes emotion (and language) around the world.
- AS this is an advanced task, teachers of younger students can provide the list of words

## Still Here

By Langston Hughes

I been scarred and battered.

My hopes the wind done scattered.

Snow has friz me,

Sun has baked me,

Looks like between 'em they done

Tried to make me

Stop laughin', stop lovin', stop livin'--

But I don't care!

I'm still here!

## The Rainy Day

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;  
It rains, and the wind is never weary;  
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,  
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,  
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;  
It rains, and the wind is never weary;  
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering past,  
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,  
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart, and cease repining;  
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;  
Thy fate is the common fate of all,  
Into each life some rain must fall,  
Some days must be dark and dreary.

## **Life is a challenge**

By Gurjas Singh Narula

Life is a challenge - meet it

Life is a gift - accept it

Life is a sorrow - over come it

Life is a tragedy - face it

Life is a mystery - unfold it

Life is a opportunity - take it

Life is a promise - complete it

Life is a struggle - fight it

Life is a goal - achieve it

Life is love - love it

Life is adventurous- have fun

Life is a duty - perform it

Life is a game - out smart it

Life is a beauty - praise it

Life is great- make something good of it

So life is a celebration -eat, laugh and do meditation.