

Literacy and the Law



Lesson Title: David Says Yes! (Lesson Seven)

Context of the lesson within the project: This lesson is a great reinforcement for the big idea of this unit, “Democracy Calls for Equal Justice Under the Law”, and a great summary about the importance of the rule of law. Using cartooning, students draw David, and have him “make a statement” regarding his understanding of the Rule of Law.

Standards Addressed:

Visual and Performing Arts, Visual Art, Communication and Expression Through Original Works of Art

Creative Expression:

2.7 Communicate values, opinions, or personal insights through an original work of art.

Essential Questions/Issues in this lesson: In what ways does the Rule of Law apply to impartiality of the courts?

Objective(s):

Students will understand the beginning concepts of cartooning.

Students will summarize their understanding of the Rule of Law as evidenced through the written comments of their cartoon character.

***Assessment:** These objectives will be assessed through final product of cartoon entry to class book.

*Quality Criteria for assessment:

Cartooning

RUBRIC

	Absolutely	Almost	Not Yet
Cartooning elements Student follows cartooning elements: design, color, and good use of space to portray character in an effective manner			
Written David’s comments are reflective of an understanding of the meaning of the rule of law following his “experience” in court! Uses vocabulary indicative of understanding.			

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Materials and Resources Needed: Handout #1 template with margin and lines for the book, Handout #2, Brainstorm page, two cartoon sample idea pages, symbols page, pencils, black fine sharpies or ink pens, marking pens, crayons, and/or oil pastels

Lesson Activity Steps:

(2 minutes)

Hook: David has learned a lot about the Rule of Law, given his experience of being charged with theft! We are going to become cartoon artists, and decide what David would have to say about the rule of law following his experience! Show the cover (provided, or use your own). David says Yes to the Rule of Law.

(5 minutes)

Review: First we will review what David learned about the Rule of Law (use brainstorm sheet, Handout 2))

Students brainstorm: What does the Rule of Law mean? (teacher edition and student sheet are provided as handouts. What we want students to review are the following important concepts:

The Constitution has the laws that must be followed.

People are innocent until proven guilty.

The jury and the judge must learn about details that show proof of the guilt.

Impartiality means it has to be fair to everyone and that decisions must be based on the law.

The judge and the jury must be impartial.

The jury must believe the defendant (David) is guilty "beyond a reasonable doubt"

Following the brainstorm: Students will decide what they want David to say about the rule of law on the cartoon page they will make.

Examples of what we are looking for – and hopeful students will create their own!

"I'm innocent until you can prove I am guilty"!

"If you aren't absolutely sure I'm guilty, beyond a reasonable doubt, then I am innocent!"

"The jury cannot decide that I am guilty just because I've been in trouble before!"

"You have to be impartial, and make a decision in a fair way, based on the law!"

"Are you looking at evidence and the stories on both sides?"

”

(30-40 minutes)

Cartooning

Introduction: Students need to practice creating David before they begin their actual page with the dialogue.

Using pencil, they can begin to practice by sketching David's head (the author has David with quite a round face). This sample sketch could be with David facing forward to get started.

David's body (just below a skinny neck) is an oval – the legs and arms are almost "sticks", his facial features are very distinct, so students usually find much success as they play with making David. (See beginning practice sheet)

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Students may want to make David with different facial expressions, turning sideways, in the court, classroom, with some symbols that represent the law, with the jury...let their imaginations run wild! They will ask for the David books, and this gives ideas as well...Do Not Let Them Trace!

Encourage them to plan their design using the full page, and to make David a good size so that he shows up well and is the center of attention! NOTE: One of the graphics pages gives symbols of the court – the Scales of Justice should be explained to students, even though on the vocabulary page– the scales of justice have been used to symbolize the balance between truth and fairness sought after in the justice system.

After plenty of practice with pencils and “scratch paper”, you can give them the handout page that has a margin drawn on the left. This margin is to be kept clear for the book “binding”, and lines at the bottom for the written comment they want from David (handout provided). You may want to use drawing or construction paper for their final copy, rather than paper that will tear too easily.

1. Students sketch out their cartoon David (and scene if applicable) page with pencil.
2. Outline the entire drawing with black ink when completed.
3. Write the dialogue with pencil first.
4. Go over the dialogue with black ink when completed.
5. Finish with color: markers and crayons give lots of options.

***Idea: This could be set up as a “cartoon center” for students to get lots of practice and time for creativity...

(5 minutes)

Closure: Put all student entries into a class book and share the book with the whole group. It is fun to take a photo or scan each page and then present as a power point (great for a parent-night too!). Reinforce the Big Idea from the unit: *Democracy calls for equal justice under the law*. Either way, the book will be out for all to look through and enjoy as a summary of their learning.

Extension Ideas: Students could create their own book on the Rule of Law – make an ending to what happened following the trial, or a completely different “case”.

References:

No David! By David Shannon
California State Content Standards for the Visual and Performing Arts
Cartooning Basics, Barnhart, cartoonc@juno.com