

Unit VII: Building Better Futures: Narrative, Recovery and Responsibility

Grade Levels: 4-5

Time: 30 minutes – 1 hour

Lesson EVII-17: Peace Poems

Interdisciplinary Connection:

Literacy

Objectives:

- Students will be able to interpret the poem, *For Our World* by Mattie Stepanek.
- Students will be able to design their own poem for the future in light of learning about September 11, 2001.

Key Terms: (terms from poem "For Our World")

Humility

Mosaic

Nurture

Judging

Vengeful

Materials:

- Poem *For Our World* by Mattie Stepanek from *Hope through Heartsongs*, New York, 2002; pg. 49 (poem written September 2001,
- Definitions of key terms
- Paper and pencils to write poems

Activities/Procedures:

- Read the biography of Matthew Stepanek who wrote poetry as a young child. (A web search may be conducted to discover information about Mattie.)

Classroom Activity:

- Obtain book and read "For Our World" by Mattie Stepanek (Teacher may read this aloud to the class or ask a few students to alternate turns reading it.)
- Follow-up discussion:
 - What is Mattie asking us to do in this poem?
 - Why do you think he is asking his readers to do this?
 - In the beginning of the poem he says, "we need to stop."
 - What do you think he means by this?
 - What do we need to stop?
- Ask students to each write their own poem for the future or peace poem.

Evidence of Understanding:

- Students can read their completed poems to their class and/or in an assembly with their grade level or school.
- Teacher can explore ways to post the poems on the school website

Extension Activities: Taking Action and Giving Service:

- Ask other classes at the same grade level to participate in the poem writing activity.
- Hold a poem contest and ask the principal or vice principal to select one poem per class and/or grade level to be read over the school intercom at the beginning or end of the school day. One poem should be read each day until all selected poems have been read.
- Create an album or school newspaper of the peace poems written by the students and illustrated by students. Arrange for students to present a copy of the album/newspaper to the mayor of the town at a meeting, to present copies to local community organizations, and to keep a copy on display in the school library.