Reflection Title: Childhood Obesity

Learning Activity: The Cost of Childhood Obesity by Juliet Armerding

Subject Area: English/Language Arts

Focus Areas: vocabulary, stake holders, point of view/perspective, drama

Grades: 6-8

Duration: 2-3 class periods (90-180 min)

Core Standards: Writing: 4 Reading: 1, 2, 4, 6 Speaking and Listening: 1, 3, 4

Learning Activity Overview:
Students will analyze the student Reflection in order to identify the different points of view related to the issue of childhood obesity in America. In groups, students will then examine a specific point of view of a stakeholder and use a dramatic presentation to teach their classmates the importance of this issue to that group. Additionally, students will be responsible for teaching key vocabulary terms to their classmates.

Objectives: (LW – Learner Will)
* LW define and apply the term “stakeholder” to the issue of childhood obesity.
* LW identify and analyze different points of view concerning the issue of childhood obesity.
* LW examine and explain the perspective of a specific stakeholder.
* LW define for others core vocabulary terms specific to their stakeholder.

Preparation: copies of the student Reflection “Childhood Obesity” and Unit Resources

Unit Resources
Previewing the Reflection (Before students read the Reflection)
Understanding the Reflection (After students read the Reflection, either in class or for HW)
Reviewing the Reflection (After the Learning Activity is completed)
Reflection Response (For students to respond to the One World Student Ambassador)

In addition, this unit can be completed to coincide with the Science Learning Activity for this Reflection. Teacher should coordinate with Science teacher to ensure this cross-collaboration.

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Reflection Prompt:
In the third paragraph of her Reflection, Nancy states, “Childhood obesity can lead to many health problems. Overweight children have a 70 percent chance of becoming overweight or obese adults, which increases to 80 percent if one or more parent is overweight or obese as well. Obesity in adulthood increases the risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, asthma, arthritis, and other health problems.”

Procedure:

Essential Question:
Who are the stakeholders affected by the issue of childhood obesity, and what are their goals regarding the topic? *Note: as this is a sensitive subject, use discretion when having class discussions and assigning student work groups.

Step 1: Our Preconceptions (10-15 minutes)
As a warm-up activity, provide students with a list of words related to this topic. Have students write a one or two work reaction - their immediate response - to those words. Some examples to include: Skinny, Malnourished, Healthy, Obese, Overweight, Exercise, Nutrition, Fast food, Vegetables. Teacher may decide to add more terms to the list as needed.
When students have finished, discuss. What connotations do we have with each word? From where do they come? What do all of these terms have in common?

Step 2: Introducing the Topic (5 minutes)
From the warm-up, students should have made the connection between all of the terms and their relation to health, well-being, and obesity. Explain that we will look at the issue of obesity as it pertains to children. Elicit a few thoughts as to why this is such a pertinent issue for today.

Step 3: An Initial Reading (15 minutes)
Using a reading method that works for your class (popcorn, partner, whole class, etc), students will read Nancy’s Reflection, Childhood Obesity. Allow this to just be an initial reading - have students annotate text if they have questions, but remind them that there will be ample time to delve deeper into the reflection.

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Step 4: Introducing “Stakeholders” (5 -10 min)
The vocabulary term “stakeholders” is one that will be central to the understanding of this topic. Define stakeholder as “a person with an interest or concern in something.” In this case, stakeholders all have an interest or concern in the issue of childhood obesity. To ensure that students have a strong grasp of this term, introduce a few examples and have students brainstorm the stakeholders in those instances. Make sure students can identify why each of those people qualify as stakeholders in the issue.

Example A: Mandatory School Uniforms. (Stakeholders: parents, students, teachers/staff, PTA boards, school uniform manufacturers, and politicians)

Example B: Opening a Homeless Shelter for Kids (Stakeholders: community members/taxpayers, homeless persons and families, schools, local politicians)

Example C: War in Afghanistan (stakeholders: American tax payers, military members, military families, US and Afghani government and politicians, Afghani citizens, media/news persons)

Step 5: Reading for Perspective (15-25 minutes)
Students will read the Reflection for a second time, looking specifically for different perspectives of different stakeholders. The teacher may want to do this a variety of ways - some options below:
* Give students different colored pens/pencils/highlighters. Each time they see a different perspective on the issue of childhood obesity, circle/underline it with a new color.
* Give students popsicle sticks or note cards. Read the Reflection aloud as a class, and each time a different perspective comes up, have students raise their popsicle stick or card. (This could be turned into a game - with students or teams competing to identify perspectives and then defend them appropriately with text)
* Have students brainstorm possible stakeholders before reading, and then check to see if those perspectives are included as they read.

Regardless of the method used, have students record information on stakeholders and their positions with the corresponding One World Education worksheet.

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Step 6: Assigning Perspectives (5-10 min)

After students have finished the re-reading, make sure the class has been able to identify the key stakeholders in the issue of childhood obesity: Kids, Parents, Government, Fast Food Marketers, Employers, Doctors/Health care industry/Nutritionists (for an advanced group)

Assign groups, each one focusing on a different stakeholder. Each group will be responsible for:
1. Identifying the point of view of that stakeholder regarding childhood obesity
2. Using Nancy’s Reflection to analyze the key points for that particular stakeholder
3. Identifying and teaching at least 3 key vocabulary terms related to that stakeholder’s point of view
4. Teaching their classmates about childhood obesity from that perspective using dramatic presentation

Step 7: Stakeholder Group Work (1 class period and HW as needed)

Once students have been assigned into groups and have a clear understanding of the objectives and deliverables, allow groups time in class (and outside of class, as needed) to prepare a short presentation. Through this dramatic presentation (a short 3-5 minute skit), students will take on the role of their assigned stakeholder to demonstrate why childhood obesity is such a concern to them. Additionally, students will present to the class (in any creative form) the minimum of 3 vocabulary terms they have identified from Nancy’s Reflection as being key to their group’s perspective.

Step 8: Presenting the Points of View (1 class period)

Each group will have 5-10 minutes to present their skit, key vocabulary, and hold a brief Q&A with their classmates. After the presentations conclude, wrap up with students by reminding them the importance of examining issues through the lenses of multiple stakeholders - issues aren’t always as black and white as we might initially believe.

Students Demonstrate Understanding By:
* Correctly defining and applying the term “stakeholder”
* Ability to identify different stakeholders in this issue

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* Correct examination of this issue from the perspective of a particular stakeholder
* Sharing the point of view with class through drama

**Global Extension Activities:**
* Keep a health journal (could be done in conjunction with science or health/PE class) in which students record their daily food intake and exercise. Use this as a powerful tool of introspection, through which students can reflect on how their decisions impact them mentally, emotionally, as well as physically.
* Write a letter to the school board/cafeteria staff/PTA regarding the school lunches provided. How do those help or hinder this topic? What could be done to improve upon existing cafeteria policies at your school?