



How can you use inspiring stories in the classroom to provide meaningful educational experiences?

Below is an inquiry activity for students based on the idea of volunteering which uses both reading and writing to gain understanding and create new ideas. While the activity is geared towards middle schoolers, any activity or material can be adjusted to various elementary classrooms.

Purpose:

To encourage students to ask appropriate inquiry questions to move to higher order of thinking. Also, to help students grow in analyzing multiple narratives from a variety of formats.

Context:

This lesson uses multiple materials revolving around an orphanage in Nepal. The following materials are available for use:

- Basic information about the orphanage program Innovative Social Centre, found on a YouTube video produced by a volunteer:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HC9Q4tTEV_4&ab_channel=SevenPointEight
- Letter/email from a volunteer about his experience and how he uses his talents there- Read&Shine has provided one from Ajay
- Books about the country of Nepal and volunteering

Standards:

This lesson can be used for various standards. Below are a few samples:

- English Language Arts Writing: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Common Core 7th grade standards:
 - RL.7.1: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI. 7.9: Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of fact.

Motivation:

Begin the lesson by asking students to describe their bedrooms. What furniture is in the room? Do they share the room with someone? What items in their room did they purchase themselves and which were gifts? Now using available technologies (iPads, SMARTBoard, etc.) to find pictures of a typical bedroom in Nepal orphanage.



Development:

Students will learn about the orphanage and other pertinent information by using the suggested context.

Assessment:

Each student will write/generate ideas about how they could contribute/volunteer to a cause. The development portion of the lesson will have guided the students in how to find information about their cause. The student will state the cause they would support, why it is important to them, and what talents they would hope to bring to the cause/organization.