

Freedom Lesson: Freedom to Read

First Grade

Cindy Dean is a Library Media Teacher at Seven Mile Elementary School

In Seven Mile, Ohio

Freedom to Read: Freedom to Live

Standards

Information Literacy

Benchmark A

3, 4, 5

Benchmark D

1, 2, 3

Benchmark E

1, 3, 4

Media Literacy

Benchmark A

1, 2

Benchmark B

1

Objective: Students will recognize that being able to read opens doors and opportunities to experience life in a new way.

Students will learn that being able to read has not always been an opportunity for everyone.

Students will experience early teaching methods of teaching reading in the United States.

Suggested Readings

Dear Mr. Rosenwald by Carole Boston Weatherford

Madoulina: a girl who wanted to go to school by Joel Eboueme Bognomo

If you lived when there was slavery in America by Anna Kamma

Mary McLeod Bethune by Eloise Greenfield

Nightjohn by Gary Paulsen

The turn-around upside-down alphabet book by Lisa Campbell

She wanted to read; the story of Mary McLeod Bethune by Ella Kaiser Carruth

Richard Wright and the library card by William Miller

Week 1

Slates, chalk

Lined paper large pencil

Dry erase board, marker

Solicit questions about what these items might be used for today.

Find out which ones they like to use and how they use them. Read a selection of Nightjohn from chapter 3, the section where he is trading Sarny for 3 letters. If you had to pay to learn to read, what would you pay/trade for it? Discuss Nightjohn's idea that A looks like you standing on two feet. Discuss what students know about reading before coming to 1st grade. Use a KWL chart to record information. Look at pictures from The turn-around upside-down alphabet book. Pair students up and have them practice writing letters on chalkboards and seeing what they can imagine them to be.

Week 2

Ask students what they used to write on this week. Did anyone use Sarny's method of writing with a stick in the dirt? Where could writing get them in trouble? (writing on walls, etc.) Read the section of Nightjohn where Sarny is writing what she sees on a feed sack and gets hit by her mammy. Solicit questions about why did the mammy get upset with Sarny. Read the page on "Would you go to school" from If you lived when there was slavery in America. Discuss how that would make you feel.

What would happen to learning if there were no buildings to use as a school? Read She wanted to read; the story of Mary McLeod Bethune chapter 1. Discuss how they would feel if out of 17 children were picked to go to school. Read Madoulina: the girl who wanted to go to school. Discuss how it would feel if school was thought to be good for only boys.

Week 3

Discuss what buildings students have been to since last week. Stores, barns, farms, libraries, etc. Were they all the same? What was different about them? What made you like some of them better than others (clean, new, smelled good...)?

Read *Dear Mr. Rosenwald* and talk about the type of school building in the book and how it is different from the one we use today. Which one would you prefer?

Week 4

Hold up library cards from different libraries. Ask the students if they recognize what these cards are used for? Discuss what is in our school library. How is it different than a public library? Why do cities have public libraries? Who can use a public library? Read *Richard Wright and the library card*. Why did Richard want a library card? What makes a library card so important? How do you get a library card here at school? At the public library? What are the responsibilities of having a library card? Pass out paper library cards and have students fill them out, color and cut out.
