

Random Acts of Kindness has brought more meaning into my life, and I am committed to help spread the word.

— Carol, State Parent Facilitator, HI

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These Lesson Plans are a culmination of school-wide activities and classroom activities, ranging from grades K-12.

Lesson Plan

Origami Paper Cranes

Submitted by Wanda; Louisville, KY

Grade Level: 6-12

Subject: Art, Reading (it can relate to the book, Hiroshima)

Materials:

- Sadako and the 1000 Paper Cranes by Eleanor Coerr, 63 pages with instructions in paper folding "origami" to make cranes, pages 66-79.
- Reading level: elementary to middle grades
- Paper: Brightly colored squares are best approximately 6 x 8 "
- Other resources:
OrigamiUSA
15 W. 77th St.
New York, NY 10024-5192
www.origami-usa.org

Lesson Plan Background:

Our associate principal earned a scholarship this past fall to participate in an educational visit to Japan. Her visit (consisted of a three-week study of the culture and school environment of the Japanese society.) Before the visit, our school became completely immersed in the study of the Japanese culture by constructing an interdisciplinary unit that would focus on one aspect of Japanese life. All content areas in the middle and high school curriculum were studied. The basis for the unit was that all students began reading the book, Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes by Eleanor Coerr. Students were to read the story and pay attention to details that would assist them in the unit development. For instance, in Social Studies classes, students learned about the implication of war upon citizens of Japan who were affected by the Atom Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II. The main character, Sadako develops leukemia and discovers an ancient legend that if you make a thousand paper cranes, healing will begin. The students all over Japan supported her efforts and helped her make the paper cranes.

Lesson Plan Objective:

Students in Art classes learned the art of paper folding known as "origami" as a result of reading the story. The girls made a commitment to make 1000 cranes themselves and expressed a desire to perform a kindness for children in the Louisville area who were suffering from the effects of cancer. The students developed a plan that would enable them to decorate the floors of the hospital so children could enjoy the beauty of origami and learn the meaning of the cranes.

As an Art teacher, I was thrilled that students came up with such a lovely idea of caring! Our principal and I reviewed the student plan and called upon our local hospital to see if the plan could be carried out; The public relations staff agreed that the student's idea was very inspiring and kind. They suggested that we not only decorate the hospital floors with the cranes but also decorate a tree that could be auctioned at the annual "Festival of Trees and Lights." The proceeds from this auction would benefit cancer care at the hospital. At this writing, students have decorated the tree and will also decorate trees with remaining paper cranes at another hospital in the area.

The response to this date has been overwhelming, as our students have learned the meaning of giving back to those who are suffering from ill health. Our girls (60 students in grades 6 through 12) are residents and receive educational services through a partnership with a local school system. Many of the girls are wards of the state, awaiting foster home placement.

Evaluation:

This lesson plan makes their idea even more significant because many would see their personal lives as hopeless as Sadako who experienced many obstacles as she struggled to survive the ravages of disease. Instead of dwelling on personal issues the students realized a need in the community and took action on it through this experience. As students depart for the holiday season this year, each one will have participated in the activity of spreading joy through kindness.