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Borders in Play

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Nate Novak Lesson Plan 4

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Spanish 380
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CEL Lesson Plan #4

Goals:

- Understand plot, themes, characters, setting of “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings.”
- Empathize with the old man in “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings.”
- Understand the analogy that “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” offers the reader.
- Have them understand the content of the poem. Who is the speaker? Who else appears in “The Bully” by Guadalupe García McCall?
- Have them understand Spanish vocabulary in the poem.
- Discuss the sequence of the poem to make sure they understand what happens.
- Think about the poem in terms of what we have read so far with them.

Objectives:

- Have every student comprehend what we are reading and contribute to discussion
- Introduce themes and topics that will be discussed later
- Understand difficult vocabulary in both English and Spanish from the texts
- Compare two different pieces of literature (what do they share? what is different about them?)
- Teach students a basic definition of what a border is or could be. See if they can identify some borders in the texts.

Plan for “A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings”

- Divide into groups of two, each group tries to define a couple of these words
- Vocabulary
 - “Enormous”
 - “Judgement”
 - “Murmured”
 - “Unfortunate”
 - “Angelic”
 - “Admission”
 - “Disobey”
 - “Mortals”
 - “Annoyance”
- Define magical realism, and how it differs from other fiction stories
 - Make the point that Gabriel García Márquez argued that magical realism is not “magic” at all, rather an accurate description of life in South America and the Caribbean.

- Words we have are not enough to describe the reality of Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. English or Spanish do not have the capacity to describe this reality, so it is expressed through the supernatural and fantastic.
- Same groups as the vocabulary: one group talks about characters, another talks about plot, the other talks about setting
- Themes
 - “How is the old man treated when he arrives?”
 - “How do Pelayo and Elisenda take advantage of him?”
 - “Why do you think people pay to see him? Why were they so interested in him? What made him different from everybody else?”
 - “Why did the people see him as ‘a disaster waiting to happen’?”
 - “What do you think the old man was? Was he an angel? An evil figure? Why?”
 - “Why did people stop going to see him? What did the Pelayo and Elisenda do after this?”
 - “In the story, García Márquez said ‘With the money they saved they built a mansion with balconies and gardens and iron bars on the windows so that angels wouldn’t get in.’ What does this show about how Pelayo and Elisenda? Why do they not want any more angels?”
 - “Do you think we see this in real life? Are there groups of people who you think are treated similarly to the old man? Who? How are they treated poorly like the old man?”
 - “In the end of the story, the old man flies away. Why do you think he flew away at that time?”
 - Have everyone go around and talk about what they think the theme of the story is, no wrong answers!
- Group activity: As a group, we can write our own short story using the themes from “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings.” We will start by coming up with characters, a plot, and then we can fill in the rest and write it all down. It will be a group effort, with everyone contributing in their own way, with no wrong answers.

“The Bully” by Guadalupe Garcia McCall Discussion

- Read the poem together.
- Who is the voice in the poem? Who else appears in the poem?
- What happens in this poem?

Vocabulary

- “Mas mala”
- “Squinting”
- “Jerks”
- “Grits”
- “Tonta”

- “No te dejes”
- “Scalds”

Themes:

- How does this poem make you feel?
- How do you think this poem relates to real life? Have you ever experienced something like this or seen something like this happen?
- Why do you think the speaker is so hesitant to fight back?
- Why do you think the speaker is so ashamed at the end?
- Do you think this is a no-win situation? If so, why or why not?
- Do you see an example of borders in this poem?

Activity for “The Bully”

- Divide them into groups and have them enact a situation where they are faced with a bully and come up with creative and kind ways to bridge the border between them and avoid violence. Focus on finding things in common instead of on the things that are causing the rift.