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FRIENDSHIP UNIT

Eighth Grade

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Rationale

A literature unit exploring the subject of friendship serves many purposes in an eighth grade classroom. On a personal level, presenting literature dealing with issues of friendship provides a framework for students to negotiate their own individual relationships as well as their role in group situations within the classroom. Acquisition of this knowledge will in turn allow adolescents to deal more effectively with larger concerns in the community, such as resolving conflict and distinguishing between positive and negative relationships. By choosing literature that addresses a topic of particular interest to adolescents, an environment will be created that invites students to relate on an emotional level to what they read. Their emotional engagement with the literature serves as a vehicle for encouraging them to then interact cognitively with the specific texts and activities designed for this unit.

When questioning the validity of friendship as an appropriate topic for school instruction, one must consider the myriad of research studies concerning adolescent development. As stated above, we intend for this unit to address the individual needs of each student in his/her personal peer relationships. As specifically pointed out by Bushman and Bushman, Erikson's theory on adolescent development "suggests that the major task of adolescence is the formulation, or reformulation, of personal identity. Middle and high school students are primarily engaged in the task of answering the question 'Who am I?'" (1993, p. 7). The importance of addressing the topic of friendship in particular is supported by many sources stating that adolescents become increasingly dependent on friendships to develop a sense of identity and to define their own role in society (Sprinthall & Collins, 1995 Laursen 1993, Woolfolk, 1990, Conger and Petersen 1984, Woolfolk & Nicolich, 1980, Adelson 1980). During this stage in development, young adolescents begin to disengage themselves from the family unit and spend an increasing amount of time engaged in activities with peers. As a recent report indicates, peer culture plays a more critical role in the adolescent's development of personality than does familial influence (Harris, 1995). Harris' report also suggests that, in fact, the influence of peer culture is more significant than previously believed. Thus, friendships offer support and encouragement at a very vulnerable time in one's life.

At this stage, it is important for students to develop peer relationships such as friendship. The absence of positive experiences with close contact, communication and intimacy often results in "poor social adjustment and interferes with progress in other developmental tasks" (Bushman & Bushman, 1993, p.8). As further evidenced in the article "Adolescents and Their Friends" by Willard W. Hartup:

[P]eer relations contribute substantially to both social and cognitive development, and to the effectiveness with which we function as adults. Indeed, the best early predictor of adult adaptation is not IQ, or school grades, or classroom behavior but rather the adequacy with which children and adolescents get along with their contemporaries (Laursen, 1993, p. 3).

In other words, much of our success or failure with relationships as adults depends upon experiences with peers during adolescence.

Unfortunately, adolescents often have difficulties creating bonds with peers and maintaining them in the face of conflict. In light of this and the above discussion on the importance of friendships to personal development, it is imperative that the teacher's role include teaching students the "how to's" of managing relationships and conflict. Although some may feel that this is not an appropriate issue to address in the classroom, Woolfolk argues that "[a]t every level, friendships play a very significant role in healthy personal and social development ... especially at the middle school level. In these years, one of the teacher's jobs is to balance students' need to learn the curriculum with their need to establish healthy peer

relationships" (1990, p. 94-95).

This unit uses the literature curriculum as a means by which to provide students with examples of various types of friendships and to enable students to gain a greater understanding of what it means to be a friend. We will address the following questions: What makes a person a good friend?; Why do certain people become friends?; What may challenge a friendship; and How do friends resolve these situations?

Literature provides an especially suitable means by which to bring such concerns into the classroom. Even a cursory glance at young adult literature reveals an abundance of characters negotiating the world of friendship. Books chosen for this unit contain adolescent characters and circumstances that eighth graders should find incredibly engaging. This unit will work from the students' initial response to the friendships presented in the literature and encourage them to examine their own personal relationships. Using short stories such as "Nancy" by Elizabeth Enright and "Raymond's Run" by Toni Cade Bambara, we will discuss what factors draw the characters together in friendship or limit their tendency to become friends. Expanding on this topic, the class will assess the situations in their school and suggest possible reasons for the development of friendships. *The Bridge to Terabithia* will allow students to address the issue of loss and to evaluate different methods of coping with the loss of a friend. *That Was Then This is Now*, *Jacob Have I Loved* and *The Moves Make The Man* contain situations in which conflict leads to a possible dissolution of the friendship thus presenting a reference for discussion of conflict resolution methods. This unit does not include poetry, as we feel this type of reading requires specific skills not yet addressed by the class.

With these particular texts and other similar ones, this unit guides students through the characters' as well as their own efforts to make and keep friends by allowing them access to knowledge concerning the nature of friendship and possible methods of dealing with a less than perfect relationship. Considering some students may not feel comfortable discussing such topics in a group setting, the use of journal writing will provide a more personal and private forum for thinking through individual situations as well as topics raised in class and the literature. Students who choose to will have the opportunity to but will not be obligated to share entries with the class or expand upon them in longer writing assignments.

Considering the relevance of this topic to the daily lives of eighth graders, we chose works of literature that will engage the students on an emotional level, realizing, however, that variation exists between the way in which male and female adolescents approach friendship (Adelson, 1980). In order to accommodate this difference, this unit includes a book club approach in which students choose, from a pre-developed list, a novel for analysis. The book club format also includes working in a group with other students choosing the same novel. Groups will present their novel to the class in order for all students to participate in discussion.

In order to achieve the goal of drawing students at the eighth grade level into thinking cognitively, it is necessary for the topic chosen for study to be both transferable and relevant to their own personal lives. Unfortunately, as recent statistics show, less than five percent of adults actually read literature (Bushman & Bushman, 1993, p.3). When considering this astounding figure, we must ask ourselves how we, as teachers, can help to produce lifelong readers. According to Bushman, it is incredibly important to "use literature that enables students to become emotionally and cognitively involved in what they read. If students are asked to read something that is not consistent with their developmental tasks, they will not be able to interact fully with that literature" (1993, p. 3). In response to this, the literature in this unit deals specifically with a topic that coincides with the developmental experiences of an eighth grader. As

further indicated, "Experience tells us that young adolescents do get turned on to reading literature when they read literature that meets their interests and fulfills their needs" (Bushman & Bushman, 1993, p. 42). We feel that learning should be based on recognizing and meeting the personal needs of our students in order to move them forward to the academic aspects of the activities presented in the unit.

One important tool that can be used to meet the academic needs of our students is the concept of scaffolding. In educational psychology, scaffolding pertains to the important task of starting with the knowledge that students already possess and helping them to build consecutive learning experiences on top of this original foundation. Once a student recognizes his/her foundational knowledge, he/she can then build upon it with new information and begin to struggle cognitively with the new material. By beginning our unit with an introductory activity that should stimulate our students' foundational knowledge of and interest in peer relationships, we hope to, more productively, foster their cognitive interaction with the texts that they will be reading. Through this process, our goal is to meet not only the personal needs of our students but their intellectual needs and academic requirements as well. As further emphasized in one text on developing curriculum for adolescents:

Most students do not want to merely accumulate factual knowledge. They want to work at something in which they are interested. It is obvious that the students' interest is aroused only when he perceives something of value in the subject he is studying or sees a practical application of the knowledge to be gained...The primary aim of youth education is to serve the future, i.e., to provide the youth with knowledge which is related to their lives, knowledge which they can use (Kalra and Singh, 1987, p. 25).

With a unit that relates to our students' lives, we hope to create an academic environment where topics that are of interest and which are applicable to the lives of our students will be used to then foster their intellectual development. The primary goals in meeting our students' academic needs are: to impart knowledge; to achieve a positive sense of their intellectual capabilities; and to develop lifelong skills for learning new material that will in turn help them face future academic challenges with success.

Key Concepts

What brings people together in friendship?

What factors make it difficult for people to become friends?

What types of qualities/actions make a person a good friend to another?

What types of situations/issues can challenge a friendship?

How can we go about resolving or dealing with these situations?

List of Materials

Short Stories

Raymond's Run by Toni Cade-Bambara

A Mason-Dixon Memory by Clifton Davis

Amigo Brothers by Piri Thomas

Nancy by Elizabeth Enright

Children's Books

George and Martha by James Marshall

Will I Have a Friend? by Miriam Cohen

Friends by Helme Heine

Ira Sleeps Over by Bernard Waber

Novels

Students will choose one of the following for a book club group:

The Moves Make the Man by Bruce Brooks

That Was Then This is Now by S. E. Hinton

Jacob Have I Loved by Katherine Paterson

The Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson

These books will also serve as the list of outside readings for the final essay. The student may also choose a novel not mentioned on the list but that deals with the theme of friendship. The teacher must approve any book not on the list.

Terminal Objectives for Friendship Unit

Objective 1. To keep a journal based on responses to issues in the literature the reader finds personally relevant or important and reflections on their personal experiences with friendship and view of the topic as the unit progresses.

1. The student must write at least three entries each week, with each entry consisting of at least one page.
2. The student must relate each thought in the journal to a specific incident in the literature, a personal experience with the unit topic, or an overall reflection on class discussion.
3. At least one entry each week must specifically draw upon the literature for this unit.
4. The writing need not conform to any external standards of form, grammar, usage, mechanics, or spelling, nor need it be consistent in these areas within the journal itself.

Objective 2. To produce a children's book based on some idea or incident from the unit's short stories or poetry.

1. This book should concern the theme of friendship.
2. The student must adapt a specific incident or idea from the literature to fit the conventions of a children's book. We will provide examples of children's books in class.
3. Language and illustrations used in the book should be modeled after age-appropriate examples previously discussed in class.

4. The book must consist of a title page and at least sixteen pages, divided evenly between text and illustrations.
5. The writing should be consistent with regard to form, mechanics, grammar usage, spelling and punctuation that the writer chooses within the work.
6. The degree of neatness, quality, and variety of the illustrations will affect the grade.

Objective 3. Student will choose from either A or B.

Objective 3A. To produce a creative narrative based on a response to some idea or incident from either the literature or their personal journal entries.

1. The writing should concern the theme of friendship.
2. The writing should involve two characters who:
 - a. are involved in a friendship
 - b. face challenges to their friendship which may include, but are not limited to, issues such as conflict, personal loss, illness, etc.
 - c. work to develop and maintain their friendship despite these struggles
 - d. reach some sort of resolution in the end concerning the future of their friendship
3. The writing should be consistent with regard to the form, mechanics, usage, spelling, and punctuation that the writer chooses within the work.
4. A minimum of five typed (double-space) or hand written pages will be required.
5. The students will have three class periods in which to prepare their narrative and exchange papers for peer feedback; they must do all additional work outside class.

Objective 3B. To use a novel read outside of class and write an essay analyzing the experiences of the friends involved.

1. The student must identify the factors that have led to the development of the friendship in the book.
2. The student must identify the key incident or factor challenging the protagonist's relationship with his/her friend.
3. The students must discuss and evaluate the character's process of resolving the challenge and determining the future of the friendship.
4. The essay should conform to generally accepted standards of grammar, punctuation, spelling, mechanics, and usage.
5. A minimum of five typed (double-space) or hand written pages will be required.
6. The students will have three class periods in which to prepare their essays and exchange papers for peer feedback; they must do all additional work outside class.

Objective for Introductory Activity

Objective 1. To participate in activities that allow students to begin thinking analytically about the issue of friendship.

1. The student will complete a friendship questionnaire.
2. The student will contribute to producing a class definition of what it means to be a good friend to someone.
3. The student will analyze scenarios and provide a rationale for whether or not the person in question acted like a friend.
4. The student, along with group members, will create a scenario that follows the model of those previously discussed in class.

Objective for Storyboard

Objective. To identify a key scene in the story "Raymond's Run" and produce a visual representation of this scene in the form of a story board.

1. The student must participate in the work of the group while producing the storyboard.
2. The student must choose one scene from the short story.
3. The student must produce a storyboard containing four to five individual visual representations of the events in the scene.
4. The student's work must adhere to guidelines set forth by the teacher.
5. The variety, quality and degree of neatness of the illustrations will affect the grade.
6. The student must explain, through text, the illustrations on their board.

Objective for News Article

Objective. To participate in an interview while role playing either a reporter or characters from the short story "Amigo Brothers" and report this interview in the form of a newspaper article.

1. The student must demonstrate having read the short story through his/her knowledge of the character that he/she will role-play.
2. Students must participate in the interviews and contribute to the newspaper article.
3. The group will submit interview notes along with the final product.

4. The group will turn in a one-page news article recorded by one reporter.
5. The article must include input from all of the assigned characters (Antonio, Felix, reporter and spectators).

Objective for In-Character Writing

Objective. To write, from the perspective of a character in the novel read for class, a one-page journal entry in response to an event in the novel.

1. The student must write at least one page.
2. The student must briefly describe the event being used and the other characters involved.
3. The student must explain the significance of this event for the character through his/her "voice".
4. The student must relate this event and/or the character's thoughts to the topic of friendship.

Objectives for Group Presentation

Objective. To participate in and complete a group presentation, consisting of a character sketch, a completed questionnaire, a one-page summary of the book and a visual representation of the book in the form of a book cover.

1. The student must contribute to the group's completion of the work above.
2. The summary should identify major characters in the work, detail major episodes and/or scenes and provide a basic plot summary.
3. The character sketch should include background information on the character as well as information on his/her family, situation, friends and thoughts.
4. The questionnaire should be complete, concise and demonstrate knowledge of the novel.
5. The book cover should illustrate one aspect of or scene in the book that your group decides is representative of the book as a whole. It may consist of illustrations, photos and/or text.
5. The presentation should last between 15 and 20 minutes and provide sufficient information for classmates to understand the characters and events in the novel.

Syllabus

Friendship Unit

8th grade Language Arts

During this unit, you will be graded on the following requirements:

Journal (20%) You will keep a journal throughout this unit. We will spend time in class working on these. You are expected to spend this time writing. I will collect these journals periodically throughout

the unit and again at the end for grading.

Children's Book (15%) You will create a book based on a friendship story that would be appropriate for preschool children. This book will include both text and illustrations. You will have the option to work alone or in groups.

Final Essay (20%) You will have a choice of writing a formal essay on a novel read outside of class or a narrative based on a friendship story that you create. You will have some amount of class time to work on this paper but any unfinished work must be done outside of class.

News Article (10%) You will participate in a group project on the short story "Amigo Brothers." You will participate in a group interview and in the writing of a news article.

Storyboard (10%) You will create a storyboard based on one incident in the story "Raymond's Run." It will consist of both text and illustrations.

Group Presentation (10%) You will contribute to a group presentation of the novel you choose to read for our book club. You will personally be responsible for one component of the presentation.

Homework and Participation (15%) You will be required to complete a number of homework assignments and participate in both class discussions and group activities. This portion of your grade will consist of both components.

I will go over each assignment in more detail as they come up during the unit.

Daily Lessons

WEEK ONE: Lesson 1. Introductory Activity

Lesson Goal: To have students begin thinking about the nature of friendship and to access their prior knowledge of the subject.

Day One

10 minutes - Discuss literature we will read during this unit, large assignments due during the unit, teacher expectations for the unit and key concepts. At this time, teacher will pass out assignment for final essay and the outside reading list to be used for the formal essay. Teacher will go over assignment and suggest that students begin reading a book from the list.

15 minutes - Icebreaker - students will interview each other in pairs to determine personal interests; favorite movies, TV shows, books, school subjects; personality traits.

15 minutes - In groups of four, introduce partner to other group members, answer any questions about their partner and discuss similarities between their partner and self

10 minutes - Whole class discussion - What did you learn about the person that you did not know before? What did you find really interesting about your partner? What is one thing about your partner that would make them a good friend? (Have students call out this one trait in "popcorn style" and record all words

on board. After all students are finished, look over the words we have accumulated.)

Day Two

15 minutes - Complete friendship questionnaire:

Questionnaire

1. Describe your idea of what a friend should be and do.
2. List three qualities you think are the most important in a friend.
3. Think of two or three of your closest friends. You do not need to write their names down. What made you want to be their friend? What made them want to be your friend?
4. What activities do you share with your friends?
5. Do you tell your friends things you do not tell other people?
6. Why do you think it is or is not a good idea to tell your friends these things?
7. Do your friends do things that upset you or that you do not like?
8. Why don't you like it when they do these things?
9. Is it important for people to have friends?
10. Why do you or don't you think so?

15 minutes - Class discussion:

What makes a good friend?

What are some things a good friend does?

What types of things make people want to be friends with each other?

What types of things do friends do together?

What do people do that make it difficult to be their friend?

10 minutes - Teacher models journal entry in response to class discussion on friendship

10 minutes - Have students journal on their own in response to class discussion on friendship

Day Three

10 minutes - DOL

15 minutes - Friendship Scenario Activity - (Taken from Explorations: Introductory Activities for Literature and Composition, 7-12, Smagorinsky, McCann, Kern, 1987, p. 45).

Read a friendship scenario and discuss whether the person acted like a true friend - why? or why not? (See next page for example of scenario)

25 minutes - Get into groups and discuss scenarios - have rationale for decision

Day Four

20 minutes - Together as a class, discuss the group scenarios and rationales for decision - possible debate over decisions will take place

15 minutes - Model journal entry in response to one scenario - demonstrate split page journaling

15 minutes - Students journal in response to one scenario

Day Five

10 minutes - DOL

20 minutes - In a group, students come up with their own scenario "a difficult decision or situation with a friend"

20 minutes - Exchange with another group and decide if the person acted as a friend would- written rationale for decision turned in

WEEK TWO: Lesson 2 Short Stories

Lesson Goal: To have students use literature as a way to discuss the nature of friendship and how people deal with situations that may arise in a relationship of this nature.

Day One

10 minutes - Journaling - "Tell a story about something that happened to you this weekend and how you think it fits into our discussion of friendship"

20 - 25 minutes - Read "Raymond's Run" aloud to class. While reading, stop periodically to ask questions and model process of thinking about the plot progression and character development. When finished answer any questions about the story.

15 minutes - Brainstorm significant scenes or events in the story. Record them on the board. Have students form groups around the scene that they find most interesting. Groups should not exceed five members. Explain Storyboard activity that students will complete in class tomorrow. If time, have students begin forming ideas and working on preliminary sketches for their storyboard.

Day Two

10 minutes - DOL

5 - 10 minutes - Have students re-form their groups. Pass out materials for storyboard and answer any questions about the activity.

30 minutes - Students work on storyboard for their scene.

Day Three

20 minutes - Have groups present their storyboards to the class. As each group presents, talk about what this scene reveals about the characters involved and their relationships with other characters.

20 minutes - Talk more specifically about friendship issue:

How do we learn about Squeaky's personality? (look at her interactions with other characters, look at what other characters say about her, look at how she feels about other characters, etc.)

Does Squeaky seem to have any friends at the beginning of the story?

Do we see any changes in her character from the beginning to the end of the story? How does she grow and change during the story? Why do you think she feels or acts differently now?

Does this affect her view of friendship? How?

10 minutes - Journaling in response to short story:

Squeaky suggests that it is difficult for girls in our society to be "something honest and worthy of respect." Explain why you agree or disagree. If you do agree, does this make it difficult for girls to develop friendships? Boys will have the option of answering the following question instead: Do you think girls' friendships are different from those of boys? Base your answer on something you find in the story.

Homework: Read the short story "Amigo Brothers"

Day Four

10 minutes - DOL

5 minutes - Quiz - write a brief summary of the story.

10 minutes- Class Discussion of "Amigo Brothers" (Ideas for working with this short story were taken from Elements of Literature: first course, Annotated Teachers Edition, Eweler, M. (Ed.), 1997, p.T245-T256).

Have you ever competed against a good friend in a contest or sport? How, if at all, did this competition change your friendship? If you knew that two friends were going to compete against each other, what kinds of things would you advise them to do?

10 minutes- Group Activity: Have students create a list titled "Rules for competing against a friend."

15 minutes: Have groups share their lists with the rest of the class. Compare and contrast different rules and discuss the students' reasons for these rules.

Homework: Reflect on the "Rules for competing against a friend" that you and your classmates came up with in class. Do you feel that Felix and Antonio followed these "rules"? How/how not? Would you have acted the same or differently in their situation? Why/why not? Teacher will collect responses at beginning of class tomorrow.

Day Five

10 minutes- Journaling- Consider the following quotation from "Amigo Brothers": "They were so together in friendship that they felt themselves to be brothers. They had known each other since childhood..." Have you ever had a friendship like this? Do you know others who have these friendships? What are some possible benefits of a friendship that is "as close as brothers [or sisters]"? What are some possible problems or challenges in this type of friendship?

40 minutes- Group Activity: In groups of at least 3, students will take on one of 3-5 roles. They must, at least, have Felix, Antonio, and a sports writer. Remaining group members will take on the role of spectators at the fight. In these groups, the sports writer will interview other group members. The sports writer will be responsible for taking notes from these interviews. The notes will be used to compose a newspaper article for a local paper using the notes gathered from the interviews. These articles should cover the who, what, where, when and how and have a catchy headline.

WEEK THREE

Day One

20 minutes - Students will share their articles with the class and talk about how they chose to "record" the fight. What were the important parts that they wanted their readers to know about? Why did they consider these parts important?

20-30 minutes- The above discussion will evolve into a discussion of the ending of "Amigo Brothers" by introducing the following questions:

How did you react to the end of the story?

Why do you think both boys wish for an early knockout? What does this wish show about them and their feelings for each other?

Why do you think we are not told at the end of the story which friend won the fight?

Would you be able to walk away from a contest like this fight without finding out if you had won? Why/why not?

The last sentence refers to both boys as "champions"- In what sense are they both champions?

Did you find this story, particularly the ending, true to life?

Do you think that two good friends can fight each other and stay friends? Why/why not?

10 minutes - Have students practice pre-reading strategies with the story "A Mason Dixon Memory." As a class, we will consider the picture on the two pages before the text and the quotation on these pages. First, we will look at the photograph and discuss how we might describe this group of boys (a team, club, friends, etc.). We will talk about qualities that the students associate with a team or club. How are these qualities similar to friendships? Discuss the quotation on the title page: "If we leave, we forfeit this tournament. If we stay, Dondre can't play." What does this quotation suggest the conflict in the story will

be?

Homework: Read "A Mason Dixon Memory."

Day Two

10 minutes - DOL

(Activities and discussion questions for this work were taken from Elements of Literature: first course, Annotated Teachers Edition, Eveler, M. (Ed.), 1997, p.T206-T215).

5 minutes - Brief discussion of things we "really care about" - As a class come up with things/people we really care about or an event that we are really looking forward to.

15 minutes - Break into pairs and have each person talk about one thing they really care about personally and would hate to have to give up. Why is this possession/person/event so important? Have each person think about their partner's choice and imagine situations in which making "the right choice" could mean he/she would have to give up what they treasure most. Come up with "What if ..." questions such as "What if going to this party meant you would have to break a date with a friend who was not invited?"

20 minutes - Class discussion -

How did having to make the above choices make you feel?

How do you think Dondre's friends felt about having to choose between the tournament and his friendship?

Do Dondre's teammates have to think about the decision?

Why do you think they did not hesitate to choose Dondre over the tournament? What does this say about them as a team and as friends?

Why do you think Dondre is surprised that his friends give up the tournament so easily?

Has a friend ever stood by you and done "the right thing"? How did this make you feel? How do you think Dondre feels about his teammates after this?

Day Three

10 minutes - Journaling - Did reading this story make you think about or change the way you look at choices that might force you to give up something you value? If so, explain how and why?

20 minutes - Class discussion comparing the narrator's story with Dondre's:

Why do you think Dondre's story causes Clifton Davis (the narrator) to reflect on his past memories of friendship?

In what ways are Clifton Davis' friends like Dondre Green's teammates?

How are these two situations similar? How are they different?

Why do you think that Clifton is surprised that his friends want to give up the trip to the amusement park for him? How are his feelings similar to Dondre's?

How might their friends have benefited from the sacrifices they made for friendship?

The narrator says that there was "something even more important" than going to the amusement park or tournament. How would you explain what that "something" was?

What do Dondre and Clifton Davis' friends show them?

5 minutes- Discussion of external boundaries on friendship and how race in particular forced the friends in "A Mason Dixon Memory" to make difficult choices.

10 minutes- In groups of 1-5, come up with a list of other possible boundaries or obstacles that could make it difficult to be friends with someone (e.g.- class, age, gender, physical appearance, distance, parental disapproval, etc.).

5 minutes- As a class, discuss what the groups came up with.

Homework: Keeping the class discussion in mind, read "Nancy".

Day Four

10 minutes- DOL

5 minutes- Have class brainstorm important characters in the story "Nancy".

15 minutes- Have students form groups around these characters and create a character sketch of the character they choose. Students will describe the physical appearance of this character, where he/she lives, the economic background of this character, what they think is important to him/her, how they feel about his/her family, how their character views other characters in the story, and any other information they want to include about this character.

20 minutes- Have each group read their character sketch. Classmates can contribute any additional information or question the overall sketch. Using what we have learned about the characters:

Why do you think Nancy wanted to become friends with the family?

What are some of the things they do that she finds interesting?

Why does she find them so interesting?

What is the Grandmother's response when she finds Nancy in the house?

Why do you think she responds in this way?

Why does her Grandmother think Nancy does not belong there? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

What are the barriers or obstacles that stand between Nancy and the family?

Why do these things make it difficult for Nancy to be friends with the other children?

Do you think that Nancy has any other friends? Why or why not?

Day Five

10 minutes - Journaling - Pretend you are Nancy at the end of the story. Write a brief letter to the family telling them what you thought of the day you spent there and whether you would like to come back or not. Also, explain what might prevent you from being able to return.

15 minutes - Have students pair off and exchange letters with each other. Each person will respond to his/her partner's letter as if he/she was a member of the family. Make your letters brief and address the topics covered in the initial letter.

25 minutes - Have students volunteer to read their letter exchanges. Use these for a class discussion on the following:

Imagine a conversation between Nancy and her parents in which she asks them for permission to spend time with the family.

How might Nancy explain to her parents her reasons for wanting to spend time with the children in the other family?

What reasons might she give for them allowing her to see the others?

Why might her parents agree or disagree?

Could you think of a compromise between Nancy and her parents that would allow Nancy to see the family? Why or why not? What would the compromise be?

Have you ever had to "defend" your friends to your family?

What are some possible reasons for having to do this?

How might you handle this situation with your friend? With your parents?

Has this story helped you to think about ways of dealing with this type of situation? How or how not?

WEEK FOUR: Lesson 3 Children's Stories - Writing for different audiences

Lesson Goal: To have students realize that our audience influences the way in which we write and begin writing for a particular audience.

Day One

15 minutes - Journaling - Reflect back on the literature we have read thus far. Choose one short story and explain why it was significant for you.

20 minutes - Read one children's book aloud and talk about some general qualities.

15 minutes - Have students break into groups of 1-5. Students will read additional children's books and list specific qualities they notice while reading. They will also note any similarities to or differences from short stories we have read. One student will be responsible for recording ideas generated by the group. Collect at end of the period.

Day Two

10 minutes - DOL

25-30 minutes - Discuss group findings from previous day. Generate a list of specific qualities of children's books. Class discussion:

What are some "obvious" differences between children's books and young adult literature?

Look at sentence structure and other grammatical conventions. How do they compare to the short stories we have read?

Look at subject matter, plot and ending of the story. How do they compare with the short stories we have read?

Why do you think these differences exist?

10-15 minutes - Introduce children's book project. Explain the activity and the evaluation criteria. Answer any questions that come up. Discuss possible processes students could use to complete the activity, various ways to begin the process and different methods of organizing their ideas and specific tasks.

Homework: In journals, develop three to four potential stories for your children's book.

Day Three

5-10 minutes - Individually or in groups, students should develop a time-line for completion of their project. They should also divide responsibilities among members. Teacher will collect these at the end of the 10 minutes.

Remainder of the period - Students will share journal stories and choose one for their book. Students will begin working on a rough draft of their book. Teacher will circulate and answer any questions that may arise. Collect rough drafts at end of period.

Day Four

10 minutes - DOL - During this time teacher will pass back rough draft and speak with students/groups with specific questions, concerns or problems.

Remainder of period - Teacher will pass out materials. Students will begin to work on their children's book. Teacher will circulate.

Day Five

Entire period - Students will continue working on children's book.

Homework: Complete any unfinished portion of the children's book.

WEEK FIVE: Lesson 4 Book club format and novels

Lesson Goal: To encourage students to expand their discussion of friendship to include longer works of fiction and the issue of conflict resolution.

Day One

10 minutes - Journaling - Reflect on the children's book activity. Do you feel your group worked well together? How would you evaluate your contribution to the project?

40 minutes - Students will read their books aloud to the class. Class will vote on their two favorite books to be read to a Kindergarten class.

Homework: Students will fill out peer evaluation forms for group members.

Day Two

10 minutes - DOL

40 minutes - Read books to Kindergarten class at nearby elementary school.

Day Three

10 minutes - Journaling - What other audiences would read a story about friendship? What would be some characteristics of these books? Explain.

20 minutes - Debrief the children's book lesson.

Did you have fun writing a children's book? Why or why not?

What was it like reading your book in front of an audience?

For those who read in front of the Kindergarten class, how was this different from reading to your peers?

What are some things you learned from this lesson?

20 minutes - Introduce book club format for studying a novel. Talk about the different novels and have students choose one. Students reading the same novel will come together. Once everyone knows who is in their group, teacher will discuss general requirements of the project and how their presentations will be assessed.

Homework: Begin reading your novel. (We will assign a specific number of pages or chapters depending on the novel.)

Day Four

10 minutes - DOL

20 minutes - Silent reading of novels

20 minutes - Students will meet with their group, talk about what they have read up to this point. They should begin to form ideas about their presentations and divide responsibilities.

Homework: Read assigned number of pages or chapters.

Day Five

10 minutes - Journaling - Identify the characters involved in a friendship in the novel. Why do you think they are friends? What kinds of things do they do together? Does their friendship remind you of one of your own friendships?

20 minutes - Silent reading of the novel

20 minutes - Meet with group to talk about the novel and work on presentation.

Homework: Read assigned number of pages/chapters

WEEK SIX

Day One

10 minutes - Journaling - Choose a character from your novel. Identify characteristics of this person that may or may not make them a good friend. Would you want to be his/her friend? Explain.

20 minutes - Silent reading of the novel

20 minutes - Meet with group to talk about the novel and work on presentation.

Homework: Read assigned number of pages/chapters

Day Two

10 minutes - DOL

20 minutes - Silent reading of the novel

20 minutes - Meet with group to talk about the novel and work on presentation.

Homework: Read assigned number of pages/chapters

Day Three

10 minutes - Journaling- Did group members add anything to your understanding of this novel? Did group members have different ideas or questions about the novel? What did you think about these ideas?

40 minutes - Finish preparing group presentations

Day Four

10 minutes - DOL

Remainder of Period - Two group presentations of novels

Day Five

40 minutes- Two group presentations of novels

10 minutes- Teacher explains in-character writing and homework. Students may ask questions. If time

left over, they can begin their homework.

Homework - Pick a major character in the novel and an event that is significant to his/her friendship. Pretend that you are this character. Sit down and write an entry in "your" journal just after this event. From this character's perspective, talk about what just happened, what you are feeling and thinking and your reactions to the event.

WEEK SEVEN

Day One

10 minutes- Journaling- How did it feel to write a journal entry in the voice of someone else? Did you think that this was a hard assignment? Why/why not? Did you enjoy this assignment? Why/why not?

30 minutes - Have volunteers read their journal entries from the homework.

Discuss reasons that students chose particular characters and events.

What was the significance of the event?

How did it affect the friends in the novel?

What do classmates think about the events and characters chosen by others?

10 minutes - Prepare students for tomorrow's class discussion on The Nature of Friendship. Have students come up with some topics they would like to cover. Teacher will collect their questions and/or topics at the end of the period.

Day Two

10 minutes - DOL

10 minutes - Form book club groups and develop a definition of friendship as one of the characters in your book would define it.

20-30 minutes - Class discussion of the novels and The Nature of Friendship:

Examine what the groups came up with for definitions.

Revisit our class idea of what it means to be a good friend.

Do you feel the friendships in the novel would be considered good ones by our definition?

In what ways do the individual characters show that they are a good friend?

Are there ways in which they do not behave like a good friend?

Why do you feel the characters act this way?

How do other characters affect the friendship?

What purposes do these friendships serve for the people involved? How do they help each other through situations encountered in the novel?

Day Three

10 minutes - Journaling - What kinds of problems developed between the friends in the novel that you read? How were these problems dealt with by the characters?

20 minutes - Discussion of novels - Challenges to the Relationship:

(In today's discussion, we will encourage students to use their journal entries)

What, if anything, makes it difficult for these individuals to be friends?

What types of situations cause problems for the friends?

Does one of the friends experience a loss of some sort?

20 minutes - Group Activity - Have students form groups of 3 to 5 and come up with three or four possible conflicts they may encounter with a friend. They will record these conflicts and develop ways of resolving this conflict.

Day Four

10 minutes - DOL

20 minutes - Have students discuss the conflicts that their group came up with and the ways that they decided to resolve them. Have class discuss possible alternatives to group recommendations.

20 minutes - Have class continue with discussion of conflict and resolution and extend it to the novels.

How did the characters in the novels deal with the situations, problems they faced?

How did the characters resolve conflicts?

Why might they have been unable to do so?

What are some alternatives to the methods they used - the solutions they chose?

Do you think some of the unresolved situations could have been resolved?

How?

Day Five

20 minutes - Journaling - Reflect on a conflict that you have personally experienced with a friend, or create a conflict situation with a friend. Discuss the conflict and how you may be able to resolve the situation.

30 minutes - Debrief of Novels-

What are some similarities among and differences between the novels that we have read?

What do you think are some possible reasons for these similarities and differences?

What, if anything, do you think we can learn about friendship from the characters we have read about?

Do you think the characters and situations were realistic?

Did you find your self sympathizing with them or connecting with them in any way?

Could you understand their problems?

Could you have/have you had experiences like the ones we have read about in the novels?

Do you feel the short stories provided views of friendship similar to those in the novels?

Answer any final questions and or concerns the students may have about the unit.

Homework: Have students complete another friendship questionnaire (the same one completed for the introductory activity).

Questionnaire

1. Describe your idea of what a friend should be and do.
2. List three qualities you think are the most important in a friend.
3. Think of two or three of your closest friends. You do not need to write their names down. What made you want to be their friend? What made them want to be your friend?
3. What activities do you share with your friends?
4. Do you tell your friends things you do not tell other people?
5. Why do you think it is or is not a good idea to tell your friends these things?
6. Do your friends do things that upset you or that you do not like?
7. Why don't you like it when your friends do these things?
8. Is it important for people to have friends?
10. Why do you or don't you think so?

WEEK EIGHT

Day One

10 minutes - Journaling - Reflect on your friendship questionnaire. Are your answers different from those on your first one? Why do you feel they have or have not changed?

10 minutes- Class Discussion of friendship questionnaire. Ask students to discuss how their answers did or did not change throughout the unit. How do they feel the short stories, novels, etc. affected their responses? Do they feel differently about why friendships are important? What purpose do friends serve?

Remainder of the period - Teacher will re-introduce the end of the unit writing activity and go over specifics for the assignment. Teacher will pass out the actual assignment and answer any questions students may have. Students will then be given any time left to begin outlining or drafting their papers.

Homework: Begin a rough draft of the paper.

Day Two

Entire class period will be spent working on rough drafts of the paper.

Homework: Finish rough draft of the paper.

Day Three

Students will have two of their peers read and comment on the rough draft. Teacher will circulate and read drafts as time allows.

Teacher will collect rough drafts at the end of the period.

Day Four

Students will use the entire period to work on revisions of their paper. Teacher will circulate to answer any questions or read papers as requested.

Homework: Student will complete final draft.

Day Five

5 minutes - Teacher will collect papers at the beginning of class.

15 minutes - Students will read through all of their journal entries from the unit on friendship and produce a rough outline which will reflect what they have learned from each entry.

30 minutes - Final Journal entry: After looking through all journal entries, students will use their outlines to write a final synthesis entry, which will reflect on what they have learned from their experiences with journaling throughout the unit. To begin this final journal entry, students will be given the following topic: If you had to teach a unit or a class on friendship and how to make friends and maintain friendships, what activities might you include? Explain. What texts would you use? Explain. What would you want your students to learn about friendship?

At end of period, teacher will collect completed journal from the unit.

Friendship Unit

Journal Grading Criteria

- This assignment requires you to keep a journal throughout the unit on friendship.
- At the beginning of the unit, I will model entries based on both the literature and personal experiences. You should follow this format when writing your own entries.
- Throughout the unit, you will have the opportunity to share your entries with the class. This is not a requirement, and it will not affect your grade if you choose not to share.

- Please keep in mind that I will eventually be reading and grading these entries. Do not tell me anything that would be considered too personal to share with me.

Your journals should consist of the following:

- 1) Entries which are logged at least three times a week.
- 2) Each entry must be dated and consist of at least one page.
- 3) You should use the prompts given in class to guide your entries. Any additional entries can be free topics chosen by you.
- 4) Your journal should include entries discussing the text, entries reflecting on personal experiences with the topic of friendship and/or reflections on class discussion.

A grade of F will be given to journals that:

- 1) Are not turned in by the specified due date.
- 2) Are turned in on time but do not include the above requirements.

A grade of D will be given to journals that:

- 1) Are turned in on time.
- 2) Include the minimum requirements but do not meet minimum expectations:

The journal does not follow the format modeled at the beginning of the unit; does not discuss the given prompts; shows little or no effort to engage with the text or the unit theme.

- 3) Student has not used allotted class time for journaling.

A grade of C will be given to journals that:

- 1) Are turned in on time.
- 2) Include minimum requirements and meet minimum expectations for each requirement but:

The journal entries seem separate and disconnected; entries are difficult to read because of poor organization or poorly developed thoughts.

A grade of B will be given to journals that:

- 1) Are turned in on time.
- 2) Include minimum requirements, meet expectations for each requirement, consist of sufficiently developed entries that are easy to follow and understand, but:

The journal entries do not demonstrate sufficient engagement with the overall theme of friendship.

A grade of A will be given to journals that:

- 1) Are turned in on time.

2) Include minimum requirements, meet expectations for each requirement, consist of sufficiently developed entries that are easy to follow and understand, and demonstrate significant engagement with the unit theme of friendship.

Friendship Unit

Final Essay Grading Criteria

In your final essays, you are given one of two choices. You may either:

A) Write a creative narrative based on a response to some idea or incident from either the literature or your personal journal entries

OR

B) Use a novel that you choose to read outside of class and write an essay analyzing the experiences of the friends involved

For Choice A:

1) The writing should concern the theme of friendship.

2) The writing should involve two characters who:

a) are involved in a friendship

b) face challenges to their friendship which may include, but are not limited to, issues such as conflict, personal loss, illness, etc.

c) work to develop and maintain their friendship despite these struggles

d) reach some sort of resolution in the end concerning the future of their friendship

3) The writing should be consistent with regard to form, mechanics, usage, spelling, and punctuation that the writer chooses within the work.

4) A minimum of five typed (double-space) or hand written pages will be required.

5) You will have two class periods to prepare your narrative and exchange papers for peer feedback. This time is to be used wisely. All additional work will be done outside class.

A grade of F will be given to essays that:

1) Are turned in after the specified due date

2) Are turned in on time yet do not include the above minimum requirements

A grade of D will be given to essays that:

1) Are turned in on time

2) Include the minimum requirements, but do not meet minimum expectations such as:

The writing does not clearly include the theme of friendship; shows little or no understanding of

literature and/or journal entries from class; does not clearly include characters who face challenges in their friendship; does not show clear

development of plot, characters, or friendship; does not adequately show how the friends try to maintain friendship; is inconsistent throughout paper with regard to form, etc.

A grade of C will be given to essays that:

1) Are turned in on time

2) Include minimum requirements, meet minimum expectations for each requirement, show that the writer has read the literature and reflected on journal entries, and where:

The required sections/criteria of the essay are disconnected and seem unrelated; There is no logical flow from one sentence or paragraph in the essay to the next; Ideas and themes in the essay seem disconnected or unrelated; The overall theme is not consistent throughout the paper as a whole; Student does not demonstrate awareness of the process in writing and the final product- from starting with introductory paragraph to conclusion; student does not demonstrate that concepts/issues/terms discussed in class have informed the entire essay writing process.

A grade of B will be given to essays that:

1) Are turned in on time

2) Include minimum requirements, meet minimum expectations for each requirement, provide a clear and understandable essay that demonstrates an understanding of the flow in essay writing, are consistent with the same theme throughout the essay and where:

There is not enough detail throughout all of the minimum requirements to demonstrate to the reader's audience that the topic is exciting, intriguing,

and/or significant; There is not enough detail to show that the writer is actually engaged with the essay; There is not enough detail to allow the essay to be thorough or informative.

A grade of A will be given to essays that:

1) Are turned in on time

2) Include the minimum requirements; meet minimum expectations for each requirement; provide a clear and understandable essay that demonstrates an understanding of the flow in essay writing; are consistent with the same theme throughout the essay; demonstrate understanding and usage of class discussion, literature, and journal entries; include sufficient detail and reflection to convince the audience that the writer was fully involved and engaged in the writing process; provides an interesting narrative that captivates his/her audience.

Friendship Unit

Final Essay Grading Criteria

In your final essays, you are given one of two choices. You may either:

A) Write a creative narrative based on a response to some idea or incident from either the literature or your personal journal entries

OR

B) Use a novel that you choose to read outside of class and write an essay analyzing the experiences of the friends involved

For Choice B:

- 1) You must identify the factors that have led to the development of the friendship in the book.
- 2) You must identify the key incident or factor challenging the protagonist's relationship with his/her friend.
- 3) You must discuss and evaluate the character's process of resolving the challenge and determining the future of the friendship.
- 4) The essay must conform to generally accepted standards of grammar, form, mechanics, usage, spelling, and punctuation.
- 5) A minimum of five typed (double-space) or hand written pages will be required.
- 6) You will have two class periods to prepare your narrative and exchange papers for peer feedback. This time is to be used wisely. All additional work will be done outside class.

A grade of F will be given to essays that:

- 1) Are turned in after the specified due date
- 2) Are turned in on time yet do not include the above minimum requirements

A grade of D will be given to essays that:

- 1) Are turned in on time
- 2) Include the minimum requirements, but do not meet minimum expectations

such as:

The writing does not clearly identify the factors in the development of the friendship in the book; shows little or no effort to include excerpts or information from the novel; does not clearly indicate that the writer has actually read the novel; does not adequately or clearly identify the key incident/factor challenging the friendship in the novel; does not adequately or clearly identify the process of resolving the challenge and determining the future of the friendship; does not show clear understanding of the development of the plot, characters, or friendship; is inconsistent throughout paper with regard to grammar etc.

A grade of C will be given to essays that:

- 1) Are turned in on time
- 2) Include minimum requirements, meet minimum expectations for each requirement, show that the

writer has read the novel and where:

The required sections/criteria of the essay are disconnected and

seem unrelated; There is no logical flow from one sentence or paragraph in the essay to the next; Ideas, themes, and statements made in the essay seem disconnected or unrelated; The overall theme is not consistent throughout the paper as a whole; Student does not demonstrate awareness of the process in writing and the final product- from starting with introductory paragraph to conclusion; Student does not demonstrate that concepts/issues/terms discussed in class have informed the entire essay writing process.

A grade of B will be given to essays that:

1) Are turned in on time

2) Include minimum requirements, meet minimum expectations for each requirement, provide a clear and understandable essay that demonstrates an understanding of the flow in essay writing, are consistent with the same theme throughout the essay and where:

There is not enough detail throughout all of the minimum requirements to demonstrate to the reader's audience that the topic is exciting, intriguing, and/or significant; There is not enough detail to show that the writer is actually engaged with the essay or that s/he understands the essay; There is not enough detail to allow the essay to be thorough or informative.

A grade of A will be given to essays that:

1) Are turned in on time

2) Include the minimum requirements; meet minimum expectations for each requirement; provide a clear and understandable essay that demonstrates an understanding of the flow in essay writing; are consistent with the same theme throughout the essay; demonstrate understanding and usage of class discussion, literature, and the novel; include sufficient detail and reflection to convince the audience that the writer was fully involved and engaged in the writing process; provide an interesting essay that captivates the audience.

Friendship Unit

Children's Book Grading Criteria

- This assignment, as discussed in class, is to produce a children's book based on some idea or incident from the unit's short stories or poetry.
- For this assignment, remember the children's books that we discussed in class and the different qualities of children's books that we pointed out.
- You will each have a chance to read your book aloud to the rest of the class. Everyone will vote on their favorite books from each class. These are the books that will be read, by the author(s), in front of the Kindergarten class.
- Whether or not your book is chosen will not effect your grade.

Everyone will be expected to turn in the following minimum requirements:

- 1) This book should concern the theme of friendship.
- 2) You must adapt a specific incident or idea from the literature to fit the conventions of a children's book. Remember the examples that we discussed in class!
- 3) Language and illustrations used in the book should be modeled after age-appropriate examples that we have discussed in class.
- 4) Your book must have a title page and at least sixteen pages, divided evenly between text and illustrations.
- 5) The writing should be consistent with regard to form, mechanics, usage, spelling, and punctuation that the writer chooses within the work.
- 6) The degree of neatness, quality, and variety of the illustrations will affect your grade
- 7) You will have three class periods to prepare your books and to ask for teacher and peer feedback: this time is to be used wisely. Any unfinished work will be done outside class.

A grade of F will be given to books that:

- 1) Are turned in after the specified due date
- 2) Are turned in on time yet do not include the above minimum requirements

A grade of D will be given to books that:

- 1) Are turned in on time
- 2) Include the minimum requirements, but do not meet minimum expectations such as:

The writing does not clearly include the theme of friendship; shows little or no effort to include literature and/or discussions from class; does not clearly include an incident from the literature studied in class; language and illustrations are not age-appropriate according to criteria discussed in class; does not show clear development of the characters or friendship; pages are not evenly divided between text and illustrations (i.e.- 12 pages of illustration, 6 pages of text); is inconsistent throughout paper with regard to form, mechanics, etc.; does not exhibit neatness, quality, and variety.

A grade of C will be given to books that:

- 1) Are turned in on time
- 2) Include minimum requirements, meet minimum expectations for each requirement, show that the writer has read and reflected on the literature and on class discussions, and where:

The required sections/criteria of the book are disconnected and seem unrelated; The illustrations do not seem to match the text; There is no logical flow from one page in the book to the next; Ideas, themes, illustrations, and statements made in the book seem disconnected or unrelated; The overall theme and/or story line is not consistent throughout the book as a whole; Student does not demonstrate awareness of the process in writing and the final product- from introduction to conclusion; Student does not demonstrate that concepts/issues/terms discussed in class have informed the entire book writing process; Student does not demonstrate attention to or understanding of class discussion on writing for different audiences.

A grade of B will be given to books that:

- 1) Are turned in on time
- 2) Include minimum requirements, meet minimum expectations for each requirement, provide a clear and understandable book that demonstrates an understanding of the writing process and writing for different audiences, are consistent with the same theme and story-line throughout the book and where:

There is not enough detail throughout all of the minimum requirements to demonstrate to the reader's audience that the book is exciting, fun, and/or significant; There is not enough detail to show that the writer was actually engaged in work on the book; There is not enough detail to allow the book to be easily understood by others.

A grade of A will be given to books that:

- 1) Are turned in on time
- 2) Include the minimum requirements; meet minimum expectations for each requirement; provide a clear and understandable story line; follow the conventions of a children's story; are consistent with the same theme and story-line throughout the book; demonstrate understanding and usage of class discussion, literature, and children's books read aloud in class; include sufficient detail and reflection to convince the audience that the writer was fully involved and engaged in the writing process; provides an interesting story and illustrations that captivate the audience.

Questionnaire For Book Club Novel

Use another sheet of paper to answer the following questions about your book.

Title of Book:

Author of the Book:

Names of Main Characters:

Names of Any Other Characters You Would Like to Mention:

Where Does This Novel Take Place:

When Does This Novel Take Place:

How Would You Characterize This Book (Adventure, Comedy, Drama, Mystery, etc.):

Describe One Incident in the Book That We Absolutely Need to Know About:

Write One Comment That Each Group Member Made About the Book:

Student Handouts - These handouts will be given to students the day of or the day before discussion in class.

Student Handout - "Raymond's Run"

How do we learn about Squeaky's personality? (look at her interactions with other characters, look at what other characters say about her, look at how she feels about other characters, etc.)

Does Squeaky seem to have any friends at the beginning of the story?

Do we see any changes in her character from the beginning to the end of the story?

How does she grow and change during the story?

Why do you think she feels or acts differently now?

Does this affect her view of friendship? How?

Student Handout - "Amigo Brothers"

How did you react to the end of the story?

Why do you think both boys wish for an early knockout? What does this wish show about them and their feelings for each other?

Why do you think we are not told at the end of the story which friend won the fight?

Would you be able to walk away from a contest like this fight without finding out if you had won? Why/why not?

The last sentence refers to both boys as "champions"- In what sense are they both champions?

Did you find this story, particularly the ending, true to life?

Do you think that two good friends can compete with each other and stay friends? Why/why not?

Student Handout - "A Mason Dixon Memory"

How do you think Dondre's friends felt about having to choose between the tournament and his friendship?

Do Dondre's teammates have to think about the decision?

Why do you think they did not hesitate to choose Dondre over the tournament? What does this say about them as a team and as friends?

Why do you think Dondre is surprised that his friends give up the tournament so easily?

Has a friend ever stood by you and done "the right thing"? How did this make you feel?

How do you think Dondre feels about his teammates after this?

Why do you think Dondre's story causes Clifton Davis (the narrator) to reflect on his past memories of friendship?

In what ways are Clifton Davis' friends like Dondre Green's teammates?

How are these two situations similar? How are they different?

Why do you think that Clifton is surprised that his friends want to give up the trip to the amusement park for him? How are his feelings similar to Dondre's?

How might their friends have benefited from the sacrifices they made for friendship?

The narrator says that there was "something even more important" than going to the amusement park or tournament. How would you explain what that "something" was?

What do Dondre and Clifton Davis' friends show them?

Student Handout - "Nancy"

Why do you think Nancy wanted to become friends with the family?

What are some of the things they do that she finds interesting?

Why does she find them so interesting?

What is the Grandmother's response when she finds Nancy in the house?

Why do you think she responds in this way?

Why does her Grandmother think Nancy does not belong there? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

What are the barriers or obstacles that stand between Nancy and the family?

Why do these things make it difficult for Nancy to be friends with the other children?

Do you think that Nancy has any other friends? Why or why not?

Imagine a conversation between Nancy and her parents in which she asks them for permission to spend time with the other family.

How might Nancy explain to her parents her reasons for wanting to spend time with the children in the other family?

What reasons might she give for them allowing her to see the others?

Why might her parents agree or disagree?

Could you think of a compromise between Nancy and her parents that would allow Nancy to see the family? Why or why not?

What would the compromise be?

Have you ever had to "defend" your friends to your family?

What are some possible reasons for having to do this?

How might you handle this situation with your friend? With your parents?

Has this story helped you to think about ways of dealing with this type of situation? How or how not?

Student Handout - The Nature of Friendship

Revisit our class idea of what it means to be a good friend.

Do you feel the friendships in the novel would be considered good ones by our definition?

In what ways do the individual characters show that they are a good friend?

Are there ways in which they do not behave like a good friend?

Why do you feel the characters act this way?

How do other characters affect the friendship?

What purposes do these friendships serve for the people involved?

How do they help each other through situations encountered in the novel?

Student Handout - End of the Novel Debriefing

What are some similarities among and differences between the novels that we have read?

What do you think are some possible reasons for these similarities and differences?

What, if anything, do you think we can learn about friendship from the characters we have read about?

Do you think the characters and situations were realistic?

Did you find your self sympathizing with them or connecting with them in any way?

Could you understand their problems?

Could you have/have you had experiences like the ones we have read about in the novels?

Do you feel the short stories provided views of friendship similar to those in the novels?

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