Portrait of the Whole Person
Lesson 4: Researching and Writing the Biographical Sketch and Creating the Portrait

MATERIALS
• Students can utilize any research resources including:
  • Access to the Internet (using appropriate filters to conduct online research). Examples of online resources include:
    • Gale Kids InfoBits (requires paid subscription)
    • PebbleGo (requires paid subscription)
    • World Book Online (requires paid subscription)
    • BrainPop (requires paid subscription)
    • Library of Congress: Meet Amazing Americans
    • Ducksters Biographies for Kids
    • SweetSearch Biographies (select United States from the left side of the page)
    • Biography.com

OBJECTIVES
• Students will enhance research skills.
• Students will improve writing skills and ability to write a biographical sketch.
• Students will improve mechanics of writing including proper spelling and punctuation.
• Students will learn about the skills or accomplishments of an individual without focus on the person's disability and will work to focus on respect rather than concepts of pity.

TEACHING TOOLS
(provided as separate documents)
• RUBRIC 1: Review of the Biographical Sketch
• RUBRIC 2: Students Increased Knowledge
• RUBRIC 3: Creation of the Portrait
• Graphic Organizer
• List of Potential Individuals
• Survey: teachers provide feedback to Disability Rights Washington
• Powerpoint

ESTIMATED INSTRUCTION TIME:
Two 45 minute blocks to introduce graphic organizer, how to take notes, provide research guidance and make individual assignments. Three to six 45 minute blocks for students to research and write their biographical sketches. Two to three 45 minute blocks for the teacher to provide instruction for the portrait and the students to create their portraits.
VOCABULARY

- Pity\(^1\) - noun
  - sympathetic sorrow for one suffering, distressed, or unhappy
  - something to be regretted
- Respect\(^2\) – noun
  - a feeling of admiring someone or something that is good, valuable, important, etc.
  - a feeling or understanding that someone or something is important, serious, etc., and should
- Perception\(^3\) - noun
  - the way you think about or understand someone or something
- Stigma\(^4\) – noun
  - a set of negative and often unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something


WASHINGTON STATE LEARNING STANDARDS AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Washington State Superintendent DA Policy 3226 Required Observances (includes Disability History Month); Policy 3227, Disability History Month.

Common Core State Standards, English Language Arts Standards:

- Anchor 3, Creating: Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work; Performance Standard Va:Cr3.1.4, Revise artwork in progress on the basis of insights gained through peer discussion.

- Benchmark 4A – Demonstrates awareness of other people’s emotions, perspectives, cultures, language, history, identity, and ability.
- Benchmark 4B – Demonstrates an awareness and respect for one’s similarities and differences with others.
- Benchmark 4C – Demonstrates an understanding of the social norms of individual cultures.
PROCEDURE

1. **The teacher provides instruction on the goal of the assignment:** to learn about an individual and be able to see the whole person, rather than focus on the disability.

2. **The teacher moves to the SLIDE 16: “What is the Whole Person Project?”** (Slide attached below). The teacher reads the slide.

3. **The teacher then moves to SLIDE 17: “Your research projects: Seeing the Whole Person.”** (Slide attached below). The teacher reads the slide to explain what the student will be thinking about when researching and writing about the individual.

4. **Assignment:** The teacher will assign the individuals to be researched to the students. The teacher has a few options for assigning individuals to research. The teacher can provide the list of individuals to the students and allow them to select a person to research; the teacher can assign each student a person to research; or the teacher can offer ideas of people to research and allow students to identify a different person to research.

5. **Research Guidance:** The teacher directs the students in conducting the research by completing the following steps.

   - The teacher should consider the universe of research when assigning individuals. Internet research may be unreliable or contain information that is not appropriate for the students. For example, co-occurring conditions along with particular behaviors exist that may not be appropriate for students such as self-harm and substance abuse. The teacher may choose to limit the universe of individuals to research to those who have information about them in specific books including, but not limited to, the Encyclopedia of American Disability History and online resources including, but not limited to, “Disability Employment Awareness Month,” Library of Congress, accessed at https://www.loc.gov/disabilityawareness/people/.
a. Distribute the graphic organizer. Explain to students that they will research a successful individual who also has a disability and then draft a biographical sketch of the individual. When researching and writing, children should avoid concepts of pity and seek language and views based in respect. Each student should be able to answer:
   i. What is the person known for? Why is the person successful?
   ii. What is the person’s disability(s)? Was the person born with the disability or did they acquire it? Consider how the disability impacted the individual:
      1. Did it lead them to a new activity?
      2. Did it help them see things differently?
      3. Did it create a new passion for them?
      4. Did it relate to their success at all?
      5. Did they work harder to achieve success?
   iii. How can society change or be changed to make the person’s condition less of a “disability” (change perceptions or stigma, physical accessibility, protection of civil rights)?

6. Guidance during Research and Writing: The teacher provides guidance to each child researching and writing the biographical sketches. Instructions include
   a. Give students specific internet sites or resources to use including those listed above under resources before the students conduct a general web search.
   b. Give students specific topics to be looking for (early life, family life, accomplishments, barriers, interesting facts, ect.).
   c. Give students a graphic organizer to record their findings. A sample graphic organizer is provided with this curriculum.
   d. Teach or review note-taking and paraphrasing skills before they begin their research. The teacher instructs the students to take notes on their research, but to be careful to put their notes in their own words.
   e. Tip: It is helpful to research one person together as a class to demonstrate these skills and then have them work in groups or pairs to try these skills semi-independently before working on their own. Model search terms before having the students work independently. This helps students to devise effective terms to broaden or narrow a search and then evaluate the resources for reliability.
   f. The teacher will give the students “RUBRIC 1: REVIEW OF THE BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH” to ensure each biographical sketch has been proofread for spelling, grammar, punctuation, respectful language, and the removal of concepts of pity. The teacher will help each child prepare the final version of the biographical sketch.
7. **Creation of the Portrait:** The teacher or art teacher will instruct the students on creation of a portrait. Each student will use the internet or books to identify an image or images to use. The teacher or art teacher will provide instruction on how to create a portrait. The teacher will give the students “RUBRIC 3: CREATION OF THE PORTRAIT” for the students to reflect on their project. During the creation of the portrait, the teacher will create an opportunity for peer to peer feedback. The students will be offered an opportunity to revise their portrait in response to the feedback, but only if the student agrees with the feedback and feels it is appropriate.

8. **Displaying the Biographical Sketch and Artwork:** The teacher and/or art teacher will identify a place and time for displaying the art work together with the biographical sketches for others to see. Teachers may choose to display the art work in the hallways of the school, in a school or public library, in the classroom, or in another all-school public space. The preferred location offers an opportunity for individuals outside the class to learn about the project and share in the students’ experience.

9. **Assessing efficacy of the curriculum:** The teacher will provide each student with “RUBRIC 2: STUDENT’S INCREASED KNOWLEDGE.” The students and teachers will complete this to measure the efficacy of the curriculum.

10. **Examples of Other Student Work:** Examples of past work along with a summary of the project may be found on Disability Rights Washington’s website accessed at http://www.disabilityrightswa.org/disability-awareness-portrait-whole-person
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Lesson Four
SLIDE 16: “What is the Whole Person Project?”

What is the Whole Person Project?

You will learn about a person who is successful and who has a disability through research, writing, and art. Here are the five easy steps:

1. Select an individual who is successful who also has a disability.
2. Research the individual’s life.
3. Write a one page description of the person.
4. Create a portrait of the person.
5. The class hosts a show for others to see the portraits and one page descriptions.

SLIDE 17: “Your research projects: Seeing the Whole Person”

Your Research Projects: Seeing the Whole Person

- Consider how the disability impacted the individual:
  1. Did it lead them to a new activity?
  2. Did it help them see things differently?
  3. Did it create a new passion for them?
  4. Did it relate to their success at all?
  5. Did they work harder to achieve success?
- Consider how society can change to make the person’s condition less of a “disability” (perceptions, access, rights)
- Edit your work and make sure to show respect instead of pity.