

Alicia: My Story

Lesson Plan for Chapter 15

“The Bitter Winter of 1943”

TITLE: FAITH AND HOPE: LIKE FOOD FOR THE SOUL

*“‘I am so tired, Mama,’ I said wearily. ‘Sometimes I feel this will never end.’
‘It will one day. Everything that had a beginning must have an end. Besides, we must have faith. Our people have always had faith. This is what sustained us for generations: our faith and our hope.’”
(Appleman-Jurman, 1988, p. 202)*

*“In spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart.”
Anne Frank*

RATIONALE:

In this lesson, students will examine the role that faith and hope played in surviving the Holocaust. This will be from both internal and external forces, such as religion, family, and civilian aid givers. It is intended that students will take away a message about persistence bolstered by hope and faith in the face of many struggles, as well as the role that an individual can play in providing strength and support for others experiencing struggles.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVE(S):

Students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast Alicia’s experiences with civilian aid givers with those of survivors as presented through testimony.
- Compose a journal entry discussing the role of faith and hope in their own experiences.
- Analyze the efforts of civilian aid givers during the Holocaust as well as the impacts, both physical and emotional, of those efforts.

NEXT GENERATION SUNSHINE STATE STANDARD(S):

LA.7.1.7.3

The student will determine the main idea or essential message in grade-level or higher texts through inferring, paraphrasing, summarizing, and identifying relevant details.

LA.7.2.2.2

The student will use information from the text to state the main idea and/or provide relevant details.

LA.7.3.2.2

The student will draft writing by organizing information into a logical sequence and combining or deleting sentences to enhance clarity.

SS.7.C.2.14

Conduct a service project to further the public good.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARD(S):

LACC.7.RI.1.1

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

LACC.7.RI.3.9

Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE LESSON:

- Appleman-Jurman, A. (1988). "The Bitter Winter of 1943". In *Alicia: My story*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Journal prompt: *Alicia's mother says that faith and hope have sustained their people for generations. To you, what is faith? What is hope? How do faith and hope help you, or people around you, get through tough times?*
- Content lesson materials (IWitness video of Esther Bem)
<http://sfi.usc.edu/content/esther-bem-0>
- Critical thinking questions for conclusion

PREPARATIONS:

- Students should be assigned to read chapter 15 prior to this class period.
- Cue up the IWitness video of Esther Bem: <http://sfi.usc.edu/content/esther-bem-0>. Because two time segments are to be shown, having two separate tabs or windows ready to go at the correct time mark would be most helpful.
- Desk arrangement is to the teacher's preference. This lesson can include peer collaboration in the form of Turn and Talk or Think-Pair-Share, so arranging desks to benefit that may be done.
- For students who need accommodations, provide an outline or study guide for the chapter.
- Provide the journal prompt &/or critical thinking questions ahead of time to ESE / ELL students who need extra time to read and consider them.

INTRODUCTION:

- (1) Students will complete an initial bell work assignment to provide them with a task to work on immediately upon entering the classroom. This bell work will consist of the student producing a summary of the chapter or a concise list of key events from the chapter, which should have been read prior to coming to class.
- (2) The teacher will select a few students to share their summaries or lists and discuss in a whole group format some of the key events that took place. The idea is to ensure that students understand the progression of the novel as well as any character development.
- (3) Students will then be asked to re-read a brief excerpt from the chapter, beginning on page 197 with the third full paragraph. Students will read from here to the page break on page 202, ending with the dialogue between Alicia and her mother.
- (4) After reading this excerpt, students will be asked to respond through journal writing to the following prompt:
Alicia's mother says that faith and hope have sustained their people for generations. To you, what is faith? What is hope? How do faith and hope help you, or people around you, get through tough times?

This activity will serve to introduce the concepts of faith and hope, and focus students on the lesson.

PROCEDURES:

Bell Work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display a bell work assignment for students to begin upon entering the classroom. Possibilities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Please write a brief, one paragraph summary of chapter 15 of <i>Alicia: My Story</i>.” - “Please create a list with the key events from chapter 15.” 2. Allow 5-8 minutes for students to complete their work. 3. When time is up, select 2-5 students to share their responses (number can vary depending on whether students composed full summaries or lists). 4. Discuss the events that are mentioned to ensure that students understand the progression of the chapter and its characters.
Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instruct students to re-read pages 197-202 of chapter 15, starting with the third full paragraph (“It was while...”) and ending at the page break on page 202. 2. After the students have re-read, read this quote from Alicia’s mother aloud: “<i>Everything that had a beginning must have an end. Besides, we must have faith. Our people have always had faith. This is what sustained us for generations: our faith and our hope.</i>” Tell students that, clearly, Alicia’s mother values faith and hope, and views them as necessary for survival. Now, they will consider what faith and hope mean to them. 3. Instruct students to read the journal prompt as displayed or found in front of them: “<i>Alicia’s mother says that faith and hope have sustained their people for generations. To you, what is faith? What is hope? How do faith and hope help you, or people around you, get through tough times?</i>” 4. Allow students 10-20 minutes to respond to the prompt in relaxed journal form.
Content Presentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show the IWitness video testimony of survivor Esther Bem, from 00:48:28 to 00:52:28 and 01:32:47 to 01:34:47. Have students take notes while viewing to record key ideas from her testimony, including her emotional reaction to the aid she received. 2. After viewing, allow a few minutes for students to Turn and Talk to share their notes and reactions to the testimony. 3. In a whole group discussion, talk about Alicia’s story as compared to Esther’s and the role of faith and hope in their experiences.
Closure: Critical Thinking Questions	<p>Aside from the obvious, why did these people help Alicia and the other survivors?</p> <p>Aside from the obvious, how did the actions of these helpers benefit Alicia and the other survivors?</p> <p>Based on Alicia’s experience and the testimonies you have heard, what is faith? Hope?</p>

CLOSURE:

Students will answer critical thinking questions requiring them to synthesize the material presented in *Alicia: My Story*, their journal response, and the content presentation.

ASSESSMENT:

Students will write an extended response to a prompt asking them to compare and contrast the experiences of Alicia and other survivors who experienced help and aid from civilians.

EXTENSIONS/MODIFICATIONS FOR DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION:

- ESE/ELL: Students can be provided with an outline or study guide of the chapter as well as the questions and writing prompts ahead of time. Students can also receive a modified version of the assessment question asking them to compare *or* contrast the experiences of Alicia and other survivors (shortened length requirement, as well).
- Gifted: Students can be assigned a research assignment to discover other ways in which civilians have come to the aid of victims of genocide, war aggressions, and other inhumanities carried out by governments, dictatorships, coups, rebel/insurgent groups, and so on.
- For students motivated by the sacrifices of the civilian aid givers, arrange for service learning projects or other ways for students to give back to their communities. Show them GenerationOn (<http://www.generationon.org/>) and DoSomething.org (<https://www.dosomething.org/>).

REFERENCES:

Appleman-Jurman, A. (1988). "The Bitter Winter of 1943". In *Alicia: My story*. New York: Bantam Books.

Esther Bem, Interview Code: 753. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation. Retrieved March 25, 2015, from <http://sfi.usc.edu/content/esther-bem-0>