
Literature Selection: *My Friend Jacob* by Lucille Clifton

Summary

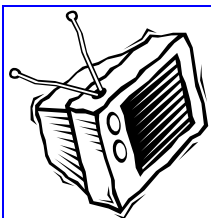
Seventeen-year-old Jacob has difficulties that other children do not have but eight-year-old Sam thinks he is the best friend in the world.

Suggested Activities

- Webbing -- Qualities We Look For in Friends
- Commercial Advertisements for Friends
- Journal Entries -- Another Point of View
- Other Titles

Webbing

On the following page is a web template for this activity. Individually, students create main web categories to place in the circles and then they web the concepts out on the spokes. Once the students have finished their webs, discuss them as a class to learn about the variety of qualities and characteristics that the students look for in a friend. Students should add to their individual webs during the discussion. Discuss what types of people have the qualities that were webbed -- it is possible for all people, despite differences in appearances, skin color, or weight to have these desirable qualities? If children talk about friends that must be able to run and play, discuss the modifications that they can make to their play to include disabled friends.

Commercial Advertisements for Friends

Following the webbing activity, students will be aware of many qualities that are found in good friends. Show them examples of different types of commercials (radio and TV) and then have them create their own commercials advertising for friends. What qualities are they looking for? This activity forces them to make a personal definition of a good friend. Students can tape their commercials to play in front of the class or they can perform the commercial in front of the class. You may want to consider making a mock TV with a large cardboard box. Put students in pairs or small groups for this activity. Encourage the use of props, music and instruments for sound effects. If your school has a video camera, try it out!

Journal Entries -- Another Point of View

Sometimes children are mean to other children because they have failed to consider the other child's point of view. Have students write how they would feel if they were teased just because they were different. Also, encourage children to write about times when they might have picked on another child because he or she was different and why they realize they were wrong to do so. Let the students share their responses.

Other Titles

Following the reading of the literature selection, have students make up a new title for the story. Students should present their titles to the class and state why they think that their new title is appropriate for the story.

Additional Literature Suggestions

***A Very Special Friend* by Dorothy Hoffman Levi**

A little girl is searching for a friend and when she meets a deaf girl she learns a lot about her self and others.

***Arnie and the New Kid* by Nancy Carlson**

Philip comes to school in a wheelchair and Arnie teases him mercilessly. When Arnie breaks his leg and must use crutches, Philip helps him maneuver around the school. Arnie discovers that Philip is a lot of fun to play with even if he cannot run and play baseball.

Qualities and Characteristics of Good Friends -- Webbing Activity

