

Session 11
Violence in the Nation

Goals

- To help students to explore ways of dealing with violence in our nation.
- To help students to consider the unsung heroes in the face of horrific tragedy.

Materials

Activity 1
Activity 2
Activity 3

Procedure

Greet the students. Wait until the students are seated and quiet. Briefly describe the goals of today's lesson. Reintroduce yourself to the students if necessary.

Script

We have a right as citizens to fight for justice and equality. However our individual rights should not infringe upon the rights of others. Often times, violence is an expression of extreme discontent. We must all learn to express ourselves in more effective ways. Music and writing can be powerful forms of expression. Helping others and celebrating those who risk there lives on our behalf are also constructive ways of handling tragedy.

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Activity 1: Jena 6

When the genre of HipHop/Rap music first began it was used to address social issues in the black community. Recent events in Jena, Louisiana have drawn the attention of the nation. The issues of justice and equality for all keep coming up again and again. In an effort to bring the world's attention to this situation Jasiri X created the Rap song below. Read the lyrics. Does this song tell a story? Write about the feelings that come up after reading the lyrics. Do you need to hear the music to understand the artist's message? What questions arise after reading the lyrics to the song? Write a review of Jasiri X's song Jena 6. Tell him what you think of his expression of what is happening in Jena, Louisiana.

Activity 2: Stereotypes

Jisu Yoo is a 14 year old middle school student. Below is a post he made directly following the Virginia Tech massacre. Read Jisu Yoo's post. Do you agree with his post? Do you believe everyone plays a part in trying to prevent violent events like what happened at Virginia Tech? Get in groups of 3 or 4 and develop a way that school administration can be notified of potential problem students.

Activity 3: Heroes in Tragedy

Do you know someone who has been a hero during trying times? In many instances of tragedies there are unsung heroes who put themselves in harms way in order to save lives. In our grief, we sometimes forget to be grateful for them. Read the article below.

Can you suggest 3 thoughtful and creative ways to memorialize brave heroes in the face of tragedy?

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Activity 4: Virginia Hero

Viola Baskerville (born October 29, 1951) is currently Secretary of Administration in the Cabinet of Virginia Governor Tim Kaine.

She was born in Richmond, Virginia. Her educational background includes a B.A. from the College of William and Mary earned in 1973, and a law degree from the University of Iowa earned in 1979. Furthermore she also studied abroad on a Fulbright Fellowship in Bonn, Germany.

Prior to her appointment as Secretary of Administration, she served on the Richmond City Council from 1994 to 1997, including a stint as the city's Vice Mayor under then-Mayor Tim Kaine. Following her tenure as Vice Mayor, she was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates, serving from 1998 to 2005. In 2005, she became the first African-American woman to seek the Democratic Party nomination for Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, coming in second place in the four-way primary behind State Senator Leslie L. Byrne, but ahead of State Delegate Chap Petersen, and State Senator Phil Puckett. Following the 2005 general election, she served as Co-chair of Governor Kaine's Transition Team.

Activity 5: Teen Health and Safety

Studies show that people who binge-drink throughout high school are more likely to be overweight and have high blood pressure by the time they are 24. Just one regular beer contains about 150 calories, which adds up to a lot of calories if someone drinks four or five beers a night.

Alcohol poisoning is the most life-threatening consequence of binge drinking. When someone drinks too much and gets alcohol poisoning, it affects the body's involuntary reflexes – including breathing and the gag reflex. If the gag reflex isn't working properly, a person can choke to death on his or her vomit. Other signs someone may have alcohol poisoning include: extreme confusion, inability to be awakened, vomiting, seizures, slow or irregular breathing, low body temperature, and/or bluish or pale skin.

If you think someone has alcohol poisoning, call 911 immediately.