

“Death with Dignity? (Later Lesson)”

- I. Content: Describe **what** it is you will teach. What is the content?

The lesson today allows students to think critically about issues of suffering animals, and by extension, suffering people. We are examining the section with Candy’s dog (pages 44-49), and whether people have the right to determine what needs to be removed from suffering.

- II. Learning Goal(s): Describe what specifically students will **know** and **be able to do** after the experience of this class.

Students will use textual evidence to support their stance on the episode with Candy’s dog, whether they agree or disagree with how it was handled. They will take their own stance and apply it to people drawing on some provided sources of evidence.

- III. Rationale: Explain how the content and learning goal(s) relate to your Curriculum Unit Plan learning goals.

“Death with dignity” initiatives are becoming more frequent as society grapples with the essential question above. Most people will know a family member, friend, or even pet who was at one point very sick or very old. We’ll put ourselves in a position to empathize.

- IV. Assessment: Describe **how** you and your students will know they have reached your learning goals.

Today is formative assessment based on the discussion. I will also require the inner circle to all speak at least three times and each cite one quote from the book while requiring the outer circle to respond to the inner circle.

- V. Personalization and equity: Describe how you will provide for individual student strengths and needs. How will you and your lesson consider the needs of each student and scaffold learning? How specifically will ELL students and students with learning disabilities gain access and be supported?

This lesson begins with a low-stakes writing assignment that can be informed by the novella, but does not inherently require it. This aims to get all students involved in a topic that is relevant to their lives and to the story moving forward.

I will create several versions of the “Question #2” sheet; some students will be able to access the original text. For those who will not—some IEP and ELL students—I will adapt the text to provide the key points. Giving students the chance to read the text individually will decrease the likelihood of a stigma of people who see some students with different versions of the same text.

The Socratic seminar portion will enable about ten students to enter the inner circle who are feeling confident about their reading of “Question #2” and *Of Mice and Men*. Students inhabiting the outer circle will get the chance to listen and respond, though their work is lower-stakes. In the end, all students get the chance to participate, read, and think. My IEP students who need modifications will get that with the text provided and the structure of the seminar. All

students will be able to engage at a level appropriate for them to also learn and be pushed to think in new ways.

VI. Activity description and agenda

- a. Describe the activities that will help your students understand the content of your class lesson by creating an agenda with time frames for your class. Be prepared to explain why you think each activity will help students on the path toward understanding.

0:00-0:05	Writing activity: "If an animal is suffering, should it be killed? What about people? How do you know when animals or people are actually suffering?"
0:05-0:10	Students will have read pages 44-49 for homework. One student will provide a summary of the reading.
0:10-0:20	Students will now review the 2012 Massachusetts Initiative Question #2 on "Death with Dignity" to see how the issue in a modern one.
0:20-0:50	Socratic seminar; inner circle takes up the issue of death with dignity while the outer circle listens and adds comment at the end. Some suggested questions will be provided as access points, including "Was it right to kill Candy's dog?" "Should Candy have done it himself?" and "What would be your vote for Question #2?"
0:50-0:52	Debrief as time allows. Assign next reading.

- b. What particular challenges, in terms of student learning or implementing planned activity, do you anticipate and how will you address them?

Students probably will have some difficulty with the topic, since it is a very sensitive one. I do not want to shy away from a topic just because it is potentially unsettling. If a student truly has an issue with the topic, we can arrange to find the student something to write about on their own. I can also envision students becoming very wrapped up in the issue in life and not in the book. I will interject myself when the conversation goes too far into life. Also, as part of the assessment, I will require students to bring in at least one textual example.

VII. List the Massachusetts Learning Standards this lesson addresses.

RL.9-10.2 | Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

SL.9-10.4 | Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.