Who Moved My Cheese? For Teens

WebQuest Description: Students read, discuss, and write about Who Moved My Cheese? for Teens by Spencer Johnson, M.D., a parable about life's changes, and how best to benefit from them. By reading the parable, students will learn ways to react positively to inevitable change, and gain insight into their personal decision-making processes regarding changes in their lives, now and in the future.

Grade Level: 9-12
Curriculum: English / Language Arts
Keywords: Changes
Published On: 2012-06-19 13:34:12
Last Modified: 2012-06-23 22:30:45
WebQuest URL: http://zunal.com/webquest.php?w=155763

Introduction

The story is told in parable form and based on Haw's discoveries as he enters into the maze looking for more cheese. There are four characters, two mice (Sniff & Scurry) and two little people (Hem & Haw) and they are all searching through a maze for cheese. The mice, Sniff who sniffs out change early before others are aware of it; Scurry sees what is needed and who acts immediately and the two Little People; Hem who denies and also resists change as he fears it may become worse and Haw who learns to adapt to change and acknowledges that it will lead to something better in his life. The mice possessed simple brains and good instincts, and the little people have more complex brains filled with many beliefs and emotions. Haw's first discoveries was if you do not change you can become extinct. He then contemplates what he would do if he was not afraid. As he is wondering around the maze he wonders if he has bit off more than he can chew but then it dawns on him he was not chewing on anything anyway. Change happens whether we like it or not and the parable deals with how change is handled.

Tasks

Students' will: Learn new vocabulary, and use it in their speaking and writing; understand what a parable is and be able to give examples of other parables in literature; explain what an idiomatic expression and be challenged to use them in their writing, and reflect upon the changes in their lives through journal entries and other writing assignments; adapt to change and win by learning from the four characters in the story; talk and write about their personal experiences and reactions to life changing events.

Process

Summary Sheet of Characters, Discussion Questions, Pre-Introduction, GraphicOrganizers, Vocabulary, and Unit Introduction 1.

Introduction- Day 1 (15-minutes):

Unit Introduction: Teacher will read "A Gathering" to the class, which provides a backdrop for "Who Moved My Cheese". Students are presented with a group of high school friends who has just found out that they are going to experience a change at school. List vocabulary words and definitions encountered during the reading. Sheets of paper will be divided into four sections with a block of cheese drawn, as students are listening to the story they will write down sayings that are on the wall.

Pre-Introduction Vocabulary of proverb, parable, parody and teacher mini lesson of examples of above vocabulary. Students will use this knowledge to complete the anticipation guide. 2. Present Information – Day 1 (30 minutes): The video "Who Moved My Cheese" will build upon and tap into students prior knowledge, generate questions, and anticipate assumptions. Ampie time will be given to the class in order for students to discuss book/video and characters. Discussions will be centered on the group of high school friends and the changes taking place in their lives. The class will also identify the terms parable, metaphor, symbol, and fable using the Graphic Organizer. What does the block of cheese represent in connection to the title of the book? Organize students into study teams – Day 3 (20 minutes): Students will be organized into groups of 4 before watching the 13 minute video on “Who Moved My Cheese”. Students will take a 3x5 index card out of the bag with a question pertaining to the meaning of the story, answer the question, and share their response.

Students will use the critical vocabulary lists as needed, each student will fill out the Summary Sheet of Characters, and use the critical vocabulary to reflect in their journal, concerning a change that they had no control over and how they felt about it. 4. Assist Teamwork and Study - Day 3 (45 minutes): Students will assume the identity of one of book's character (assign each student with a role). Students' will review one Change Event and react in the role of their assigned character. Each group will discuss whether each reaction was true to the character, and the Summary Sheet of Characters can be used for this activity. Students make "Handwriting On the Wall" slogan posters and hang them in the classroom. Students return to Day 2 worksheet and discuss the question, "Would you have reacted differently to your life's changes if you had read this book before those changes? If so, how?" 5. Presentation of final product Day 5 (45minutes): Students can write a poem, fable, parable, or an essay about how the ideas in the book affected their personal views about change; which can be presented as a collage of pictures/words depicting their personal cheese, present the problem or change event that is occurring at school or at home. Students' will reflect on the ways that Sniff, Scurry, Hem, and Haw would react to the changes taking place. The final reflection will include the students' personal reactions not to exceed three paragraphs, and their ending of "Who Moved My Cheese". 6. Recognition and evaluation of group and individual efforts: I will compile a checklist for each student with their evaluation of their role in the group and their participation for each day, and a checklist for the group will also be included for self-evaluation.
Summary for the handwriting on the wall: As students’ reflect in their journals about the changes occurring in their lives, they will also begin to notice that changes are taking place in their school as well. The groups of high school students have been friends since kindergarten and Middle School, but some may have decided to take a different route than others. Some are experiencing drugs, alcohol, teen-age parenting, rebellion, and trying to fit in or find their place in live. Peer pressure will often lead a student down a path of destruction, but can be corrected if they are allowed to express the way they feel about life altering events such as parents divorcing or separating or not having a positive role-model in their life, no father, being raised in a foster home, being raised by grandparents or being raised by someone that is not a family member. Changes are inevitable, but when students learn to accept changes instead of fighting change, that is when learning takes place, and they become better students instead of giving into the in crowd. The more students cling to their “oldcheese,” (old attitudes, habits and patterns, etc.); their transition to the “new cheese” will become difficult for them. The sooner students’ learn to let go, the easier their transition toembracing the “new cheese”, which is a practical application for adults as well. Change Happens They Keep Moving The Cheese Anticipate Change Get Ready For The Cheese To Move Monitor Change Smell the Cheese Often So You Know When It Is Getting Old Adapt To Change Quickly The Quicker You Let Go Of Old Cheese, The Sooner You Can Enjoy New Cheese Change Move With The Cheese Enjoy Change! Savor The Adventure And Enjoy The Taste Of New Cheese. Be Ready To Change Quickly And Enjoy It Again They Keep Moving The Cheese.

Teacher Page

All teenagers experience major changes; however, English Language Learners must deal with more than the usual number of changes, and those are sometimes of greater intensity than those of their American peers. Often, they have moved from their home country to the U.S. knowing no English nor understanding the culture. Their families have limited resources, and for these reasons, ELLs were introduced to a book about life’s changes, how to cope with them, and make them work for you in positive ways. I feel that all English Language Learners can benefit from reading and discussing “Who Moved My Cheese, for Teens.”

Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category and Score</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth of Knowledge and Understanding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Spelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This is a fun and innovative way of getting students' to appreciate changes, diversity, and life. Asking students to reflect on their own life, their experience in reading a selection for a class assignment, or on an exercise/simulation may lead to their uncovering and confronting previously hidden assumptions. Students' are often put into different situations, especially when they are the minority, or only one of a few people in similar situations. Who Moved My Cheese? for Teens allow students' to rethink and reflect on values, communicate respect, fairness, foster equal class participation, cultural and social examples, and take the necessary steps to establish an overall appreciation of others. We must provide students with an environment that is conducive to learning, comfortable, and safe; and when we do all of these things we dramatically increase their chance of success. We must constantly show our students' we value diversity and change, and then model this attitude to our students.