Lesson Topic: Hate Crimes

Grade Level Appropriateness: 6th – 8th Grade

Standards:

Language Arts: Listening and Speaking
- Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes.

Language Arts: Writing
- Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process.
- Uses the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing.
- Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions.

Life Skills: Thinking and Reasoning
- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning

Civics
- Understands the importance of Americans sharing and supporting certain values, beliefs, and principles of American constitutional democracy.
- Understands the role of diversity in American life and the importance of shared values, political beliefs, and civic beliefs in an increasingly diverse American society

Behavioral Standards
- Understands various meanings of social group, general implications of group membership, and different ways that groups function.

Essential Questions:
- What is the nature of hate?
- What are some factors that make it more likely that hate will escalate?
- Once someone’s actions start moving up on the pyramid of hate do you think it’s difficult to stop?
- What are some things that might help stop the escalation of hate?
- What can individuals do to stop the escalation of hate? What can communities do?
- What is the cost to the individual who does not act to challenge hate? What is the cost to the targets of hate? What is the result for society?

Lesson Objective:
- Students will examine how people develop stereotypes and to consider how stereotypes can lead to prejudice.
• Students will examine the escalating nature of hate and to consider the difficulty of stopping the progression once it begins.
• Students will examine individual responsibility in helping to stop the escalation of hate.

**Materials:**

• Hate Crime introduction PowerPoint
• Internet connection
• Notebook paper and pencil

**Grouping:**

• Whole Group – introduction PPT/reflection discussion
• Small groups of 3-4 students – icebreaker/discussion

**Vocabulary:**

• stereotype
• generalizations
• prejudice
• discrimination
• scapegoating
• violence
• hate crimes
• genocide

**Background:**

For the last couple of weeks, students have been participating in a series of lesson on building community and combating hate. They have/will be learning about interpersonal communication/conflict resolution, the escalation of hate and violence, the consequences of scapegoating and bias in history, and the rights, challenges and responsibilities of living in a democracy. Students will have opportunities to recognize the similarities and differences among people, acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual, understand and appreciating diversity, consider the harmful effects of prejudice, stereotyping, name-calling, misinformation, and rumors, and understand each person’s role in creating fair and respectful communities.

**Procedures:**

• In a whole group, teacher will introduce the topic of hate crimes by asking students, “What do think of when you hear the words “hate crime”? Allow students 2-3 minutes to talk within their table groups.
• Back in whole group, show the remainder of Slide 1 and Slide 2 of the PowerPoint. Explain to students that hate crimes can happen to anyone, and anyone can be involved.
• Begin small group activity to get students thinking about their own stereotypes.
  o Have students pull out a piece of notebook paper and pencil. Students should number their paper 1-15.
As you show each word on slide 3, one at a time, allow students 5-10 seconds to write the first word that comes to their mind. Encourage them to be honest!

Have students flip their papers upside down, and then introduce the definition of stereotype. Explain that we all have stereotypes, even when we think we don’t. Anyone can be subject to a stereotype.

Have students flip over their papers and share their response in their small groups of 3-4 students. Encourage them to be honest and open, recognizing that all of us carry stereotypes and make generalizations.

Stop students after about 3-5 minutes and lead a whole group discussion. Some possible questions to ask might include: *(If students are unwilling to share whole group, have them turn to their small groups and share)*

- Based on the discussion about assumptions and stereotypes, are you reconsidering any of your responses?
- Do any of your responses appear to be a result of unconscious stereotypes that you have formed about particular groups?
- Do you think that if we tallied the responses to each of the items listed, the answers would be similar? Why or why not?
- How do people learn stereotypes?
- What were some examples of stereotypes that people responded to after the terrorist attacks on 9/11?
- What are some ways that people can verify whether or not an assumption that they have about a group of people is accurate? What would be the value of doing so?

Finish going through the PowerPoint, directly teaching students about the history of hate crimes, examples of hate crimes, etc. *Don’t forget to show the embedded YouTube video.*

Review the “Pyramid of Hate” and lead a self-reflection. Have students write, using the same notebook paper as earlier, respond to the following questions (shown on the PowerPoint).

- Where do you and your actions fall on this pyramid? Where have they fallen in the past?
- What can YOU do to stop the escalation of hate? What can others do?

**Assessment:**

- Informal observations of student discussions and whole group responses
- Anecdotal notes