

If you only have 30 minutes ...

In this activity, you will complete an “Inside-Outside” discussion activity on three quotes from the article “Andrew Nemr Taps Into Story.” Read the article before doing this activity.

Directions:

1. Divide into groups of three and select one of the passages below. Then divide each group into smaller groups of 2-3 students. In your small group, review the passage and discuss the prompts.
2. After each group has covered the discussion prompts, arrange the class chairs with one group’s chairs in the middle and the other two groups’ chairs in a circle surrounding the middle chairs.
3. Have the first group sit in the middle chairs and review their discussion prompts with each other. Students from the outside groups listen and ask questions. Then the other groups take their turns on the inside.

Write a paragraph on your reactions to what you’ve learned from reading the quote or passage, and the discussion activity.

- Group 1
 - “In ‘tap-dance land,’ you learn this thing that you do from people, shaped in part by who they are and their personalities. And as you learn from them, you begin to embody someone else’s personality, someone else’s story—their choices, preferences, approaches to excellence, relationship to the audience, music—and then you can begin adding your own and passing it on.”

—Andrew Nemr

- Summarize what Andrew Nemr is saying in the quote.
 - What do you think he means when he says, “as you learn from them, you begin to embody someone else’s personality, someone else’s story”
 - How can this level of understanding someone else help in communication
- Group 2
 - Nemr “brings an interesting mix of heritage and personal experience that shows how circumstances in life are not that simple.” Nemr describes some of his stories as not just narratives but homilies, intentionally instructive tales that invite the audience into both wider wonder and compassionate understanding.
 - Summarize the content of the paragraph.
 - What seems to be the purpose of the tales Nemr tells his audiences?
 - What do you think is the result of speaking to people this way?
 - Group 3
 - “Over the course of my life, I experienced significant disappointment and pain, as relationships fell apart on account of things I had no control over. Other peoples’ lives are the same. The question is whether you allow a seed of bitterness to be planted and grow ... or try to water the seed of love that is there even in the midst of that pain.”

—Andrew Nemr

- Summarize what Andrew Nemr is saying in the quote above.
- What do you think is the main point in what he’s saying?
- Do you feel this is a good philosophy to have in life? Why or why not?

Common Core Standard(s) Met:

CCRA.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCRA.R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas

CCRA.R.3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

CCRA.R.8: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.