Lesson Plan 1

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Standard: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (RL.9-10.1)

Learning Goal: Students will be able to use quotes from the text to support their placement of a main character on a moral spectrum.

Expectations for Behavior: Students will listen while I am introducing material and asking questions as well as when their partner is sharing their answers during the collaboration time. They will be on task when working on their spectrum sheets and focus and follow along during the read-aloud.

Assessments: spectrum worksheets, answers to questions during class, group work

Before Class: copy the spectrum worksheet on the board, pull up picture of a scarlet ibis

“Find a good place to stop and put your books away.”

TRANSITION: “I’m handing out worksheets to all of you. We’ve been talking a lot about using evidence to support our ideas. That’s the whole point of the WRAP folder, and you guys had a lot of experience with those with ‘The Most Dangerous Game’ and ‘Believing in Brooklyn.’ Today, we’re going to start a new short story, and we’re also going to work on citing textual evidence, but we’re not going to use the WRAP folder. It’s going to be a little more informal; I just want to know what you guys are learning about using evidence to support your ideas.”

I. Opening Activity (10 minutes)
   a. Pass out spectrum worksheets
b. “We’re going to start with a little activity before we get into the story. So, I think we can all agree that killing is wrong, right? I would agree. It’s not right for people to kill other people, and it’s even part of our country’s laws. We talked about that a lot in The Most Dangerous Game, didn’t we? Now, I’m going to challenge you guys to think really deeply. We’re going to get our mental juices flowing today.”

c. (while indicating on the white board) “Everyone take a look at your worksheets. They show a spectrum. Who knows what a spectrum is? As you can see, it ranges from ‘not wrong’ on the left to ‘definitely wrong’ on the right. I’m going to share some examples with you that should challenge your thinking about killing, and your task will be to mark on the line where you think the event falls. So if I said, ‘A student cheats on a test,” it would go where on the spectrum? Yes, we can all agree that cheating on a test would go close to definitely wrong on the spectrum. Now, when I read you these examples, don’t talk to your neighbors, but think about it and mark what you think. You’ll have a chance to compare your spectrums in a little bit. Try to mark these as accurately as you can. If you’re not sure, don’t just plot your point smack dab in the middle, but really think about where it would go. Pay really close attention to the details from these examples and really think about why you’re marking them on your spectrum where you are. You will be turning them in, but I want to see evidence that you participated and really tried to think critically. I’m not looking for perfection or certain answers; I just want to see that you put forth effort.”

d. Doctors
i. “A pregnant woman was declared brain dead after her car slid into a ditch on icy roads. The woman was put on life support. The baby’s heartbeat could still be detected, but the doctors decided to remove her from life support.”

ii. “Where would you place the doctors on the spectrum?”

e. Teenager

i. “A teenager went into a bank demanding money. When the bank teller hesitated to hand over the money, the teenager shot her.”

ii. “Where would you put the teenager on the spectrum?”

f. Mother

i. “On a hot day in August, a mother was driving to work. She was going to drop her baby off at daycare first, but she forgot, and the baby died in the hot car.”

ii. “Where would you put the mother on the spectrum?”

g. Man

i. “A man woke up in the night to strange noises. He ran downstairs to find a man robbing his house. When the robber heard the man coming, he started to run up the stairs toward the man’s sleeping wife and children. The man grabbed his gun and shot the robber.”

ii. “Where would you put this man on the spectrum?”

TRANSITION: (while passing out copies of the story) “Okay, we’re going to come back to this spectrum in a little bit, so keep those thoughts in mind. We’re going to switch gears here and start reading another short story that I think you guys will really like.”
II. Background of the Scarlet Ibis (3 minutes)

a. “This story is called ‘The Scarlet Ibis.’ It was written in 1960 by James Hurst. Does anyone know what an ibis is?”

b. “Here is a picture of a scarlet ibis. As you can see, it is a bird that has a vibrant red color. This bird is the title of our story. Do we have any resident bird experts who could tell us a little about the ibis? I’m not a bird expert either, so I did a little research about the scarlet ibis.”

c. “The scarlet ibis is originally from South America. It gets its bright red color from the crustaceans it feeds on, so lobster and crab and other sea animals with shells. They’re very quiet birds. They fly in V formations, a lot like Canada geese that you might see here in Iowa. In North America, they are known as scavengers and are often seen wandering around garbage dumps or landfills looking for food.”

d. “From what you guys discussed and the title of the story, do you have any predictions of what the story will be about?”

TRANSITION: “Let’s see if your predictions hold true. We’re going to read this story aloud.”

III. Read “The Scarlet Ibis” (10 minutes)

a. Questions during reading:

i. After 1st paragraph: “This story starts kind of like ‘A Kind of Murder’ did. We know that the narrator is looking back on something that happened in the past.”

ii. Bottom of page 2: “Does anyone know what infallibility means?”

1. Not able to be wrong, not able to make mistakes
TRANSITION: “So now you guys can probably see why we had that discussion at the beginning of class. Brother was also in one of those sticky situations just like the doctors and the mother.”

IV. Follow-up Question/Activity (13 minutes or until the end of class)

a. “Now we’re going to place Brother. What do you guys think about Brother? Did he kill Doodle? Where would he fall on the spectrum? I’m going to give you a chance to collaborate on this, so you’re going to turn to the person beside you and discuss this in pairs. In your pairs, you will want to decide where you would plot Brother in comparison to the other examples you have on your timeline, and on the bottom half of the worksheet, explain why you put him where you did using evidence from the story to support it. You don’t need to worry about having all of the components of the WRAP folder right now, just get your thoughts flowing. It’s okay if you want to write this as a list or without perfect citations. Try to use at least 2 specific quotes from the story to support why you put Brother where you did on the spectrum. You might find it helpful to use the examples we talked about at the beginning of class to explain why you put Brother where you did, also.”

b. If there is time after they work for awhile, we will come back into a whole class discussion and talk about why they placed people where they did on the spectrum.

TRANSITION: “Before you leave, please pass your spectrum sheets to the front of your row. Thank you for putting in some good work and really thinking critically today, guys!”