

Annie's Appalachian Adventures

The Letter Lesson Plan

Dealing with Hard Issues Lesson 1

Day 2, 30 Minutes



Annie in a Snap Shot: Annie's Appalachian Adventures is a literary series for children ages 7-9 years old. Annie is the main character and she lives in the hills of Appalachia. Annie is a tomboy at heart and has a vast imagination. With her strong willed spirit, Annie has to overcome the challenges of her life that have unfortunately become more and more common in America. Annie's mother suffers from a substance use disorder and consequently, Annie resides with her Grandmother while her mother is receiving treatment. *Annie is a model for children on how to process the obstacles of familial problems without shame and guilt by seeking a healthy adult to talk about feelings and by learning coping strategies to utilize that enable them to overcome challenges in their lives.*

ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success:

Category 1: Mindset Standards

M 1. Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental and social/emotional well-being

Category 2: Behavior Standards

B-SMS 7. Demonstrate effective coping skills when faced with a problem

B-SS 4. Demonstrate empathy

Pennsylvania Department of Education Standards:

Resilience

AL.4 2.B Recognize that everyone makes mistakes and that using positive coping skills can result in learning from the experience.

Reading Literature

1.3 2.A Recount stories and determine their central message, lesson, or moral

1.3 2.C Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

West Virginia Department of Education Standards:

Physical Education

Wellness Behaviors

WE.2.15

Practice positive communication skills (e.g., healthy ways to express needs, wants, and feelings).

WE.2.18

Identify situations resulting in hurt feelings and demonstrate appropriate coping skills.

Lesson Overview: *The Letter* is a book with a message of empowerment and love. It tackles the difficult topic of substance use disorders and helps readers not to internalize shame and guilt of familial problems brought on by this growing epidemic. In this lesson, students will review the story where Annie receives a letter from her mother about changes in their lives brought on by substance use. After the story is read, students will reflect on the emotions of both Annie and her mother. Students will consider their own emotions when faced with various situations or obstacles and will draw these emotions.

Lesson Steps:

StoryTime

In a storytime environment, students will review *The Letter*. The teacher will again pose the inquiry question, “Have you had to overcome something heartbreaking in your life?” Students will not verbally share unless they are willing to do so, but can nod their heads. The teacher will relate that everyone’s life has challenges and that Annie’s life does too. The teacher will allow students to read their letters from the prior lesson if the child is comfortable to do so.

After listening to the letters, the teacher will help the children look through *The Letter* again recognizing the emotions of both Annie and her mother in each illustration. Students may be asked to role play various emotions that mimic the emotions of the characters.

Drawing Emotions

Each student will be given a piece of paper and a pencil to draw. The teacher will name various emotions and students will be asked to draw the emotions. After each emotion the students will share their drawings and discuss how the pictures are alike and what characteristics are commonly symbolized by their representation. The teacher may choose to draw an accumulative example for the class.

For more information about Annie and our non-profit, Curious Kiddos, explore:

Annie’s Appalachian Adventures

www.anniesadventures.org

Curious Kiddos Educational Resources, Inc.

www.curiouskid.org

