

Graphic Novel Lesson Plan

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Title *The Sinking of the Titanic*

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Themes history, Titanic disasters, shipwrecks

Target Grade Level 4th

Book Summary

The Sinking of the Titanic is the story of the 1912 disaster told in a graphic-novel format. The novel includes action packed artwork and presents history accurately, and in a fun new way. The easy-to-read text is perfect for reluctant or challenged readers. This comic book style brings history to life and offers a "you are there" experience. It includes a short list of other books for younger readers and a bibliography which includes some well-known books about the sinking.

Activity Objectives

- The students will be able to identify the six Pillars of Character (Character Counts)-respect, caring, citizenship, trustworthiness, fairness, and responsibility
- The students will be able to apply the Pillars of Character Education to a real life situation/situation in history
- The students will be able to determine how the Character Traits are displayed in a positive manner in the story
- The students will be able to determine how the lack of the Character Traits had a negative effect in the story

Getting Ready

As a class, the teacher and students will review the Pillars of good Character. To get students interested in reading the book, the teacher will give a brief synopsis of the book and review some of the facts of the event. Students will already have some basic background knowledge about the historic event.

Vocabulary

- Graphic novel
- Survival
- Stern
- Distress call
- 1st class/2nd class
- Respect
- Caring
- Responsibility
- Trustworthiness
- Fairness
- Citizenship

Activities

The students will use what they already know about good character traits to look for examples that support a pillar of character or examples of where one is lacking. Each student will receive a sheet which lists the 6 pillars of character to use as a quick reference. The teacher will give an example to make sure the students are on-track. (People believed that the Titanic was unsinkable because they were told it was made with watertight compartments that kept it afloat—People believed that the builders of the ship were **trustworthy** and that it was the safest ship ever built.)

The students will then read the book in small groups. They will be instructed to use post-it notes to mark pages where an example of a trait is present or lacking. When completing this task, students will be required to discuss their findings. They will then write independently about one example of a character/pillar trait and its relationship to the story.

Extensions

- Students could do more research on the Titanic, finding more details and facts that compare or contrast to the graphic novel events
- Students could explore other resources-books, movies, websites

Instructional Design

Analyze Learners

The class consists of 23 fourth grade students: 14 boys, and 9 girls. The students are 99% Caucasian and 1% Black. Two of the male students have an IEP for reading and read at an independent level that is slightly below the average fourth grader. One of the female students has a severe speech disorder called apraxia which affects her ability to communicate clearly with her peers. These students will need to be monitored more closely and placed in a group that will best meet their needs. Students already have some background knowledge of the disaster, and most have a great interest in the subject matter. The students seem to learn best when the information is presented in a fun manner both written and spoken. The students work well together towards the common goal of the lesson. Concepts are reinforced through daily discussions and interactions.

State Objectives (Activity Objectives)

- Given a copy of the graphic novel *The Sinking of the Titanic* students will use post-it notes to mark examples and will participate in a small group discussion and fact-finding application
- Students will be able to identify at least 3 situations where Pillars of Character are evident or lacking
- Students will be able to write a paragraph about how one of the Pillars relates to an event in the story according to the guidelines listed in the rubric

Select Methods, Media and Materials (Getting Ready)

Methods- small collaborative group work, brief mini-lessons/review, whole class discussion, and independent practice

Media- poster of Character Counts pillars with examples, computer (synopsis of story, internet sources)

Materials- 6 copies of the graphic novel *The Sinking of the Titanic*, post-it notes (5-10 per group), reference sheet(Character Pillars), pencil, and paper for each student

Utilize Media and Materials (Activities/ Teacher & Students)

- During the review of the Traits of Good Character, the teacher will display a large poster of the 6 pillars with trait examples on the chalkboard

- During the small group instruction, the students will share ideas about applying the Character Counts traits to the novel

Require Learner Participation (Activities/ Students)

Each student must be actively engaged throughout the lesson. The teacher will meet with each group and ask questions about the Character Traits that they have found in the novel. Students will present their findings to the class before they are required to write independently about one specific instance.

Evaluate and Revise

The teacher will observe students working collaboratively in their groups to determine initial understanding. If students do not understand the task or are off track, redirection and more discussion may be needed. The paragraphs written by students will be assessed by a rubric that students will receive prior to writing. Upon completion of the activity, the teacher will discuss with students their group finding.