

A Tale of Two Families

High School Lesson Plan

Lesson 1

Introduction: Elicit ideas about the importance of what can we learn by listening to stories from older members of the community.

Play the video “A tale of two families” (the video is in English because that is how it was recorded).

Both families emphasize education, intercultural community building and kindness as family values. During times of extraordinary challenges, such core values can shape people’s response. The stories of the Guichon and Louie families exemplify resilience through hard times in British Columbia history.

Discuss the skills needed to write a biography. Look at some examples of biography writing.

Explain to the students that they are going to interview a French speaking adult who lives in their community. If you approach the ‘Société francophone,’ you should be able to set up video or live interviews with some francophone adults from the community. You could also ask other French Immersion teachers from the school or any other contacts you might have. The students could conduct these interviews in pairs or individually.

Lesson 2

Students write questions for their interviews. Remind them that questions such as ‘tell me a story about someone who was important to you when you first went to school’ or ‘tell me about why you chose the career path you followed’ will elicit better information than rather than questions that are too big and vague such as ‘what was your childhood like?’ or too closed such as ‘what was the name of your school?’

Lesson 3

You will need to provide time for the students to carry out the interviews and get a recording of what was said. Interviews carried out online can be recorded relatively easily. Those carried out ‘live’ should be recorded on a device that allows easy upload so the recordings can be accessed in class.

Lessons 4-5 (depending on how long you want the piece to be)

Students write up the story of the person they interviewed. As an extension piece, students can create a final product to gift back to the person who told them the story. This can be, for example, an illustrated booklet, a digital document or a video.

You may want to remind your students of ways to make their biography more interesting and well structured.

- Start with a quote by your subject. Something that really reveals the essence of who they are.
- Include a fascinating story or anecdote about them.
- Describe an accomplishment they achieved.

Your thesis statement will be the crux on which the rest of your essay hangs, so pay careful attention to crafting it.

Some example thesis statements:

- Though Marilyn Monroe had fame and fortune, she was a troubled woman whose self-destructive habits may have ultimately led to her tragic early death.
- Nobel Laureate Gabriel Garcia Marquez invented a new genre of writing called magical realism which had a powerful impact on the literary world and influenced.

Consider addressing the following questions:

- What kind of contribution did they make to their chosen field?
- What is their legacy? How are they remembered?
- What or who did they have a major influence on?