

Title: “They call me an apple”: Exploring Internal and External Perceptions of an Individual

Time: 50 minutes

Setting: Tenth grade classroom with 25 students

Theory Into Practice Background

1. This lesson was created based on a line in *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, where Junior says the people on the reservation call him an apple (132). The scene has to do with Junior’s dual identity (apple means he is red on the outside, white on the inside) which relates to the unit’s overarching theme of exploring identity. We thought it might be nice to take the idea of the apple and turn it into a graphic organizer where students can visually explore Junior’s identity. Jim Burke says that “such organizers invite examination of structure and relationships” (250). Certainly, the organizer shows the relationship between internal and external identities. Students can easily see what kinds of traits show up on the outside of the apple and what kind of traits show up on the inside.

At one point during the lesson, students will form small groups and discuss questions based on the text and their completed graphic organizers. Burke explains that the use of group discussions in class is backed by research. He says, “when a doctoral candidate surveyed my students about different strategies that helped them learn and allowed for “meaningful moments,” he found that students overwhelmingly favored discussions” (241). Group work also provides equal opportunities for students of any gender. Burke explains that, “by working in groups, girls can often take more risks, sharing their fledgling ideas within a more supportive environment and thereby gaining confidence in their thinking...such smaller groups make room for all students, but specifically those who are otherwise shut out because of the aggressive interrupting that characterizes so much discussion” (395). Interestingly, the theory behind the use of group work reflects the very issues of identity that students will be exploring. In a sense, students will face their own identity when they are placed in a group.

2. Prior to this lesson students will have read “Don’t Trust your Computer”, the chapter containing Junior’s quote about being an apple. They will have also read “Dance, Dance, Dance,” which discusses Junior’s dual-identity in greater depth. These chapters will be the basis of our conversation for this lesson. Our ongoing discussions of Native American identity will also aid students during this lesson.
3. This lesson uses the chapters “Dance, Dance, Dance” and “Don’t Trust your Computer” as the basis for discussion. Again, these chapters focus on Junior’s struggle with his dual-identity; specifically, his being seen as a Native American who betrayed his tribe and is therefore actually white on the inside.

4. This lesson links directly to the following day's lesson, which discusses individual vs. group identity. Today's lesson focuses more on the individual and has students explore Junior's and their own identity. However, tomorrow they will explore how an individual identity is affected when it becomes a part of a group. This lesson will focus on a quote from Junior's friend Gordy who says, "Life is a constant struggle between being an individual and being a member of the community" (132). The apple lesson is designed to transition directly into the lesson on individual vs. group identities.

Objectives:

- Students will analyze the nature of Junior's dual cultural identity through writing and class/group discussion
- Students will use a graphic organizer to separate Junior's external and internal identity and their own internal and external identity.

Materials:

Document camera and screen

7 copies of the Apple Worksheet (Attachment 1)

7 copies of the discussion question half-sheet (Attachment 2)

Whiteboard

Preparation:

Make seven copies of the Apple Worksheet and seven copies of the discussion questions (six for the students and one for you to use during class discussion). Discussion questions will be on a half sheet of paper so you can copy two sets of questions on one piece of paper. On the whiteboard write "I find it necessary to hide my true identity". Students will respond to this in a quick write at the beginning of class. A Document camera should be readily available to turn on and use during class.

Procedure:

1. (6 minutes) Direct students to the quick-write topic written on the board: "I find it necessary to hide my true identity". Tell students that they should write from Junior's point of view, describing how he would respond to this statement, and base their answers on what they have read for homework. Ask students if Junior would agree with this statement. Why or why not?
2. (4 minutes) In small groups of three or four, students should share their responses with one another.
3. (2 minutes) Ask for volunteers to share their response with the class.
4. (7 minutes) Tell students that today's lesson will focus on the idea of Junior's dual identity. Have students take out their copies of *Part-Time Indian* and turn to page 118. Choose a volunteer to read from the beginning of the chapter until "Lies rot and stink up the joint" (119). Ask for reactions to this section. Is Junior's experience relatable? Turn

to page 131 and read the short section from “The people at home” to “Yep.” on the next page. Tell the students that they will be doing an activity that explores internal and external identity based on Junior’s idea of “being an apple”.

5. (10 min) Arrange students into six groups of four (one group will have five students) and give each group an Apple worksheet and a discussion question half-sheet. Students should fill in the apple together from Junior’s point of view. On the outside of the apple students will write features of Junior’s external identity, or what others can see. Inside the apple students will write features of Junior’s internal identity, how he feels about himself, what others might not know about him, what is not immediately visible. Students should include quotes from the book that support their ideas.
6. (10 min) When students have completed their apples they will use it to answer the discussion questions on the half-sheet of paper.
7. (5 min) Use a document camera to project a blank Apple worksheet on a screen. Have each group share some of the things written on their apple and write down their answers on the blank Apple worksheet in order to make a comprehensive list of identity traits for Junior.
8. (5 min) Ask a representative from each group to summarize their group’s response to one of the questions until every group has answered a question. For homework, students will create an apple for themselves and they will turn it in the following day.

Discussion Ideas

Can you relate to Junior’s experience of having to pretend to be someone your not? Are there certain situations where you feel you need to act a certain way? When do you feel you can just “be yourself”?

What is the difference between internal and external identity? How would the words in /out of the apple change if you were writing it from another person’s point of view (e.g. If Penelope created an apple about Junior)

BILINGUAL/ESL AND ENGLISHES ACCOMMODATIONS: Spanish and AAVE

Spanish: Our student who speaks Spanish and is an English Language Learner can use Spanish-English dictionaries to translate class discussion and to help him when he is creating his personal apple. During group work, the other students can try to help the student if he is having trouble understanding certain words/idea (i.e. they might reword certain ideas for him). We can also provide him a translator if necessary.

AAVE: We will discuss that any form of English can be used during the entirety of today’s lesson (On the quick-write, during discussion, and on the Apple Worksheet).

Special Education Accommodations:

Autism: “Autism is a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are

engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences” (<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed/html/categories.htm>).

Our student with asperger’s syndrome will be given accommodations throughout the lesson. Instructions for the activities in this lesson will be provided verbally and on handouts so that they are made very clear. To make sure the student is comfortable during group work, he will be placed with students who he is used to and has been shown to work well with in the past.

Assessment

Quick writes will be turned in for a participation point. Students will get credit if they turn in an answer as long as it is at least a few sentences and related to the prompt.

Students will complete an Apple Worksheet from their point of view for homework. There are no right or wrong answers to this activity so they will receive a completion grade. Two points for turning in a completed Apple Worksheet and zero points for not turning in anything.

Extension Ideas

-This lesson ties directly to the unit’s theme of exploring identity. In another lesson, we will transition from external/internal identity to talking about individual vs. group identities, based on a quote on page 132 that says, “Life is a constant struggle between being an individual and being a member of the community”.

Source of Activity

This lesson is directly based on an event in *Part-Time Indian* where Junior explains that many members from his tribe see him as an apple, red on the outside, white on the inside. Gintare Radvila provided me the idea of creating an Apple graphic organizer to represent internal and external identity. Jim Burke deserves credit for providing a wealth of ideas and strategies for creating and implementing the lesson. Thanks to Professor Arlette Willis for demonstrating effective uses of quick-writes (e.g. using them as a reading comprehension check). I would also like to thank Professor Lisa Monda-Amaya for her suggestions on how to accommodate students with Asperger’s Syndrome.

Resources and References

Burke, J. (2007). *The English Teacher’s Companion: A complete guide to classroom, curriculum, and the profession*, (3rd ed). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Illinois State Board of Education: Illinois Learning Standards .2010. Illinois State Board of Education. < <http://www.isbe.net/ils/ela/standards.htm>>

Illinois State Board of Education: Special Education Categories.2010. Illinois State Board of Education. <<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed/html/categories.htm>>

Illinois State English Language Arts Goals

STATE GOAL 1: Read with understanding and fluency

1.C.4d Summarize and make generalizations from content and relate them to the purpose of the material

Students will accomplish this goal by filling out an Apple Worksheet from Junior's point of view. In order to complete the worksheet successfully, students will need to summarize what they have learned about Junior from the text so far. They will also need to make generalizations about his personality and be able to determine which aspects of his identity are external and which are internal. The lesson relates directly to the unit's theme of exploring identity.

ATTACHMENT 1

Discuss the following questions in your group. Choose one representative to share your answer to one of the questions with the rest of the class.

1. Do you notice any trends in the words that show up inside or outside of the apple? What are they? Why do you think that is?
2. How would the words in/out of the apple change if you created it from another character's point of view? For example, what might Penelope write on an apple about Junior.
3. What is the difference between external and internal identity?
4. What does it mean to "be yourself"?
5. What would happen if all of the words in and out of the apple were the same? Is this possible? What would that mean for the person's identity?
6. Junior says he has to hide some things about his identity when he is at Reardan, like the fact that he is poor. Can you think of a time when you act differently than "normal" or do you always act the same, no matter what situation you are in?

Instructions: Pretend you are Junior. Inside the apple, write down internal aspects of your identity (what do you see/think about yourself?). Outside of the apple write down external aspects of your identity (What do others see or think they know about you?) Include 3-4 quotes from the text to support your ideas!

