



Teaching Social Skills, Creating Successful Students

Making an Apology

Academic Context	Teach students the skill of "Making an Apology" by researching a major mistake in history. Please adapt this lesson plan to fit content-specific needs. Examples of appropriate subject choices: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• History• Current Events• Literary Character• Scientist
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will research a major mistake in history or in current events and compose an apology from the point-of-view of the person who made the mistake. The apology will contain the Boys Town steps for the skill of "Making an Apology."• Students will apply their use of 21st Century skills such as writing and interpersonal skills.
Life Skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students if they've ever had to make an apology. Ask students to share any school-appropriate examples.• Tell the students that there have been major gaffes in history and that they are going to choose a mistake in history (current or past), research it, and help the "offenders" make an apology.• Tell the students the steps of "Making an apology" and refer to your wall poster or write them on the board:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Look at the person.2. Use a serious, sincere voice.3. Say "I'm sorry for..." or "I want to apologize for..."4. Explain how you plan to do better in the future.5. Say "Thanks for listening."• Ask students why it might be important for major players in history to apologize. Elicit conversation about the effectiveness of an apology. (What effect will an apology have on others and on the future? Will the apology "smooth things over"?)

<p>Academic Content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students that they will research a major mistake in history or current events. If desired, you can give them a list of acceptable topics. A sample list is included. They must identify the problem, the major players, the effect that the mistake had and on whom. They will write an apology note to the affected party/parties, utilizing the skill of “Making an apology”. Students will be graded on their use of the six traits of writing, their knowledge of the historical content, and their incorporation of the skill of making an apology.
<p>Assignment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each student chooses a mistake from history or current events. • Students are to follow the guidelines (identify the problem, the major players, the effect that the mistake had and on whom). • Then write the apology note from the point of view of the person(s) who made the mistake. • You can facilitate students’ use of the entire publishing process, including self- and peer-edits, revision, and publication. • *Optional follow-up assignment: The papers can be distributed to the class and the students can reply to another student’s letter, using the skill of “Accepting an apology”.
<p>Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 point project. Rubric is attached.



Possible Topics for Historical Mistakes

- Captain Edward Smith crashes the Titanic into an iceberg. (1909)
- Faulty equipment causes the Challenger to explode on liftoff. (1986)
- John Wilkes Booth assassinated President Abraham Lincoln. (1865)
- The U.S. government ordered the removal and internment of many Japanese Americans. (1942)
- Hernan Cortes and his soldiers brought smallpox into the Aztec Empire. (1520)
- Joseph McCarthy claimed to have a list of 205 State Department employees who were members of the Communist Party. (1954)
- The Ohio National Guard shot unarmed students at Kent State. (1970)
- The U.S. army, led by Major Samuel Whitside, sought to disarm the Lakota Indians and the result was the Wounded Knee Massacre. (1890)
- The U.S. Government signed the Indian Removal Act. (1830)
- The U.S. Senate signed the Treat of New Echota, leading to the removal of the Cherokee Indians in the Trail of Tears. (1835)
- White bus drivers in Montgomery, Alabama, enforced the segregation of blacks and whites on public buses. (1950's)
- Five police officers in Birmingham, Alabama beat an unconscious suspect. (2008)
- Al-Qaeda hijacked four passenger plane so they could be flown into buildings. (2001)
- Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols bombed the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. (1995)
- James Earl Ray assassinated Martin Luther King, Jr. (1968)
- The Nixon administration participated in and covered up the Watergate scandal. (1970's)
- Gavrillo Princip assassinates Archduke Ferdinand of Austria and his wife, the duchess. (1914)
- NASA uses the metric system while Lockheed Martin uses the English system when building a satellite. (1999)
- New Mexico loses control of a controlled burn in the Cerro Grande. (2000)
- Columbus lands in the Caribbean. (1492)
- Doctors prescribed Thalidomide as a treatment for morning sickness. (1950's & '60's)
- Faulty equipment causes a B-2 stealth bomber to crash on takeoff. (2008)
- The Chinese military attacked student protesters at Tiananmen Square. (1989)
- A hunter starts the biggest fire in California history. (2003)
- Faulty equipment causes nuclear meltdown at Three Mile Island. (1978)
- Safety inspectors forget to replace a valve at the Piper Bravo Oil Rig. (1994)
- Capitain Joe Hazelwood crashes the Exxon-Valdez into Prince William Sound. (1989)
- Faulty equipment causes nuclear meltdown at Chernobyl. (1986)
- Trojans accepted the Trojan horse. (Greek legend)
- John F. Kennedy consented to the Bay of Pigs invasion. (1961)
- Edward Snowden breached the NSA. (2013)
- Former Confederate veterans founded the Ku Klux Klan. (1866)