

JANE ELLIOTT. Blue Eyes. A class divided



Screenshots: URL <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPHnAzrtQos> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZPt7toFeFu>
(online 2013 07 14)

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Jane Elliott and her work as a topic for conversation classes on a higher level.

Jane Elliott is an American former schoolteacher, born in 1933, in Riceville, Iowa. Today she is recognized most prominently as an anti-racism activist and educator. She created the famous “blue-eyed / brown-eyed” exercise back in 1968 for her then third graders.

The day after Martin Luther King Jr. was murdered, the kids came to class confused and upset. They recently had made King their “hero of the month” and they could not understand why this murder had happened. Jane Elliott decided to teach her class a lesson in the meaning of discrimination, to show her third graders what discrimination feels like, and what it can do to people.

This exercise later became the basis for her career in diversity training.

“The fight against racism is far from over.”

Jane Elliott, 2013

MATERIALS

Prepare everything you need for class: Organise a computer, a beamer and a sound system if needed and prepare the transcript of the video you are going to use.

Selection of links (online July 2013)

- Jane Elliott’s website. URL <http://www.janeelliott.com/>
- PBS Frontline: an incredible online source with special material for teachers (such as transcripts and a teacher’s guide)
URL <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/divided/>

- Jane Elliott / Wikipedia: URL http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Elliott#Controversy_surrounding_the_exercise
Find in this article more information about the controversy surrounding the exercise.
- Trailer “Blue Eyed” URL <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPHnAzrtQos>
- Interview with Jane Elliott on racism, dated Feb. 2013
URL <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZPt7toFeFU>

- Picture search in the internet: use different search terms and search engines: e.g. antiracism, discrimination,...
- Migrantas: URL http://www.migrantas.org/web_migrantas_english.html

STEPS

Choose a subject you know.

Learning by listening

Learners have to listen to a presentation or video in the internet (see “Materials”)

Learning by reading

Watch Video.

Read the transcript (provided by the teacher)

Identify and discuss all open questions relating to grammar, vocabulary, etc.

Watch the video once again.

Read the different pages (articles) of the websites and the materials that are provided.

Learning by communicating

Start a discussion

Storytelling with pictures

Provide the learners with different pictures (e.g. cartoons), and, then challenge them to think up a story (see “Migrantas”/Materials)

Learning by writing

Each person takes a picture or a cartoon and tells his or her own story.

Homework: to write a story

Feedback: Don't forget to actively seek feedback on whatever activity.

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