

Meditation as Liberation:
Transforming our Schools and Ourselves

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Abstract: This project will assist educators working with multilingual students to begin the year or reset by practicing meditation in a trauma-informed environment. Students will use English and their mother tongues to learn, practice, and notice vocabulary of emotions while they learn translation strategies, practice meditation, and journal. They will create a mantra using the ideas of their elders, and then create a presentation to effect positive change.

Key Words: meditation, mindfulness, contemplative studies, multilingual learners, ML, emergent bilinguals, English to speakers of other languages, ESOL, English language development, ELD, English learner, EL, English as a second language, ESL, middle school, elementary, immigrant education, students with limited or interrupted formal education, SLIFE, refugee education, student choice, project-based learning, translanguaging

Unit Content

Introduction

All of my students are immigrants, and many are new to Philadelphia. Their families' various journeys converge near where the Schuylkill flows into the Delaware river, as they pursue life, liberty, and happiness in our city of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection. These families have often survived traumas, deprivation, fear, and extortion to find a seat for their child in our classroom. This is an honor I do not take lightly, striving to empower my students to create the future they dream, while recognizing that their languages, prior education, literacy, and knowledge are a matrix of strengths and setbacks.

Outside our classroom, students and families can face discrimination, lack of access to resources, and overwhelming obstacles as they create a new life in West Philadelphia. We are a Sanctuary City, true, but this only means that local law enforcement will not refer people to Immigration and Customs Enforcement. In fact, right before COVID, a mother was arrested by ICE while dropping her child off at school in South Philadelphia (Hanna & De Moya Correa, 2020). Beyond our county the rest of the country can be at best inhospitable and at worst actively hostile to people born in other borders. During the last three Presidents my students have shared stories of their stays in

Las Hieleras, or the Iceboxes, where they ate frozen peanut butter sandwiches and slept under space blankets until unintelligible strangers sent them to relatives, friends of the family, or foster homes in our school's area. Many families escaped climate-related or political chaos. Each of their stories are incredible.

As an educator, I have embraced critical pedagogy as developed by Paolo Freire, and strive to assist my students to make the reality they desire. This struggle is sometimes extremely daunting, however. We learn in very old, although quite beautiful, buildings, where deferred maintenance means students may be exposed to lead, asbestos, sewage, extreme heat, and/or rodents. Secondary students arrive with dreams of becoming a doctor or engineer, yet lack of previous schooling means this will be a mountain of learning, made steeper by teachers and materials using an unfamiliar language. Even more challenging are the students with faint or absent dreams, who are perhaps more aware of the nearly insurmountable obstacles facing them here. Families encounter the daunting tasks of obtaining housing, food, and employment with very little or no assistance except through networks of slightly more experienced compatriots, charities, and a few advocacy groups. Their futures may seem unbelievably challenging, but my wish is that by focusing on our possible tomorrows in class, we learn to understand the value of our pasts to determine our present actions in our city.

Just as Philadelphia was a crucible for our democracy, so has it served as a laboratory for public education. From the nativist riots in the Kensington neighborhood over which Bible students read (Hingston, 2015) to the explosive fight for African-American History kindled by students themselves in the 1960s and 1970s (Sigmond, 2011), Philadelphia has seen bloody battles over our curricula. In addition to these conflicts, school itself can be a potential site of trauma, as our students enter our doors during what the American Pediatric Association describes as a "public health crisis," where, "In 2019, gun injury became the leading cause of death among children aged birth to 19 years" (Rapa, et. al., 2024). Trauma experienced at school, while not a point on the ACES test, can nevertheless result in similar barriers to health and opportunity. In 2019, writing for the Southern Poverty Law Center's Learning For Justice, Carrie Gaffney highlighted "a curriculum organized around helping students navigate the issues they are facing in their communities" and more opportunities for student voice as strategies for creating schools that heal rather than re-traumatize or replicate society's systemic injustices.

I want to emphasize to the reader that while I assume most of my students have experienced some forms of trauma, I have to remember that A. I am not a therapist, and B. Similar to their learning experiences, students' responses to trauma are as varied as their DNA. Assuming most of my students are living with C-PTSD, how can I possibly meet so many needs, avoid compassion fatigue, and follow five grades and four subjects of district curriculum? While the weight of generational, societal, and personal trauma can affect our brains and bodies in predictably negative ways (Tanyu, et. al 2020), our

brain's extraordinary neuroplasticity allows the possibility of lasting positive changes in the brain (Van der Kolk, B. A., 2015). One method for helping neurons forge new pathways is working for societal change (Puderbaugh, 2023). Another, according to our seminar *Asian Meditation Traditions Past and Present*, is meditation.

My project aims to assist my students' journeys towards the lives, freedoms, and joys they can dream using meditation, research, and language learning through a set of classroom exercises that help us learn about our cultures, our schools, and ourselves. If a goal of meditation is liberation, then this project can help ground my students in our current realities in order to create new futures for their greater good.

What is Meditation?

Our seminar began with Halvor Eifring's suggestion in his introduction to *Asian Traditions of Meditation*, "Meditation is an attention-based technique for inner transformation." This emphasizes the centrality of technique in the process of focusing attention in order to reach a goal within the practitioner. While Eifring realizes that succinct definitions may be "anachronistic and Eurocentric" when applied to 5,000 years of contemplative sciences studied predominantly in Asia, his ontological framework acknowledges the irony of trying to label a phenomenon that may strive to understand the world as impermanent and beyond labels (2017).

Knut A. Jacobsen, in his *Theories and Practice of Yoga*, writes:

The word 'yoga' refers both to traditions of mental and physical discipline and the goal to be achieved by those disciplines. Thus, the most important yoga text, the *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali (400-500 C.E.) defines yoga as 'the cessation of the transformation of awareness, *'yogaś cittavrttinirodhah* (*Yogasūtra* 1.2). This state is called concentration (*samādhi*) and is the goal of most premodern and many contemporary yoga traditions. (Warrier, 2012)

Would Patañjali be surprised by a google image search of "yoga" fifteen centuries later? Depending on the algorithm and his ability to use our alphabet, he might see many pictures of young, thin, white cis-women teaching *asana* (posture), sometimes even *pranayama* (breathing), but much less of the other six limbs of yoga, including the *yamas*, ethical actions, of *ahimsa*, non-harm, and *aparigraha*, non-greed. A website offering to teach yoga teachers touts that the "global wellness market" will grow from \$4.2 trillion to \$8,945.3 trillion by 2032 (Norlyk Smith, 2023). This type of effusive enthusiasm for growth in finances, prestige, and self parallels several other pyramid schemes, and is doubtless similarly based more on optimism than market forces.

While contemplative studies become more popularly practiced, Aguirre de Cárcer (2019) points out

it is also important to notice that this repackaging within the capitalist framework has led to considerable reinforcement of individualistic values such as autonomy, self-discipline, and self-improvement” (i)

While yoga may embody the drive toward secularization and legitimization in Western approaches to Asian traditions, meditation and mindfulness find their counterparts in the world of medicine and science.

Aguirre de Cárcer argues that “Capitalism and White privilege is driving the mindfulness movement.” Despite 5,000 years of rigorous experimentation in the contemplative sciences, doctors today try to objectively study the brains of meditating minds, recalling phrenology in their grasp for understanding. In order to prove the effects of meditation, researchers map meditators’ minds using the latest technology to prove the efficacy. Using this data and others as proof, countless companies vie for their share of the mindfulness profits, offering everything from paid curricula to corporate retreats. Aguirre de Cárcer reminds us of the

privileged position of medical and psychological applications in research and funding, often framed in an implicit paradigm whereby ‘well-being’ becomes an end to itself, the final object of contemplative practice (in sharp contrast with the soteriological framework where they often originated). This situation can become a tool to inhibit social transformation, as it places the responsibility of the psychological welfare almost exclusively on the individual (meditate and alleviate your stress), ignoring the social conditions that contribute to suffering and exploitation in the world. (6)

Similarly, our students are asked to demonstrate culturally-bound behaviors without many of the tools that would make this achievable for them. For example, our school had access to the Community Meeting App (School District of Philadelphia, 2023), intended to help teachers structure their class meeting time through pre-made slides on a range of class-building topics such as compassion, stress-management, and goal-setting. Within hundreds of images, under greeting activities for self-regulation, two out of the four listed asked students to discuss the importance of following rules and finishing work on time. Under mindfulness, there were also four suggested activities: the same “What does safety look like, sound like, and feel like to you?” slide grouped with self-regulation and one slide each in English, Spanish, and Chinese giving directions to choose from a list of affirmations in English. While the School District of Philadelphia is paying Sproutly.com \$125,000 next year for the service (Barnes, J.D., 2023), it does not adequately give teachers the tools they need to have full understanding of and conversations with some of our most vulnerable students. This presents a barrier to

learning for many newly arrived multilingual students who cannot yet process written or oral English and will struggle to participate in the conversation, thus depriving them of more connections with their peers, their teachers, and themselves, as well as understanding class rules on a deeper level, not to mention the fact that their allowable accommodations include extra time for classwork and homework completion due to the complicated demands of translanguaging.

While we must teach and learn “embedded in a brutal capitalist framework,” we can always question the goals and “values, such as individualism, success, and career advancement at any cost” commonly ascribed to the benefits of mindfulness, meditation, and yoga (Aguirre de Cárcer, 2019). These goals are not necessarily shared by our students and families, many of whom sacrificed homes and careers to move into substandard housing and exploitative jobs.

This concept of a goal for meditation troubled me throughout the class. In truth, when beginning the readings, I struggled with the paradox of measuring the unmeasurable, especially in our students. If I am being really honest with you, reader, I also struggle with grading, standardized testing, and the absurdity of awards shows for subjective creations like ‘Movies’ or ‘Music’.

What I do not struggle with is my love for meditation. This is one of my best and most effective tools, including yoga, therapy, and birdwatching, that keep me from collapsing under the weight of my students’ needs. Despite my reluctance to fully trust that science is unbiased or academic measurement is fair, I have seen the value of allowing students the space to breathe quietly.

For several weeks this year, the students and I experimented with meditation in class. Students wrote journal entries after a few sessions of practicing mindfulness through various methods. These are a few examples, typed from their journal entries:

MR	Before meditation, I feel a lit bit nervous for the PSSA [an annual state standardized test] because last year I was do the math PSSA but not the ELA one and I feel like my English is not very good for do the ELA PSSA. In the morning I felt insecure and angry because my curls was look good and my autoestim [self-esteem] depen of how my curls look like. In math class I felt bored and sleepy because I don’t like math. After meditation I feel more sleepy, calm, and I wanna do it again. Also I feel relax. I feel like I wanna go to my room and sleep. My body feel calm and tired.
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AN	<p>How do you feel right now?</p> <p>I feel alive today because I woke up in a good mood today but not until i had to come to school and I also feel very excited because there is not school and me and my family are going shopping tomorrow so yeah!</p> <p>Before the video started i kinda felt unalive because I was thinking too much in my brain. During the video i felt calm and so I alive. i got things out of my brain so quickly and just payed attention to the voice on the video and after the video I felt relaxed.</p>
IM	<p>Before meditation</p> <p>I feel very very very jealous and my heart is hurting. And I feel like talking to him. I really miss him and I my heart is hurting a lot.</p> <p>After meditation</p> <p>I feel a little calm and feeling a little light. My heart is still hurting and I'm feeling sleepy. I feel like going somewhere I can stay for a little and think about myself.</p>

From their writings and discussions, we incorporated meditation practice into our class. Students often used words like calm, relaxed, and sleepy, but also wrote about more specific emotions they were experiencing. I'm excited to start the year with intentionality and practice more consistently as a classroom routine. But I want to embed the contemplative sciences into their histories and not as something dreamed up by YouTube or their teacher.

What if we learned from roots of the contemplative sciences as well as life experiences of our elders? What if we simultaneously found our own goals for our particular place and time? We do not necessarily have to climb out all the way on the limbs of Buddhist Vipassana or Jainism to find insight, transformation, or liberation. But we do need both a structure and a goal. Also, of course, in a 21st century classroom, we need standards and objectives. How can we measure achievement in a way that is both culturally-responsive and trauma-informed? Is there a rubric for *Samadhi*, the system of enlightenment and self-realization described by *Patañjali* (Bryant, E. F, in Eifring, et. al., 2016)?

Luckily, early in the class I also read this from Livia Kohn: "The argument is that meditation in both practice and effects is culturally determined and that whatever the seeker sets out to discover he or she will eventually find." My classmates and I discussed the difficulty of writing units for teachers in completely different educational contexts and situations. Many thought the rumor was true that Philadelphia had tried and then explicitly forbid Transcendental Meditation in the 1970s. While I was not able to find

evidence for this in Philadelphia, there was a case brought by the Coalition for Religious Integrity against three school districts in New Jersey.. Judge H. Curious Meanor ruled that the course, was, in fact,

founded on religious doctrine, The course was entitled “Science of Creative Intelligence for Secondary Education-First Year Course-Dawn of the First Year of the Age of Enlightenment.”

Opponents of the suit argued that the course was not founded on religious doctrine, but rather was designed to help students find self-awareness, define goals and improve learning skills.

Judge Meanor specifically took issue with the course textbook, as well as with an initiation ceremony called a ‘*puja*’ in which shoeless students entered ‘incense filled rooms.’ (Kleiman, 1977)

This is somewhat comical in that *pūjā* is a very general Sanskrit term for “worship,” which could take thousands of forms depending on the place and time, but those TM teachers ’penchant for patchouli may have cooled some curricular buyers from choosing anything that sounded vaguely Eastern. Over 40 years later, we still need systems that help students ’ability to flourish in school. Schools where I worked have used Responsive Classroom, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, Restorative Justice, and Relationships First, but all have required staff training and assumed that severe behavioral crises would be more conveniently timed. Teachers also are living through a time when we are simultaneously asked to help all students succeed with limited resources and myriad student needs, participate in drills or worse where we contemplate death, while at the same time not trusted to select books, materials, or curricula for our students in our classroom. While I am lucky that I have had a lot of freedom in my classrooms from principals to teach standards in ways my students learned most effectively, I understand that my brethren in states like Tennessee legally do not have this trust to design learning experiences or select readings. .

So, you know your students and yourself. This will be a unit to begin a year on a solid foundation, honoring our pasts and working to change our future. You may have found this looking for strategies to help you share mindfulness in a community where people think SEL is a Communist plot, or from one where your students live in fear that one mistake will cause unimaginable chaos. If so, I sincerely hope that it gets better for you and your students. I am also not sure what will happen to us all in November of 2024. Even if you are reading this in a cave using a generator, know that you and your students are trying your best and practicing meditation techniques intentionally may lead to positive transformation.

Rationale and Alignment

All of my students are language learners. Many know three, four, five or more languages, but my job is to help them learn and function in a new language: English. Despite their undeniable abilities to use language in fresh and inventive ways, to move seamlessly between cultures, gestures, words, dances, and customs, my students and families are sometimes unable or unwilling to speak up if something is not fair or needs to change. While students who speak Spanish may be able to find bilingual assistance sometimes, it is challenging for anyone who has not had the privilege to learn to read and for any of the 30+ other language speakers I have had in my classes. Most of my students' families are not able to vote, and thus have very little political power in our current system. Some of my students struggle to feel comfortable enough to ask for help understanding a concept or to ask to use the bathroom, much less speak up for social change.

But as we still follow the promise of a free and appropriate public education for all in our schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2023) my students and their families have as much right to determine what they learn and how they learn it as any other Philadelphia family. One area where many people have strong opinions backed by decades of case law is the question of religious expression in schools. At my seminar, our professor shared that Philadelphia schools had tried Transcendental Meditation in schools, but had outlawed it in the seventies. We learned above that this was not quite accurate, but the experienced educators around our seminar table found it plausible. Some teachers have shared that their students and families opted out of meditation and mindfulness classroom activities using religious exemptions.

Thus, the Western tendency to rename and rebrand may have some use for teachers introducing this coursework. If the secularization of meditation and reinforcement by science helps convince administrators and families that it is worth a try, that is legitimate. The approach I will follow is trying to place this learning into its historical context while exploring the contemplative practices of my students, their families, and cultures.

As a lifelong proponent of the liberating promise of public education, I cherish the ability of communities to have a say in their children's education. We may vote for our school boards or depend on other processes, but public education at its best responds to the needs of the public. Lately, however, we have seen extreme examples from elsewhere in the country where locals try to ban books, teachers, and curricula from existence. While some seek to silence or destroy public education altogether, Philadelphia in my time here has emphasized equity and inclusivity. I want my students to feel the power within themselves to work for social change.

Unit Content

To accomplish my goals, my students will learn about meditation, explore Philadelphia educational history, and create a presentation that explains their ideas for a better school, neighborhood, or city. My current students are 4th through 8th graders in a pre-K-8 elementary school in West Philadelphia. Additionally, I am a teacher sponsor for our Horticulture Club and Student Council. This unit could be used in small or larger groups and apply not only to younger grades here in Philadelphia, but any language learners. After all, students from multilingual backgrounds are the fastest growing population in US public schools (Najarro, 2023), so you probably have multilingual learners already in your classrooms.

This unit is designed to be used during the tumultuous first few weeks, as we develop and learn our routines as a group. After introductions as new students enter our classroom, the beginning of the year is typically more of a rolling start, I will introduce meditation as a practice to begin our class or meeting. We will learn to get comfortable, find a point of focus, and notice our breathing and thoughts. Concurrently, we will study feelings vocabulary from the general to the specific. We would begin journaling before and after meditation during the first class, asking questions generated by the teacher and students. Eventually, since I have found students appreciate both routine and novelty, we could incorporate some of the mindfulness videos or audio tracks linked in the Appendix, and students could choose media or share contemplative practices they value for the class to practice. This would be for the first few minutes of every class for at least the first semester.

The next lesson will be translations of a short text from a visual representation. I can provide translations and cultural contexts for each word in English, but students will need to apply their prior knowledge of vocabulary and cultural connotations in order to translate the texts into their mother tongues. The Bhagavad Gita can be read as a pedagogical dialogue. Chapter 5 Verses 1 and 2 has Prince Arjun calling Krishna out on a perceived contradiction.:

Prince Arjun

O Krishna, you have recommended both the path of selfless action and *sannyasa*, the path of renunciation of action.
Tell me definitely which is better.

Krishna

Both renunciation of action and the selfless performance of action lead to the supreme goal.
But the path of action is better than renunciation. (Easwaren, 2007)

Working from images of Sanskrit written on paper or palm leaves, texts that also exist as art objects will prove a challenge to the ubiquitous google translate, and hopefully lead to deeper discussions and understanding of cultural context in language.

From here, I would ask my students to interview the oldest person they know to find out what types of contemplative practices they may engage in and how they affect their lives. We will develop questions together, but I would hope students could find something about how the person spends time in a contemplative way, what rituals or procedures they follow, and how the practices make them feel. Last, they could ask the person what is the reason they practice this contemplation. With these interviews, we could create illuminated texts in English and other languages, ideally sharing wisdom from our elders. At this time, I have many Muslim families from more than seven countries who pray multiple times a day in various ways, as well as Christian and Buddhist families with their own traditions. Families also are fond of walks, birdwatching, gardening, and doubtless many other ways of grounding themselves in the present and engaging in focused contemplation.

After we learn more about ourselves and some roots of meditation, students can learn more about Philadelphia student history, for example, the fight to learn African-American history brought by Philadelphia students in the 1960s and 70s. We could read articles and view images from the first leaders of this movement until the adoption of African-American History as a required class in 2005. It will be delicate but necessary to learn about the fascist response from then mayor Frank Rizzo to student leaders. While I do not want to retraumatize my students in any way, we need to understand the potential threats from other voices who may disagree and have power. There is a method introduced by Shu-Chin Wu developed while teaching contemplation in a college history course, practiced while students viewed a documentary on the Vietnam War (Simmer-Brown & Grace, 2011). Right after viewing, students were invited to write their initial reactions and then contemplate how they felt and what was going on in their mind. This method will help us process potentially triggering images in a meditative way, by intentionally noticing our feelings before, during, and after viewing. We can also learn about other educational movements in Philadelphia, such as the recent attempt to make special-admit schools more inclusive and representative of our city's diversity, and the efforts of a local Latinx rights organization, *Vamos Juntos*, to make our schools safer and more inclusive for immigrant and refugee youth.

For the culmination of our projects, as we continue to practice meditation daily, I will introduce elements of Freire's problem-posing education. Many times, when we first discuss what we like about school and what we might change, my newest students cannot even consider that our schools are not ideal and are mutable. By showing photos from within our own school, we can begin the conversation about possible improvements. I would ask students to generate questions for school leaders, conduct interviews of people in positions of authority, and finally create a presentation for the people who make the decisions about areas of their education students want to continue or update. They will focus on why this issue is important, and why it needs to change or be maintained. Last,

we would find venues for students to present their ideas and determine what our next steps might be to continue the work we begin.

Teaching Strategies

Anytime a teacher tries to lead a group of students in meditation, they should introduce the activity with choice and flexibility built in from the beginning. For example, while many practitioners close their eyes during contemplation, as a teacher I am more comfortable keeping an unfocused gaze. I would be more distracted worrying about my students and surroundings if my eyes were closed than if they were softly focused. Similarly, students who have experienced trauma may also prefer to keep their eyes open and can learn how to rely more on passive peripheral vision during exercises. Students should also be allowed to get comfortable, whether that is sitting on the floor, chair, or even laying down if the space and the cleanliness permit. Students should also be given the choice to opt-out, as long as they sit quietly and comfortably during the exercise. As Stromberg (2023) points out, “Encouraging students to make informed decisions regarding their participation or non-participation in the meditation reduces the likelihood of adverse effects, especially retraumatization.” That said, I have had the luxury of small groups for experimenting with these exercises, and I don’t know how some teachers with more bodies than space would fare allowing students that much autonomy. Again, you know your students.

As an introduction, our class will discuss and share what we already know about meditation. Here I can add information about mindfulness research and places students might recognize contemplation from my prior experience. You, dear reader, have a different life and different knowledge, so I encourage you to be honest and share what you know about meditation if and when you embark on this project. When we begin practice, students will be invited to focus on their breath, noticing how they feel physically, and noticing what they think about. After about two minutes of practice, students will again notice their natural breathing, and finally move extremities and rejoin the class. In subsequent practices, students can try counting in their brain for equal inhaled and exhaled, counting with English numbers or imaginary strokes of a bell and notice and share how those choices of focus change the experience.

Next, we will learn and practice feelings and emotion vocabulary. For our newest arrivals who have just begun their English learning, we will start with basic emotions like happy, sad, angry, excited, and nervous. We can model faces together showing the emotions, take pictures of ourselves showing the emotions and create presentations, find our current emotion from picture cards, and identify diverse faces showing emotions in pre-made presentations. Our students who know more English can select their specific emotion on a categorized list or a feelings wheel. We can discuss how the feelings are grouped and if that seems accurate or not in our experience. Using this vocabulary and

the explicit instruction, students can begin to write how they feel before and after meditation as a class starting routine.

After some practice of meditation, we will translate a text together about meditation. When first beginning this project, I researched examples of pre- 20th century writings on meditation, yoga, and liberation. Faced with blocks of unfamiliar squiggles and dots, I experienced a similar feeling as many of my students when they first arrived in older grades. I have a translation in English that students can work from to translate into their home languages, but I will also try to puzzle out words and concepts in Arabic as they work. We can continue to notice how we feel translating, moving between languages using dictionaries when possible or word to word translation using a translation app. Many of my students have begun to rely on google translate as our schools become 1:1, that is, one student: one chromebook. Doubtless many in the future will use these and other Artificial Intelligence tools to communicate more effectively, but I've noticed the AI translation strategy works for brains in the short term, for example, when students literate in their first languages try to answer long comprehension questions quickly in English, but often become passive in practice, with the student copying the words with hotkeys and lacking the confidence to allow their brain the space and time to listen to the question, translate in their mind, think, answer in their preferred language, and translate the answer back to English.

During this activity, students may work together or individually to translate a selection from the reading into their home language. We will read the efforts together in all of the class's languages including English, and circle the words we think are important. Last, we will connect related words to create word webs, or a graphic organizer showing relationships between words.

The following lesson will find us working to think of questions we could ask the oldest person we know. Together, students and the teacher will generate a list of questions and students will choose from the list for their interview and translate into the appropriate language. If a student is not literate in a home language, they can memorize the one question that must be included: What advice has helped you in life? Students will have more than one day to complete the interview, and the teacher should carefully check that each student has a person in mind and a way to communicate.

Students will then share the answers of their elders with classmates, and find one phrase, piece of advice, or idea that they want to translate and illuminate. We can look at more examples of pages from early copies of the Bhagavad Gita, the Yoga Sutras, Upanishads, or other texts as inspiration for our project. Using their interviews, students will design and create a poster or painting of their elder's wisdom in English and a different language for hallway or classroom display. This project will probably extend into two days if creating an art object, so the end of the first day and the start of the

second day can have students pair up to offer compliments and suggestions for each other's art.

Next, with our grounding from our ancestors, we can learn about our schools. On a walk around the building, always an important Newcomer activity, the students and I will take pictures of the school's bathrooms, cafeterias, water fountains, offices, yard, gym, classrooms, and other places. Our school is lucky enough to have a volunteer-run library, which is sadly becoming more and more of an incredible bonus. So I would advise you to take pictures of the positives of your school, as well as the realities. My school, for example, would most likely have flooded or non-working bathrooms, out of service water fountains, and no elevators over three floors, but we would also have our edible orchard, revamped garden, the aforementioned library, and beautiful architecture.

For the next class, after creating a presentation with our faces to review vocabulary of emotions, or asking a tech-savvy early finisher to create one, we can look at the images of our school and discuss what is good about our school and what could change. You could also do this activity with pictures from your school's neighborhood or your city or town. This is the foundational activity to Freire's problem-posing literacy education, so there are as many versions as situations (Freire, 2004).

We will then learn about three fights for education in Philadelphia: the fight to change the selection process for admission into Philadelphia's special-admit high schools during Covid, the ongoing fight for safe sanctuary schools organized by local advocacy group *Vamos Juntos*, and the fight for inclusion of African-American history in the curriculum begun by students in the 1960s and 1970s. I would encourage you to research local campaigns and other educational questions in your area. Research for my students would be reading different articles in groups and defining what was/is the fight, who are the fighters, what are their demands, and what do you think was the response?

Next, we would practice a version of the method introduced by Shu-Chin Wu in *Meditation in the Classroom* (2011). After our initial meditation, students would write how they feel before viewing the images of the protests, write their immediate reactions, and then observe how they feel. We would also have room for discussion and processing. In this way, we could view at least one image from Nov. 17, 1967 mindfully with less risk of traumatization. I would advise against examining images with blood or active violence.

Finally, students would select a local problem and determine who to create the presentation for. For example, if the idea is providing menstruation products in bathrooms, the quest of our Student Council this year, students must identify a person that has some power to change or help with this issue. I will provide links to city council people, the mayor, and school administrators, and help students set up appointments for presentations. Students will create a 3-10 slide presentation with at least one fact, one

idea for change, and one ask of the audience. Students will practice their presentation in pairs, we will develop a rubric together, then students will practice for the class while the audience evaluates their presentation using our rubric. Finally, students will present for people in positions of authority, using remote or in-person interviews.

Since this activity will require some time, it will be incorporated into class routines for the actual scheduling of the interviews, reporting back, and determining next steps if the student wants to continue their campaign.

Classroom Activities

Lesson1 : Introduction to meditation	
<p>Materials Presentation Prepare by watching video for Samatha meditation and/or choosing a video to guide your class. Video 1: instrumental. Practice for as short or long as needed. Recommend starting at about 1-2 minutes of focused practice. Video 2: 30 seconds with visual. More videos are listed at the end, as well as As you practice, students can also choose videos or lead meditations if they want.</p>	<p>Timeline for completion First day for about 20 minutes, continuing under 5 minutes daily practice</p>
	<p>Standards - CC.1.4.6.A, CC.1.4.7.A, CC.1.4.8.A Career ready: Self-Awareness and Self-Management ELD-LA.6-8.Narrate.Expressive</p>
<p>Objective: Students will share what they know about meditation and practice focused breathing. Students will write what they are feeling in L1 (home language) and/or English before and after meditation.</p>	
<p>Evaluation: At least two sentences or clauses written, sharing one idea (monolingual students who need may use google talk translate or peer support to answer).</p>	

Teaching strategies:

Whole group discussion; paired discussion; modeling, powerpoint

Note: My groups are about 4-6 students, so I would advise adding paired think-write-pair-share if this is tried with a class of more than 10.

Step by Step:

1. Greet class and share names.
2. Open notebook and add date.
3. Ask, what is meditation? What do you know about it?
4. Students write the word meditation and associated words and ideas in any language.
5. Show word in class languages and add pronunciation links for any non-readers.
6. Students can share ideas by drawings, actions, L1, or English.
7. Teacher writes ideas on a board or large paper.
8. Teacher shares two ideas they know: practiced for thousands of years in Asia and studied by scientists now.
9. Begin Practice
 1. Invite students to find a comfortable seat, either on the edge of their chair or on the floor.
 2. Invite students to feel their bodies' connection to the floor, and to close their eyes or partially close their eyes.
 3. If students opt out of meditation, they may sit comfortably and quietly while the rest of the class practices.
10. Introducing meditation
 - a. After establishing a comfortable seat, begin to notice your breath.
 - b. You don't need to change it, just notice. Where do you feel the breath the most?
 - c. After a time, see what happens when you breathe in more air. Notice your inhales and exhales.
 - d. *Sit for about three or four breaths as students try.*
 - e. Now, breathe normally. See how you feel.
11. Write how you feel in your notebook in any language.
12. Share ideas with paired partners and/or with class.

Lesson 2: How do I feel in English?

Materials Photos of students with permission during pantomime in presentation with vocabulary Feelings Vocabulary Feelings Wheel Feelings Word List Emotion Picture Cards Emotion Vocabulary on cardstock (happy, sad, mad, bored, confused, nervous, others as suggested by students) Shared presentation or jamboard	Timeline for completion 1-2 days
	Standards CC.1.4.6.A, CC.1.4.7.A, CC.1.4.8.A CC.1.2.6.J, CC.1.2.7.J, CC.1.2.8.J PA Career ready: Self-Awareness and Self-Management ELD-LA.6-8.Narrate.Expressive

Objective

Students will demonstrate and use feelings vocabulary to write sentences in English.

Evaluation

Students should write or draw one face for inclusion in the review presentation, write at least two sentences in English for how they feel before and after meditation

Teaching Strategies

Total physical response
Illustrating vocabulary
Using a chart, table, or graph

Steps to Completion

1. Greetings, sharing of names, and notebook procedure.
2. Question on board: How do you feel now?
3. Answers may be in any language
4. Introduce vocabulary through picture cards, if available, or modeling with word on card. Take pictures of individual students, with their permission, while they act out vocabulary.
5. Students should add vocabulary to notebooks with translations written in L1 and/or a picture.
6. Advanced students may choose the most precise word for how they feel from the chart or wheel.
 - a. Ask students using this resource: Why do you think these emotions are grouped in these ways? Would you group them differently?
7. If time, students can add a picture illustrating a word from a search, computer selfie, or emoji using jamboard or shared presentation.
8. Next, ask students to take a comfortable seat and practice using the breath as a focus of concentration. Ask advanced students to try counting silently during inhales and exhales in English and notice what happens.
9. After completion of 1-2 minutes of focused breathing, students write how they feel after meditation, using one or more vocabulary words.
10. Discuss as a class and everyone tries to use the feelings chart and wheel to share precise emotion.

Lesson 3: Does meditation have a goal?**Materials**[Presentation Day 3](#)

Printed and projected texts

Chromebooks

Dictionaries

Timeline for completion

1-2 days

Objective

Students will work together or individually to translate a section of text from an unfamiliar language, and revise by applying connotation.

Standards

CC.1.2.6.C, CC.1.2.7.C, CC.1.2.8.C

CC.1.2.6.J, CC.1.2.7.J, CC.1.2.8.J

CC.1.2.6.F, CC.1.2.7.F, CC.1.2.8.F

PLD.6-8.INT.Dis-Org.PL2

Evaluation

Students will translate at least one word from English or Arabic in target reading.

Students will independently circle related words and create a word web as a class.

Teaching Strategies

Group choice

Translanguaging

Intentional translation

Steps to Completion

1. Meditation and journal routine
2. Ask, Does meditation have a goal?
3. Paired student discussion and response. Record student answers.
4. Introduce translation exercise- Context: Prince Arjum is asking Krishna for advice after discovering a contradiction.
5. Model translating two or more words in Arabic.
6. Using dictionaries and/or google, students select or are assigned sections of text in English to translate. Students may assist one another, but introduce and/or model shades of teaching, assisting, and doing the work for the person.
7. Pause for discussions when students notice they have more than one word choice. Demonstrate selecting from the other translations into English, Arabic, or Spanish. Ask,
 - a. Which word do you think is closest to the intended meaning?
 - b. Why do you think that?
 - c. Is there a different word that could work?
 - d. What do you notice about the order of words in English and your other language?
8. When students complete their section, or there are ten minutes remaining, pass work one to the right, spend 30 seconds reading and 30 seconds writing questions or observations, repeat until each person receives their original papers.
9. Add words to a large central paper. Draw lines between related words creating a word web.

Lesson 4: Interview an elder

Materials

Zoom with my grandmother or other elder, family, neighbor, or friend
[Interview an elder worksheet](#)

Timeline for completion

2-3 days

Objectives

Students will generate ideas for questions written in English, then select one to five questions to ask the oldest person they know and can talk to.

Standards

CC.1.2.6.J, CC.1.2.7.J, CC.1.2.8.J

CC.1.2.6.F, CC.1.2.7.F, CC.1.2.8.F

CC.1.4.6.T, CC.1.4.7.T, CC.1.4.8.T

PA Career Ready: Social Problem Solving

ELD-LA.6-8.Narrate.Expressive

Evaluation

Students will need to write questions from the board for reference, the name of their elder, one to five questions written in English and one other language, and one to five answers written in any language, depending on literacy level.

Teaching Strategies

Modeling

Family/Community connections

Brainstorming

Translanguaging

Steps to Completion

1. Students will share the name of the oldest person they know. This might be a relative, friend, or neighbor. Ask if they are in contact with this person.
2. Meditate, Journal, Check-in
3. Ask: What can we learn from people older than us?
 - a. Capture student ideas on board or other way
4. Introduce project: Students will interview someone that is older than them and write down their answers. Determine timeline for completion with students and subjects' availability.
5. As a class, after think-write-pair-share or other processing time, ask the class what questions they would like to ask their elders during the interview. Use assistive devices or translation when necessary to capture students ideas in English, and invite students to write questions in their home languages. Ideally, every question would be comprehensible to every student.
6. Teacher adds questions: What advice do you have for me? How do you spend time contemplating? unless already suggested.
7. Students select five questions from the list. If they want, they can add more questions or different questions.
8. Students have 1-3 days to complete interviews.
9. During this time where we work on other lessons, I model meeting virtually with my grandmother or other older person and ask questions from the class. Students may also ask my guest questions and write answers to practice. This will serve students who are unable to complete the interview when they create their mantra.
10. When interviews are complete, continue to lesson 5.

Lesson 5: Choose a mantra

Materials

Students' interview responses to elder or my guest
18" x 11" artists' paper, poster paper, butcher paper, canvases, whatever media you choose to introduce
Markers, crayons, colored pencils, or acrylic paint, brushes, paper towels, water

Timeline for completion

2+ days depending on medium

Objectives

Students will choose a word, phrase, clause, or sentence from their interviews that they want to display and perhaps use as a meditative focus.

Students translate their elders' words into English or a home language, depending.

Students create posters for the classroom or hallway with their elder's advice in English and one other language.

Standards

CC.1.2.6.F, CC.1.2.7.F, CC.1.2.8.F

CC.1.2.6.J, CC.1.2.7.J, CC.1.2.8.J

CC.1.4.6.T, CC.1.4.7.T, CC.1.4.8.T

PA Career Ready Self-Awareness and Self-Management

ELD-LA.6-8.Narrate.Expressive

Evaluation Students must circle important words or ideas from an interview, and create a bilingual poster with words, clauses, phrases, or sentences of advice.

Teaching Strategies

Family/Community connections

Translanguaging

Peer-editing

Art in every classroom

Steps to Completion

After meditation,

1. Students work from a complete interview.
2. Students circle important words, phrases, or ideas. If students share a language, they can share about their interviews and help choose ideas for posters. If not, the teacher can check in and guide.
3. Students use dictionaries or electronic assistance to translate word by word, and check in with peers or teachers for feedback and assistance.
4. Students plan and create posters for the classroom or hallway with their elder's advice in English and one other language.

Allow time for excellent posters. If needed for slower finishers, class can be structured as 1. Meditate and journal, 2. Pair and share ideas, 3. Notice how you feel adding color and design, 4. Those who finish early can interview each other, meditate, or help clean.

Lesson 6: What do we see?**Materials**

Photos of bathrooms, cafeterias, water fountains, schoolyards, etc. taken on class walk.

Practice walking meditations as preparation

Timeline for completion

1 day for mindful walking

1 day for mindful viewing

Objectives

Students will recognize school vocabulary on a mindful walk.

Students will view and respond to images of Philadelphia students working for change.

Standards

CC.1.4.6.U, CC.1.4.7.U, CC.1.4.8.U

Standards - CC.1.4.6.T, CC.1.4.7.T, CC.1.4.8.T

Standards - CC.1.4.6.J, CC.1.4.7.J, CC.1.4.8.J

PA Career Ready: Social Problem Solving

WIDA: PLD.6-8.INT.Dis-Org.PL2

Evaluation

On the walk, all students should be able to point to and name at least one feature of school after practice.

Students will write reactions to images showing students protesting immediately and after pausing for contemplation.

Teaching Strategies

Mindful walking

Realia

Problem-posing Education

Journaling

Steps to Completion

Day 1:

1. Practice a mindful walking meditation for about a minute: follow steps for meditation and add walking very, very slowly with full attention on the feet and balance.
2. Prepare students to walk around the school by reviewing English for school places and norms of behavior.
3. Take a walk around the school, pointing out and taking pictures of bathrooms, water fountains, cafeterias, schoolyards, etc.
4. At some point in the walk, instruct students to practice mindful walking and notice.

Day 2:

1. Share selection of previous days' photos, asking students to notice how they feel in one word immediately after viewing, pausing for 10-30 seconds to breathe, and then sharing any ideas, questions, or reactions.
2. Share multiple student movements or school initiatives from your area. Ours will be images from different student protests in Philadelphia.
3. Return to our school's photos. What are some things we would like to change at our school? How could we change them?

Lesson can be extended by reading articles about issues and reporting information to class.

[Vamos Juntos and their fight for Sanctuary Schools](#)

[Philly special-admit schools admission process](#)

[Overview of the events of Nov. 17, 1967 fight for African-American students' rights](#)

[Historical summary article of Nov. 17, 1967](#)

[Potentially triggering Inquirer article with images from Nov. 17, 1967 fight for African-American students' rights](#)

[Outlined and categorized summary of students' demands on Nov. 17, 1967](#)

Lesson 7: Share your knowledge

Materials

Student created presentations
Student created rubric ([Slide 27](#))
Resources document

Timeline for completion

3 days direct instruction
1-2 weeks for time for scheduling with audiences and debrief

Objectives

Students will research their chosen educational issue and determine audience to create and present a presentation that clearly states in English what the student wants, at least one reason with citation(s), and a question for their viewer

Standards

CC.1.4.6.U, CC.1.4.7.U, CC.1.4.8.U

CC.1.4.6.T, CC.1.4.7.T, CC.1.4.8.T

CC.1.4.6.J, CC.1.4.7.J, CC.1.4.8.J

PA Career Ready: Social Problem Solving

WIDA: ELD-LA.6-8.Narrate.Expressive

Evaluation[Student Created Rubric \(Template Slide 27\)](#)

Ideas: Eye contact (Looks at or near audience, looks at board sometimes, reads from board, does not present), Fluency (Almost no mistakes in speaking or reading, Some mistakes in reading or speaking, A lot of mistakes in reading or speaking, and Does not speak. Other categories could be: Accurate information, Clear ideas, Informative Visuals. Students will be invited to share ideas and then choose as a class the most important four.

Presentations must

- 1. State the problem or issue*
- 2. Include at least one citation*
- 3. Propose a solution or ask for help*

Teaching Strategies

Student choice

Guided research

Authentic assessment

Introduction to technology

Peer practice and editing

Steps to Completion

1. Assess student familiarity with technology, including email, google classroom or comparable school-wide platform by having students complete a simple google form with their name and their chosen issue or problem from a drop down menu with three teacher-supported choices and other.
2. Students will choose an issue or problem in Philadelphia schools that they want to research through a google form and teachers will link documents or websites to students directly.
3. Students who have selected the same topic may work together at teacher's discretion.
4. Students will use templates to begin presentations.
5. Students complete another google form as they read answering these questions:
 - What is the issue or problem you are researching?
 - Who is also working on this problem?
 - How do you know this? (Add citation entry here)
 - What do you think should happen?
 - Who can you ask for help?
 - What will you ask them to do?
6. Per day, divide questions into groups of 1-3 with a meditative check in and journaling at the beginning of class, check on previous questions or expectations during whole-class discussion, then work with individual students for differentiation of technology skills, interests, and difficulty.
7. After completing presentations, students pair up and apply the student-created rubric to one another as they speak and listen. Students are encouraged to name what they like and notice about their peer's presentation, and to also ask questions. Students may continue to edit.
8. Next, students will present one by one to groups of four or to the class, depending on size. Students will also spend time finding contact information for audiences and write emails or call using a school phone. Teachers will facilitate and contact the audience directly if there are privacy concerns.
9. Over the next few weeks of class, ideally the audiences could meet directly with students during our class time, for example the principal or custodian dropping into our class, or virtually in the case of City Councilmembers or school district officials.
10. During each interview, the students not presenting are encouraged to ask or answer questions from the authority figure, and after each presentation we will check in as a class on our feelings, ideas, and questions.

Resources

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Appendix

Presentation

Cesarini, E. (2024). *What is Meditation? Presentation for Newcomers* [Link](#)

Google Slide presentation with daily activities for lessons 1, 2, and 3

Worksheet

Cesarini, E. (2024). Interview an Elder Worksheet. [Link](#)

3 worksheets with guiding questions for generating interview questions as a class, selecting questions and translating questions, and conducting the interview in the shared language of the elder.

Meditations for classrooms

Bulletproof. (2019, January 14). Breathing ball - unguided meditation. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwV6wHUhV-w>

10:00 minute unguided meditation with vaguely Japanese music and a gradually enlarging and shrinking design. Could also be played silently.

Fablefy - The Whole Child. (2018, November 2). *2 minutes Mindfulness: tree guided meditation for children and classrooms* [Video]. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iplZGpP2VO0>

2:00 minute video with a female narrator and cartoon white children demonstrate the movements. Auto-generated subtitles.

Flow Neuroscience. (2019b, August 31). *3-minute meditation exercise for beginners! Feet, Hands and Forehead - Flow*. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QpLP4xCZ2tU>

3:00 minute meditation with female narrator and available closed captions. The graphic is a gradually increasing and decreasing yellow circle. Pre-teach vocabulary: feet, hands, and forehead.

Gonoodle. (2021, November 29). *Weather the storm | Guided meditation for kids | Breathing exercises | Gonoodle*. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCe-WQbMWhw>

3:00 video with a female narrator telling a story about a tree in a storm, illustrated in motion. Gonoodle has many options for short meditation for younger learners in simple English.

GoNoodle, Get Moving. (2022, May 16). *Twist and Turn | Guided Meditations for Kids | GoNoodle* [Video]. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGw0rFaMyE8>

3:30 video with a female narrator, cartoon demonstration of movement, and emojis. This video asks students to move slowly and intentionally, and asks students to notice emotions before and after movement. Better for students after emotion vocabulary learning.

Insight Network Inc. (2021). Insight Timer App. (v2.281.0) Retrieved from
<https://insighttimer.com/>

Free app with paid options with a database of thousands of searchable audio meditations, body scans, binaural beats, and related categories. Tracks vary from one minute to hours. In a decade of nearly daily use, I have rarely listened to the same track twice. Includes a feature that shows you how many other people are using the app. At 7:00 pm on June 17, 2024, there were 28,689,422 people on Insight Timer worldwide.

Jon Kabat-Zinn. (n.d.). *Mindful listening*. <https://mindfulnessinschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/MiSP-Practices-Listening-5-Min.pdf>

2 page printable pamphlet with scripts for guided meditations intended for children.

Kidsa English. (2019, August 14). *Mindfulness Meditation for Kids | Guided Meditation for Children | KidsA English* [Video]. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VoNKELtIQs>

3:00 minute meditation for younger students featuring a female voice, xylophone music, and images of cartoon fish and numbers.

Meditation videos: Learn the basics of meditation. (n.d.). Headspace.
<https://www.headspace.com/meditation/meditation-videos>

Free and subscription based app with available videos. Videos are closed-captioned and feature cartoons illustrating the words.

pure star kids. (2021, January 8). *Candle and flower breathing - mindful and calming breathing technique* [Video]. YouTube.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTN_MtV5TFw

2:30 minute instrumental video with illustrated commands in English. Teacher could read aloud and act out.

Samatha Buddhist Meditation. (2023, November 7). *Sitting posture, the longest of counting and the breath in everyday life* [Video]. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21CXqdUT2sw>

Talking head style video with English description and modeling of taking a seat and practicing Samatha meditation by using counting and breath as the object of meditation. Samatha instruction from about 3:00-8:00, more explanation before and after.

School District of Philadelphia. (2023) Community Meeting App. (Version 2.4) [Mobile Education Software]. Retrieved from
<https://www.communitymeeting.me/#/dashboard>.

Paid collection of pre-made slides and organization tools that can serve as the curriculum during advisory time. Limited to mostly English, with some monolingual slides in Spanish and Chinese. Slides connect to Social and Emotional Learning strategies.

The Mindfulness Teacher. (2022, October 9). *Circle // 30 second breathing exercise. super short & simple!*. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fu6XOe6SwHI>

30 second breathing exercise with music and text. The viewer is invited to breathe in and out with an expanding and contracting ball.

Feelings and Emotions Vocabulary Resources

Test-English. (2023, September 15). Feelings and emotions – B2 English Vocabulary - Test-English. <https://test-english.com/explanation/b2-vocabulary-explanations/feelings-and-emotions-b2-english-vocabulary/>

Basic feelings and emotions illustrated by diverse adult and children's faces with space for words and labeling.

Gilson, M., Freeman, A., Yates, M. J., & Freeman, S. M. (2009). Feeling Words list. <https://www.ndapandas.org/wp-content/uploads/archive/Documents/News/FeelingsWordList.pdf>

Useful chart students can use to find general and more precise emotion words.

Download Free Printable FEELINGS WHEEL Template (PDF + Editable Canva version) — Mindful Coaching Tools. (n.d.). Mindful Coaching Tools. <https://www.mindfulcoachingtools.com/free-tools/p/the-feelings-wheel>

Printable and editable feelings wheel and guiding questions.

Images

File:Anger Controls Him.jpg - Wikimedia Commons. (2008, February 6). https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anger_Controls_Him.jpg

File:Bored.gif - Wikimedia Commons. (2011, November 3). <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bored.gif>

File:Confused Felipe.jpg - Wikimedia Commons. (2011, August 16). https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Confused_Felipe.jpg

FILE:2020 Ghana Spelling Bee Grand Finale 22.jpg - Wikimedia Commons. (2020, February 1).

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2020 Ghana Spelling Bee Grand Final 22.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2020_Ghana_Spelling_Bee_Grand_Final_22.jpg)

File:Girl with sad face.jpg - Wikimedia Commons. (2013, April 6).

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Girl with sad face.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Girl_with_sad_face.jpg)

File:Meditating in Sun.jpg - Wikimedia Commons. (2017, January 16).

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Meditating in sun.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Meditating_in_sun.jpg)

Wolinsky, C. Electrodes measure a Tibetan monk's brain activity. *Beyond the brain.*

Science. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/mind-brain>

Vyacheslav A. *File:U Bein, Happiness, Mandalay, Myanmar.jpg - Wikimedia Commons.* (2008, December 3).

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:U_Bein,_Happiness,_Mandalay,_Myanmar.jpg

Articles and websites about Philadelphia student protests

General 1 — Juntos. (n.d.). Juntos. <https://www.vamosjuntos.org/sanctuary-schools-campaign>

Interactive webpage outlining demands for Philadelphia schools, including school board resolution and videos.

Graham, K. A. (2017, November 17). These Philly schoolkids marched against injustice 50 years ago, and police responded with nightsticks. Today, they inspire a new generation. <https://www.inquirer.com>.

<https://www.inquirer.com/philly/education/philly-schools-1967-walkout-racial-injustice-police-riot-20171117.html>

Contemporary account of the events of Nov. 17, 1967 and their aftermath.

Includes videos of political leaders' filmed responses.

Mezzacappa, D. (2023b, November 1). Philadelphia schools chief announces changes to high school admissions after enrollment protests. *Chalkbeat.*

<https://www.chalkbeat.org/philadelphia/2023/3/23/23653678/philadelphia-teachers-protest-high-school-lottery-unfilled-seats-staff-cuts-enrollment-implicit-bias/>

Photo of student and teacher protestors, and article outlining demands of students for reforming admission processes for special-admit Philadelphia high schools.

Philadelphia schools add afro-U.S. history madison, ill., parents continue picketing. (1967/11/28/, 1967 Nov 28). *The Washington Post, Times Herald (1959-1973)*
Retrieved from
<https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/classes-resume-at-csu-despite-rumors-plot/docview/143070653/se-2>

Short national press article about the student protests on Nov. 17, 1967.

Philadelphia seizes 57 in negro rioting: Philadelphia police seize 57 as 3,500 students riot in negro school protest. (1967/11/18/, 1967 Nov 18). *New York Times (1923-)*
Retrieved from
<https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/philadelphia-seizes-57-negro-rioting/docview/118011826/se-2>

Includes image of police response to student protestors. Shows two policemen dragging a student, one policeman walking with a protester, and the back of a crowd in front of city hall.

Sigmond, C. E. (2011, June 16). *Philadelphian African American students campaign for greater rights, 1967*. Global Nonviolent Action Database.
<https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/philadelphian-african-american-students-campaign-greater-rights-1967>

Summary of students 'campaign and demands, including the demand for African-American history.

Standards Appendix

English Language Development Standards

From WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Digital Explorer, available at <https://satchel.commongoodlt.com/97c883b4-8590-454f-b222-f28298ec9a81/97c883b4-8590-454f-b222-f28298ec9a81>

PLD.6-8.INT.Dis-Org.PL2 Toward the end of each proficiency level, when scaffolded appropriately, multilingual learners will...* Understand how coherent texts *(spoken, written, multimodal)* are created to meet a purpose in a short, connected text

Students will translate short informative text illustrating the goal of action and non-action in relation to meditation.

ELD-LA.6-8.Narrate.Expressive Multilingual learners will construct language arts narratives that

Orient audience to context and point of view
 Expanded noun groups to state who or what the narrative is about
 Engage and adjust for audience

Students will create posters to give advice or wisdom from their elders, choosing precise words in English and home languages, and create a presentation for a person in the position to facilitate change.

Criteria of Language	Criteria Definition	End of Level 1	End of Level 2
<i>Grammatical Complexity</i>	<i>Understand how meanings are extended or enhanced through... ⇒</i>	<i>related simple sentences</i>	<i>multiple related simple sentences</i>
<i>Precision</i>	<i>Understand how precise meanings are created through everyday, cross-disciplinary, and technical language through... ⇒</i>	<i>an increasing number of words and phrases</i>	<i>a growing number of words and phrases in a variety of contexts</i>

Students may create posters with words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. Through peer editing and teacher support, students will write more precisely and expand ideas.

Note: Students are considered an English learner in Pennsylvania until they earn a 4.5 out of 6.0 points on the WIDA ACCESS test and a 10.4 on the reclassification rubric. The students who need the most help are typically my newly-arrived students in the first years of their US education. Please adapt the expectations of language reception and production according to your students 'needs.

Social/Emotional Learning Standards

Pennsylvania Department of Education. (n.d.). *Pennsylvania career ready skills*. Department of Education. <https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/CareerReadyPA/CareerReadySkills/Pages/default.aspx>

Self-Awareness and Self-Management

Skills to understand and manage behavior, including the abilities to set goals, recognize feelings, and respond effectively to challenges.

Social Problem Solving

Skills that support students to understand social norms, make responsible choices, and engage effectively in diverse contexts.

During discussions of the benefits of meditation, highlight the value of pausing and recognizing one's inner emotions. Students will develop action plans for change and present ideas to others.

PA ELA Standards

Standards - CC.1.2.6.C, CC.1.2.7.C, CC.1.2.8.C

Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text.

Students will study and produce texts through translation, attention to connotation, and refinement.

Standards - CC.1.2.6.J, CC.1.2.7.J, CC.1.2.8.J

Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Students will learn to choose precise words when speaking and writing.

Standards - CC.1.2.6.F, CC.1.2.7.F, CC.1.2.8.F

Analyze the influence of the words and phrases in a text including figurative and connotative, and technical meanings; and how they shape meaning and tone.

Students will apply connotation and meanings when they choose a word when translating texts in an unfamiliar language.

Standards - CC.1.4.6.A, CC.1.4.7.A, CC.1.4.8.A

Write informative/ explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information clearly.

Students will create posters to share elders 'wisdom and presentations to persuade people in positions of power.

Standards - CC.1.4.6.J, CC.1.4.7.J, CC.1.4.8.J

Organize the claim(s) with clear reasons and evidence clearly; clarify relationships among claim(s) and reasons by using words, phrases, and clauses; provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

Students will cite at least one source and add a concluding statement for their persuasive presentations.

Standards - CC.1.4.6.T, CC.1.4.7.T, CC.1.4.8.T

With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

Students will create and revise their elder advice texts by dialogue with subject, peers, and teacher, as well as read and respond to classmates 'writings to refine.

Standards - CC.1.4.6.U, CC.1.4.7.U, CC.1.4.8.U

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others

Students will use google slides to create presentations, comment on one another's writing, and present. Students will use guided internet searching to answer questions about and research student movements.

Author's Note: For comments, suggestions, further information, or non-working links, please email me at ecesarini@philasd.org.