

Classroom Proposal for *Rocky Rulers*:

Grade: 4-7, ages 10-14

Subject: English writing or reading class

Topic: Character development

Lesson Length: Should be split over two sessions 45-60 each

Lesson Goals:

Learning Objectives: To be able to identify character attributes and descriptors through reading comprehension and categorization. Being able to apply this to everyday reading and personal creative writing.

Part 1

Materials Needed:

1. Two books- a copy of *Rocky Rulers* and personal reading book, can be slightly lower than grade level. Prefer unillustrated stories. Can work in partners or small groups with one book.
2. Scrap paper for brainstorming and notes as the story is read.
3. two copies of the Character Sheet (separate document)
4. Writing materials
5. White board or large paper at front of class

Structure/ Activity :

1. Introduce the author and a short description of *Rocky Rulers*.
2. Explain Character attributes and descriptions making a list on the white board. Using ideas from the students. Write down the specific words corresponding to the character sheet handout.
3. Read a section of *Rocky Rulers* aloud, I recommend a chapter in the first 5, encouraging the students to use their scrap paper to write down what types of descriptions and attributes they hear.
4. Have someone (teacher or student) act as scribe while the students share what they heard. Ask for a show of hands for who else had the same item. If only a few have a description ask where they heard that in the story. Review the Character sheet and reassure them that not everything about a character is shown in one part so blanks or vague parts are acceptable.
5. Students can then hand in their sheets to their teacher or add them to their novel study booklets.

Extention activity

1. Divide into partners or small groups. Have one person read the first chapter or first few pages of their personal book. Have the others write down the descriptions they hear.
2. Fill out the Character Sheets with the new information.
3. Share what their character was like with the rest of the class. Identify the book read, the character by name and what they learned about the character. Not all groups need to do this but those who would like to are encouraged.

Assessment:

Participation, reading comprehension skills through details on character sheet.

Part 2

Materials Needed:

1. Scrap paper for calculations
2. A set of dice per group
3. Print out of Character Sheet
4. Paper for Character write up. Younger classes can do single paragraphs, older are encouraged to do 1-2 pages and describing their character in a situation.
5. Pens and pencils possibly in different colours for ease of identification.

Structure/ Activity :

1. Review Character Sheet from last class (part 1)
2. Explain how to roll dice according to teacher's instruction section.
3. Hand out Dice sets.
4. Have groups do the math to fill out every section of Character Sheet.
5. Decide on a name for their character.
6. Younger grades write out their character descriptions into a paragraph using the Character sheet as a guide. Not all sections are required to be in the writing portion. Encourage older students to put their character into a situation – something simple such as going for a walk or eating a meal. Include all the necessary descriptors or attributes that would be shown in that situation.

Assessment:

Math calculations, descriptions, detailed explanation sentences, Writing quality in terms of grammar, spelling, punctuation. Understanding how strengths and weaknesses can interact. Accepting that not everyone is good at everything and that weaknesses can make interesting and relatable characters. Ability to include descriptors as part of action in scene. Creativity.

Teachers Instruction Sheet:

Students should write down what type of character they want to build. Examples- Superhero, hockey player, teacher or mentor, other jobs or roles or if it is a fantasy creature – dragon, fairy, elf, dwarf are also options. Write this in the Type box

Explanation of attributes:

Strength is being able to crush a tomato.

Agility is being able to dodge a tomato. (Reaction time, speed, sense of direction)

Dexterity is being able to juggle a tomato. (Hand-Eye co-ordination)

Constitution is being able to eat a bad tomato. (Healthiness, hit-points)

Intelligence is knowing a tomato is a fruit. (Book smarts)

Wisdom is knowing not to put a tomato in a fruit salad. (street or experiential smarts)

Charisma is being able to sell a tomato based fruit salad. ('Riz', interpersonal skills)

Explanations of descriptions:

Body - encourage more than basic: blue eyes vs eyes like a team's uniform or a blue-raspberry Slurpee.

Language -Sayings, favourite words, speech patterns, accents, impediments, proper vs improper,

Level – Age, education, influences (books, movies), training
Relationships – Family, friends, groups, people
Equipment – Clothing, bags, toys, tools, fidgets
Special – Mannerisms, pets, details

Dice/Math:

Dice will be used to determine strengths and weaknesses of the attributes. Any shape, amount or combination of dice can be used as long as the scale of what the numbers considered strong and weak are understood.

Two options

1. Roll 3 six-sided dice. This will allow a scale between 3 and 18. It will make most numbers in the middle range. Numbers greater than or equal to 12 being strong and less than or equal to 8 being considered weak.

2. Percentile role using 2 ten-sided dice (0-9 or 1-10) one die represents the tens column and one die represents the ones column. If using a 1-10 die 10=0. This method creates more dynamic characters. 0&0 or 10&10 is 100%

As a roll is made and calculated, the student must decide which attribute they are going to use that number in. Then they will make the next roll and assign that number. Numbers can not be changed once they have been written down. (Similar to how 'Yahtzee' is played). There may be consequences to their choices. (such as waiting for a higher roll that never comes).

Once the numbers are totaled than have the students write a sentence of what that attribute means for their character.

Hockey player with high intelligence (14-18) might be a captain or the person making the plays and rules for the team.

A Superhero with a low strength (3-5) might need to ask for help or find tools to help him on his missions when he can't do things physically.

Encourage students to figure out alternative actions for low rolls and ways to accent their high rolls. Some will be disappointed with their rolls. Explain that these are called character flaws.

When the attribute boxes are all filled in have them fill out the rest of the description boxes and include a name for their character.

Writing up the paragraph or pages will then be based off of the outline already completed on the Character sheet.

Spin off lessons:

Combinations and Permutations – Likelihood of character attributes.

Artwork of character