Unit 3.4 How Do I Solve My Problems? Lesson: Chapter 3 of Our Guide to Life Grade Levels 3–4

Yearlong Objectives
- I can recognize my own unique skills.
- I can express myself with words and art.
- I can work as part of an ensemble.

Essential Questions
- How can I be an active member of an ensemble?

Lesson Objectives
- Define and describe “conflict” and “resolution”.
- Create a draft of an advice page.
- Create a piece of writing in fine calligraphic lettering.

National Arts Standards
Note: For consistency, all arts standards listed are second grade standards. However, National Anchor Standards naturally build on each other. To adjust for your grade level, find the corresponding Anchor Standard for your grade.
- Brainstorm collaboratively multiple approaches to an art or design problem. (VA:Cr1.1.2a)
- Demonstrate safe procedures for using and cleaning art tools, equipment, and studio spaces. (VA:Cr2.2.2a)
- Analyze how art exhibited inside and outside of schools (such as in museums, galleries, virtual spaces, and other venues) contributes to communities. (VA:Pr6.1.2a)
- Contribute to group guided drama experiences (e.g., process drama, story drama, creative drama) and informally share with peers. (TH:Pr6.1.2)

Materials needed
Final draft papers (11 x 17), draft books (from previous session), draft paper, calligraphy pens or paintbrushes and black ink, watercolor pencils, calligraphy alphabet

Time needed
90 minutes

Vocabulary for this lesson
Social-Emotional: comfortable, uncomfortable, sadness, joy, fear, surprise, anger, conflict, resolution
Visual Arts: draft, book arts, binding, lettering, drop cap
Theatre: ensemble

Warm-Up Phase (15 minutes)
Circle: “Favorite” question: What is your favorite holiday?
Feelings question: Think about the five emotions we learned in the last unit. Which one most closely matches the way you are feeling right now? Why?
Team-building game: Zip Zap Zop, Level 4 (see Team-Building Games)

I Do/ We Do (20 minutes)

Explicitly Teach
- Review the three problems selected in the first session.
- Review final draft pages created during the last session.
- Explain that you are going to write advice for another one of the problems today (review vocabulary: “conflict” and “resolution”). All problems have many possible solutions. If you knew someone was being faced with this problem, how would you advise they solve it? Let’s solve a problem together as a group.
- Follow the same guidelines as last time, but this time, add the option to create an illustration using watercolor pencils.
- Demonstrate how to use watercolor pencils carefully, and only after you are completely done lettering.

Keep in Mind
- What are some ways you can be sure that your words and lettering are complete and ready to be added to a book?
- What are some ways every person’s work might look different? What are you proudest of in terms of your capabilities as an artist and a writer? How can you use your strengths in the work you create today?
- How can you help a friend who might be struggling without taking over their project?

You Do (55 minutes)
The project, step-by-step
- Begin with your draft book.
- In pencil, draft exactly what you will write on your book pages: advice on the first and second problems voted on by the class.
- In pencil, transfer your idea to a large piece of draft paper. Practice writing with the calligraphy pen, and practice forming letters that are interesting to you.
- Create a final version of your advice page. Be sure to include a chapter title.
- Add an illustration using watercolor pencils.
- After creating your image, apply water sparingly and gently to create a paint-like effect.

Extensions: Students can sketch illustrations on all three of their drafts: first, midway, and final.
Closure: Writers’ circle: A few writers read aloud their advice pages, if they are feeling particularly proud of them.
Optional Writing Prompt: What other problems have you thought of while working on this project?

Big Picture
We will use these books as drafts as we work toward creating a big class book of How Tos: How to Solve Our Big Problems. We will work on designing beautiful pages and expert binding to create the kind of book we would want to find in the library.

Adjustments for K-1
Warm-Up Phase
Play the Level 1 version of the game.

I Do/ We Do
Do the advice page for the major problem as a group write: Kids talk and you write simple sentences on the board that they can easily copy.
You Do
Use markers instead of calligraphy pens. Students copy, illustrate, and decorate letters with skinny markers to create drop caps. Alternately, students can work as a table group, with each student making a word for the sentence, and then all words can be glued together to make a class page.