

Sonrieta Lesson Plan

Theme

Sonrieta shows how simple things such as music, poetry, the beauty of nature and special friends can make us smile, fill our hearts with happiness and turn away grimness. But it also shows how following your heart when it comes to who you are, is the key to happiness.

Examples

✧ Even though Antoine and Pablo were in the Frowning Tower of Grim, both were happy because they were following their hearts when it came to creating their art.

✧ Oscar tried to follow the rules of Grimly Valley when it came to writing music but was not happy until he “stopped thinking about the music” and let his heart take over and the music started to flow out of him with out the restrictions of the rules.

✧ Similarly Petunia tried to not notice the beauty of flowers so she could “fit in” but was happiest when she was with her flowers.

✧ The friendship and gatherings to share art led Grace to realize that she was a dancer.

Before reading the story:

✧ Down load the coloring pages from the website www.sonrieta.com for your students to color.

✧ By looking at the pictures that you downloaded can the students predict what the story is about?

✧ Explain the meaning of the word grim.

✧ Review Spanish words on page 33.

During reading

Discussion questions marked with a ◆ may be asked during the reading.

After reading

After the story with your students go over the following discussion questions to bring out the underlying themes of the story and what lessons may be taken away from it. Questions 4-7 are fall can be used to talk about *word play*.

1. ◆ Would you like to live in Grimly Valley? Why/ Why not?
2. ◆ Why do you think the people of Grimly Valley saw things three shades paler?

3. ◆ If you are walking through a garden but are sad, angry or worried about something or busy thinking about your homework assignment do you think you might miss the beauty of the flowers in the garden?
4. Do the names of the characters have any special meanings; do they fit the characters? Give three examples.
5. Sonrieta's last name is a combination of the English word change and the Spanish word "cosas" which means things. Why do you think they have that name?
6. ◆ Why do you think Oscar's last name was "soledad", which means loneliness or solitude in Spanish?
7. Can you make up a word or words like Pablo did? What does your word mean?
8. Pablo, Antoine and Oscar were all artists who wouldn't change their way of creating poetry, paintings and music to follow the rules of Grimly Valley. For this they were at the Frowning Tower of Grim. Do you think artist should have to follow rules placed on them by others or should they be free to create whatever they want?
9. Petunia first gave Sonrieta a flower, then Antoine shared his painting and Pablo a few of his poems. From this small beginning how did the atmosphere of the tower change?
10. What happened to the guests of the tower after it was filled with smiling?
11. What is the lesson/meaning of Sonrieta's poem? Do you agree with it?
12. ◆ Should you keep happiness to yourself or should you share it like Sonrieta wanted to?
13. Why were the town's people so shocked by the parade? Why did the children react differently to the parade from their parents?

Answers to some of the questions

The following answers will make it easier to for you to discuss the questions without going back through the story.

2 and 3. When we are caught up in the "seriousness" of life; being busy doing work, worrying about things or life's disappointments we often miss the beauty around us that can bring us joy.

4. Many of the character's names carry a meaning that applies to that character. For instance dancers are graceful and Grace is a dancer. Petunia loves flowers and also has the name of a flower. Necio being a member of the High Council of Grim is "stubborn" in seeing things only by the rules of Grimly Valley. Sonrieta, Ms. Prune, Oscar Soledad and Allegre could all be answers to this question.

5. The name Changeocas foretells that life in Grimly Valley will change when Sonrieta is born.

6. Many artists spend much of their time alone or in solitude creating their art so the name Soledad fits for Oscar since he must be alone to practice and compose.

10. They saw things in their true colors and they enjoyed life because they would get together each night and dance and listen to music.

Activities

*Have students brainstorm people, places, things, environments, activities that bring happiness to their lives.

*Have students brainstorm rules in their life that “hold them back/ restrict their freedom” do they have more or less freedom than students in other countries to express themselves?

*Have students create the “rules” for their perfect world.

*Have students color the sketches you downloaded.

Sonrieta Vocabulary Words

achieve	effect	resident
amazement	eternity	restore
avoid	grace	result
babble	grim	sensation
bashful	honorable	shiver
bewildered	immediately	slightly
contagious	jig	slouch
counsel	menacing	struggle
courtyard	presence	temptation
discussion	recite	tolerable
dreadfully	reform	