

Lesson Plans

NEA Human and Civil Rights
Awards Program

Lessons Learned from NEA's Social Justice Advocates

DANIEL RODRIGUEZ

George I. Sánchez Memorial Award

**Lesson At-A-Glance**

- ▶ **Opening the Lesson:**
Keys to the Future
- ▶ **Leading the Lesson:**
Understanding Social
Justice Causes
- ▶ **Closing the Lesson:**
Your Own Dreams

Objective(s)

- ▶ Students will be able to define fairness.
- ▶ Students will be able to apply the concept of fairness to equal educational opportunities and see the information gained as an opportunity for activism.
- ▶ Students will be able to identify the significant social justice contributions of Daniel Rodriguez and examine how he has helped others.
- ▶ Students will be able to define advocacy and reflect about their own opportunities for advocacy.

Materials/Preparation

- ▶ Whiteboard and marker
- ▶ Index cards or sticky notes (a few per student)
- ▶ Tape
- ▶ Sheet of small stickers (e.g., dots or small star stickers)
- ▶ 12 x 18 white construction paper (one piece per student)
- ▶ Markers, colored pencils, crayons



- ▶ Handout 1: Word Cards (print and cut one set)
- ▶ Handout 2: Puzzle Piece Template
 - Make one copy of the puzzle per small group of three or four students
 - Cut each puzzle into pieces, separate the yellow pieces from the blue pieces and place into two separate envelopes or small plastic bags
 - Label the envelopes or plastic bags in order to keep the two envelopes that belong to the same puzzle together (Puzzle 1-A and Puzzle 1-B; Puzzle 2-A and Puzzle 2-B, etc.)
- ▶ Handout 3: Dream Cloud Template (make one copy per student)
- ▶ Prior to teaching the lesson familiarize yourself with Daniel Rodriguez's background by reading the Lesson Plan Introduction that can be found at www.nea.org/hcrawards.

Suggested Grouping Structures

Whole group discussion and independent work

Estimated total lesson time: 40 minutes

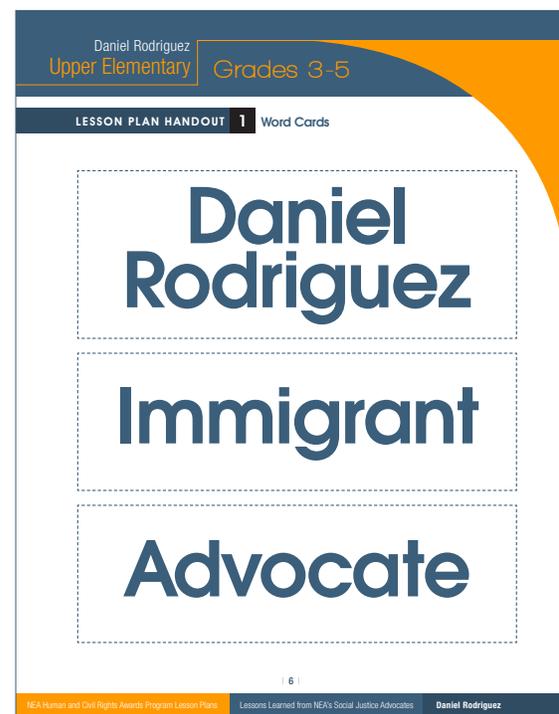
Opening the Lesson (10 minutes)

Keys to the Future

1. **Ask** students to name all the kinds of jobs they can think of.
2. **List** each on an index card and tape to the whiteboard or chalkboard. (Prompt to include some that would require further education.)
3. **Tell** the students you need to remove some of the jobs. Take down all of the ones that require further education. Draw a separate area on the board and move the cards inside of that space.
4. **Ask**, "Why do you think I have moved these jobs into a different category? (Prompt the

thinking: What would these jobs require you to have? College or further education.)

5. **Explain** that for some people, getting a job that requires further education has been very difficult or impossible. Tell them this was true for the person we will learn about today, Daniel Rodriguez. Post the Daniel Rodriguez Word Card (Handout 1). Say, "We will learn how he worked hard to change his own situation and is working to help others have the equal opportunity to further their education as well."



Leading the Lesson (20 minutes)

Understanding Social Justice Causes

6. **Ask**, "Is it fair that some people who work really hard in school, have certain rules which say they can't go on to college?" Direct students to think about their answer and share it with a partner. Ask for a few students to share with the whole class.

7. **Tell** students that Daniel Rodriguez thinks everyone should have the same opportunity to succeed. He was born outside of the United States and was brought here at a very young age with his mother. A person who is not born in a particular place but moves to that place after they are born is referred to as an immigrant. The word immigrate means to move. When a person moves from another country into the United States without following the immigration procedures that the United States has, the term undocumented immigrant is used. Undocumented means not having paperwork completed. Even a young child brought to the United States by his or her parents would be considered an undocumented immigrant along with his or her family. Since an undocumented immigrant did not complete the required legal immigration process to become an American Citizen, they sometimes are subjected to different rules and laws than other American citizens. In some cases, this is true for young people, brought to America with their families, who have never known any other country as their home.
8. **Tell** the class that you are going to lead them through an activity to help explain what that may feel like. Note: Be sure to prepare the puzzles (Handout 2) as directed in the Materials/Preparation section in order to carry out this step. Divide the class into small groups of three or four students. Randomly pick two of the groups and place stickers on the students' hands in those two groups only. Give all of the groups the first envelope or bag with the yellow puzzle pieces (do not let the students know that they are only getting half of the puzzle). Tell students to begin putting the puzzle together. After about 30 seconds to a minute, ask the students to pause. Tell the class that the groups wearing stickers are going to get some additional pieces to work with. At this time, give only those two groups with the stickers the second envelopes with the blue puzzle pieces. Tell the class that they can work on the puzzle for another 30 seconds and direct the groups with the additional pieces to use the new pieces as well. The other groups can only use their original pieces.
9. **Give** the groups about 30 additional seconds to work on the puzzles. Bring the whole class together and ask if every group was able to complete the task. When some groups say they can't finish because they don't have all of their pieces, ask the class if they think it is fair for some students to have everything they need, but not others. Explain that Daniel Rodriguez did not think that was fair either. Since he was not born in the United States, he was told that he couldn't go on to college. Many other students have the same problem as he did.
10. **Ask** the class to think to themselves for a moment, if they think everyone should have what they need to finish the puzzle. Remind them that Daniel Rodriguez does and then give the other groups their second envelopes (with the blue pieces).
11. **Allow** time for all of the groups to finish the puzzles.
12. **Direct** students to read what the puzzle says (Daniel Rodriguez, Social Justice Advocate, and The Dream Act). Say, "You know the name Daniel Rodriguez, now let's find out what the Dream Act and Social Justice Advocate mean to him."
13. **Explain** that the Dream Act is the name of plans that people are working on in State and Federal Government Levels where students

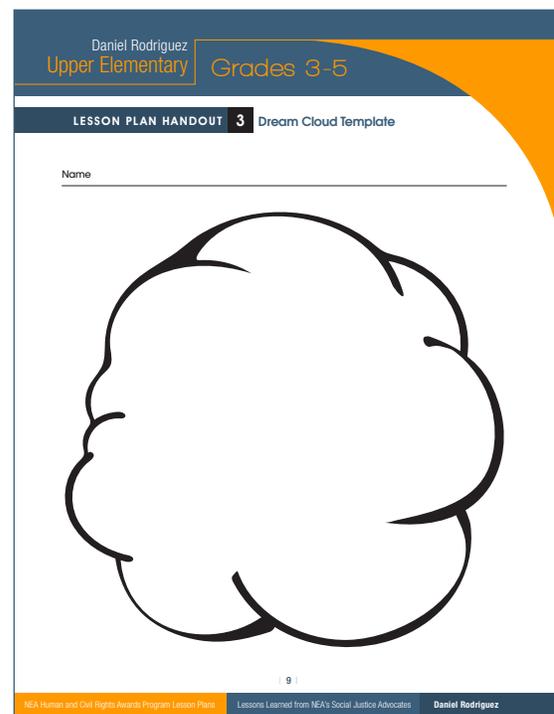
who are undocumented immigrants have an equal opportunity to go to college and to pay the same tuition rates as other students who are considered legal residents of a state and therefore pay a lower tuition rate. At Arizona State University (ASU), Daniel Rodriguez continued to excel academically and he became a full-fledged activist. In 2008, he founded what would become the Arizona Dream Act Coalition (ADAC). He understood the importance of organizing the undocumented communities. He organized leadership development trainings focusing on the power of shared stories.

14. **Ask**, “What do you think the connection is between the title of the Dream Act and the kind of dreams that a person can have when he or she sleeps or thinks?” Direct students to think to themselves for a moment about your question.
15. **Explain** that because of all of his work for others, Daniel Rodriguez has received a Human and Civil Rights Award from the National Education Association. Say, “He was awarded the George I. Sánchez Memorial Award. George I. Sánchez was an educator and scholar who devoted his life to improving the education of Hispanic children. The award is given in his honor to recognize a person whose activities significantly impact education and the achievement of equal opportunity for Hispanics. Mr. Sanchez and Mr. Rodriguez are examples of Social Justice Advocates.” Post the Advocate Word Card (Handout 1).
16. **Ask** the class what makes a person an advocate and discuss. (Prompt the answer: A person who devotes himself or herself to making a difference for others; A person who stands up for an important cause often involving the rights or the common good of others).

Closing the Lesson (10 minutes)

Your Own Dreams

17. **Post** the I am a Deamer Word Card (Handout 1). Ask students to think of a dream they have for a better world. Tell them to think about that dream and how it would help others. **Give** each student a 12x18 sheet of white construction paper and a dream “cloud” template (Handout 3).



18. **Have** students write sentences telling what their dreams are on the clouds, then cut the shapes out and glue them onto their construction paper. Assign partners and have students read their sentences to each other and help each other with sentence writing as needed.
19. **Tell** students to finish the posters by adding pictures (students can draw the pictures or cut pictures from magazines) that fit with their sentences. As students work, tell them they

are “dreamers” just like Daniel Rodriguez and that thinking about ways to make a difference is how he started, too. When finished, post the pictures on a bulletin board or wall with the title, “I Am a Dreamer.”

Assessment Suggestions

- ▶ Student response to classroom discussion
- ▶ Writing assignment
- ▶ Poster

Adaptations, Enrichment, Cross-curricular Opportunities

- ▶ Have students create a list of classroom rules for ways to treat everyone fairly, a Fairness Doctrine to follow in the classroom.
- ▶ Have students work in groups and help each other with writing on Your Own Dream Activity Sheet.
- ▶ Integrate Art, have the class create a wall-length mural to display in the classroom with pictures to illustrate the Fairness Doctrine.

**Daniel
Rodriguez**

Immigrant

Advocate

I am a
Dreamer.



Name _____

