

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:**
Examining Quote Themes
- ▶ **Leading the Lesson:**
What Inspires a Social Justice Advocate?
- ▶ **Closing the Lesson:**
We are all Dreamers

Objective(s)

- ▶ Students will be able to identify educational barriers that are present for undocumented immigrants.
- ▶ Students will be able to identify the significant social justice contributions of Daniel Rodriguez.
- ▶ 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.

Materials/Preparation

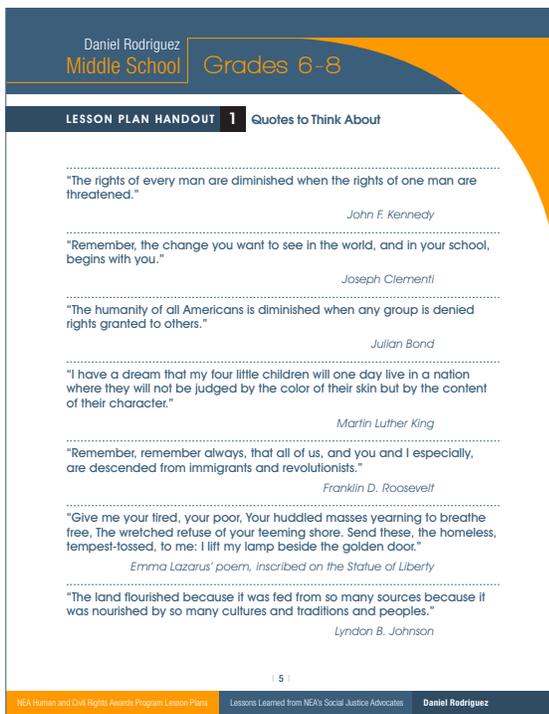
- ▶ Whiteboard and marker
- ▶ Markers, colored pencils, crayons, scissors
- ▶ 12 x 18 white construction paper (one piece per student)
- ▶ Handout 1: Quotes to Think About (make one copy per student)
- ▶ Handout 2: Introducing Daniel Rodriguez
- ▶ Prior to teaching the lesson familiarize yourself with Daniel Rodriguez's background by reading the Lesson Plan Introduction that can be found at www.nea.org/hcawards.

8. **Discuss** the meaning of the term undocumented immigrant with the class. (Prompt: Not having the official documents that are needed to enter, live in, or work in a country as a legal citizen).
9. **Ask**, “What challenges might an undocumented immigrant face?” Guide the discussion to include disadvantages in the educational system.
10. **Ask**, “What might Daniel’s dreams have been as he was growing up?” (Possible responses: to be treated fairly, to receive an education, to go to college, to get a good job.)
11. **Ask**, “Are most of his dreams and goals similar to yours?” Explain that young undocumented immigrants have many roadblocks in their paths including the denial of admission to colleges based only on their undocumented immigrant status and the denial of equitable tuition rates if admission is allowed (e.g., example making an undocumented immigrant pay for college at an “out of state” tuition rate when they are attending a college in a state they have lived in their entire lives).
12. **Discuss** the meaning of the Dream Act and the term Dreamers with the class. Explain that “DREAM” stands for “Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors.” The Act part of DREAM Act means it is a bill, legislation or a law. The passing of new and improving upon existing DREAM Act legislation is being carried out at both the state and federal government levels. The term “Dreamer” has been used to describe young undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as children and who have lived and gone to school here for their entire lives as Americans. It also has a philosophical meaning and refers to the hopes and dreams that young people have for their futures and the equal opportunity to pursue those dreams. Dream Act legislation addresses topics like the challenges Daniel Rodriguez faced.
13. **Tell** students that as a result of his struggles and challenges, Danielle Rodriguez now works to help other undocumented immigrants in similar situations.
14. **Tell** students they will work in groups of four, and each group will be assigned one of the quotes from the opening to discuss further. Tell them they will have five minutes for their discussion and that they will need to pick one group member to write down the group’s thoughts about what the quote means to them.
15. **Assign** each group one of the quotes from Handout 2.
16. **Direct** students to begin and give them five minutes. Ask them to stop working after five minutes and have a member of each group share their thoughts with the class about their quote.
17. **Ask** if most of the quotes would be ones that would apply to students facing similar challenges to Daniel Rodriguez.
18. **Ask** students to consider how each of the quotes could serve as inspiration or support of philosophical belief for social justice and human and civil rights advocacy. Discuss each quote and suggest some of the advocacy actions or causes that a leader may be involved with or support if that quote was one of his or her mottos or sources of inspiration and belief system.

Closing the Lesson (10 minutes)

We are all Dreamers

19. **Give** each student a piece of 12 x 18 construction paper.
20. **Tell** students to select their favorite quote from Handout 1 to illustrate in a poster. Have them cut out and attach the quote to the bottom of their poster.



completed an activity like this in school and why. Have students find partners and share their thoughts. Conclude by asking for a few volunteers to share some of their thoughts with the whole group.

Assessment Suggestions

- ▶ Discussion Response
- ▶ Teacher observation of small group work
- ▶ Posters

Adaptations, Enrichment, Cross-curricular Opportunities

- ▶ Have students research Daniel Rodriguez and the Dream Act.
- ▶ Have students create a quote of their own regarding social justice and fair treatment.

21. **Post** the completed posters with a heading that says "WE ARE ALL DREAMERS" and allow a few minutes for students to look at one another's posters. After looking at the posters, direct students to think for a moment about which quote they think Daniel Rodriguez might have chosen if he had

LESSON PLAN HANDOUT

1

Quotes to Think About

“The rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened.”

John F. Kennedy

“Remember, the change you want to see in the world, and in your school, begins with you.”

Joseph Clementi

“The humanity of all Americans is diminished when any group is denied rights granted to others.”

Julian Bond

“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

Martin Luther King

“Remember, remember always, that all of us, and you and I especially, are descended from immigrants and revolutionists.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt

“Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me: I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”

Emma Lazarus’ poem, inscribed on the Statue of Liberty

“The land flourished because it was fed from so many sources because it was nourished by so many cultures and traditions and peoples.”

Lyndon B. Johnson

LESSON PLAN HANDOUT

2

Introducing Daniel Rodriguez



Introducing the National Education Association Human and Civil Rights Awards Program Recipient Daniel Rodriguez

A Dreamer Becomes a Leader

Daniel Rodriguez was born in Monterrey, Mexico and came to Phoenix, Arizona with his mother when he was seven years old. He grew up in Phoenix attending school and thinking of his future. One high school counselor told Daniel he would not be able to attend college because he was undocumented. Fortunately, another counselor encouraged Daniel not to give up on college and to focus on his grades and school involvement. He did both. He excelled academically, and he joined school clubs, including becoming vice president of the Black Student Union (BSU).

With the BSU, he learned about a group of people who had to struggle to be recognized as full human beings and Americans. He saw the similarities with his own struggle. 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 community where so many live in the shadows. He organized leadership development trainings focusing on the power of shared stories. He came out publicly as an undocumented person, while other youth often used pseudonyms to protect their identity.

By 2009, the undocumented in Arizona lived in fear because of the state's anti-immigrant

policies. Daniel Rodriguez began to organize "Coming Out of the Shadows" events in public forums to create a space for undocumented youth to confront their fears by sharing their stories publicly. In 2010, Daniel led a three-week action in which immigrant youth camped outside Senator John McCain's office in Phoenix, asking the Senator to support the Dream Act.





Introducing the National Education Association Human and Civil Rights Awards Program Recipient Daniel Rodriguez

A Dreamer Becomes a Leader

Daniel graduated Magna Cum Laude from ASU with a B.A. in Political Science and English Literature. He received many awards, including the Most Outstanding Hispanic Undergraduate at ASU and the Ross Rice Award for Excellence in Political Science. In his third year at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, he was the only undocumented student in the law school. He has served as president of the Somos America/We Are America Coalition, the largest immigrant rights coalition in Arizona.