

## 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:**  
Thinking of the Future
- ▶ **Leading the Lesson:**  
Understanding Advocacy
- ▶ **Closing the Lesson:**  
What it Means to Dream

#### Objective(s)

- ▶ Students will be able to understand character traits related to their dreams for the future.
- ▶ Students will be able to identify people with roles in their lives whose guidance will help them reach their dreams.
- ▶ Students will discuss the social justice contributions of Daniel Rodriguez and his dedication to helping others.

#### Materials/Preparation

- ▶ Whiteboard and marker
- ▶ Markers, colored pencils, crayons
- ▶ Handout 1: Word Cards (print and cut one set)
- ▶ Handout 2: Daniel Rodriguez Photographs (print and cut one copy for display)
- ▶ Handout 3: I am a Helper Student Activity Sheet (make one copy per student)
- ▶ Handout 4: How I Feel Student Activity Sheet (make one copy per student)
- ▶ Prior to the lesson, record the following sentence on the board: The things we think about and hope will happen are called our hopes and \_\_\_\_\_.
- ▶ 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](http://www.nea.org/hcawards).

### Suggested Grouping Structures

Whole group discussion and independent work

**Estimated total lesson time:** 30 minutes

### Opening the Lesson (5 minutes)

#### Thinking of the Future

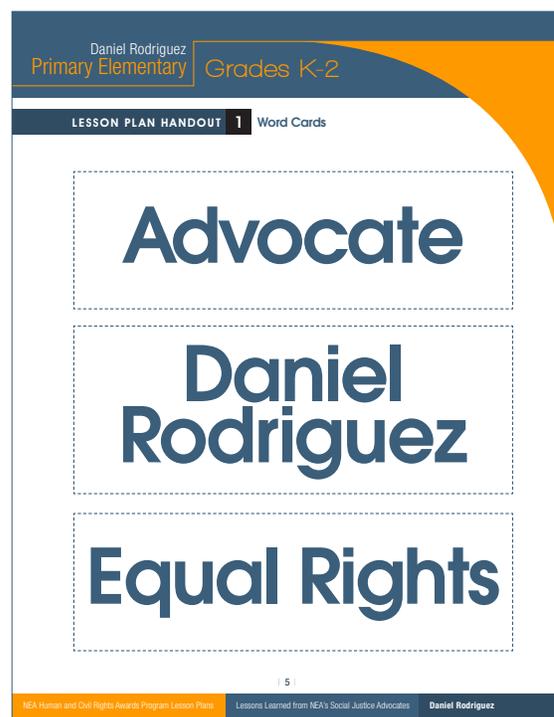
1. **Tell** the class you want them to think about what their lives might be like when they are older. Ask, "How many of you have some ideas about what things you would like to do when you get older or what jobs you might like to have?"
2. **Call** on student volunteers to share their responses.
3. **Call** attention to the sentence that you recorded on the board prior to the lesson. (The things we think about and hope will happen in our lives are called our hopes and \_\_\_\_\_.)
4. **Ask** what word they could fill in the blank. (Prompt the answer: dreams.) Record the answer in the blank space on the board.
5. **Tell** the class today's lesson will help them think about dreams for the future and how there are always people in our lives that help us accomplish our dreams or goals.

### Leading the Lesson (20 minutes)

#### Understanding Advocacy

6. **Ask**, "If you have something you really want to do when you are older, who might help you make that happen?" List responses on the board (Possible responses: parents, teachers, friends, grandparents, family.)
7. **Ask**, "What ways do those people help us reach our dreams?" Call on a few volunteers

to share their answers and discuss. (Possible responses: listen to us, ask questions to help us make decisions, help us with our schoolwork, push us to work harder and do well, let us join activities related to our dreams.) Say, "There are people in our lives who help us to keep working and not give up. Another word for people who help, care for, or stand up for others is the word "advocate." Place the Advocate word card (from Handout 1) on the board.



8. **Ask**, "What might get in the way of someone's dreams? What could make it feel hard for someone to do some of the things he or she wants to do?" Call on a few volunteers to share their answers and list the responses on the board. (Possible answers: they don't feel like they have anyone to help them, something else comes up that they have to take care of, or the person might give up

because he or she thinks it might be too hard or that they might not be able to do it).

- Place the Daniel Rodriguez word card (from Handout 1) and his pictures (Handout 2) on the board.



- Refer to his name and pictures and say, "I would like to introduce you to Daniel Rodriguez."

- Tell the class about Daniel Rodriguez. He was once a student like them and he went on to live a life centered around helping (advocating) for others. He received a Human and Civil Rights Award from the National Education Association. Say, "He was awarded the George I. Sánchez Memorial

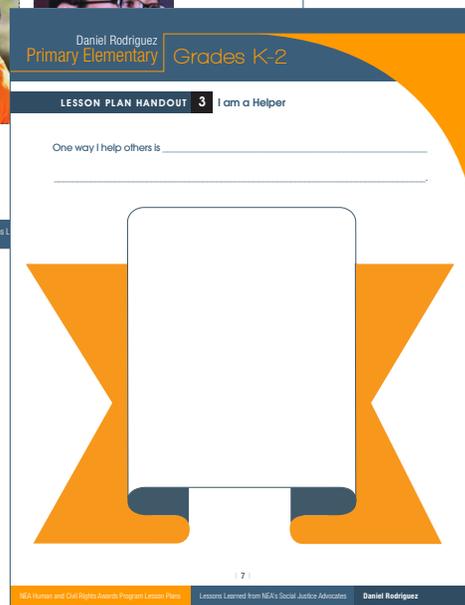
Award. George I. Sánchez was an educator and scholar who devoted his life to improving the education of Hispanic children. The award is given in his honor to recognize a person whose activities significantly impact education and the achievement of equal opportunity for Hispanics. Mr. Sanchez and Mr. Rodriguez are examples of Social Justice Advocates."

- Explain to the class that sometimes people are in a situation in which they do all they can to reach their dream, but things don't go well. For example, Daniel Rodriguez worked really hard in school and he decided he wanted to go to college and become a lawyer. At first, he was told he wouldn't be able to go to college despite his dreams.

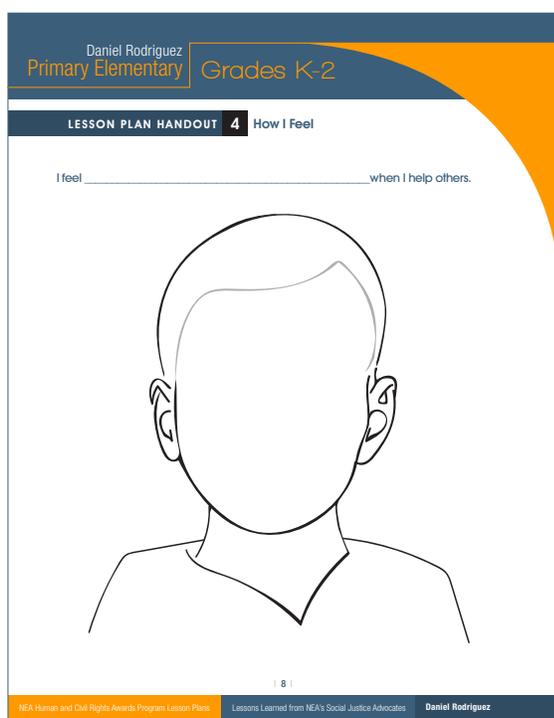
- Ask, "Do you think he felt sad and worried?" Say, "He probably did, but he kept working toward his goal. He didn't give up, and he was finally able to go to college and he became a lawyer, just like his dream."

- Say, "After he became a lawyer he thought about all of the challenges he had faced reaching that goal. He knew that sometimes people aren't treated fairly and that makes it hard for them to reach their goals. He decided he wanted to help those people so they would have the same opportunities. We call that Equal Rights." Place the Equal Rights word card on the board.

- Ask students to think for a minute about a way they have helped another person. Distribute Handout 3 and have students complete the assignment by completing the sentence and drawing a picture to match.



16. **Form** a circle on the floor and have each student to read his or her sentence and show the picture to the rest of the class.
17. **Discuss** the students' responses. Help them to draw similarities between the ways they have helped others and the way that Daniel Rodriguez has advocated for others to have equal opportunities to reach their dreams.



### Closing the Lesson (5 minutes)

#### What it Means to Dream

18. **Ask** the class if everyone should have the same chance to try to make their dreams come true. Ask students if they have heard the words "Equal Rights" before today. Refer to the Equal Rights word card (previously posted) and explain that everyone having the opportunity to make their dreams come true is a big part of what "Equal Rights" means.
19. **Ask** the class how they think Daniel Rodriguez might have felt when he received his award and how he feels knowing he is making such a difference in the lives of others by giving them a chance to reach their dreams. Call on a few volunteers to share. Ask students to think about how they feel when they help others. Call on a few volunteers to share.
20. **Distribute** Handout 4 and have students complete the assignment by finishing the sentence and filling in the face to match.
21. **Post** the completed activity sheets with a heading that says "Helping Dreamers to Dream" and allow a few minutes for students to look at one another's sheets.

### Assessment Suggestions

- ▶ Student response to classroom discussion
- ▶ Informally assess understanding using Handouts 3 and 4

### Adaptations, Enrichment, Cross-curricular Opportunities

- ▶ Read the Crayon Box that Talked by Shane Derolf and discuss how we treat one another and the lesson the crayons learned. Have students draw a picture using all of the colors in a crayon box.
- ▶ For younger students, brainstorm about the words they might need to use to complete Handouts 3 and 4 on the board and allow students to choose and copy words from the lists onto their papers.

**Advocate**

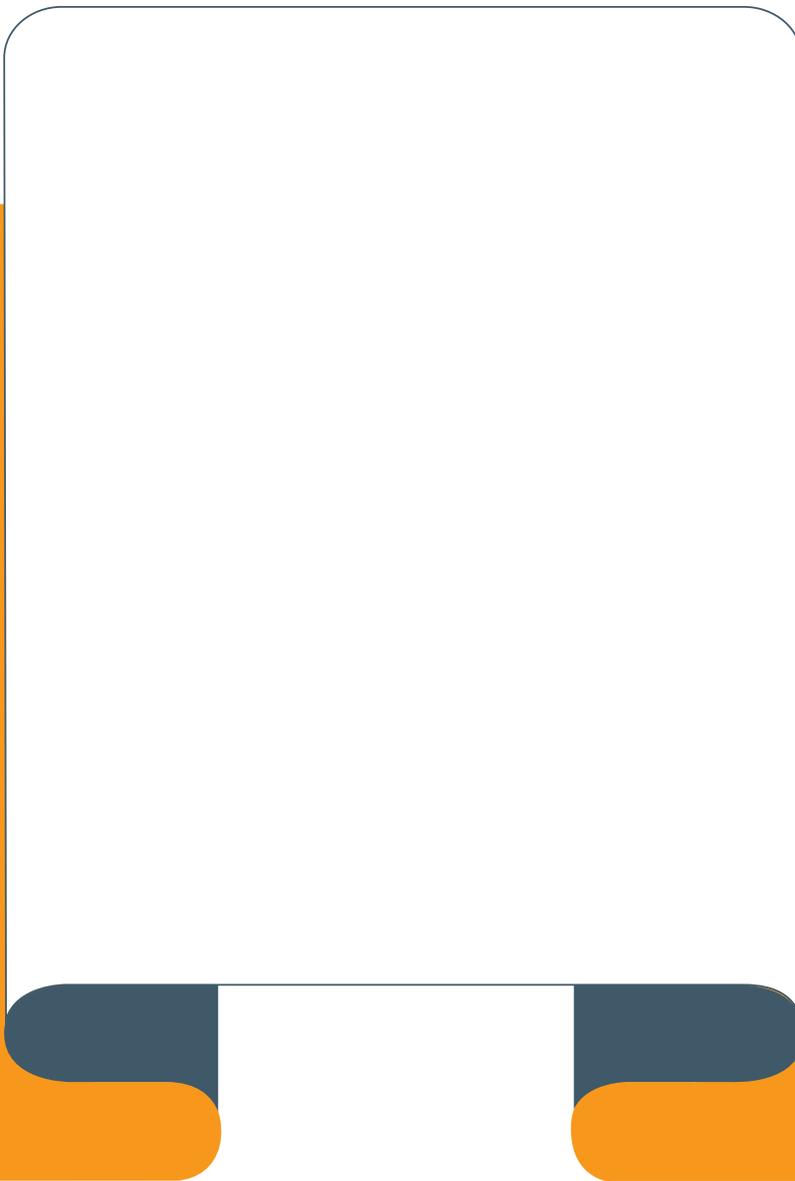
**Daniel  
Rodriguez**

**Equal Rights**



One way I help others is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



LESSON PLAN HANDOUT **4** How I Feel

I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when I help others.

