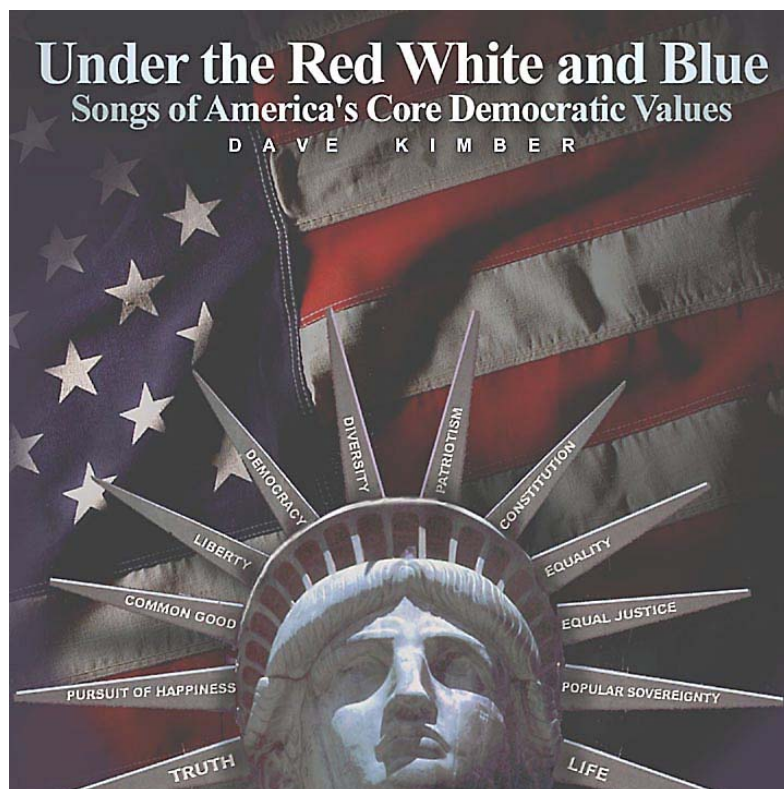


Under the **Red**, White, and **Blue**

Elementary & Middle School Lesson Plans

Volume 2



**Under the Red, White, and Blue
Songs of America's Core Democratic Values**

Dan Kimber, Dave Kimber

**Elementary and Middle School
Lesson Plans and Learning Strategies**

Volume 2

Gloria Tibbetts

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INTRODUCTION

For the better part of a year, my brother and I have worked on this compilation of songs and accompanying lesson plans. We both learned early in life the magic of music to inspire, to motivate, and to teach. We both teach social studies and over the years we have seen fundamental change come to our profession. While we continue to challenge the assumptions about how children learn, we take comfort in knowing that some things have stayed the same. As educators, we realize the amazing capacity of music to stimulate both sides of the brain and to supplement traditional modes of learning. As music lovers, we recognize the power of music to stir emotion as well as the intellect, and thus educate the whole child.

The songs we've composed bring to life American values that are at the core of every curriculum in all schools in this country. They are about the founding principles and transcendent values—the things that teachers and parents understand are fundamental to every child's education. Beyond that, they are tunes that are fun to sing, over and over again. Kids will remember these songs, and the messages they impart, long after they have forgotten texts and lectures and homework assignments.

We are living in times that test not only our resolve as a nation but also our basic principles as a people. How well we convey a love of liberty and equality, an appreciation for democracy and diversity, a belief in truth and justice, is a measure of how well we have passed on a treasured heritage to future generations. It is our hope that "Proud to be an American" can be more than just another empty phrase that is drilled into our children. It is a celebration worthy of honored traditions, of sacred pledges, and of joyous music.

Daniel Kimber

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***Pursuit of Happiness* – Elementary Lesson Plan**

Grade Level

This lesson is intended for students in grades 3 through 8.

Social Studies Standard

III.2. All students will explain the meaning and origin of the ideas, including the Core Democratic Values expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the other foundational documents of the United States of America.

Time needed

As written, this lesson should be given in 30-minute segments over several days.

Overview

One of the Core Democratic Values is *Pursuit of Happiness*. Students need to understand that it is all right at times to do things that make us happy, but it is not all right to get in the way of other people's happiness. In our country we have the right to be able to be happy, as long as we do not hurt other people.

The purpose of this lesson is to increase the chance that students will understand what the *pursuit of happiness* means. The teacher will read aloud to the students the book *Uncle Jed's Barbershop* by Margaree King Mitchell. The teacher will use best-practice reading strategies to help students make connections between the story and the concept of pursuit of happiness.

Objective: Students will be able to identify and explain verbally what the benefits of *pursuit of happiness* are, and the responsibility of making sure that our happiness does not hurt others.

Materials

- The book *Uncle Jed's Barbershop* by Margaree King Mitchell. (A different trade book that deals with the concept of *Pursuit of Happiness* could be used.)
- CD player and the CD *Under the Red, White, and Blue*.
- Drawing paper
- Story writing paper
- Pencils
- Crayons or markers

Procedure

The strategies used throughout this procedure are described in the boxed sections. For in-depth information on these strategies, see the bibliography (Appendix B, at the end of the lesson plans).

1. **Brainstorming:** Ask students if there are times when they like to choose things to do that they like. Have students share ideas. You can write those ideas on chart paper or on the board. Tell students that being able to make choices to do things that make us happy, is something that we should be able to do at times. It's fine to do certain things that make us happy, but we must make sure that whatever we choose to do does not hurt other people, or make other people unhappy.

2. **Introduce the concept** of the Core Democratic Value *Pursuit of Happiness*:

Definition for *Pursuit of Happiness*:

All citizens can find happiness in their own way, so long as they don't step on the rights of others.

Say to students,

"What are some things that make you happy?

Let's make a list of things that we like." (Write the students' ideas on chart paper.)

"Wow! We have come up with a big list, haven't we?"

Ask students,

"Do you remember that in this country we have Core Democratic Values?

Core Democratic Values are things that we think are very important for our country. We have really important papers that tell us about Core Democratic Values.

Continue by saying, "Today we are going to learn about a Core Democratic Value called *Pursuit of Happiness*. *Pursuit of Happiness* means that people can find happiness in their own way, so long as they don't step on the rights of others.

The list of things that made us happy is long, isn't it?

But what if what one person likes stops someone else from being happy?

Do you know what?

In this country we have the right to try to be happy, but we cannot do things that stop others from being happy. We are going to read about *Pursuit of Happiness* and not stepping on the rights of others." (Sound excited when you talk about the Core Democratic Values and the book that you are about to read. Enthusiasm is contagious and getting students excited about learning is so very important.)

3. **Before Reading Strategies (using verbal/linguistic intelligence – “word smart”):** Tell students that we are going to read a book. Tell them that when they read, good readers do certain things to help them become better readers--things called strategies. We are going to learn reading strategies every time we read together.

Asking Questions: Say to students, “Good readers always ask questions before they start reading.”

Predicting: Say to students, “We are also going to use another before reading strategy. We are going to try to guess what might happen in the book. Guessing can also be called Predicting. Predicting is another very important reading strategy that good readers use before they start reading. We are going to try to guess what might happen in the story before we read it.”

Hold up the book *Uncle Jed's Barbershop* by Margaree King Mitchell. Read the title. Then slowly turn the pages of the book, and look at the pictures with the students. Ask them to think up some questions about the story.

Think Aloud: Model for your students how to ask questions by doing a Think Aloud. (In a Think Aloud, the teacher verbalizes his or her thoughts out loud. This helps students understand how adults attempt to work through the thinking process.) While you and the students are thinking up questions, also model for them how to make predictions. Help students guess and predict when necessary.

We are going to read about *Pursuit of Happiness*. (Sound excited when you talk about the Core Democratic Values and the book that you are about to read. Enthusiasm is contagious and getting students excited about learning is so very important.)

4. **During Reading Strategies (using verbal/linguistic intelligence – “word smart”):** Say to students, "We are going to read the story together now. Good readers use reading strategies while reading."

Asking Questions: Say to students, "Good readers continue to ask questions while reading. As they read, they try to think up new questions about the story that they might want answers to."

Predicting: Say to students, "During reading good readers check to see if their predictions were correct. During reading, we are going to see if the guesses or predictions that we made were correct. We are going to continue to ask questions and also make new predictions."

Read the book *Uncle Jed's Barbershop* out loud to the students. Periodically stop while reading the book to ask new questions, to check on predictions that you made, and to make new predictions.

Think Aloud: Model for your students how to ask questions by doing a Think Aloud. (In a Think Aloud, the teacher verbalizes his or her thoughts out loud. This helps students understand how adults attempt to work through the thinking process.) While you and the students are thinking up questions, also model for them how to make predictions. Help students guess and predict when necessary.

5. **After Reading Strategies (using verbal/linguistic intelligence – “word smart”):** Say to students, "What did you think about the story? Now we're going to learn another strategy that good readers use."

Retelling: Say to students, "Good readers use other reading strategies after reading a book. One of those strategies is called Retelling. In Retelling, the reader tries to remember as many of the things from the story as possible. Let's see how many things we can remember from the story we have just read."

Get students excited about helping each other remember the details from the story. Write the ideas up on chart paper or the board.

6. **Process the concept** of the Core Democratic Value *Pursuit of Happiness*: Help students make personal connections to the book and to the concept of *Pursuit of Happiness*.

Reading Strategy - Text-to-Self (intrapersonal intelligence – “self smart”): Say to students, “After reading, good readers make connections to the text. That means that they think about the words that they are reading, and try to think of similar things in their own lives.”

Reading Strategy - Text-to-World (intrapersonal intelligence – “self smart” and interpersonal intelligence “people smart”): Say to students, “After reading, good readers make connections between the text and the world. That means that they think about the words that they have read, and try to think of similar things in the world.”

Say to the students (**Text-to-Self**), “Let’s think about the story that we have just read.” (As you look over what the whole class has come up with about the story, help the students make connections to the concept of *Pursuit of Happiness*.) “Look at all the ideas we had, when we were working on our Retelling Reading Strategy. We wrote ideas about the story up on the chart paper (or board), didn’t we?

Do you get your hair cut?

Where do you go to get your hair cut?

How often do you go to get your hair cut?

Do you remember the first time that you went to get your hair cut?

Describe how you felt.”

Continue by asking:

Do you have something in your life that you want to pursue?

What is it that you want to pursue?

When you grow up, what career do you want to pursue?”

Ask the students (**Text-to-World**):

Do you know people who have worked to pursue happiness in their life?

What did they do?

Did they study hard to pursue a job that they wanted?

Describe what they did.

Do you know anyone famous who worked hard to pursue happiness?

What did they do?

What about famous leaders?

Do you know what they did to pursue happiness?

7. ***Pursuit of Happiness* song (using musical/rhythmic intelligence – “music smart”)**: Students usually like singing songs. According to the latest brain research, music can help students remember concepts.

- Play the song for the students.

- Gradually teach the song lyrics. They're at the end of this lesson plan. Just teach a few lines at a time. (You need to make sure you don't overwhelm the students with too many words at once.) The song may take several days to teach, but that's okay. The important thing is that the students have fun with the song.
- As you teach the lyrics, you can ask the suggested questions (listed next to the lyrics). Add to the questions as you feel appropriate.

Closure (using visual/spatial intelligence – "picture smart")

Ask students to think about *Pursuit of Happiness*. Pass out paper, pencils, crayons, and markers. Have students draw a picture about what career they want to pursue.

Follow-up Activities (using visual/spatial and interpersonal intelligences)

- Ask students to talk about their picture or share their story and tell how they feel being able to choose things that make them happy.
- Write a story about the freedom to *pursuit of happiness*, and the responsibility of not causing others harm.

Pursuit of Happiness Song Lyrics and Discussion Questions

Words and music by Dave and Dan Kimber	Questions to ask students
<p>Ya' know it's written in the law All across the nation. We've got basic rights. It's in our Declaration.</p> <p>With life and liberty We are truly blessed. And we're guaranteed The pursuit of happiness.</p> <p>I can do my own thing, March to my own beat, Choose my own friends, And stand on my own two feet.</p> <p>Oh, I can pursue happiness Each and every day. But, I'll try to remember Not to get in your way.</p> <p>You like football, And I like to sing. What makes us happy, Well, that's a personal thing. No matter where you find it, No matter how you do it, We all live in a country With the freedom to pursue it.</p> <p>I can do my own thing, March to my own beat. I can chose my own friends, And stand on my two feet. Oh, I can pursue happiness Each and every day. But, I'll try to remember Not to get in your way.</p> <p>So, I'll find my own happiness And leave you to yours. It's the American Way. Who can ask for anything more.</p> <p>I can pursue happiness Each and every day. But, I'll try to remember Not to get in your way. I'll try to remember Not to get in your way. Yeah.</p>	<p>Did you know that in this country we have certain rules that are called laws?</p> <p>Did you know that we have the right to have protection of our lives?</p> <p>How do our government and our courts 'guarantee' our right to pursue happiness?</p> <p>Do you like to choose your own friends?</p> <p>Did you know that you have the right to make choices at times?</p> <p>Did you know that you do not have the right to bother other people?</p> <p>Do you like football?</p> <p>Do you like to sing?</p> <p>What things do you like to do that make you happy?</p> <p>What does 'march to my own beat' mean?</p> <p>What does 'stand on my own two feet' mean?</p> <p>What does 'not get in your way' mean?</p> <p>What does 'I'll find my own happiness And leave you to yours' mean?</p> <p>In the United States of America, do we have the right to do what we want if that doesn't stop others from doing what they want?</p> <p>Are you going to try to stay out of other people's way?</p>

Additional Trade Books to Help Teach / Assess *Pursuit of Happiness*

Name of Book	Author
Abuela's Weave	Castaneda
Bill of Rights	Coleman
Brother Eagle & Sister Sky	Jeffers
Chrysanthemum	Henkes
Cornelius	Lionni
Dear Benjamin Banneker	Pinkney
Dinner at Aunt Connie's House	Ringgold
Farmer	Ludy
First Thanksgiving	George
Fly Away Home	Bunting
Friendship	Taylor
Giving Tree	Silverstein
Great Migration	Lawrence
Kid Who Ran for President	Gutmann
Liberty	Curless
Matthew's Dream	Lionni
Meanest Thing to Say	Cosby
More Than Anything Else	Orchard
My Rows & Piles of Coins	Lewis
Old Henry	Blos
Other Side, The	Putnam
Ruth Law Thrills A Nation	Brown
Say Hey!	Mandel
What Do You Stand For?	Lewis