

LESSON PLAN 3

Yaro's I Believe Poem

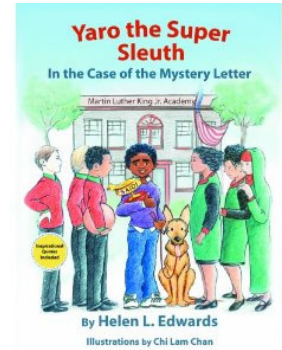
GRADE LEVELS: 4-6

BASED ON THE BOOK:

Yaro the Super Sleuth In the Case of the Mystery Letter

by Helen L. Edwards

(Appendix F & G)



PURPOSE:

- Students will take an introspective look at what they believe about themselves.
- What they value, how they feel about themselves, their family and friends.
- What is essential in their life and what they could not live without, which will give them insight into their worldview.

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will literally write a declaration describing their belief system by expressing their thoughts and feelings in the form of their own poem entitled **“I Believe”**. Their poems will reflect their worldview based upon the experiences they have had in life up until the present.

STUDENT PROJECT:

- Students will design a personal business card that will promote a single focus of their school life, personal life, or extracurricular activities.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- The book “Yaro the Super Sleuth In the Case of the Mystery Letter” by Helen L. Edwards
- Yaro’s “I Believe Poem” -- every student should have a copy of the poem
- Paper or journal
- Pen and pencil

PRE-READING: You have already read the book to the class in lesson 1, read Appendix F. & G.

TEACHER'S NOTE:

1. This is a shared reading activity. Read aloud **Yaro's “I Believe Poem”** to the class as the students follow along silently reading it to themselves. (They may also reference the poem during whole class discussion).
2. **Say –**
 - We have read the book; do you think the poem depicts the essence of what is important in the character Yaro's life? If so how? Before you answer I want you to read aloud a sentence or verse from the poem that supports your statement; you can also refer back to the book using retell or paraphrase. (If students have a copy of the book)

- You can also reference the book by using a sentence or paragraph from the book to support your statements.
3. Continue this process of whole class discussion and passage selections as students use them to support their points. Upon conclusion of the whole class discussion, summarize and make the points on the board and complete the statements generated that have been made in the class discussion. Example, you would have written and completed each sentence based on the class discussion.
 4. **Say --**
 - Yaro stood for . . . Struggled with . . . Believed in . . . Valued . . .
 5. Continue to write down the open-ended statements and leave room to reference the students comments with factual data they cite using text from the poem and book.
 6. **Say –**
 - Class what kind of mindset do you think Yaro has overall, would you call him a positive person, optimistic or a negative person, pessimistic?
 - Is he an ethical person, one who is honest, fair and does the right thing?
 - Did he give up when things got tough?
 - Was he a quitter or would you say he had perseverance? Why or Why not?
 - Class continues to support all of your statements using text from the poem or book as factual data.
 7. Upon conclusion of this process, enlist the class to summarize their statements defining who Yaro is.
 8. **Read aloud:**
 - We view the world and believe what we see through the lenses we are looking at it through. Have you ever heard the saying “You are looking at the world through rose-colored glasses?” (*Allow for the class to respond*)
 9. **Say --**
 - This refers to seeing life in a positive, optimistic, happy way. You might say seeing life as a rosy picture. Class, I want you to take a moment to think about what lenses are you looking through? (*Give the class a minute of silence to think about it*).

10. Say --

- Class, how you view the world is based on what has happened to you in your life up until the present. Let's talk a little bit about belief.

11. Tell class:

- Take a minute to think, why do we believe the way we believe about something?
- Why might someone else believe something totally different about the exact same thing or similar experience? Is that okay?
- Right now class, I just want you to silently think about these questions. Okay class, now you have had some time to ponder about the questions, let's start with the first question and I want to write down your thoughts.

12. Have the questions already written out on the board and record the students' thoughts after each question until you feel they have thoroughly shared their thoughts and feelings.

13. Summarize their thoughts.

14. Say --

- Class I want you to take out your journals or get a sheet of paper out and take some notes while I read you two different scenarios.

15. Read:

- **Our experiences and our beliefs about those experiences in life form our perceptions, attitudes and fuel our feelings, which drive our decisions and choices.**

16. For example: Read the first scenario

- Student A's father dies. His mother can no longer afford their nice comfortable home. She is grief stricken and scared, she is unsure about her family's future. The family is forced to sell many of their belongings and move into a small cramped home with relatives.

Student A has to change schools and move into an unfamiliar neighborhood. This new community is rougher and seems a bit tougher than what Student A is used to. While the relatives they are living with love and support Student A's family, living in small, cramped quarters, it is not a comfortable living arrangement for anyone. The relative's once cozy home is now a cramped and overcrowded home.

Home is no longer a happy or welcoming place. Student A's mother is constantly saying she cannot believe her husband is gone and she feels like the bottom has fallen out, they don't have a safety net and she doesn't know how their family is going to make it.

17. Say --

- Class now I want you to take a moment to think about the scenario I just read. How do you think Student A is feeling?
- Why do you think Student A feels that way?
- How does his mother feel?
- What messages is Student A getting? Self-talk is what we say to ourselves in our minds. Our self-talk comes from things that are said to us or from things we have experienced and believe about our world. Our self-talk can be calming, supportive and positive or it can be alarming, negative and pessimistic.
- What do you think student A's worldview might be right now? What might this student be saying to himself? Write down what you think he is saying in his mind about his circumstances.

18. Now class I want you to get ready for me to read to you the second scenario.

- Student B's father dies. The student is sad but her mother says death is a part of life and we all have to die sometime. Death is sad, I am sad and I know you are because we will never physically see your father again, in this life. But your father was a great father to you and a wonderful husband to me. I am grateful for that.

We have to love and show people in our lives that we appreciate them while they are living. I believe we did that. At your father's funeral we will celebrate his life and what he meant to our family while he was with us.

Things will be a little tight now financially but we are going to be just fine. You know I love you. No matter what, as your mom I can and will take care of you and the family. I want you to know, have faith and believe that no matter what happens in life you will always be loved and well cared for. Repeat after me "No matter what happens in life I will always be loved and well cared for".

19. Go through the same process as with Student B as you did with the class with Student A, allowing students to share their thoughts based on what they wrote after hearing the scenarios.

- Talk about how similar things happened in both cases the father died. But each mother handled the circumstances that resulted in the loss of the father differently.
- There were also some things outside of the mothers' control that they had to deal with, the loss of the father figure, husband, protector and provider.
- There were also some advantages that one family might have had over the other. In life, all things are not equal or fair, but we still have to make the best out of challenging situations.

- Compare and contrast with the class the various approaches each mother took to a very similar situation.

20. Conclude by saying:

- Life is full of changes. You cannot control what happens outside of your control in life but you can work on what you say to yourself, in your mind, about your life's circumstances.
- Your self-talk will either make you stronger, increase your faith in your ability to handle what life sends your way or it will defeat your faith and reinforce your belief that life is hard, unfair, and there is no hope for a brighter day. Your self-talk will be affirming, either in a positive and optimistic way or defeating in a negative and pessimistic way.
- Your belief system and your support system greatly influence your view of life and the world. Yaro's emotional support system was his parents, grandparents, aunt and uncle, his dog, Saidi and his friends.
- Class before we begin writing our "I Believe" poems, I want us to draft out what is important to us first. So that we can clearly see it and make sure that we really have incorporated the important elements into our poem that we consider essential.
- Use this checklist to help you get started as you begin to write your poems. Everyone's checklist will be unique to what is essential to them.
- Before we get started I want to ask you class what are some negative beliefs you might have or people in general might have. I am going to write them down and then together lets work on turning a negative belief or thought into a positive, empowering belief or thought. *Teachers when you are rewriting the negative, depowering beliefs or thoughts, when turning those statements into a positive, empowering beliefs or thoughts, make sure you use words and phrases like "I am", "I am doing", "I can", "I know" using affirming language. Summarize the purpose of positive self talk.*

21. Say -

- Class, positive self talk is a pep talk to yourself, to motivate you, lift your spirits and encourage you to believe in yourself. Your self talk guides your beliefs, thoughts and actions. You are what you think.

ASSESSMENT:

- Each student is to write a poem based on what they believe about their life.
- It should also reflect how they deal with adversity or challenges.
- You should see some positive self-talk reflected in the body of the poem as well. At least one key emotional support person in each student's life should be reflected in the poem.
- The poem should clearly indicate the student's belief system and worldview.

Checklist for
"I Believe "Poem

1. Who are the people you love and trust?

2. Who do you enjoy being around and why?

3. What is something you could not live without and be happy?

4. What do you enjoy doing? (Hobbies, sports, talents, collect coins, rocks, dolls, baseball cards etc.)

5. List positive beliefs about yourself and your life:

6. List negative feelings or beliefs about yourself or life:

7. What can you do to change your negative views about yourself or life?

8. What is your self talk?

Yaro's I Believe Poem

I believe:
Life is a gift, treasure it;
Full of mystery, explore it;
Adventurous, enjoy it;
Challenging, conquer it;
An education, learn from it;

I believe:
In the power of my thoughts;

I honor them;

I believe:

In my dreams;

I relish in them;

I believe:

In working hard;

I am achieving my dreams;

I believe:

In my grandma's prayers, she says they sustain me;

I believe:

In my Creator;

I know that I am blessed by him;

I believe:

In family and I know my parents love me;

As a loving big brother I'm looking out for my baby sister;

I believe:

Saidi is loyal to me and we have each other's back;

I know Missy Ann is my challenge;

I believe she's my ongoing test to be neighborly and fair;

I believe:

That when I do good, I feel good;

I believe:

And know that joy comes from within and it is reflected in all that I do.

