

The Air I Breathe – Classroom Lesson Plan

Includes Virtual Author Interview

Book Synopsis

The Air I Breathe by Linda Dickman is a middle grade novel that follows a young protagonist navigating friendship, identity, and emotional growth while confronting personal and social challenges. Through relatable conflicts and character-driven storytelling, the novel explores themes of belonging, empathy, self-awareness, and resilience. The story emphasizes the importance of perspective and honest communication.

Essential Questions

- How does perspective shape our understanding of others?
- What role does empathy play in resolving conflict?
- How do personal challenges contribute to growth?

Lesson Objective

Students will analyze character development and evaluate how the novel portrays emotional growth and resilience.

Lesson Structure (60 Minutes)

- Warm-Up (5 minutes): How can misunderstandings affect relationships?
- Direct Instruction (15–20 minutes): Examine characterization and theme. Define key terms: empathy, resilience, conflict, perspective.
- Guided Practice (15 minutes): In pairs, analyze a key turning point in the protagonist's development. Synthesis Question: How does the character's growth change the outcome of the conflict?
- Independent Practice (15 minutes): Choice-based analytical or reflective response (see below).
- Exit Ticket (5 minutes): Identify one example of emotional growth in the novel.

Independent Practice Options

- Option A: Analyze how dialogue reveals character change.
- Option B: Reflect on a moment when perspective altered your understanding.
- Option C: Write a short scene demonstrating conflict resolution.

Creative Interpretation Option

- Character growth timeline
- Conflict-resolution flowchart
- Empathy-themed visual collage

All creative responses must include an artist statement referencing specific textual evidence.

Reader Impact + Student Voice

- How does the story encourage empathy?
- What challenges feel most relatable?
- How does the novel portray personal growth?
- Why is perspective important in relationships?

Author Interview

Author interview provided by UNBAN COOLIES.
Visit: <http://www.youtube.com/@unbanCOOLIES>

Lesson materials developed in partnership with UNBAN COOLIES.