

The School Culture Project

Lesson Plan #1

Inspiring Student Voice

“Before I die...” Ted Talk by Candy Chang

designed by Melinda Forward

The School Culture Project empowers Student Voice to build a school culture where everyone thrives. Our strategies focus on developing the whole child, with hands-on learning opportunities, to boost social-emotional and communication skills.

The *We All Have a Voice!* Campus Empowerment Program grows and strengthens the 5 Key Characteristics of Strong Student Voice:

Curiosity, Compassion, Creativity, Connection, and Confidence

Ask

Listen

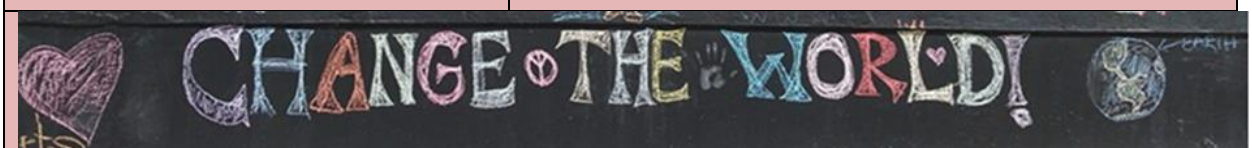
Learn

Initiate Change

Never Give Up

This lesson plan includes:

- Student Handouts
- Lesson Plan Introduction
- Instructor's Guide to the Lesson
- Student Samples
- Opportunities for Future Learning
- About the Author



“Before I die I want to...” Ted Talk by Candy Chang

1. How would you finish the above statement? Explain why with details.

2. What does “Community” mean to you?

3. What are you passionate about in life? Why?

4. Listen. As you are watching Candy's Ted Talk, listen carefully and write down two things you find interesting. If you write exactly what the speaker says, use "...." marks to show that it is a direct quote

a. _____

b. _____

5. Learn. Write a brief reflection. What are you thinking and feeling now that you have heard Candy's story?

6. Initiate change. This Ted Talk shows how Candy Chang created a project that allows communities to share their voices, their thoughts, their dreams, and their hopes. How does this relate to your idea of community? What impact might a conversation place like the "*Before I die*...." Wall offer your community?

6. Never Give Up. Make the Dream REAL.
Draw a picture to illustrate what you are taking away from Candy's talk. Think about your world and your community. What are your dreams and visions?

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Lesson Plan Introduction to: Inspiring Student Voice

“Before I die...” Ted Talk by Candy Chang

This lesson is intended to serve as an introduction to the power of understanding one's dreams and the power of expressing dreams publically. Communication is the key to expressing and growing Student Voice. Communication takes many forms: private, interpersonal, and public. Students practice private communication in their reflections, interpersonal communication listening to Candy's story, and public communication when their illustrations are posted for others to see. Keep in mind that the intent is to hear ALL Student Voices. This means that ALL students must be included in each part of the lesson. You will have students who will not feel comfortable sharing these thoughts and feelings in a discussion, so be aware of the quiet students. Encouragement is a strategy to engage these students. You may be the only person in this student's life with an encouraging voice. You are the guide on this adventure of discovery. Sit back and watch students grow as you provide them opportunities to engage. Your observations will give you feedback on the needs of your students. From there, you are empowered to empower them.

In the Instructor's Guide, I explain each section of the lesson, giving some tips and considerations for you to keep in mind. There is no one way to approach the lesson, no right or wrong. This is a simple guided opportunity for students to connect with a person who turned a small idea into an opportunity for the world.

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Instructor's Guide to: Inspiring Student Voice

“Before I die....” Ted Talk by Candy Chang

The School Culture Project trains students how to communicate with themselves, others, and the world. The 5 Key Characteristics of strong Student Voice are: Curiosity, Compassion, Creativity, Confidence, and Connection. These characteristics are guiding points for conversations throughout the lesson.

Ask questions: Introduction

The intent of these first questions is to get students thinking about their dreams, their community, and their passions. To engage Student Voice, it is important to give them the opportunity to share what is most important in life. This is an opportunity to get to know students in a new way, a way which encourages meaningful sharing and personal expression. Some students will be challenged by these questions. They may not often reflect on their dreams. They may not be open to talking about their feelings. If a safe environment is provided, along with encouragement, students will have an opportunity to be more open. If they are not, that just means this is an area for growth.

Listen: Watch [Candy Chang's Ted Talk](#) (6 minutes)

First, give the students time to answer the first three questions. Then, show the talk one time while students simply watch and listen. Show the talk a second time and have students write down what they find interesting. This may be a direct quote, or paraphrase. The intention here is that students will connect with Candy's story in a personal way by watching and listening first. Giving them the opportunity to write down what they find interesting after the second viewing places value on their feelings and gives them time to

internalize and relate. This gives them choice, which empowers them to connect with their voice and what is important to them personally.

Learn: Reflection

Encourage students to pull together their ideas about community, their passions, their dreams, and Candy's story. This is a time for them to make comparisons and contrasts between themselves and Candy, their community and Candy's, their vision of the world and hers. This is a time for them to be inspired because they are ALL like her in some way.

Initiate change.

After some quiet personal reflection time, this activity encourages students to broaden their views and develop a new vision of their own community. Now that students have seen what was possible for another community, how one woman's idea changed the world for so many others, they have seen the POWER of ONE VOICE.

Candy Chang has a quiet voice, yet it is so powerful because of how she uses it. The intention is that students will connect with their own power and believe that they could be the person who creates great change in their community, even in the world. This is our task, to guide every student to FIND and CONNECT with this power and then ACT with it to create positive change.

Initiating change is the focus of this activity. Taking the step to believe something is possible is the first step toward creating that change.

So, what are your students thinking? Good question. Hopefully they are thinking about a lot of things, by now. You may want to have a class discussion to see how students are pulling ideas together, what connections they are making. It is very important, however, that you keep the emotional level in your class comfortable, or students will shut down and not share.

Strategy for success: Layer the sharing.

Giving students a chance to share with a fellow student is less intimidating than sharing with the whole class. Since we want to hear from shy students, layering the sharing by giving students an opportunity to share with one another first can make a big difference in their comfort level. Have students first share with a partner. Then ask for volunteers to share what their partner wrote. This takes the pressure off of the student who wrote, allowing their voice to be shared by someone else who is enthusiastic to volunteer. For your shy students, this will be empowering. For all your students it will be inspiring.

Never Give Up - Make the Dream REAL

Creating a vision for the world is a powerful task. Now that students have had a chance to listen and learn, to reflect and connect, they are empowered to not only create a new vision in their mind, but to create an illustration of that vision to share it with the world.

Students may have a different vision of the world from how it IS right now. When they are drawing, they are creating their Voice on paper. During this step, students are building a dream. The illustration makes it more tangible. A tangible dream is easier to hold on to, easier to Never Give Up on.

Curiosity inspired Candy Chang's dream to connect with her neighbors. She used her creativity to create new ways for people to share their voices around the world. Why was she successful? Her

voice was Curious, Creative, Compassionate, Connected, and Confident. Did she encounter obstacles? Of course she did. Everyone experiences obstacles when creating change. She made her vision real. How? Her Voice was STRONG and she NEVER Gave Up.

To share student dreams with the world, post their illustrations, Posting their illustrations shows that you value their dreams so much you want to share it with others. You have an opportunity to support their dreams, and give them confidence to step out even more and start making their DREAMS REAL.

Empowered with the WHY and the VISION, students can make anything happen and you can help them. HOW will they create this change? Let Curiosity lead the way to discovery!

This is just our first lesson in **Inspiring Student Voice**! There are so many more! If you are interested in growing that inspired Student Voice, sign up to be an SCP Partner School. Lesson #2 is exciting!

On the next pages you will find:

- Samples of student work
- About the Author – Melinda Forward, NBCT
- Information about exciting upcoming learning opportunities

Now what, you ask?

Well, that is up to you. If you are excited to continue building Student Voice, The School Culture Project has the tools and training. This is what we DO. We want to help YOU empower students to change the world. Why? Student Voice is the key to transforming our schools.

Here are your next steps

- Become a SCP Partner School. You have done Step #1 & 2:
Now, share your story with us!!! [Click here - Step #3](#)
- Start a School Culture Project. [Click here.](#)
- Attend a Training to learn more skills and tools....keep reading!

Most of all keep moving and growing!!!

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The Ted talk really showed me how many different voice there are through out the world. Not only did it make me think about my goals in life but also other people's goals and how important all our goals are, no matter what it is. The ted talk also Made me not only think about the little things but also the bigger things, like what I do want before I die.



Before I Die...



Candys Teetalk inspired our French class to want to do something to impact our school/community in a positive way. In the video she talks about how it helped her get through tough times and made her smile. It helps people voice their dreams. It would be amazing if we could help people bring out their passions and forget what worries them.

Before I Die...

(TED talk video)

This TED talk made me think of the important things in life. It made me wonder why I worry and stress about little stupid things. It made me really think about things I can achieve in life. It made me think about everything I'm passionate about. It made me really open my eyes.

Dream

Believe in Yourself

Stand Up

Be Brave

Be Strong

Be Proud

About the Author



Melinda Forward, NBCT is an innovative educator with practical and powerful strategies to engage students in schools, especially powerful in underperforming schools. She is the founder and CEO of The School Culture Project. As the Director of the *We All Have a Voice!* Campus Empowerment Program, she trains students and staff the skills they need to grow strong Voice and build positive School Culture.

Melinda's Surprising Service Learning Projects fuel student achievement, develop relationships, and build optimism. Based in cutting-edge neuroscience and research, these projects are intentionally designed to give schools new tools to overcome obstacles of poverty.

Melinda lives with her husband, Thomas, and son, Sebastian, in a beautiful little wooded valley in Sandia Park, New Mexico. She loves to read, walk in the woods, do yoga, and cook with her family. Professionally, in addition to developing engaging training for Staff and Student, she is also in the process of writing a book about transforming school culture with Student Voice.

Inspire change.

Engage student voice.

Build community.

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Now is the time to get the tools and strategies to:

