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### Lesson Plan: Describing a Person (grades 6-8)

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**Names: Kim Boehm, Peggy O'Malley, Karen Sandercock, Caitlin McGrath**  
**School: Roxboro Middle (CHUH)**

## **Lesson Plan**

### **Course/Grade Level: Humanities:**

- Grade 6

### **Topic/Title:**

- Describing a Person

### **Historical Time Period(s):**

- Contemporary America (1945-present)

### **Thematic Question:**

- How can you keep memories alive?

### **Standards/Benchmarks/Indicators**

- Common Core: Writing standard
  2. Write informative/explanatory text to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts and information through the selection, organization and analysis of relevant content.
- Common Core: Speaking and Listening
  1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
  5. Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.
- Common Core: Reading- Key Ideas and Details
  2. Determine a theme or central idea of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text and how it is conveyed through particular details; summarize the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

### **Materials/Resources:**

1. McDougal Littel Language Arts textbook/copy of the story "Nadia the Willful". ANY story focusing on the topic of keeping memories alive would be suitable for this lesson plan.
2. Writing prompt for class: Write a focused description of a person. You should have many details and should tell why the person is important to you.

3. Interview Questions
4. Flip camera to record interview with person (or for use in class as practice)
5. Rubric: Describing a Person (attached)
6. Exemplar essay (attached)
7. Computers/IPads to type their descriptive writing piece
8. Projector or Smart board for presentations

**Motivation (Attention Grabber):**

1. CAN MEMORIES KEEP THE PAST ALIVE? Quickwrite → Think about a happy or important occasion you want to remember. It might be a wedding, a birthday, or a day spent with friends.
2. Write down some ideas about how you can preserve this memory.
3. Students can share their responses when they are finished writing.

**Activities:**

1. Begin with the Quickwrite & class discussion.
2. Begin reading “Nadia the Willful” or story chosen by teacher that reflects the theme of keeping someone or something’s memory alive. This story should help make connections with a real-life example of keeping memories alive
3. After reading, present students with writing prompt: **WRITING FROM YOUR LIFE**-Write a focused description of a person. Your description should have many details and should tell why the person is important to you. People to consider:
  - a. A person you know very well
  - b. A person who has influenced you
  - c. A family member or neighbor who helped you
4. Interview
  - a. Students will schedule their interviews
  - b. Choose questions to be asked during interview
  - c. Use their flip cameras to record interview
5. When students have completed their interviews, they will respond to the writing prompt using the writing process (pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, publishing)
6. Present students with a copy of rubric and exemplar so your expectations are clear.

**Assessment:**

1. Rubric: Describing a Person

## WriteSmart Model Bank

### Character Sketch

A character sketch provides a snapshot of another person, one the writer probably knows. A character sketch should contain the following elements:

- a focused impression of the person
- anecdotes, examples, details, and dialogue to describe the person
- background information as necessary

### Grandma Andrea

Steve Hernandez

You could say that I had three mothers—my real mom and my two grandmas, Rosa and Andrea. My grandmas took care of me because my mom needed a lot of help when I was little. Both of my grandmothers spoke Spanish, but only Grandma Andrea knew English, too. Because of this, we spent a good deal of time together. I thought there was something special about her because she was the only older lady I knew who could speak two languages. Ours was not a typical relationship between a boy and his grandma.

Grandma Andrea was not much taller than most of her grandchildren, but I looked up to her. She taught me things like discipline, manners, and respect. Whenever I was alone in the house with her, she'd speak to me in English and in Spanish. Once, I remember she asked me in Spanish if I wanted a glass of milk and a snack. "*¿Te gustaría un vaso de leche y una merienda?*" I didn't answer her in Spanish, only in English. But she refused to give me my milk and snack until I answered her in Spanish. She didn't want me to be lazy about learning both English and Spanish.

Her brown eyes always looked gentle, but I saw strength in them. She didn't give up when her husband died in 1979. Instead, she continued to work and raise ten kids, including my father, Raul Hernandez. No matter what her troubles were, she always made everyone feel at home. Every holiday was an excuse to celebrate and have family and friends together at her place. She was friendly with all her neighbors and was always ready to give a helping hand. When a neighbor was sick, she would bring food or medicine. She would also pray for them in church.

On Sundays, she dressed formally to go to church. She always wore her gray suit, and her curly dark hair framed her round face. I remember how she looked one Sunday morning. The front door had been left open to let the sun in. Activity filled the house. Everybody was talking, making breakfast, watching TV, or getting ready for church. Grandma Andrea stood in the doorway, and the sunlight acted like a spotlight. Her cheeks were flushed and she wore a proud smile as she looked at her family. I'll always remember this moment when she looked like a dignified, elegant and sophisticated lady.

Rubric Bank: Character Sketch Roxboro

1/23/2013

KEY TRAITS	6	5	4	3	2	1
<b>IDEAS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The person is clearly identified.</li> <li>A central impression of the person is compellingly stated.</li> <li>Interesting, relevant details and examples explain each key character trait.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The person is identified and a central impression is stated.</li> <li>The key character traits are explained by relevant details and examples.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The person is identified, but a central impression is vague.</li> <li>Most details and examples are relevant in explaining key character traits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A central impression of the character can be inferred with careful reading.</li> <li>Details and examples are overly general.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A hint of a central impression of the character is present.</li> <li>Details and examples are unrelated to the main ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No central impression of the character is stated.</li> <li>Details and examples are irrelevant or missing.</li> </ul>
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The introduction presents the character in an engaging manner.</li> <li>The conclusion summarizes the ideas and offers some new thoughts.</li> <li>Transitional words and phrases are satisfying and well used.</li> <li>The organization is consistent, thoughtful, and logical.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The introduction clearly presents the character.</li> <li>The conclusion summarizes the ideas and offers an observation.</li> <li>Transitional words and phrases show how ideas connect.</li> <li>The organization is consistent and logical.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The introduction presents an identifiable character.</li> <li>The conclusion summarizes the ideas.</li> <li>A few more transitions are needed.</li> <li>The organization is logical but has a few inconsistencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The introduction vaguely presents the character.</li> <li>The conclusion summarizes some of the ideas.</li> <li>Many more transitions are needed.</li> <li>The organization shows some logic but is often inconsistent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The introduction hints at possible character traits.</li> <li>The conclusion is skeletal.</li> <li>One or two transitional words are used.</li> <li>The organization shows minimal logic and is inconsistent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The introduction does not identify the subject of the essay.</li> <li>The essay lacks a conclusion.</li> <li>No transitions are used.</li> <li>The organization seems random; the reader often feels confused.</li> </ul>
<b>VOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing has an appropriate tone and reflects enthusiastic engagement with the character.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing has an appropriate tone and shows engagement with the character.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing has an acceptable tone and usually reflects engagement with the character.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The tone is sometimes inappropriate, and the writing only occasionally reflects engagement with the character.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing often has an inappropriate tone and rarely reflects engagement with the character.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing is lifeless or mechanical.</li> </ul>
<b>WORD CHOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words and phrases vividly describe the character's appearance, actions, speech, and personality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words and phrases precisely describe the character's appearance, actions, speech, and personality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words and phrases generally describe the character's appearance, actions, speech, and personality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words and phrases sometimes describe the character's appearance, actions, speech, and personality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words and phrases rarely describe the character's appearance, actions, speech, and personality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited vocabulary and/or frequent misuse of parts of speech interfere with understanding.</li> </ul>
<b>SENTENCE FLUENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentence beginnings, lengths, and structures vary and have a pleasing flow.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentence beginnings, lengths, and structures mostly vary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentence beginnings, lengths, and structures vary somewhat.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentence beginnings, lengths, and structures do not significantly vary, and some fragments and run-on sentences are present.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most sentences have the same beginning, length, and structure, and many fragments and run-on sentences are present.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repetitive sentence structure, fragments, and run-on sentences make the writing difficult to follow.</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are correct.</li> <li>Grammar and usage are correct.</li> <li>Paragraphing is correct and reinforces the organization.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are almost always correct.</li> <li>Grammar and usage have some minor errors.</li> <li>Paragraphing is generally correct and reinforces organization.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are sometimes incorrect.</li> <li>Grammar and usage do not distort meaning but are not always correct.</li> <li>Paragraphing is attempted but is not always sound.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are often incorrect.</li> <li>Grammar and usage are regularly incorrect and distract from meaning.</li> <li>Paragraphing is occasionally sound.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are incorrect.</li> <li>Grammar and usage are often incorrect and distract from meaning.</li> <li>Paragraphing is irregular or too frequent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Common words are misspelled and almost all punctuation is missing or incorrect.</li> <li>Grammar and usage mistakes are frequent and distort meaning.</li> <li>Paragraphing is missing.</li> </ul>