



STICKS – N – STONES!

Get them thinking...and then writing.
Thought provoking letter lesson to engage students in learning about the power of names.

Write the following on the board and ask students to reflect quietly on the following statement: "Sticks and stones may break the bones, but names will never hurt you?"



Whether they agree or disagree with the statement, it should generate good discussion on the impact of names, nick names and bullying.

Further the discussion by asking for written responses to:

- Now task your students to write down any nick names they have been "given."
- Are nick names from home different from those at school?
- Are these names good ways to identify yourself or others?
- Are students happy with their nick names?
- Can they think of nick names given to fellow students that are good or bad reflections on whom they are?

Be sure to explain to students that the origins of nick names once had a serious purpose. A long time ago, in small communities everyone knew one another and there was little need for last names. People knew one another by their looks, jobs or personal relationships. John was a very popular name, but you also knew him by John "Brown" (if that was his hair color) or John Smith (if that was his job). But as populations expanded, a need arose to find ways to differentiate between people who shared the same first name.

The origins of last names are unique and interesting in each country. In the USA, the British were among the first Europeans to settle and establish last names that are still common. To help identify people, nick names and common adjectives were used. Last names often referred to size, hair color, or complexion – such as Little, Short, Long, Brown and White.

Personality traits could also serve well as last names like Stern and Stout. American last names derived from Gaelic influences are less obvious but fun to look up. In Gaelic, Cameron means "crooked nose" and Kennedy means "ugly head," while Connolly means "valiant."

Nick names served an important purpose to identify people and individualize communities before there was formal/printed means to prove who you were.

This is a great small group discussion activity – to get students to realize that nick names do have power – and can have a lasting impact on those around them. Task each student to write up a summary of 5 important things they learned through their discussion and then share with their pen pals.

This is the third of three lesson plans to introduce pen pals with letter lessons on names. Find lessons one and two in the June and August newsletters on the OEF website. <http://www.opportunityeducation.org/newsLetter/view>

Teachers should be sure to participate in lesson activities to help students get to know you too! They will love learning about your nick names and see your good example in writing a letter to your pen pal teachers. Include a copy of this newsletter to guide your pen pals' lesson and letter replies.

SWAMPSCOTT SKYPES SIYABULELA SOUTH AFRICA!



The students got together to ask questions.
They asked about their favorite movies and books.
They asked about after-school activities.
They asked what subjects they studied.
Just normal, everyday teenager stuff.

Except there was a 6 hour and 7,800 mile difference between their classrooms!

Students from Swampscott Middle School in Massachusetts had made signs with their pen pal's names on them and held them up to help locate their friends.

Students from Siyabulela Primary School in Langa, South Africa stood up and waved while greeting their pen pals.

There were approximately 35 students from each school. Siyabulela even had some seniors return from the schools' first video conference – six years ago!

The Swampscott students particularly enjoyed greeting Sheila Galo, the principal of Siyabulela, because she had just visited them in Swampscott in March 2014.

While it's pretty tricky to arrange a time and place to Skype – these schools have been video chatting since they were paired up in 2006. OEF is grateful for the outstanding efforts of all the teachers on both sides, to continue this amazing opportunity to make a global connection – live!

WELCOME NEW SCHOOLS!

We welcome the following schools to our free, international pen pal program which is a fun and easy way to meet Language Arts, Social Studies and History/Civics standards – share [this link](#) to invite others to join.

Welcome to:

Hyer Elementary, Dallas, TX
University Park Elementary, Dallas, TX
Chapel Hill High School, Chapel Hill, NC
St. John Lutheran School, North Tonawanda, NY
Bradfield Elementary, Dallas, TX
Inter-American School, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala
Munhwa Girls Middle School, Daejon, South Korea
Palencia Elementary School, St. Augustine, FL
Kyrene de la Sierra Elementary School, Phoenix, AZ
Joel P. Jensen Middle School, West Jordan, UT
St. Richard School, Chicago, IL
Valley Ridge Academy, Ponte Vedra, FL



OEF would love to have more international schools – if you have educator friends, anywhere in the English speaking world – forward them to us and we will connect their school to one of our outstanding schools in Africa or Asia.

Email today and start writing tomorrow! schools@opportunityeducation.org

THIS SCHOOL NEEDS PEN PALS!

Pelican Park Primary School, Cape Town, South Africa started in February 1995 and today supports 490 students from pre-school to grade 7. There are 16 classrooms with 18 teachers.



Annual fees are around \$180 but only about 50% of parents can afford to pay. However, they have been able to earn additional income from renting school facilities and fundraising activities. Pelican Park has other significant challenges, as it is located in an area with high levels of unemployment, alcohol and substance abuse, crime, and poverty. Despite this, the school is proud of its achievements.

In 2005 Pelican Park Primary School published its first school magazine, receiving an award in 2008 for excellence in literacy. The school is proud of its academic record – despite the low socio-economic environment. Pelican Park still produces academic results well above the regional average and has won awards from the Western Cape Education Department.



This vibrant school also encourages co-curricular activities, particularly in the field of music. Pelican Park Primary School is eager to create friendships with other schools around the world. You can even get to know your pen pals by visiting their Facebook page!

https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pelican-Park-Primary-School/347432432021913?sk=photos_stream&ref=page_internal

Writing letters is an excellent opportunity to learn more than textbooks or even the internet can offer...just email us and we will put a Welcome Folder in the mail to you today!

Email schools@opportunityeducation.org and you can start writing today!

If you already have a pen pal, refer a friend to our **OEF Pen Pal** link.

If you prefer a different school, simply email us and note what grade and country you would like to write to and we can get you writing, right away!

FEATURED SCHOOL & GIFT CERTIFICATE WINNER

Congrats to Marsha Simonson Henderson
from Queen of Angels Catholic School in Roswell, Georgia.

On behalf of your pen pals from Michael Primary in Tanzania –
thank you for sending letters!



Marsha, send an email to: schools@opportunityeducation.org
to claim your prize!

Want to win next month?

Just email schools@opportunityeducation.org after you mail your letters and you are
entered to win!

START WRITING – RIGHT NOW!

Now is the perfect time to write your pen pals!
No lesson plan is needed, but if you need one – we have
them!



Writing letters is a great activity to keep students
productive during homeroom, study hall or downtime.
You can also integrate cross-curricular objectives into
lesson plans that we have created to maximize learning through letters.

[Click Here for Letter Ideas and Resources](#) or [Click Here for Letter Lesson Plans](#)

We also have 4 options to stay up to date with our international pen pal program.

OPTION 1: To keep up with our "Friends" – we have a Facebook page just for you!
Visit our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/OpportunityEducation>

OPTION 2: Unable to get on Facebook? No worries.
Visit our Pen Pal Blog. <http://opportunityeducation.wordpress.com/>

OPTION 3: Pinterest. <http://www.pinterest.com/opportunityed/>

OPTION 4: Twitter. <https://twitter.com/OpEdFoundation>

Check out our social media for interesting ideas, stories, and links to help generate
enthusiasm and discussion about education plus lesson plans to integrate pen pal
letters into your standard requirements.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Write Your Pen Pals!

Even if it's been a while, now is still the best time to write. The name, address and mailing instructions are available on our website start by [clicking here](#).

You can also email: Schools@OpportunityEducation.org



Get Others to Write!

We have 355 schools very eager to have English speaking pen pals.

Share the following link – and make sure you CC schools@opportunityeducation.org – to get a gift certificate. [Click Here to Refer A Friend and Get a Gift Certificate!](#)

Visit an Opportunity Education School!

Take a life-changing trip to teach, share and learn in an Opportunity Education school in Africa or India. [Click Here to Learn More.](#)



Picture of the Month:

Jim Ricketts, (center) President of OEF, has good reason to smile! He is pictured with John Kandichetla, OEF South India Manager, and surrounded by some of the amazingly devoted educators he met during his whirlwind tour of India.

OEF is proud to have 224 Indian schools and is grateful to all the staff and students who welcomed our visits last month.

For more information please contact:

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STAY CONNECTED

