Cesar Chavez Day
2023

Grades 3-5

CESAR CHAVEZ FOUNDATION
INSPIRING & TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.1, RL.4.3, SL.4.1

Community Circle

What do you know about Cesar Chavez? What do you wonder?

I know Cesar Chavez was…
I am wondering…

[5 min] Opening Community Circle

Create a K-W-L poster. Tell students, “This week is Cesar Chavez Day. We will be learning more about the life and values of the leader Cesar Chavez.”

Ask students to offer ideas for Columns 1 and 2, by having students share what they already know about Cesar Chavez and/or what they want to know. The teacher can chart the ideas, or listen as students share in the circle, and add to the poster later.

What's a K-W-L chart

Unity Clap

[1 min] Lead students in the Farm Worker Unity Clap. Video example linked here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p9s2l9sGDckUz6xejjzq9RxfV488QItn/view?usp=sharing

[teacher says] Si Se Puede!
[students respond] Yes, we can!
[teacher says] Si Se Puede!
[students respond] Yes, we can!
[teacher says] Isang Bagsak!
[students respond] Isang Bagsak!
Clap together slowly and then faster and faster.
[all together] Si Se Puede!

[10] Movie and Discussion

Teacher Directions: We are going to watch the first few minutes of a movie about Cesar Chavez and his life as a farm worker as a child. As you are watching, I want you to consider a few things

- What did farm workers do that might have made them everyday heroes? (How are they helping us?)
- What was it like for Cesar as a kid to be a farm worker?

After the video, add to the “L” portion of the K-W-L chart, adding what they have learned about Chavez and farm workers.

Let's Read!

Pages 17-22

YouTube Read Aloud
Option (5:54 to 7:51)

[5 min] Read Aloud p. 17-22, a *portion* of the book Harvesting Hope.
(If time allows, teachers are welcome to read the whole text, or read over multiple days. Today's lesson will focus on the excerpt from P. 17-22. Youtube read aloud option linked.)
Teacher Instructions:
Model good reading habits by telling students we are going to learn a bit more about **one part** of Cesar Chavez' life. We are going to learn *how* Cesar organized farm workers. How did he get people to work together to create change? If we have time, we will read the whole book, Harvesting Hope, by Kathleen Krull.

Read page 17-18 and Think Aloud: Cesar is remembering back in Arizona when his family owned their ranch and did all the farmwork themselves. It wasn't miserable like the work is now and he is realizing it's all because the way they are being treated. This is an important part of the book because now he starts the change, his focus is now on fighting for change. Wow! What bravery it must have taken for him to do this.

Read page 19-20
Think aloud: Wow, what a hard worker and problem solver he must be to be able to work with different groups people and get them to trust you! Remember the landowners are the ones who hire the workers so for cesar to be a worker and have the trust of a landowner is a big deal.

Yet Cesar had never forgotten his old life in Arizona and the jolt he'd felt when it was turned upside down. Farmwork did not have to be this miserable.

Reluctantly, he started paying attention to the outsiders. He began to think that maybe there was hope. And in his early twenties, he decided to dedicate the rest of his life to fighting for change.

Again he crisscrossed California, this time to talk people into joining his fight. At first, out of every hundred workers he talked to, perhaps one would agree with him. One by one—this was how he started.

At the first meeting Cesar organized, a dozen women gathered. He sat quietly in a corner. After twenty minutes, everyone started wondering when the organizer would show up. Cesar thought he might die of embarrassment.

"Well, I'm the organizer," he said—and forced himself to keep talking, hoping to inspire respect with his new suit and the mustache he was trying to grow. The women listened politely, and he was sure they did so out of pity.

But despite his shyness, Cesar showed a knack for solving problems. People trusted him. With workers he was endlessly patient and compassionate. With landowners he was stubborn, demanding, and single-minded. He was learning to be a fighter.

In a fight for justice, he told everyone, truth was a better weapon than violence. "Nonviolence," he said, "takes more guts." It meant using imagination to find ways to overcome powerlessness.

More and more people listened.

One night, 150 people poured into an old abandoned theater in Fresno. At this first meeting of the National Farm Workers Association, Cesar unveiled its flag—a bold black eagle, the sacred bird of the Aztec Indians.

La Causa—The Cause—was born.

Turn and Talk (pg.21-22)

In a fight for justice, he told everyone, truth was a better weapon than violence.
"Nonviolence," he said, "takes more guts." It meant using imagination to find ways to overcome powerlessness.

What does this mean? Do you agree with this? Why or why not?

[3-5min] Discussion
Teacher Instructions:
Have students talk with a partner to share their ideas. Pick a couple of students to share out.

Justice

The quality of being just; fairness.

[1 Minute] Vocabulary Introduce this vocabulary word and connect it to the previous quote and story.

Add this word to the vocabulary chart you have started from yesterday- either in the moment or at the end of the lesson or simply print out this slide and add to a chart. Students are more likely to use these vocabulary words when they are made visible for the students to reference.

National Farm Workers Association

A group of farmworkers who come together to fight for change and justice.

[1 Minute] Vocabulary Introduce this vocabulary word and reference the flag and symbol used by the national Farm Workers Association

Add this word to the vocabulary chart you have started from yesterday- either in the moment or at the end of the lesson or simply print out this slide and add to a chart. Students are more likely to use these vocabulary words when they are made visible for the students to reference.

Map of California

Fresno

Los Angeles

[Optional]: Reference this map to show where Fresno is and how close it is to LA. Remind them is where the first meeting of the National Farm Workers Association took place.

Let's Read!

Pages 23-26

YouTube Read Aloud
Option (7:51 to 8:51)

[3-5 min] Read Aloud p. 23-26
Teacher Instructions: Read pages 23-26 and check for understanding along the way.

[3-5 min] Read Aloud

Teacher Instructions: Read pages 23-26 and check for understanding along the way.

[3-5 min] Read Aloud
Teacher Instructions: Read pages 23-26 and check for understanding along the way.

Strike or *Huelga*

to stop work in order to force an employer to comply with demands

[1 Minute] Vocabulary Introduce this vocabulary word and connect it to the previous quote and story.

Add this word to the vocabulary chart you have started from yesterday- either in the moment or at the end of the lesson or simply print out this slide and add to a chart. Students are more likely to use these vocabulary words when they are made visible for the students to reference.

Strike or *Huelga*

[1 Minute] Show an additional photo of the protests that were part of the farm workers' strike. <If time allows> Discuss what it meant to "boycott" grapes. The Farm Workers asked people around the country not to buy grapes (boycott). This was another example of nonviolent action to demand change. Add Boycott to vocabulary chart if time allows.

Turn and Talk

How does a strike help fight for change?

How would this impact the landowners?

What risk are the farmers taking by doing this?

[2-3 min] Discussion
Teacher Instructions:
Have students talk with a partner to share their ideas. Pick a couple students to share out.

Map of California

Sacramento

Delano

Optional: Reference this map to show where the first march was organized. From Delano, about 30 miles northwest of Bakersfield to Sacramento.

Stop and Jot

"The company fought back with everything from punches to bullets."

pages 25-26

Explain this quote. What does it mean?

What was Cesar's response? What did he plan to do, and how do you think this helps fight for change?

[5-10 min] Stop and Jot
Instructions: Give students some processing time to share their thinking on paper. Have students share out after writing with their partner first and then have a whole group discussion.

Imagine you are joining a strike or protest.

Create your own sign to carry.
What would it say?

Two different extension options:
Option 1: Have students pretend they were getting ready to protest and join the strike for farmworkers' rights. Have them create their own sign. Have students add to the classroom wall or hold a classroom march on your school campus.

Option 2: Have students create a protest sign to fight non-violently for change on another topic they care about, such as the environment or gun violence. Have students add to the classroom wall or hold a classroom march on your school campus.

CESAR CHAVEZ FOUNDATION

INSPIRING & TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES