

Paideia Seminar Lesson Plan

Text: *Stone Sat Still (A)* by Brendan Wenzel

Grade/Subject: ES/Adult General Use

Ideas, Values: Perspective, Time, Nature, Philosophy, Opposites

Date of Origin: 11/11/2021

Pre-Seminar Content

Launch Activity:

Have participants describe what it feels like to be still for different lengths of time (10 seconds, 30 seconds, 1 minute, etc.) Make note of responses and list them on chart paper.

Follow up with a question about how these feelings might change with location are share a few examples. Indoors, outdoors, in the sun, in the dark, on the floor, or in a chair.

Inspectional Read:

Read the text aloud for the first time while students identify (with a raised hand) the words they are unfamiliar with. List those words on the board. Have students share which pictures from the story they would like to look more closely at.

Background Information:

Brendan Wenzel is the author and illustrator of three picture books: *They All Saw a Cat*, *Hello Hello,* and *A Stone Sat Still*. Additionally, he is the illustrator of several other picture books.

When not creating books for children, Brendan is a collaborator with a number of groups that work to protect and conserve wild places and creatures.

Vocabulary:

Ask students to identify words that are unfamiliar or that need explanation. Define them or elicit definitions from context. Ask students to sort the words/phrases according to categories from both the text and illustrations. As appropriate for students’ developmental readiness, either have them choose the categories or provide them. (places; plants; animals; action words)

Analytical Read:

Read the text a second time and discuss the illustrations. Allow students to discover that the illustrations contain animals and plants that are not included in the text. Students may add these to the lists created in the vocabulary task.

Pre-Seminar Process:

* Define and state the purpose of the seminar.

*“A Paideia seminar is a collaborative, intellectual dialogue about a text, facilitated with open ended questions.*

*“The main purpose of seminar is to arrive at a fuller understanding of the textual ideas and values, of ourselves, and of each other.”*

* Describe the responsibilities of facilitator and participants.

“*I am primarily responsible for asking challenging, open-ended questions, and I will take a variety of notes to keep up with the talk turns and flow of ideas. I will help move the discussion along in a productive direction by asking follow-up questions based on my notes. “I am asking you to think, listen and speak candidly about your thoughts, reactions and ideas. You can help each other do this by using each other’s names.*

*“You do not need to raise your hands in order to speak, rather, the discussion is collaborative in that you try to stay focused on the main speaker and wait your turn to talk.*

*“You should try to both agree and disagree in a courteous, thoughtful manner. For example, you might say, ‘I disagree with Joanna because…,’ focusing on the ideas involved not the individuals.”*

* Have participants set a Personal Goal.

*“Now, please reflect on how you normally participate in a discussion as a group. What goal can you set for yourself that will help the flow and meaning of the seminar?*

*“Please consider the list of personal participation goals – either on the Speaking and Listening Checklist or on the board.”*

* To speak at least three times
* To refer to the text
* To ask a question
* To speak out of uncertainty
* To build on others’ comments

*“Is there one that is relevant for you? Please choose one goal from the list or that you feel is best and commit to achieving it during the discussion we are about to have… write down (or circle) your personal goal.”*

* Agree on a Group Goal.

*For this seminar, I will suggest our group goal.* (Select display for all to see.)

Seminar Questions:

* Opening (Identify main ideas from the text):
* What word or phrase would you use to describe the stone beside still?

(round-robin response)

* Why? (spontaneous discussion)
* Core (Analyze textual details):
* Time passes throughout the book. How can you tell time is passing? Are there clues in the words? Illustrations?
* Where do you see evidence of the five senses? Use examples?
* How are the creatures who interact with the stone alike? How are they different?
* Based on this text, what do you think the stone would say about us (humans/people)? Do you agree? Why or why not?
* Closing (Personalize and apply the ideas):
* What might the author be telling us about the value of being still? How do you know?

Post-Seminar Process:

*“Thank you for your focused and thoughtful participation in our seminar.”*

* Have participants do a written self-assessment of their personal goal.

*“As part of the post-seminar process, I would first like to ask you to take a few minutes to reflect on your relative success in meeting the personal process goal you set prior to beginning the discussion. Please review the goal you set for yourself and reflect in writing to what extent you met the goal. In addition, note why you think you performed as you did.”* (Pause for reflection.)

* Do a group assessment of the social and intellectual goals of the seminar.

*“Now I would like us to talk together about how we did in relation to the group goal we set for ourselves (insert your group goal). On a scale of one to five, five being perfect, how would you say we did? Why?”* (Pause for discussion.)

*“Now, would someone be willing to (volunteer) to share your personal self-assessment and reflection?”*

* Note reminders for the next seminar.

Post Seminar Content:

* Transition to Writing:

Have participants take notes to brainstorm ideas that they heard, read, or thought during the seminar.

* Writing Task:

Pick a place where you can be still to observe the world around you over time.

After reading and discussing *A Stone Sat Still*, write a paragraph in which you share your reasons for the place you will observe. Support your decision with an example from the text.

* Brainstorm:

Display the writing task and then have participants talk in pairs for two minutes to share thoughts about what the writing task is asking and how they might respond. Discuss for clarity with the entire class. Offer ideas for observation points if participants seem to be stuck.

* Structure the Writing:

List the parts of the story that you will use to help you explain what you think. Organize how the paragraph will be organized.

* First Draft:

Ask participants to draft their paragraphs, beginning with a clear topic sentence. Specify that they need to refer to the original text to provide examples of the points they are making and what they hope to observe by being still.

* Collaborative Revision:

Have participants work in pairs to read the first drafts aloud to each other. The listener should comment with one point he or she heard clearly expressed and ask one question for clarification. Switch roles. Make revisions, resulting in a second draft.

* Edit:

Following a teacher edit, students should make corrections as needed, and draft a final copy.

* Publish:

Display the paragraphs in their final form, alongside a picture of what the learner has observed while being still.

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This Paideia Lesson Plan was created by:

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\*Text is attached if open sourced.

\*Text is cited if it needs to be procured.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C80NidUVOVs>

Wenzel, B. (2019). *A Stone Sat Still*. Chronicle Books.