

Lesson Name:

A Powerful Positive Perspective!

Student Objectives:

- Define perspective.
- Explain how a positive perspective relates to happiness.
- Create a chart comparing a negative and positive perspective about an object.

Educator Preparation:

- Familiarize yourself with the lesson outline and the story.
- Read “Identity” by Julio Naboia Palanco.
- Be ready to share an example of a time you had courage to bring beauty into the world.
- Prepare [graphic organizer worksheet](#) for students (may need to adjust directions for youngest students)

Introduction:

Hello! Today I am sharing with you a lesson about how having a positive perspective enables you to find happiness despite how others might view your circumstances. I will be teaching this lesson through the poem “Identity” by Julio Naboia Palanco.

Instruction:

Have you ever noticed that little toddlers love dandelions? And why wouldn't they? Dandelions are often the first dots of color that peek out of the ground in the spring! I have often seen little children discover dandelions and quickly pick a handful to give to one of the older people in their lives. If they are lucky, the older adult responds by saying thank you and expressing appreciation. If they are not so lucky, they might get told quickly that dandelions are a weed.

And despite every child's best intentions, a dandelion is still a weed! They grow everywhere.

People spray pesticides to kill them in their yard. Other people pull them out of gardens—annoyed they are growing up amongst the “real” flowers. Once we get past our toddler years, we quickly realize that a bouquet of dandelions is not exactly a gift!

We figure out pretty quickly as we grow up what is supposed to be beautiful and what is not. Just like the dandelions. Unfortunately, this often informs our perspective. A perspective is how we view things in the world or how we view ourselves. You can have a positive perspective or a negative perspective. And our perspective often shapes our ability to find happiness.

If we have a negative perspective about everything, it is really easy to feel anger or sadness. If we have a positive perspective, it helps us to be hopeful about our circumstances and find happiness. That doesn't mean we can't be angry when something is not right or we shouldn't be sad when something is upsetting. Having a positive perspective does not mean ignoring the things in the world that are bad. But, having a positive perspective means believing that things can get better. It also means believing in the potential for good or beauty even when it seems challenging to see that.

In our poem today, the speaker decides to view something that most people see as negative in a positive way. I really love how the speaker decides to have a positive perspective and finds happiness in her circumstances this way.

Interaction:

Read “[Identity](#)” by Julio Naboia Palanco.

Closure:

The speaker in this poem uses an image of a weed as a way of understanding herself and decides to have a positive perspective about it. Instead of focusing on the parts of herself that are difficult or thorny, she decides to see herself with a positive perspective by understanding those parts of herself as signs of strength. By developing a positive perspective, we can find greater happiness in our current situations.

Teacher provides examples of this from their own life. For example: When I was little, I was treated very cruelly by someone very close to me. It was very hurtful and I still think about how it impacted me. It would be very easy for me to look back and only think of the bad in that

situation. However, as I have gotten older, I have realized how many people I have been able to help because of my experiences. The situation also made me more sensitive to understanding other people's situations. It has helped me to find more happiness by focusing on the ways this has helped me and others rather than only focusing on the negative. I have tried to keep a positive perspective as I have looked back on these experiences.

How are you going to develop a positive perspective? What good can you find in situations that are not always viewed as beautiful?

Activity:

Today, I want you to find a way to have a positive perspective about something that is happening in your world. It could be something happening to you; it could be something happening to others. First, acknowledge the negative parts of the situation. We are not going to just ignore the negatives in order to have a positive perspective—so first acknowledge them. Then, find a way to reflect on the situation using a positive perspective. How can you find happiness despite difficulties?

Next, you are going to fill out a comparison chart to show the difference between a positive and negative perspective. You are going to identify an image you want to focus on for your chart. Some examples to choose from have already been given to you, but you can also choose your own image.

On our chart, we are going to think about how we could view that image with a negative perspective and how we could view that image with a positive perspective. If you want to draw the images, you can draw it in two different ways: showing the positive and the negative. If you want to write, you can make a list of the positive and negatives.

Additional Resources:

- [Spanish version of the poem "Identity"](#)
- [Reading comprehension questions for "Identity"](#)