

Catch the Vision

From apathy to understanding, to excitement, to ownership, to a passion for and love of country which includes a love for all people

Subject: America's greatness is its people, and that means you!

Objective: Provide students an understanding of what they can do right now to give of themselves, i.e. their time, energy, ideas, and commitment to build a greater America.

Lesson time: Pre-Readers' Theater Lesson 25-30 minutes

Reader's Theater Lesson 25-30 minutes

Pre-Readers' Theater Lesson

Preparation:

Teacher makes colored squares on their floor of their classroom that represent life boxes.

Start the lesson by playing a game of "telephone" or "gossip" where the teacher whispers a message in a student's ear and that same message is whispered from ear to ear until it has gone around the class. The message that will be sent is "Catch the Vision." When the message has been sent, the teacher will respond by saying, "We will see if the message is correct and complete later on in the lesson."

Teacher:

What do you like to do during your free time?

Let students respond. Some ideas may be listening to music, playing computer games, texting friends, watching movies, sports, etc. The teacher may find that some students like more than one activity but tell the students they can only pick one. Write the ideas on the board and assign a colored box to each idea, then say...

Each one of these colored boxes on the floor represents what you like most of all. Now go to the colored box that represents what you like most.

Let the students go to their colored boxes.

Now lets suppose you can do your favorite activity all day long with your friends. In fact, maybe you could do your favorite activity your whole life. Wouldn't that be fun? Since you are doing what you like to do in your free time you have nothing to worry about. Your favorite activities may change but you can stay in another little box. You can just think of yourself and serve yourself in that little box. This makes you think that maybe the purpose of life is to have fun. Are there good, better, and best ways to spend your free time?

See if the students have any comments, then continue...

Name some people that you know who reach out to you to help provide for your wants and needs.

List on the board the people and the services they provide.

Why do those people do these things for you? Have you had an experience where you have had an opportunity to reach out and help someone else? Tell us about it. How did it make you feel?

Again, let the students make any comments they would like, then continue...

Do you think those who serve you get the same satisfaction that you get when you are helping others?

Again, let the students make any comments they would like, then continue...

What would it be like if instead of the hours you spend doing your favorite thing, you decided to spend them outside of your box helping someone else? Can one of you tell an experience about doing something unselfish for someone else?

Wait until at least one student has responded positively then say, ***“Congratulations! You are catching the vision! Do those words ring a bell with anyone in the class?”*** Student response. (Catching the Vision was the message sent in the opening game of “telephone”) Then continue...

This box you are in is important to you because it provides you with entertainment and relaxation and just all around fun. But how much time are you spending there and is anyone gaining anything from this except you? Yes, you are going to school and fulfilling certain responsibilities, but are there other ways you could spend your free time? What would happen if you stepped out of your box? How could you improve your communication skills if you didn't have texting, instant messaging, and cell phones? Or, what would you do with your time if there were no organized team sports, IPODS, computer games, emailing, watching DVDs, internet, and fast-food businesses taking all of your time and money? Is there a volunteer from each box who would like to share an unselfish way to serve or communicate? If so, please come up and write it on the board.

Say to every student who writes something positive on the board,

“Congratulations! You are catching the vision!”

Ask if there is anyone else who would like to share an idea. Praise, praise, praise!!

Did you know that the boxes that you are in were created during this generation? They did not exist in past generations. Your ancestors did entirely different things with their time. America could not have become great if important people had stayed in a little

selfish box. Certain people like our Founding Fathers and those who sacrificed their lives for America have given us the opportunities that we have today. These people sacrificed everything and dedicated their lives to a higher cause. There is no greater satisfaction that one can have than that of service to other people. Today we invite you to “Catch the Vision” and to open your heart and to pledge yourself to using your time more wisely in serving others.

Today we are at war. We face terrorism, crime, drugs, pollution, and many other problems including this “throw-away society” we live in. Very few people seem to care about anyone else but themselves. America needs you and me to not allow this to continue.

We now invite you to step out of your box so that you can continue to “Catch the Vision” for a better America. Please be seated.

Class, now that you are out of your boxes you can continue to think about other things that can really make a difference in our world. Let’s watch a little video clip from a movie called “Pay it Forward” and how it worked in real life. You try to imagine what you could do to step out of your own box and “pay it forward” in your own life.

If you would like to watch the following video clips, you can either copy them online or purchase a DVD at www.rootsoffreedom.com for \$1 plus \$1.95 shipping. It will also include the song, “We Can Make a Difference.” (Teachers can purchase the orchestration of this song and other patriotic songs at www.classroomclassics.com)

Pay it Forward trailer

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rM19jFIVog0>

Starbucks news report

<http://www.katu.com/news/local/12684067.html?video=YHI&t=a>

Atlanta sisters on Oprah Winfrey Show

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItIYmUMVlg8>

You have all presented some great ideas today and hopefully benefited from these short video clips. Have you caught the vision?

I want all of you to think about what you can do to “pay it forward” to our country. John F. Kennedy said, “Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.” We should all ask ourselves what we can do for our country, no matter how small our contribution may be. We all can make a difference.

Outside of our box is where a true patriot lives, concerned about others, the group, the country, improving awareness, communication, hard work, reaching beyond limitations. Outside of our box we ask what we can do for others. How well we get along with other people is one of our great purposes on earth.

Next we will act out a real “pay it forward” story of how we got the Statue of Liberty and of the people who did it living outside of their box.

Readers’ Theater

Teaching Tips:

The teacher should be the Narrator and the best readers should be Laboulaye, Bartholdi, and Pulitzer. Teachers should explain that this Readers’ Theater is an introduction to a new program about America to encourage a love of country. It will teach them the greatness of America and how they can help America become a better place for everyone to live.

Display a picture or a sculpture of the Statue of Liberty.

Before beginning the Readers’ Theater read the following to your class:

As the Statue of Liberty invites the masses of the world through America’s golden doors, we invite you to change your vision of what America can become with your help. You too can help bring a symbol of liberty, like the Statue of Liberty, to our school.

As you hear the story of the Statue of Liberty, ask yourself, “Am I one that is going to sit back and let others change America?” America is a positive and upbeat country. It is our responsibility to keep America great. America is nothing more or less than the sum-total of its people. Remember, if you do not personalize the blessings of America then those blessings are useless to you. We need to keep America alive through positive and uplifting experiences. This can only be done by its people. You can be an effective part of building America.

Characters:

Narrator

Edouard-Rene Lefebvre de **Laboulaye**: Original sponsor of the Statue of Liberty and a French politician, historian, professor of law, and chairman of a French anti-slavery society

Frédéric-Auguste **Bartholdi**: French sculptor of the Statue of Liberty

Bruno **Girard**: French intellectual

André **Moxley**: French intellectual

Antoine **Romaine**: French intellectual

Emile **Snodgrass**: French intellectual

William M. **Evarts**: Head of the American fundraising effort for the Statue of Liberty

Scoop **Williams**: Reporter for the New York Times

Joseph **Pulitzer**: Owner of the *World* newspaper in New York City

Louise **Layne**: Reporter for the *World* newspaper in New York City

Adult Contributor:

Gambler Contributor:
Child Contributor:

Narrator:

America would not have won her independence without the help of France who provided arms, ships, money, and men to the American colonies. Some Frenchmen – most notably the Marquis de Lafayette, a close friend of George Washington – even became high-ranking officers in the American army. It was an alliance of respect and friendship the French would not forget.¹

Time: 1865

Place: France

Occasion: Several French intellectuals are at a dinner party hosted by Edouard-Rene Lefebvre de Laboulaye, a French politician, historian, professor of law, and chairman of a French anti-slavery society.

Laboulaye:

Thank you gentlemen for coming this evening. It is a most auspicious opportunity to host such a distinguished group of patriotic Frenchmen. I look forward to a stimulating evening of conversation.

Bartholdi:

We are honored. There are many things of importance happening all over the world. Truly it is a day of liberty and oppression around the world.

Girard:

Yes, we are oppressed by the dictatorial rule of Napoleon III, and America enjoys great liberty and prosperity. They are truly lucky.

Moxley:

They **are** lucky. But they have struggled greatly to win that liberty. First they had to fight for independence against our enemies the English.

Romaine:

Very true. However, they could not have won that war without our help.

Moxley:

It was truly our privilege to help in that worthy cause and to rub the nose of the English!

Romaine:

Well said, my friend! And they have recently weathered their second great peril by emancipating the slaves and remaining a union of free states.

Snodgrass:

¹ “History: Statue of Liberty, The Two Sisters” available from <http://www.americanparknetwork.com/parkinfol/sl/history/liberty.html>; accessed 24 January 2008.

Truly a miracle for all to behold. Most civil wars end in a dictatorship. Our civil war ended with Napoleon taking control of our country in 1805.²

Girard:

However, not to be outdone, his nephew, Napoleon III is now our emperor and hopefully our last monarch!

Snodgrass:

If only France could be more like America in her search for liberty!

Bartholdi:

Truly there is a genuine flow of sympathy between France and America. What can be done to cement our affections and inherit the blessings flowing from both?

Laboulaye:

Maybe there is something we can do. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the people of France gave the United States a great monument as a lasting memorial to independence and thereby showed that the French government was also dedicated to the idea of human liberty? A monument to cement 100 years of friendship between our two nations!

Snodgrass:

But of course! Frédéric! You are a successful sculptor. Is there not something you could do in this worthy cause?

Bartholdi:

What do you have in mind?

Laboulaye:

A monument as big as the idea! A monument to commemorate victory over oppression for the common man! A monument that will give hope to the world that liberty is for all men! Let it be called, "Liberty, Enlightening the World!"

Narrator:

That night the seed was sown that would become the Statue of Liberty. However, great ideas must be tested. Before Bartholdi would commit himself to the Statue of Liberty he had to go through several refining experiences. First the Egyptian ruler, Isma'il Pasha, rejected him in his hope to build a huge monument for the Suez Canal in 1869. Disappointed, Bartholdi joined the French army in 1870 as a general in the Franco-Prussian War. He fought for his homeland and the idea of "liberty" took on a whole new meaning for Bartholdi. In time, France's Third Republic, patterned somewhat after the democratic government of the United States, would emerge out of the ruins of the Franco-Prussian War.³

² "Napoleon I of France" available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon_I_of_France; accessed 28 January 2008.

³ "The Statue of Liberty" A Monument to and Ideal" by Myron Sevey available from <http://www.rootsoffreedom.com/pdf/Statue%20of%20Liberty.pdf>; accessed 28 January 2008.

Time: 1871

Place: France

Occasion: Bartholdi and Laboulaye are in a café having lunch.

Laboulaye:

So much has happened since our dinner meeting in 1865.

Bartholdi:

Yes, it has been a hard six years.

Laboulaye:

I was sorry about your disappointment to make a monument for the Suez Canal. The buffoons were too shortsighted.

Bartholdi:

Yes. I believe you are right.

Laboulaye:

However, Frédéric. Does not this open the way to make the monument for America we discussed six years ago?

Bartholdi:

Yes it does. I am ready to dedicate myself to a bigger cause! Let us begin!!

Laboulaye:

Go to see that country. Take a sketch and a small model of our statue and propose to our American friends to make with us a monument, a common work, in remembrance of the long-standing friendship between France and the United States. If you create a plan that will excite public enthusiasm, we are convinced that it will be successful on both continents!

Bartholdi:

I will try to glorify the republic and liberty there, in the hope that someday I will find it again here.

Laboulaye:

If we are successful, we will do a work that will have a far-reaching moral effect!

Bartholdi:

Now I must become a salesman as well as a soldier and sculptor of our monument, "Liberty, Enlightening the World!"

Narrator:

Time: June 8, 1871

Place: New York Harbor

Occasion: Bartholdi is raising public interest and deciding on a site for the American monument.

As Bartholdi sailed in to New York Harbor he saw Bedloe Island, the future site of the Statue of Liberty. He later wrote:

Bartholdi:

The picture that is presented to the view when one arrives in New York is marvelous, when, after some days of voyaging, in the pearly radiance of a beautiful morning is revealed the magnificent spectacle of those immense cities, of those rivers extending as far as the eye can reach, festooned with masts and flags; when one awakes, so to speak, in the midst of that interior sea covered with vessels...it is thrilling. It is, indeed, the New World, which appears in its majestic expanse, with the ardor of its glowing life.

Narrator:

Bartholdi felt it was the perfect location because...

Bartholdi:

New York is the place where people get their first view of the New World. I've found an admirable spot. It is Bedloe Island, in the middle of the bay. The island belongs to the government; it's on national territory, belonging to all the states, just opposite the narrows, which are, so to speak, the gateway to America.

Narrator:

Bartholdi's trip to America was met with excitement. He met Ulysses S. Grant, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Horace Greeley, and Senator Charles Sumner. However, no one was willing to make a commitment of money or a building site.

By 1874, with the establishment of the Third Republic in France, Laboulaye and Bartholdi agreed that "the lady's" time had come. Because the statue would be prohibitively expensive to produce, they decided its cost should be shared: France would pay for the statue; America would pay for its pedestal and foundation. A fundraising committee called the Franco-American Union was formed, with members from both nations.

Time: 1879

Place: France

Occasion: Bartholdi and Laboulaye are in a café having lunch to discuss French fundraising.

Laboulaye:

I can't believe it. The rich citizens in France are contributing almost nothing to the statue!

Bartholdi:

We must appeal to the common people. They are the ones who truly cherish liberty!

Laboulaye:

I have been thinking about this for a long time. We should have a lottery with donated prizes. In addition, we can sell clay models of the statue with the donor's name.

Bartholdi:

A brilliant idea! It might just work.

Narrator:

Laboulaye's idea did work, and by the end of 1879 about 250,000 francs had been raised for the statue's construction--enough to complete the project.

In the winter of 1883 Laboulaye died, never to see his dream come to life. The statue was finished in June 1884 and thousands visited it until the spring of 1885 when it was dismantled for the long voyage to America. Meanwhile, in America trouble was brewing.

Time: 1884

Place: The *New York Times* newspaper offices

Occasion: William Evarts, head of American fundraising and Scoop Williams, a reporter for the *New York Times*, are discussing the fundraising plight for the Statue of Liberty.

Evarts:

I can't believe it! We have been trying to raise the funds for the Statue of Liberty for nearly ten years, and we have only raised \$182,491, of which \$179,624 has been spent! The public apathy is almost as big as the monument itself!

Williams:

So what's the scoop? It seems America doesn't really care about getting the Statue of Liberty. What are you going to do now?

Evarts:

I don't know. We need to raise another \$100,000 to finish the base and the pedestal. The statue is finished in France and will be coming here next year. This lack of support is a national disgrace!

Williams:

People can't understand why the base and pedestal costs as much as the statue and they think it's a New York statue so let New York pay for it.

Evarts:

This is a national project! The apathy and ignorance have reached epic proportions!

Narrator:

At this very time, Joseph Pulitzer came to the rescue. Pulitzer was a Hungarian immigrant who came to America penniless in 1864. After serving in the Union army during the Civil War he moved to St. Louis where he bought a local newspaper and made it thrive. In August 1833 he moved to New York and bought a fledgling little paper, the *World*, with

an eye to reviving it. He saw a great opportunity to grow his newspaper and to help the cause of the Statue of Liberty at the same time.⁴

Time: 1884

Place: The *World* newspaper offices

Occasion: Joseph Pulitzer is solving the fundraising problems for the Statue of Liberty with Louise Layne, one of his best reporters.

Pulitzer:

If the rich of America will not pay for the pedestal as the rich in France did not pay for the statue, then the common people will! The *World* is the people's paper, and it now appeals to the people to come forward and raise the money for the statue's pedestal.

Layne:

Do you really think the common people will respond?

Pulitzer:

The statue was paid for by the masses of the French people; let us respond in like manner. Let us not wait for the millionaires to give of their money. It is not a gift from the millionaires of France to the millionaires of America, but a gift of the whole people of France to the whole people of America.

Layne:

You think every American should be involved in this cause?

Pulitzer:

Absolutely! With the abolition of slavery, we have proved that in America all men are created equal. The poor, the rich, the black, the white. We are all the same and we all enjoy the same liberty.

Layne:

But Mr. Pulitzer, how are you going to convince the average "Joe" to contribute to the Statue of Liberty?

Pulitzer:

Every reader should give something, however little, and every single donor will be named in print. The school children, the shopkeeper, the shoe-shine boy. And then we're going appeal to African-America newspapers to encourage their readers to contribute to a monument that will, in part, commemorate the end of slavery.

Layne:

Sounds great! This is what America is all about!!

Narrator:

⁴ Leslie Allen, *Liberty: The Statue and the American Dream*, (New York, NY: The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, 1985) 85.

So the money poured in, from single-dollar donations from grandmothers to pennies from the piggybanks of schoolchildren. Day after day, Pulitzer's editorials hammered away at what he termed "croakers and laggards" who would not get involved and especially at the rich.

Especially compelling were the thousands of letters printed as the money started flowing in. They came from adults...

Adult Contributor:

I am a young man of foreign birth and have seen enough of the monarchial governments to appreciate the blessings of this republic.⁵

Narrator:

Contributors came from gamblers...

Gambler Contributor:

Enclosed please find \$10, the contribution of a poker party, to the Bartholdi Fund.⁶

Narrator:

They came from little children...

Child Contributor:

Enclosed find 50 cents, collected at a birthday party.⁷

Narrator:

On June 15, 1885, the Statue of Liberty arrived at Bedloe's Island and on August 11, 1885 the headline on the *World* newspaper blared: "ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS!" The goal had been reached! It had taken over 120,000 contributors from around the country a mere five months to accomplish what nine years of genteel haggling had not -- and without a moment to lose.

In May 1886 the last stone of the pedestal was in place was inaugurated on October 28, 1886, more than ten years later than Bartholdi and Laboulaye had originally intended.

One important note is the sonnet entitled *The New Colossus*. In 1883 a Jewish girl named Emma Lazarus had composed this sonnet for an exhibition to raise funds for the pedestal. The words welcome the whole world to America. Part of it reads

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to be free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me.

⁵ Ibid, p. 37.

⁶ Ibid, p. 37.

⁷ Ibid, p. 37.

I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

Emma Lazarus was not invited and did not attend the inauguration of the statue and died soon after in 1887 at the age of 38. Over time, the Statue of Liberty came to signify liberty to all immigrants partly because it was the first thing they saw as they came in to New York Harbor making Lazarus’ sonnet even more meaningful. Finally, in 1903, *The New Colossus* was engraved on a plaque and placed inside the pedestal and today it is nearly as well known as the statue itself.⁸

Fundraising Activity:

At this point, the teacher should introduce the fundraiser for their class to bring a “Statue of Liberty” to their school—the Freedom Gallery. The teacher could introduce this idea in the following manner:

Show the 13 minute video of the Freedom Gallery.

Class, we have the chance to bring something like the Statue of Liberty to our school. It is called America’s Freedom Gallery and it is a 24-piece display presenting the story of America’s founding. It also includes more Readers’ Theaters like the one we just did and activities like Freedom Bowls, assemblies, and other patriotic events. As a school we really need this type of thing but we need to raise money for it. Each class has been asked to raise \$_____ and the class which raises the most will get a free pizza party! Would you like to do this?

⁸ Bernard A. Weisberger, *Statue of Liberty The First Hundred Years*, (New York, NY: American Heritage, 1985) 116-120.