I Kill the Mockingbird

AUTHOR: Paul Acampora
PUBLISHER: Roaring Brook Press
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GENRE: Realistic Fiction
SETTING: The setting is the current time in West Glover, Connecticut.

SUMMARY: After their beloved teacher dies, three friends decide to memorialize Fat Bob by promoting his summer reading assignment, To Kill a Mockingbird. They create quite a sensation throughout the country by promoting their campaign through Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

BOOK TALK:
How do most students spend their summer vacations? Most gather with friends, or go to camps or on vacation, but something sparks these three friends to spend their summer writing a manifesto, conducting a campaign to get others to read a beloved book, and creating a nationwide sensation through social media.

AUTHOR’S BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:

AUTHOR'S NAME: Paul Acampora
Author’s Website: http://www.paulacampora.com

Other books written by the author:
Rachel Spinelli Punched Me in the Face
Defining Dulcie.

BOOKS WITH A SIMILAR THEME:
Mockingbird by Kathryn Erskine
Also Known As Harper by Ann Haywood Leal
Sure Signs of Crazy by Karen Harrington
A Summer of Sundays by Lindsay Eland
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
1. "Faithful people can be a little insane sometimes..." (p. 5)
How can this quote be taken in good ways and bad ways? Cite examples of each with details.

2. "If you're reading, well...you're having a conversation." (p. 10)
Have you had a conversation with a book or the characters in a book?
Why did the book speak to you? If you’ve not had such a conversation, create one from a book you’ve read so you can get to know the characters better.

3. Mort says, “It's the books that have power....” (p. 40) In what ways can a book have power?
Give an example of a book that empowered you.

ACTIVITIES WITH STANDARDS:

Language Arts

- **Chart the Books**
  Create a chart of all the books that are referenced. How many have you read? Which was your favorite and why? If you haven’t read one, pick one to read.

  **6-8.RL.1** Read a variety of literature within a range of complexity appropriate for grades 6-8.

- **Traumatic Events Writing**
  Each of the friends has undergone a traumatic experience in his/her life: Lucy’s mother had cancer, Elena’s parents died in a car accident, and Michael’s father is not in his life. Think about a difficult experience you or someone close to you has experienced. How did that experience change your life (or the other person’s life)? What fears or uncertainties did that experience produce? How were these changes dealt with? Write about your thoughts on whether it is possible to have a positive outlook after experiencing a traumatic life-changing event. Support your reflections.

  **6-8.W.1** Write routinely over a variety of time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences; apply reading standards to support analysis, reflection, and research by drawing evidence from literature and nonfiction texts.)

Science

- **Birding**
  On page 58, Lucy’s mother is drawing birds and the two of them listen to birds in their yard. Listen to bird calls on a site like eNature: [http://www.enature.com/birding/audio.asp](http://www.enature.com/birding/audio.asp)
  If one is nearby, go to a park and see if a naturalist or an ornithologist can help you identify local birds. If a naturalist is not available, listen to birds in a park or your yard and identify them using a bird call identification site. Create a log of the birds identified and find pictures of the birds to add to your log.
6-8.RS.7 Integrate quantitative information expressed in words in a text with a version of that information expressed visually (e.g., in a flowchart, diagram, model, graph, or table).

Social Studies

- Phobias
  “Hippopotomonsrosequippedaliophobia”
  On page 19, Elena pointed out this was a word Fat Bob used in class, referring to the fear of long words. Is there something that frightens you? What is it and how do you deal with it? Research your phobia and find out how you can become less frightened of it.

  6-8.LST.7.1 Conduct short research assignments and tasks to answer a question (including a self-generated question), or test a hypothesis, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

- Occupy Wall Street
  Research Occupy Wall Street (page 52). In what ways is I Kill the Mockingbird similar to or different from Occupy Wall Street? Use a Venn Diagram to record evidence from the book and from your research.

  6-8.LST.7.1: Conduct short research assignments and tasks to answer a question (including a self-generated question), or test a hypothesis, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

Digital literacy

- Social Media
  Keep a list of the various types of social media the friends utilized to promote I Kill the Mockingbird. Cite evidence from the text to determine whether or not each resource was successful.
  Is there something about which you feel passionately? How would you promote a campaign about this passion? What safeguards would you need to keep safe while using social media?

  6-8.ML.2.1 Use evidence to evaluate the accuracy of information presented in multiple media messages.)
Fads
Research an Internet craze, fad, dance, etc. For example, the ALS Ice Bucket challenge was popular on Facebook. Many people challenged others to raise money for ALS and posted videos of themselves getting doused with ice water on Facebook. Select a similar fad. How did it start and spread? What was the result?

6-8.ML.2.1 Use evidence to evaluate the accuracy of information presented in multiple media messages.

Art

Create a Book Poster
Lucy created a poster for their I Kill a Mockingbird campaign (p. 73). Select a book and market it. Design a cover, include an author biography, write jacket descriptions, and include quote reviews about the book.

6.8.1 Compare the ways big ideas and concepts are communicated through the perspectives of visual arts and other disciplines.

Calendar shoot
Lucy’s mother is a photographer and took pictures for a calendar project (p. 138). Spend a day shooting pictures from a day in your life. Create a collage from those pictures. Consider doing it monthly and making an actual calendar out of it for your family!

6.7.1 Apply elements (line, shape, form, texture, color, value, and space) and principles (repetition, variety, rhythm, proportion, movement, balance, emphasis, and unity) in work that effectively communicates ideas.

RELATED INTERNET SITES:

Teaching Books:
http://www.teachingbooks.net/tb.cgi?go=1&searchbox_level=0.01&keyword_type1=title&boolean=AND&keywords1=I+kill+the+mockingbird

Challenging Words
vector (p. 1)
wistful (p. 8)
chronograph (p. 20)
pillories (p. 23)
jostle  (p. 42)
conspiracy (p. 53)
saboteurs (p. 55)
joust  (p. 60)
paradox (p. 66)
extricate (p. 89)
nonchalant (p. 98)
manifesto (p. 103)
unfettered (p. 130)
cyptic  (p. 130)
locavore (p. 133)
syndicate (p. 153)