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**PROJECT
CORNERSTONE**
A YMCA of Silicon Valley Initiative

Side by Side: The Story of Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez
Author: Monica Brown
Los Dichos – Lesson #7

Dicho: “Yes, We Can!”

Asset Category: Positive Values

#26 Caring, #27 Equality and Social Justice, #28 Integrity, #29 Honesty, #30 Responsibility

(Instructions: Read one paragraph/question in Spanish – stop – let the teacher read the same paragraph/question in English. Continue in same way until done with each section of the lesson script.)

Introduction– 10 minutes

Good morning girls and boys! My name is _____ and I’m very glad to be back again this month to share another story from my Latino culture with you. If you remember, I am a volunteer for Project Cornerstone’s Los Dichos program and I am a mom/dad of a student at this school! I’m here this month to share an inspiring book on social justice titled: *Side by Side* by Monica Brown.

Before we read the story the author tells us about Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta and some of the milestones they achieved working together for over 30 years. Let’s see what she has to say.

(Turn to the second to last page and read the section “A Note for Parents and Teachers.” After you’re finished reading, show the students the picture of Cesar and Dolores in the following page and read both quotes under the picture.)

Pre-story questions – 5 minutes

1. Both Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta were activists. What is an activist?
2. People work together to solve problems. What kinds of problems are best solved through teamwork?
3. Has anyone heard about the United Farm Worker Union/Movement that Dolores and Cesar created working as a team?
4. What is a strike, march, boycott?
5. The illustrator of the book Joe Cepeda, dedicates the book to the children of the San Joaquin Valley. Why could this be?

Read the story– 15 minutes

(Read the story in Spanish a page at a time and have the teacher read the same page in English. Remember to show the illustrations.)

Post–story questions – 5 minutes

1. What is *La Causa*? What were Cesar and Dolores fighting for?
2. In what type of conditions did farmworkers had to work and live under? How were the kids of the farmworkers affected?
3. What were some examples of non-violent acts Cesar and Dolores did during their struggle for social justice?

Did you know that Cesar Chavez . . .

- Was a vegetarian.
- Had two dogs - one named Huelga and the other one Boycott.
- Looked up to Mahatma Gandhi & Martin Luther King Jr. for inspiration.
- Is honored with a state holiday every March 31st in California and other states.

Did you know that Dolores Huerta...

- Received many honors for her activism work.
- Is over 80 years old and still fighting for social justice.
- Has visited the Silicon Valley many times.
- Is the president of her own foundation. The Dolores Huerta Foundation focuses on social justice.

Activities

Option # 1 — I am an activist! —15 minutes

Dolores and Cesar shared the desire to fight against the injustices in the agricultural fields affecting many farmworkers. Cesar experienced first-hand being a migrant farmworker and living in poverty. Dolores saw many migrant workers without a place to sleep, and how her students couldn't learn in class because they were too tired or hungry to learn.

Cesar and Dolores believed that it was unfair for the farmworkers to do all the hard work of growing and picking the crops, but not having enough food on their tables at the end of the day. They decided to take action and worked together to improve the conditions for farmworkers.

They were able to win the fight because they organized and recruited farmworkers to help strike, march and boycott. They used picket signs during these activities to draw public attention to their cause. It is also a non-violent way to fight injustice.

For today's activity we will be making picket signs as a way of showing what injustice we believe in. Or you can make a picket sign that is related to the book we just read.

(Offer some examples of causes they can help fight. It can be a global, local, community or school issue. Some ideas can be conserving the environment, world hunger, animal rights, poverty, access to education, gender equality, or bullying.)

Materials:

1. Medium size poster board
2. Markers
3. Large popsicle sticks
4. Masking tape

Instructions:

1. Write a few words that can transmit a powerful message to people that see your sign.
2. Draw an image that relates to the cause you believe in and/or decorate your sign.
3. Tape a popsicle stick to the back of the poster board to serve as a handle.
4. Picket sign is ready!

(Note: Explain to students that their message will be more powerful if they use less words on their sign because people will be able to read it fast and it will stay in their minds for a while. It is also important for the writing to be clear and big.)

Option # 2 — Si Se Puede! Chain —15 minutes

Dolores Huerta is famous for saying, “¡Sí, Se puede!” (“Yes, we can!”) when many farm workers doubted that they could band together to improve their lives.

For today's activity we will first brainstorm ways to bring about change in your classroom, home, and community. Then, we will think about specific ways to make the changes happen. Finally we will write “I Can” statements on strips of construction paper to link together and make a paper chain of change to hang in your classroom. This chain will serve us as a reminder that by working together as a team we can make change happen! -- Example: “I can help stop animal abuse.”

(If chain cannot be hung in classroom, students can make “I can” bracelets instead.)

Materials:

1. Construction Paper
2. Markers or Pencils
3. Stapler
4. Scissors

Instructions:

1. Cut vertical strips out of construction paper.
2. Write an "I Can" statement.
3. Staple them together to make a chain.

Closure

Thank you girls and boys for letting me come into your classroom to share this powerful story of the lives of Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta and their journeys to social and economic justice.

Our dicho for this book is Dolores' famous phrase – "Si Se Puede!" – that motivated the farmworkers to keep on fighting for better working conditions and serve us as a reminder that by working together anything is possible. Cesar and Dolores are an inspiration for all who believe in the fight for social justice.

I hope you all learn about the hard work of farmworkers. Next time that you visit the fruits and vegetable section of your grocery store remember the process of how they got there. We are able to enjoy delicious fruits and vegetables thanks to the hard work of farmworkers. I look forward to seeing you all next month for another fun story.