

Working with the Quotations

Discussion:

- √ What do you think this quotation means?
- √ What are the most important ideas and values embedded in the quote?
- √ How would you rewrite this quotation if you had to use synonyms of the original words?
- √ Is the quote making a comparison? What is it comparing?
- √ Does the quote contain symbolism? What could __ represent?
- √ Is the context important? Does it matter *who* said it, *when* and *where* it was said?
- √ Give an example of what this quote is about from real life.
- √ What circumstances do you think prompted the speaker to say this?
- √ What do you know about the speaker that would shed light on why he/she said this?
- √ Why do you suppose this quotation is famous or at least notable?
- √ If this quote doesn't apply to you directly, what kind of person or situation would it apply to?
- √ Is there something you can learn from this quote about how you should live your life?
- √ What is the key word in this quotation?
- √ How would the world be different if everyone lived by this quotation?
- √ Can you see yourself thinking of this quotation in a certain situation? Would it change how you act?
- √ When would this quote not apply?
- √ Is this quote realistic or idealistic?

Classroom Activity Ideas:

1. Have students find five quotes about one topic, such as honesty or success.
2. Have students research and write a short biography of the person who said their favorite quote.
3. Have students rewrite five quotes using language an 8 year old could understand.
4. Use a quotation as a journal prompt at the beginning (or end) of class. Students can pick out their favorite journal entry to expand into a full essay.
5. Have students memorize two or three of their favorite quotes and recite them for the class.
6. Have students find and explain one quote that uses a simile and one that uses a metaphor.
7. Have students write their own quotation using symbolism.
8. Present students with two quotes that complement or contradict each other and have a compare/contrast discussion.
9. Give students the first part of a quote and have them think of different endings. For example, "One must live the way one thinks or ends up... _____. (The original quote, from Paul Bourget, ends with "thinking the way one has lived.")"
10. List 10 quotes for students and have them rank the quotes in order of how meaningful they would be to a child, a teenager, a parent or an old person.

11. Present students with two quotes on the same topic and ask them to decide which is better. Then have students explain what criteria they used for “better.” Possible measures: simplicity, profoundness, timelessness, memorability, choice of words, use of symbolism.
12. Select a quotation and write it on the board. Have students copy it, write what it means in their own words, and give an example from their own lives.
13. As a twist on the traditional “current events” assignment, have students select a quote that relates to a news story and explain why it is relevant to that current event.
14. Assign a group of students a particular quote and have them prepare a one-to-two minute commercial to “sell” the essential message of the quotation.
15. Cut the quotes into strips of paper and have students draw a quote. Assign them the task of expressing the message of the quote in a poster, poem, essay or song.
16. Have students think about the advice their parents are always giving them. Tell students to write down at least three things they have heard their parents say over and over that would qualify as maxims.
17. Tell the class to pretend they are publishing their own maxim collection that can only be 20 quotes long. Challenge them to find powerful quotes not already in the newsletter.
18. Have students ask their parents and three other adults what their favorite quote is and how it has affected their lives (quotes should be on the topic of the month).