

Perspectives for Peace Curriculum Overview

Tenacity's literacy curriculum, Perspectives for Peace, is structured to help students explore these four main questions:

- *Who am I deep down?*
- *How do others see me?*
- *How do my surroundings shape me?*
- *How do I and can I shape my surroundings?*

The Fall Session focuses on personal identity, while the Spring session focuses on community, as demonstrated in the curriculum flow below.

	6 th Grade	7 th /8 th Grade
Fall '07*	Identity Unit 1: Understanding Values	Identity Unit 2: Understanding Identity through Interactions with Others
Spring '08	Community Unit 1: The Tenacity Community	Community Unit 2: Power in the Community
Fall '08	Identity Unit 1: Understanding Values	Identity Unit 3: Understanding Identity through Our Place in the World
Spring '09	Community Unit 1: The Tenacity Community	Community Unit 3: My Place in the Global Community

* cycle will repeat beginning in Fall '09

Two components that run through every unit of *Perspectives for Peace* are Literacy Groups and Journal Writing. In Literacy Groups, students are divided into groups of two to four children based on reading level and book preference, and work closely with one or two tutors. Each group reads a book together and uses it as a starting point for conversations, writing assignments, vocabulary development, and creative projects. Literacy groups have four main goals:

- **Positive Relationships:** We want our students to feel known, cared for, and respected by peers and adults. We want them to be able to show that care and respect towards others.
- **Reading Enjoyment:** Many students, especially those who have had negative experiences with reading, have dismissed reading as boring, as being only for school, and/or as something they cannot do. We want to reintroduce the *joy* of reading, to show students that the language of books can be silly, fun, important, intense, even life altering!
- **Literacy Skills:** Ultimately, we want our students to be better readers. Better readers are better learners, they're better writers, they communicate more effectively, and they are more successful.
- **Positive Self Concept:** We want students to have a strong sense of who they are, to feel good about who they are, and to have the courage and skills to stand up for their values.

In addition to reading throughout their time in Tenacity, students are given a journal at the beginning of their ASEP career. They decorate the journal to reflect their own identity, and write in it in a number of ways. At the end of the three year experience, students take home their Tenacity journals as a way to reflect on their growth. The two primary methods of writing are:

- **Communication and Reflection:** At least two days a week students write back and forth with Tenacity staff. These written conversations are centered on getting to know each other and discussing issues in the student's life.
- **Pondering Perspectives:** At least one day a week the students write in response to a specific question which helps them connect their books, their lives, and the unit's theme.