

## **Bully Out! study unit plan**

*This is the plan for the six-week study unit developed by middle school language arts teacher Karon Perron, at Castleton Village School in Castleton, Vermont. At [www.the-revealers.com](http://www.the-revealers.com), see also the article in the Resource Center, **Using The Revealers as the center of a “Bully Out!” study unit**, plus Karon’s letter in the Testimonials section.*

**Unit Objective:** The students will identify positive, negative, and neutralizing language and situations and apply them to literature and real life situations using various presentations and assessments.

### **Materials Used**

Current daily newspapers, news magazines, and Internet news and bullying sources

Class copies of *The Revealers* by Doug Wilhelm

Dr. Phil show tape “Bullies”

“Remember the Titans” video

“Shrek” video

Doug Wilhelm, personal visit

*Students used their own materials for the initial bulletin board, sculpture, and door projects, as well as for the Final Project Options*

### **Final Project Options**

1. You may write a narrative, in third person, utilizing an experience you’ve had, as a bully, victim, or onlooker.
2. School “Bully Out!” Plan: This plan must be workable, be positive, and involve students working with students. It must also work as a neutralizer.
3. Write, design, and perform a puppet show. The script must follow the expectations for number one.
4. Write and illustrate a children’s book, appropriate for fourth to fifth grades.
5. Your own innovative idea, approved by me.  
XC: You will receive extra credit if you do one of the following:
  - a. Do more than the project listed above.
  - b. Record *The Revealers* on tape to donate to our library.
  - c. Write a letter to the editor on the seriousness of bullying, letting adults in the community know how kids feel about the issue.

*Use your best efforts in all work!! Good luck!*

### **Standards-Based Assessment Plan**

*For a list of the state standards addressed by this unit, see [“Bully Out!” standards addressed](#).*

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Task</i>	<i>Assessment</i>
1.3	Assigned readings/tasks	Discussion/anecdotal notes
1.12	Personal essay	Benchmarks/rubric
1.13	Listen/clarify/participation	Anecdotal notes
2.2	Gathering info for class projects	Self/peer assessment
	Current article info/summary	Class discussion
2.8	Class discussions related to personal experiences	Anecdotal notes
	Tasks	Anecdotal notes/effort
3.3	Everyday communication w/others	Self reflections
	Class projects	
	Posters	Self and peer assessment
3.7	Sharing of personal stories, knowing some could be published	Self and peer assessment
3.10	Ongoing class projects	Student-designed rubric
3.11	Everyday communication of PNN language, especially w/ those out of class (recess, lunch, out of school activities)	Self-reflection
4.3/4.4	Final projects	Student-designed rubric Oral presentation rubric

### **Tasks**

*Note: Phrases in quotes are chapter titles from The Revealers*

#### *Task One: Pre-reading*

Draw your stereotype of a bully and describe that bully (including actions and language) in a paragraph.

#### *Task Two: “The Man Without Fear”*

Compare/contrast your sixth and seventh grade experiences. What’s the same and what is different between sixth and seventh grades?

#### *Task Three: “Streaming”*

What advice would you give to Russell?

#### *Task Four: “Pop Quiz”*

Compare/contrast bullying in sixth and seventh grades. You may use a t-chart, Venn diagram, or paragraphs.

#### *Task Five: “Anatosaurus/The Weird Girl/Bird Boy/Vulcanizing”*

Do you think hitting Burke will change Elliot’s situation with bullying for the better or for the worse? Why?

#### *Task Six: “Bird Boy/Vulcanizing”*

Elliot is said to be “lucky” because he has a support system. What is your support system? Describe how and why it works.

*Task Seven: Quiz*

From the story so far, identify the following:

1. main plot/theme
2. three subplots
3. protagonist
4. antagonist
5. setting
6. inciting incident
7. three events in the rising action

*Task Eight:*

Write your story, as Catalina did. Be specific, so readers know YOU.

*Task Nine:*

Discuss the Internet’s role in bullying ... pros, cons, positive, negative, and neutralizing language and situations.

Show Dr. Phil’s taped show. Class discussion.

*Task Ten: Choice*

Complete one of the following, using all the information we’ve shared so far. Make sure the theme is “Bully Out!” and remember your audience! (Would YOU pay attention to the message in your poster??)

1. Poster (12x18)
2. Write/block a TV commercial
3. Write a poem against bullying (20 line minimum)

Show “Remember the Titans.” Students are to take note of incidents of bullying and harassment which occur in the movie. For class discussion after the movie:

- a. What occurred in the movie that wouldn’t be tolerated today?
- b. How were negative situations “neutralized?” What could’ve been neutralized that wasn’t?
- c. What positive language did you hear in the movie?
- d. What still goes on today? Why hasn’t it been neutralized?
- e. Is anything in *The Revealers* similar to the movie (characters, plot, etc.)?

Show “Shrek” (any Disney movie would do). Students are to take note of incidents of bullying and harassment which occur in the movie. Class discussion would entail how even the most “innocent” of movies can plant ideas of harassment.

*Final projects and presentations*

Students will write a self-reflection of the entire unit and how it all comes together. They will also address how it personally affects them, their family, friends, and community, and how, overall, bullying affects the world.

## **Pre-reading Activities**

- A. 1. Positive and negative words  
a. connotations/denotations  
b. tone/attitude  
2. Neutralizing language and situations

(How can you stop a potentially bad situation?)

*Act: Students are to spend the next 24 hours smiling at those they pass by and offering help when needed. Take note of reactions and responses.*

- B. Bulletin board/sculptures/door design (small group)

Divide class into three groups, positive, negative, and neutral. Each group will brainstorm and design an artistic impression of the PNN category they are in. For instance, the positive group that has the bulletin board would have to design their impression of “positive” language and situations using color, shape, form, symbols, etc. ... Each group hangs words or situations on their project that match their category. “Friends,” for instance, may be hung on the positive board. Each day, groups add new words, based upon the past day’s experiences, or they may choose to remove words as well.

- C. Current events

Each student is required to find one article or television story about bullying or harassment, summarize it, and share it with the class. These are hung up in the room for the duration of the unit.

## **The Novel**

Read the novel aloud. After the first few chapters, allow students to volunteer to read chapters. Also include dramatic readings where students take character parts. Encourage read-arounds, but never force a student to read aloud; always offer the “pass.” Reading this novel aloud is important, as the voice in Wilhelm’s novel is strong. Students need to hear it as well as read it.

As a result of this unit, several students chose the final project of designing a school plan for bullying and harassment as they believed something could be done. All of these students commented that bullying would never be eradicated, and adults would never have the answer; it had to come from kids, for kids.

The overwhelmingly favorite choice of plan from my students was to design a program where anonymous students would weave in and out among all others, just going about their daily lives, and pick up on bullying or harassing behaviors. They would drop notes to one of two or three “safe” adults, who would call a counseling meeting every week or so, to go over “issues that have been recognized in our school.” These issues would be discussed with a panel of students and adults. Offenders would also be invited to these meetings, and solutions would be worked out.