



Ideas for Using Quotes in Your Classroom

A. Quote of the Day – Incorporate a quote into daily announcements, the school newspaper, school display case, bulletin board, or marquee.

B. Writing or Speaking Prompt – Use a quote as a writing prompt:

U.S. or World History– Select one of the quotes that represent a specific time and place. Have students describe the context for the quote at that time and place, then discuss and write about the relevance of the quote today.

Government – Select a quote related to one of the founding documents (Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Federalist Papers, Bill of Rights). Have students discuss and write about the relevance of the document today.

Select a quote that, for its time, influenced the “public agenda.” Have students write about the quote in terms of how it was used to influence the public agenda at that time. Have students locate a recent quote from a national, state, or local figure and describe how they think the quote could influence the public agenda today.

English/Language Arts – Have students incorporate one of the quotes *effectively* into a piece of writing. Discuss how writers and speakers use quotes to persuade, provide point of view, etc.

Divide the students into groups of three and assign each triad a different quote. Give the students five minutes to work together to outline a “1-Minute Speech” that one of the students will give to the class. The theme of the speech could be:

- Why this quote is important to remember today.
- What this quote means to youth today.
- Incorporate the quote into a topic of your choosing.

General – Select several quotes that relate to the role and responsibility of citizenship. Have each student choose the quote that most resonates with him/her and discuss and write about his/her reasoning.

C. “Public Service Ads”

As either an in-class assignment, or as part of a co-curricular activity, have students select quotes that are meaningful to them and design posters that can be displayed in the hallways. The posters should:

- Incorporate at least one of the quotes.
- Convince others that active, effective citizenship is important.

Quotes

- 1) “No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth. A society that cuts itself off from its youth severs its lifeline.” -- Kofi Annun, Former UN Secretary-General
- 2) “To be alive, to have freedom and to have opportunities to build communities are privileges not to be taken lightly. -- Ngoan Le, Chicago Department of Human Services
- 3) “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent”. -- Eleanor Roosevelt, First Lady to 32nd President, Franklin D. Roosevelt
- 4) “When I was young I used to volunteer in a soup kitchen and they thought I was wonderful. When I asked why there were soup kitchens, they thought I was a radical.” -- US Senator Paul Wellstone
- 5) “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” -- Mahatma Ghandi, Indian Leader
- 6) “If you think you’re too small to have an impact, try going to sleep in a room with a mosquito.” -- Anita Roddick, Businesswoman
- 7) “I, for one, love strength, daring, fortitude. I do not want people to kill the fight in them; I want them to fight for right things.” -- Helen Keller, Deaf/Blind Leader
- 8) “Instead of being satisfied to alleviate suffering, we shall labor hard and continually to prevent it.” -- Helen Keller, Deaf/Blind Leader
- 9) “The attempt to suppress an idea has always and everywhere proved a failure.”-- Helen Keller, Deaf/Blind Leader
- 10) “Only people count. Only people who think and feel and work together make civilization. Only governments that keep every door of opportunity wide open are civilized governments.” -- Hellen Keller, Deaf/Blind Leader
- 11) “The questions which one ask oneself begin at last, to illuminate the world and become one’s key to the experience of others.” -- James Baldwin, American writer
- 12) “We cannot learn without pain.” -- Aristotle, Greek Philosopher
- 13) “Teachers open the doors, but you must enter by yourself.” -- Chinese Proverb
- 14) “Knowledge, if it does not determine action, is dead to us.” -- Plotinus, Roman Philosopher
- 15) “I hear and I forget
I see and I remember
I do and I understand.” -- Chinese proverb

- 16)“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” -- William Butler Yeats, Irish poet.
- 17)“Today because of technology, children know as much as the wisest nobles knew in the past.” -- Jaques Coustau, naturalist.
- 18)“If you really believe in something, go for it! Life is too short to stand around and watch.” -- Ryan Tedschei, student activist.
- 19)“Knowledge is power.” -- Francis Bacon, English philosopher and statesman.
- 20)“Whatever you can do, or dream you can...begin it.” -- Goethe, German poet, playwright, and novelist.
- 21)“When you don’t know where you are going, any road will take you there.” -- Lewis Carroll, English writer, mathematician, and lecturer.
- 22)Think globally, act locally. -- Popular saying.
- 23)“This country will not be a permanently good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a reasonably good place for all of us to live in.” -- Theodore Roosevelt, 26th US President
- 24)“¡ Sí se puede! Yes, it can be done!” -- César E. Chávez, social activist
- 25)“Leadership is action, not position.” -- Donald H. McGannon, American businessman
- 26)We need to cultivate an engaged youth. This will provide results both for students and the community. It will also insure a future generation of thoughtful, sensitive and active citizens and leaders. This is the essential ingredient both to our form of government and our health as a society. " -- Wayne Meisel, Non-profit Leader
- 27)“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” – Aesop’s Fables
- 28)“The time is always ripe to do what is right.” -- Martin Luther King, Jr., American Civic Rights Leader
- 29)“ The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitudes of mind.” -- William James, Psychologist
- 30)“Imagination governs the world.” -- Napoleon, French Leader
- 31)“Who ever walked behind anyone to freedom? If I can’t walk side by side I don’t want to go.” -- Hazel Scott, musician.
- 32)“The frog does not drink up the pond in which he lives.” -- Sioux proverb

- 33)“It is not enough to be busy; so are the ants. The question is: What are we busy about?”
-- Henry David Thoreau, author
- 34)“To make a difference is not a matter of accident, a matter of casual occurrence of the tides. People choose to make a difference.” -- Maya Angelou
- 35)“If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.” --Booker T. Washington

Sources:

Quotes 1-6 from: ABCDbooks.org

Quotes 7-10 from: “To Love this Life: Quotations by Helen Keller,” Scholastic Inc., 2001.

Quotes 11-16 from: “Celebrating Teachers: A Book of Appreciation,” edited by Carol Kelly-Gangi and Jude Patterson. Published by Metro Books

Quotes 17-22 from: The Active Citizenship Today (ACT) Student Field Guide, Constitutional Rights Foundation

Quote 23 from: theodoreroosevelt.org

Quote 24 from: Cesarechavezfoundation.org

Quote 25 – 28: from SERVENet.org

Quote 29: from quotationspage.com

Quote 30: from ddg.com

Quote 31 – 36 from ABCDbooks.org