Sophie Scholl
World War Two

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Overview of learning:

- To introduce how the Nazi regime affected people living in Germany
- To explore the idea of 'bravery'
- To explores what 'values' are and how they impact on what we do

Interesting aspects:

- The idea that Sophie was German and fought against the regime
- How a young person can have an impact on big events
- What we consider 'bravery' to be in times of war

Inquiry questions:

- How do values affect your actions?
- How much risk you would take to defend what you believed in?

Narrative:

Sophie Scholl was a young women who was part of a protest and resistance group called the White Rose Group during the Nazi regime. She actively protested against the regime and was caught and executed for her actions.

Other points of view:

- Her parents
- The wider community
- Those being oppressed y the Nazi party

Links to curriculum:

- History
- Literacy

Resources

An old suitcase

Material

Mirror

Framed photo of Sophie

Scarf

German books/texts/flags etc

Copies of the White Rose leaflets

Powerpoint

Candles

Large strips of paper with quotes

Date/Time cards

Steps:

1) Adult in Role

On a large cloth lay out the objects and props. Use candlelight and lay the quotes at the edges of the cloth. Ask the children to sit around it in a circle. Take your time to consider that every person will see something different. Explain to the children that these are all part of a story and give them time to imagine what they story might have in it. Ask them to share across the space anything that they can see that they think is important to share with the group.

Explain that you are going to give them a bit more information about the story now by imagining that you are in the story. Explain that this is an imagined moment but that the story that they are exploring today is real. Carefully pick up the scarf and put it on. You are enacting Sophie's mother getting ready to visit Sophie in prison. She is obviously worried but trying to put a brave face on. She organizes her hair in the mirror, puts on her lipstick proudly and picks up the picture of Sophie to look at it. It is important that this is played truthfully and simply rather than 'acting'. If you are brave you may sing as well which offers some social context or some music playing from the start of the discussions can help set the mood. Stille Nacht works well. Take off the scarf carefully and ask the children to share with each other what else they now know about the story and what questions it offers.

Explain that this time we will be able to hear the woman speak which will help us understand more but may also leave us with more questions. Repeat the exact movements as before but this time add in some dialogue

I'm proud of her. Don't let her see you are upset. Stay strong. She stood up for herself. And now we must go. To see them both. Keep smiling.

2) Belief

Discuss what they now know but importantly what they (we) don't know. Highlight the mother speaking about standing up for something. Ask the children to share with each other if there is anything they feel strongly about. Something they would stand up for. This could be animal rights, education for everyone etc.

3) Vote with your Feet

Divide the space with one side of the room being YES, one side being o and the middle being DON"T KNOW. The 'don't know' is a space of indecision or contemplation rather than a lack of knowledge. If they can see both sides of the argument or are unsure then this is the place to stand. Ask the children to stand and explain they are going to show what they think by moving to the space. Ask the questions but pepper their answers with opportunities to share with the person next to them, facilitate whole group discussions, ask them to challenge someone on the other side, try to convince the people in the middle etc. Its important that they understand there are no right answers. The tension should develop as the questions go on.

Would you stand up for what you believed in if:

All of your family disagreed with you

All of your friends disagreed with you?

Your entire town disagreed with you?

The Government disagreed with you?

Would you stand up for what you believed in if:

There was a chance your actions could cause others to be violent?

There was a chance you could be arrested?

There was a chance you could go to prison?

There was a chance you could be executed?

4) Introducing Sophie

Gather the children around the image of Sophie (Slide 2). Discuss what they see. You'll note here that we tell the children what happens at the end of the story. This is important to keep them focused on the events and creating curiosity as to why it happens. It will enrich their debates later. Story tell the key facts:

- Sophie Scholl

- born 1921

- 21 years old when she was executed by the Nazi party for protesting against them

Explain that the Nazi party kept very detailed records so that we are able to know what people said and thought about her to some extent.

> The party executioner said "She went without a flicker of an eyelash. None of us could understand how this could be possible."

Discuss with the children what they think this may mean, how they interpret this statement and if it tells us a bit more about Sophie.

5) Sophie's Story

Divide the group into 5 groups placing the groups around a central space almost like a clock whilst they are working and in order of the story (this will help when they share their work later) and hand out each one of the sheets with the information and image on (Resource sheets). Ask the groups to read through the information and decide what ifs the most important part of the story they should share with the rest of the group. Answer any questions for example what the Hitler Youth was etc.

Ask them to create an image using their bodies based on this. It may be similar to the one they have or be more focused on what they feel is important to share. All must be involved and they should pay careful attention to where hey are looking as the eyes are very important in telling us information. Ask them to all stand and hold their images at the same time (there should be space for you in the middle and they should be able to see everyones image at from where they are positioned.) Ask them to add in one line of dialogue, something that will help us understand this part of the story. They should consider who says it, what they say and how it is said. They should add this to their images. Next the children should consider how they can add in one movement or gesture in reaction to the line of dialogue. They will have an image, a line and then the group will move in reaction. Give them some time to practice this so

that they begin and end with stillness. When they are ready to share ask them to lay their sheet of paper in front of them as you will need to pick this up.

The children should be sat in small groups in a circle in order of the story with their section of their story in front of them. Explain that you are going to use a technique called Open/Close to help them share their stories. You will say 'Open" and everyone will open their eyes and look/watch the group who are ready to share. When you say 'Close' everyone will close their eyes, the group that has just shared their story will sit down and close their eyes and the next group will stand in their beginning positions still. You will repeat this until everyone has shared their story. Explain that when each group is in position you will say 'Open' everyone will open and watch but that you will read the information on the sheet, then they will say their line and move before freezing still again before you say 'Close'. Ask the first group to stand, say "Close' and the first group should take their position. Run the exercise until each group has shared. Explain that this was a practice go but that now they should be looking for information, something they didn't know or something they would like to know more about, perhaps there is something which tells us a bit more about Sophie and why she wanted to protest against the Nazi party when she knew that this could result in her own death, why she felt that it was important to. Repeat the exercise but this time 'storytell' the information on the sheets with more focus on the voice to build the tension more.

Open/Close is an effective way of sharing work back without it feeling like a 'performance' as often this can be intimidating. It also allows the children to be more focused on observing and investigating the work instead of becoming passive as an 'audience member. The clock structure can also help keep focus and the flow of how the ideas are shared.

6) Street Scene

And so the group is formed. The White Rose. Sophie, her brother and some other people came together because they felt they had to do something about the rise of the Nazi party. What they saw they felt was wrong and they wanted to do something about it but this was dangerous. To meet, to discuss, to have these ideas was dangerous. They have come up with a plan, a way of protesting by writing and distributing leaflets. On these they write down their thoughts, they carry them around hoping that others may feel the same. To have these thoughts is dangerous but to write them down, to pass them on is…

Stand, be quick, come here to these lines of text by the cloth. Be careful for you are being watched. These are lines from those leaflets. Pick one, say it but not too loudly, for this is your line, learn it, be quick for you must not get caught.

Let's make this street where the White Rose hold their meetings, quick, find a space on this street in 5,4,3,2,1 and hold there. Say your line over in your head, its ok if its not quite right. Repeat it to yourself. You are safe no one can hear you thinking. Don't let them know. There are members of the Nazi part everywhere. You don't know who is your friend or who is your foe. Be careful. In a moment you are going to walk around this street in Germany with these thoughts or ideas.

I am going to pass this leaflet to someone and say my line to them. But I'm going to mean it, I'm going to hope to convince them to join us, but I mustn't be see, get caught, I only have a brief moment to do it, I must be quick but this is important, I must try to convince them! That person is going to take it from me and then chose a different person, pass them the leaflet and tell them, whisper to them, urgently their words and so on and so on. This is important. Perhaps they will join you. Be careful though. Begin walking.

As the children walk model passing the leaflet with urgency and tension before stating one of the lines. As they continue the exercise it can be helpful to have a drum beating and getting quicker as they do as this will quicken the pace they walk and help build some of the dramatic tension. Occasionally reinstating ideas such as "don't be seen', "they must join you" etc over them can also help. Stop them (not everyone will have had a go) and ask them how Sophie and her friends may have felt, perhaps if they can explain why they were determined to convince others to join them and why this was important.

7) Hans

Sophie's brother was also executed. Here we explore a little more about their decision as well as continue to explore the children's own thoughts about what they would do. Ask the children to sit and select one volunteer that will be able to hold a position for a while. Ask the group to 'sculpt' the person into an image of Hans holding a meeting and give them a prop of a few pieces of paper for leaflets. Discuss how he would be standing, where he would be looking, how he can look secretive, where he places the

leaflets he is about to distribute. When the group are happy with their image explain that they are going to add themselves to the image. Where they stand and how they stand is important. Are they close because they want to hear every detail, are they far away because they are more hesitant or perhaps they are not fully convinced yet that they want to join? Give them time to take a position.

When did you join? would you have joined? are you friends with the group or have you joined later, do you know of the dangers, what is your part in the group, Hans wants to reach a wider audience, in other countries. They feel it's important to begin to spread the word. Send leaflets by train but for this the risks are greater.

Thought track a few by placing your hand near their shoulder and asking them to share what they are thinking and speak at greater length with others. Some may respond as themselves and some may respond as if a character. Try to encourage them to speak as if it were themselves but in that position. You may ask them about the risks involved and if they are prepared to take those risks.

And so the White Rose continued. They made leaflets, they distributed them in Germany and abroad. They took the risk in order to share their views with others. But they have a plan. (Whilst speaking get a large suitcase and present it to the group.) **This will be the one. This leaflet drop will be the one that makes the difference. But quiet for now. Walls have ears.**

8) Sophie's Bedroom

Ask the children to sit in a large square. Give some of them the tape and ask them to mark out the walls to Sophie's bedroom, the door and a window which looks down onto the street below. They should end up sat outside the walls of the room. Mark out a wardrobe, a bed and then place a chair and small table in the space. With a sense of ritual introduce the old suitcase prop. It should have some leaflets in it already. Explain that this suitcase is important as in it are the leaflets of by the White Rose. Ask the children where she would keep it. If it is under the bed etc then ask them to imagine it is under a bed. Again with a slow sense of ritual as you enter Sophie's bedroom place the suitcase where they have chosen and repeat what they say e.g. Under the bed is the suitcase. Sophie has placed it here because she wants to keep it hidden but close enough to grab in an emergency.

Give each some small ripped bits of paper and a pencil and ask them to consider what else would be in her bedroom or even what she would be able to see out of the window, on the walls in the drawers or on the bookshelf. They must matter. When they have done this ask them to place it where it would be found. They should do this carefully as this is now Sophie's bedroom.

Ask a volunteer to become Sophie. Ask the group to sculpt her in the position they might imagine her to be the night before an important plan that the White Rose have come up with. When they are still narrate the next section. The repetition is important.

This is Sophie's bedroom one night before the White Roses sixth leaflet drop. This is the one. For they are going to go to the University. And while everyone is in lectures they are going to drop the leaflets in the corridors. For it's at the University that the young people can be found and they will listen. They have to!

How she feeling? Give me five

Urgently take the suitcase and stand.

Hans and Sophie run through the halls, the corridors throwing leaflets where they can. This is the one. The one to make a change! Then just as they are leaving Sophie feels something in her case. (Stop and bend down, slowly open the suitcase as if you are Sophie. Hold up some of the leaflets in the case.) **She still has some left. Ahead of her is a large staircase and below a large hall. Sophie runs up the stairs and throws the last of the leaflets in the air.** (Throw the leaflets and let them fall.)

But she is seen by University handyman and Nazi party member, Jakob Schmidt. He immediately reports them and both Sophie and Hans are immediately are arrested. (Return your focus to the bedroom.)

This is Sophie's bedroom one night before she is arrested at the University of Munch.

This is Sophie's bedroom four nights before she is tried for treason against the Nazi party.

On the 22nd February 1943 her trial starts at 10am. At 1:30pm Sophie is condemned to death by guillotine. This is Sophie's bedroom four nights before her mother and her father get ready to leave the house to speak to their daughter briefly at her prison cell. And this is Sophie's bedroom four nights before, at 5pm, she is executed for treason against the Nazi party.

9) The Night Before

But here she is. The night before the sixth leaflet drop. And this is the one. The one to make a change! If you can imagine what Sophie might be thinking, or perhaps what you would be thinking if you were Sophie then stand where you are. As I pass you you're going to speak Sophie's thoughts.

Slowly walk behind them as they speak Sophie's/their thoughts. Encourage them to speak in first person. When they have finished ask them to sit down and thank the person being Sophie asking them to return to the seated square on the outside of the room.

10)The night after

Explain that they allowed Sophie's parents to visit her and that they also visited Hans who was also executed. Remind them of the imagined start of the workshop where the adult was in role as the mother preparing to see her. Ask them what they know about Sophie's parents from the open/close exercise. Explain that now they are going to imagine that the mother is entering the Sophie's room having returned from seeing her and knowing her fate. Ask for one volunteer to imagine they are Sophie's mother. Ask the others to tell them what different objects of details they imagine are in Sophie's bedroom, what is outside of the window etc.

Explain that they are going to use a technique called action/thought. The first person in the square will narrate an action. It can only be one but must be detailed. Offer an example e.g. "She slowly turns the handle to the bedroom". It musn't be longer than this but needs to indicate 'how' it is done. The next person will then say the thought again this should be in first person. Again offer an example e.g. "I'm scared what I may find. The next person narrates the next action and the next person the thought and so on. They may need some scaffolding at the start and reminding to offer one action but some detail as to how to do it however they will soon get the hold of it. The person as the other should only do what is instructed so it's important that the group speak up.

11)The University

Ask the group to stand in two parallel lines opposite each other so they make a corridor. It can be useful if the end of the corridor is by the projection screen for the last slide. Explain that you are going to imagine that you are Sophie on her way to the University to make the sixth leaflet drop. What would they say to her, as themselves now? If they could speak to Sophie knowing her story what would they want to say to her? Explain that as you walk down the line they will speak to her.

Sophie lifts her case and begins to make her way to the University. Today is the day. This is the one that will make a difference, a change. It has to.

Holding the suitcase begin walking slowly.

12)Sophie

When you reach the end ask them to sit by the screen. Remind them that the Nazi's kept very good records therefore we know what Sophie said about what she did. Display the final slide.

Discuss what you/they feel is important.

Quotes to be displayed

a civilized nation as allowing itself to be "governed" without opposition

the system has put every man into a spiritual prison

Freedom! Freedom!

this cancerous growth in the nation

It is not too late

order is upset and turns to disorder

why do you allow these men who are in power to rob you

urge them to passive resistance

Please duplicate and distribute

When he says peace he means war

We will not be silent

We are your bad conscience

Genuine learning

Real freedom of opinion

Date/Time Cards

22nd feb 10am

1.30pm

5pm