

# Americans Who Tell the Truth

## Lesson Plan #5:

### What is a turning point?

Find a portrait subject's "turning point", create art to represent this moment, the issue, and your chosen truth teller. Go the extra mile, create an exhibit to showcase the class's findings.

### Reading Assignment:

#### Biography of David Rovic:

<https://www.americanswhotellthetruth.org/portraits/david-rovics>

### Essential Question:

What is a turning point and what is its value?

### Lesson Description:

After discussing how the creative arts are able to help people understand a message and connect across real and perceived divides, students will write a personal and creative description of their chosen AWTT portrait subject and his/her issue, e.g. a letter, poem, rap and create an artistic representation of the portrait subject and issue.

*Additional possibility is to make this a school or community event and showcase student work.*

### Activity:

#### The Writing

1. Choose a Truth Teller from Shetterly's *Americans Who Tell the Truth*.
2. Identify the issue this person addresses.
3. Identify the "turning point(s)" -- when this person knew it was important to act on the issue and not just be a bystander.
4. Write a description of this moment. Your description should be creative. It can be any one of the following or some other format that allows you to capture the energy of this moment:
  - letter to someone **from** your Truth Teller

- letter from someone **to** your Truth Teller
  - brief story
  - poem, rap, spoken word
  - song
5. Edit your piece so that it is no longer than two paragraphs --
- make it real
  - be specific
  - make people laugh, cry, be angry

### **The Art**

1. Create a piece of art that represents your Truth Teller and the issue addressed.
2. It can be any of the following or something else that represents what you want to convey:
  - a collage
  - a drawing
  - an abstract representation
  - a mosaic
3. Make your artwork small enough that it can be displayed with your writing on a 15"x20" posterboard (or smaller if necessary)

### **Discussion/Suggested Lesson Expansion:**

Make this work an Event (in person, virtually on Zoom or Google Meets, or filmed and offered as a video)

### **Introduction**

1. As a group, students will verbally introduce the project – the purpose of the project, definition of a truth teller, an example of a “truth telling moment”
2. The introduction will be
  - energetic
  - brief (5-10 minutes)
  - engaging – make people want to look at the exhibit

### **The Viewing**

1. Students will stand professionally beside the art and writing about their Truth Teller.
2. Students will give a brief description of their Truth Teller for the people looking at their writing and art work.

### **The Closing (only if live or on a virtual live gathering)**

1. Students and the audience gather together for a closing discussion.

2. Audience has an opportunity to ask questions of students.
3. Students ask the audience to identify characteristics common to all of the truth tellers.
4. Final comments from both groups.