



Teaching *for*  
**TRANSFORMATION**

# **Voices from behind the Mask**

## **Bioethics - 11th and 12th Grade**

Bryan Crump  
Oakland Christian School



## Deep Hope:

My Deep Hope is that we will become people who:

- think as disciples,
- love as neighbors,
- and live as stewards.



## Essential Learning Targets:

- ① I can love my neighbors by taking time to listen to their stories.
- ① I can love my neighbors by relating their story in a kind and compassionate way.



## Curricular Outcomes:

### Our Bible standards are Throughlines.

- Justice seeker, community builder, servant worker, image reflector

### We also hit literacy standards for science.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.4 · Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.5 · Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.6 · Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

### Bioethics curricular ideas were also addressed.

- Image of God, allocation of resources



## Habit of Learning:

**Gracious Communicating** is a key habit of learning practiced by the students during this project. Particularly, we focused on hearing the voice of the person who was interviewed. Also, the students used class time to review each other's work and make suggestions.



## See God's Story:

Creation	Fall	Redemption	Restoration
God created humans to be healthy and at peace.	Since the Fall, we struggle with disease and also with isolation.	Christ's death allows us to come together in community.	We are helping someone's voice to be heard by others outside their circle.



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## Storyline

This activity connected to my storyline because the students had to take a step to reach out to someone else, listen in detail to their story, and faithfully represent it through their writing.





## Throughlines

- **Throughline #1: Justice Seeker**
  - The act of sharing other peoples' stories allows for a variety of voices to be heard.
- **Throughline #2: Community Builder**
  - By spending time with the person interviewed, we are helping build relationships and reflecting our shared struggles.
- **Throughline #3: Servant Worker**
  - Students developed empathy for others through this process.
- **Throughline #4: Image Reflector**
  - We recognize that the subjects were created in the image of God and therefore deserve to be heard, and we also live out His image through compassion, communication, and creativity.





## Formational Learning Experience:

- **Real Needs:** Many individuals have struggled with COVID, whether through illness, fear, or restriction.
- **Real People:** These stories reflect real people with whom we have contact and represent others with similar stories.
- **Real Work:** The students produced stories for a document that was emailed to the staff, and shared via the school's social media.



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## INVITE

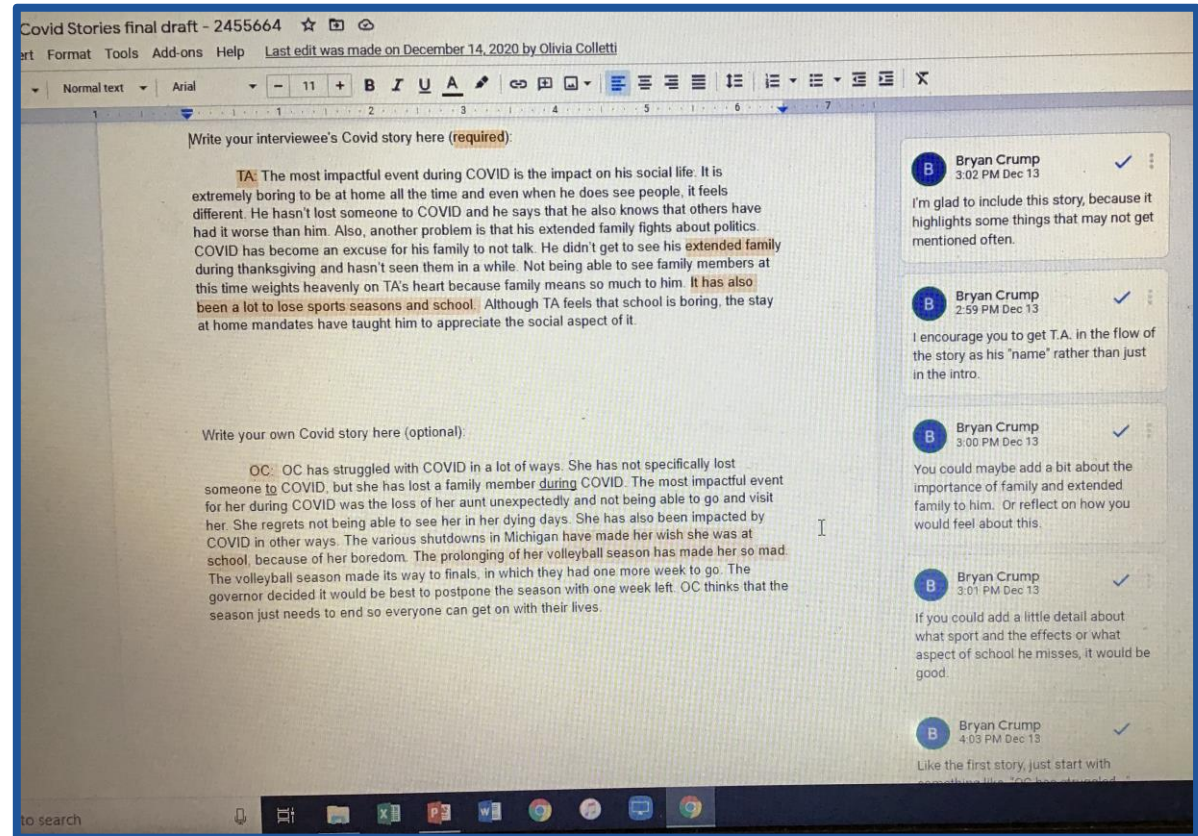
### **How did you invite your students into this FLEx?**

I asked them for ideas on how we could connect our classroom learning to the lives of real people in our community and show love to our neighbors. Most of the ideas suggested required either contact that would have been difficult with the restrictions in place (since our high school was required to be learning remotely) or relationship-building that would have taken more time than remained in the semester. I suggested that they could show love to our neighbors, by valuing them as persons, hearing their story of hurt, and sharing it with our community.

## NURTURE

### How were your students nurtured during this FLEx?

Students recorded the stories they collected in a Google document. They peer reviewed each other's stories. Also, the teacher made encouraging comments and suggestions for improvement on each document.



The screenshot shows a Google Docs interface with the following content:

**Title:** Covid Stories final draft - 2455664

**Toolbar:** Normal text, Arial, font size 11, Bold, Italic, Underline, Text color, Background color, Bulleted list, Numbered list, Indent, Outdent, Link, Unlink, Table, Undo, Redo, Refresh, Print, Full screen, Help.

**Main Text:**

Write your interviewee's Covid story here (required):

**TA:** The most impactful event during COVID is the impact on his social life. It is extremely boring to be at home all the time and even when he does see people, it feels different. He hasn't lost someone to COVID and he says that he also knows that others have had it worse than him. Also, another problem is that his extended family fights about politics. COVID has become an excuse for his family to not talk. He didn't get to see his extended family during thanksgiving and hasn't seen them in a while. Not being able to see family members at this time weighs heavily on TA's heart because family means so much to him. It has also been a lot to lose sports seasons and school. Although TA feels that school is boring, the stay at home mandates have taught him to appreciate the social aspect of it.

Write your own Covid story here (optional):

**OC:** OC has struggled with COVID in a lot of ways. She has not specifically lost someone to COVID, but she has lost a family member during COVID. The most impactful event for her during COVID was the loss of her aunt unexpectedly and not being able to go and visit her. She regrets not being able to see her in her dying days. She has also been impacted by COVID in other ways. The various shutdowns in Michigan have made her wish she was at school, because of her boredom. The prolonging of her volleyball season has made her so mad. The volleyball season made its way to finals, in which they had one more week to go. The governor decided it would be best to postpone the season with one week left. OC thinks that the season just needs to end so everyone can get on with their lives.

**Comments (all by Bryan Crump):**

- 3:02 PM Dec 13: I'm glad to include this story, because it highlights some things that may not get mentioned often.
- 2:59 PM Dec 13: I encourage you to get T.A. in the flow of the story as his "name" rather than just in the intro.
- 3:00 PM Dec 13: You could maybe add a bit about the importance of family and extended family to him. Or reflect on how you would feel about this.
- 3:01 PM Dec 13: If you could add a little detail about what sport and what the effects or what aspect of school he misses, it would be good.
- 4:03 PM Dec 13: Like the first story, just start with something like "OC has struggled"

## EMPOWER

### **How were your students empowered to take action?**

The students had the ability to choose anyone they wanted to interview and share the story. We encouraged the use of initials, which could be real or an alias, as a way of preserving some level of anonymity for the subject. Students also had the choice to share their own story, after having shared someone else's.



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I chose to write my story about a family friend of my family. This friend (Mr. E senior) recently passed away due to COVID-19, and it was all very sudden. It happened about a month ago. Just a week or two before he passed away, I was at his house with my dad shooting guns before opening day. However, he never came out because he was feeling sick, and because he was old and didn't want to risk coming into contact with me and my dad. Unfortunately a few weeks later, he was sent into the emergency room and news got out that his organs were failing. The saddest part of this tragedy is that Mr. E senior's son, daughter-in-law, and grandkids, never got to see him before he passed away. Two of the kids were unable to visit due to college, and his son was all the way in Thailand. It breaks my heart to think about how he was unable to see his family, and his family who was unable to see their dad/grandpa before he passed away.

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E.K. is a professor at a university, and happens to be immunocompromised. When COVID first hit, EK was worried about how it was going to affect their students, and what would happen to her classroom. After January EK decided to start teaching more online courses in their field and less physical courses. While they have managed to still teach effectively through COVID, they deeply miss their students, and the environment that their workplace created. They also miss interacting with people, as since they are immunocompromised, it is unsafe for them to be out in public.



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## Student Reflections:

“The COVID project was meaningful since it gave me a unique way to sympathize for the person I interviewed. I would almost call it therapeutic just because she was able to discuss what was on her mind and I was a listening ear for her. This fits with the deep hope because I was able to love as a neighbor as I reached out and was willing to listen. This connects with bioethics in general because bioethics is almost asking the question: ‘What would Jesus do?’ We think about bioethical issues through a biblical lens in this course and Jesus sets the greatest example of what it looks like to live as a steward and love as a neighbor. Jesus helped the hurting, just as we did through this project.”



## Student Reflections:

“The COVID project was meaningful to me because it allowed me to see how everyone around me was affected. Most of us have experienced some tragedy from COVID and it is helpful (but sad) to know that others around can relate and share their experiences as well. This issue connects to bioethics in that we need to decide the best way to allocate medical resources.”



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## Student Reflections:

“Yes, the project was meaningful to me, because I had a deeper understanding of my friend's COVID experience. Talking with friends about their COVID experience shows a loving neighbor. Everyone has a different COVID experience, all difficult in different ways. We were taught in our first unit that we are all made in the image of God. Each person's experience with COVID is meaningful because of this fact. Also, just like we rely on Jesus to help us have informed opinions about certain issues, we need to rely on Jesus for our difficulties with COVID.”





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## Student Reflections:

“It was meaningful to me because it helped me to empathize with people I didn't know I needed to empathize with. It fits with the deep Hope because it helped me love as a neighbor. It connects because this whole quarantine is a question of our basic rights for freedom, and that has been restricted.”



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## Student Reflections:

“The COVID project was meaningful to me in many ways. I was able to talk to other people about their stories and listen. Sometimes the best thing for someone is to listen to their story and I could be that person for them. It also impacted me being able to write my story. I have only shared it a few times and never been able to write it down, it impacted me knowing that some people can read my story and relate knowing that they are not alone. It fits in with the deep hope sharing that us believers go through battles and we can help people with theirs. It also connects to bioethics in many ways. Because this virus is new, there are so many things out there about what to do and what not to do and what is best for the people as a whole that it is hotly debated.”



## Teacher Reflections:

I think that, given the constraints we had in place, that the project worked out as well as could be expected. Students heard and shared stories reflecting a wide variety of experiences. Many of them spoke of loving others, which is certainly a taste of a 60-year target.



## Additional Information:

- One key insight I had partway through the writing process was that the stories were most effective, not when written as impersonal case studies, as I had first imagined, but as deeply personal interactions where emotions could flow onto paper.
- Also, I was bothered by the fact that I had initially aimed at student choice for the direction of the project, but then I had to re-target it to meet the limitations of restricted contact and the time frame of the semester class. I now believe that God led us to a meaningful project anyway and that the students still had room for choice and voice.



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