



## New From Here

### Activity 1: Poetry of a Pandemic

Students will write a poem about their schooling experience during the pandemic.

**Format:**

- Individual

**Materials:**

- Letter size paper or journal
- Pencil

**Instructions:**

1. Set the stage for students: During the pandemic, millions of children stopped going to in-person school because of lockdowns. Students without access to computer technology didn't go to school at all. In the we're about to read, Knox has to do online school for a while and is supposed to write a haiku, but he's confused and unsettled.
2. Guide the students through a brainstorming session encouraging them to share their personal experiences with online school and/or in-person school during the pandemic.
3. Introduce the students to haikus and/or quatrain poems.
4. Instruct them to write a poem of this kind about their experiences.
5. Ask if anyone wants to share their poem with the class.

### Activity 2: We Can Do Better

Students will identify a moment in the story in which they wish Knox or his siblings had acted differently and discuss what they would have done instead.

**Format:**

- Small Groups

**Materials:**

- Letter size paper
- Pencil

**Instructions:**

1. Divide the students into small groups.
2. Instruct students to identify a scene in the book where they wished Knox and/or his siblings had said something to one another to help ease the pain.
  - What would they have said or done differently?
3. Have each group share what they discussed.
4. Lead a discussion with the class:
  - Why do you think it's so difficult sometimes for siblings to say they're thinking to each other?
  - How did your family support each other during the pandemic?

### Activity 3: A Note to Future Me

Students will reflect on learnings from the reading that they think will serve them in the future.

**Format:**

- Individual

**Materials:**

- Post-it notes (or small square paper cut-outs)
- Pencils

**Instructions:**

1. Set the stage for students by recalling that in chapter 27, Knox describes how Christopher has a habit of writing things down on post-its: "I got the idea of writing notes to myself from Christopher. . .It's kind of cool. Like Old Me talking to Future Me."
2. Give each student five post-it notes.
3. Have each student write down one thing they learned from the story; something that they want to remember in the future. (Students should write only one item per note).
4. Create a space for all the post-its to be displayed in your class, or encourage students to put the notes in a safe place for future reference.

### Activity 4: ICEE in Action

Students will practice applying the ICEE strategy to responding to racism and discrimination by scripting responses to scenarios from the book involving those things.

**Format:**

- Teacher-Facilitated Group Discussion

- Groups of 2-3

**Materials:**

- None

**Instructions:**

1. Ground the activity by recalling the ugly scene in Chapter 37 at the track where Bowen is scapegoated for his coach's cough. After this happens, Knox googles How to respond to racist comments. What he discovers is the acronym ICEE: interrupt, correct, educate, echo.
2. Discuss the steps of this strategy as a class.
3. Give each group time to write a short script based on some of the scenes in New from Here that involve racism, discrimination, or scapegoating.
  - **Remind students that they are only to script the response to the situation, not to dramatize the scene involving racism or discrimination itself. Tell them to remind students of the scene before acting out the response.**
  - Direct students to incorporate ICEE into their scripts.
4. Give each group an opportunity to perform their piece for the class or share about the process of scripting the scene.