

## Building Language Skills with The Seattle Times

March 24, 2016

Article: "Fostering a civil society, one student at a time"

Sunday, March 20th, 2016 in the e-Edition of The Seattle Times, NW Sunday, page B1

### Pre-Reading:

Look at the picture attached to the article. What do you see? How do you think the two women are feeling? How do you know? Have you ever felt that way? What makes you feel like that? Try to use words that are related to/express emotions (i.e. happy, sad, joy, kind).

### Vocabulary:

As you read, look for the following vocabulary words that appear in today's article. Write down what you think the words mean based on the "context," or how the words are used in the sentence in which they appear. Next, look up the definitions in a dictionary and see how close your guess was for each word.

*Anti-social*

*Anxiety*

*Attorney*

*Civility*

*Condescending*

*Consciously*

*Courtesy*

*Depression*

*Foster*

*Justice*

*Nurture*

*Resiliency*

*Rival*

*Rudeness*

*Scholars*

*Scholarship*

*Uncivil*

### **Comprehension:**

1. What recent political event was the inspiration for the development of the Alfie Scholar's program?
2. How many students will be in the new program?
3. How much money will the scholars receive each year from the Lustbader family foundation?
4. Studies show, Lustbader said, that when people are exposed to \_\_\_\_\_ before sitting down to a task — even if the rudeness is not directed at them — they're less capable of \_\_\_\_\_ that task and more predisposed to \_\_\_\_\_ tendencies. **(Fill in the blanks)**
5. What kind of scholars is the program looking for?
6. "It's partially \_\_\_\_\_, partially \_\_\_\_\_, partially \_\_\_\_\_," said another state Supreme Court justice, Mary Fairhurst, who has participated in the programs. **(Fill in the blanks)**
7. What will all the scholars be required to take?
8. What is the most important part of the program (how does it build community)?

### **Post-Reading:**

**Read the following passage from the article and discuss the following questions in a group:**

**"And they emphasize the importance of building community. The idea taps into a South African concept, "ubuntu," the idea that humans are dependent on one another, and 'I can only be the best I can be when you're the best you can be,' Lustbader said."**

What is civility? Does it matter – why? How do you show civility to other people? How would you like other people to show civility to you? How does it make you feel when people are/are not civil to you? Is it always easy or sometimes hard to be civil? Is civility a responsibility or a privilege? Do you think that civility can be taught? How do you practice civility in your everyday life? Can different people practice civility in different ways?

### **Building Language Skills:**

**Read the following passage, and complete the activity below:**

**"Whatever our work is, and whatever our personal lives are, we'll be much more effective — we'll do it much more efficiently — if we can do it with an ounce of civility,' she said."**

Work together as a class to come up with a set of guidelines for civility. Write the guidelines down on a large sheet of paper for display. What does civility look like? What does civility sound like? How does civility look in your classroom specifically? After you have created a master list, divide into smaller groups to create skits to demonstrate each of the principals on the list. Perform the skits for the rest of the class.

## Comprehension Question Answers:

1. What recent political event was the inspiration for the development of the Alfie Scholar's program?  
**The presidential primaries and the rhetoric of this year's election.**
2. How many students will be in the new program?  
**There will be 15 students in the program.**
3. How much money will the scholars receive each year from the Lustbader family foundation?  
**Each of the students will receive \$10,000 each year in addition to financial aid to cover the cost of their bachelor's degrees.**
4. Studies show, Lustbader said, that when people are exposed to mild rudeness before sitting down to a task — even if the rudeness is not directed at them — they're less capable of completing that task and more predisposed to anti-social tendencies. **(Fill in the blanks)**
5. What kind of scholars is the program looking for?  
**The university is seeking a diverse group of scholars from disadvantaged backgrounds who demonstrate grit and resiliency.**
6. "It's partially communication, partially leadership, partially accountability," said another state Supreme Court justice, Mary Fairhurst, who has participated in the programs. **(Fill in the blanks)**
7. What will all the scholars be required to take?  
**The new scholarship requires all participants to take two philosophy courses, and a two-credit seminar on leadership and fostering civility.**
8. What is the most important part of the program (how does it build community)?  
**The students will take many classes together, moving through their two years at Seattle University as their own community.**