



Word Memes Lesson Plan

Length: 30 minutes Grades: 5-12

Overview:

Students will play with context, word nuance, audience, pathos, and images in a medium they are likely already familiar with – memes! They will select a word (*or words*) from their Membean training and combine it with an image to elicit emotion that is widely understood. Memes depend on an interactive audience, and often evolve as they spread – sometimes until the original creation is forgotten. Can your students create a Membean meme that will make students at a different school laugh, relate, and want to create their own?

Objectives:

To complete this lesson, your students will need to:

- Demonstrate nuanced understanding of at least one Membean word.
- Manipulate text and images to enhance each other for effect.
- Revise and edit text.
- Incorporate literary elements such as irony or puns.

Materials & Preparation:

Student Slideshow: We've prepared a [slideshow to introduce this lesson](#) to your students, complete with notes for you as a teacher. You can use the slideshow as-is, or customize it to your liking. To customize it, make a copy by going to **File > Make a copy > Entire presentation**.

Image Editing Software: [Adobe](#) and [Canva](#) have free meme generating tools if you do not already have a preferred image editor.

Meme Templates: We've provided some [sample meme templates](#) for your students to use, or you can select other images for them to use.

Lesson Procedures:

Motivating Activity:

Start by having your students chat in small groups, or as a whole class, about any of the following:

- What are some memes that you are familiar with?
- What do most memes have in common?
- What makes a good meme? What makes one meme better than another?
- Are memes targeted towards certain audiences? Should they be?
- How does word choice impact the meaning of a meme?
- How does word choice help target different audiences?

Primary Activities:

1. **Establish Purpose:** Discuss why you are talking about memes, the objectives of this lesson, and the skills that are addressed.
2. **Review Meme Creation:** Review how memes are created and the various types of memes that exist. Show examples of memes or have students select school-appropriate examples and share them.
3. **Create Membean Memes:**
 - You can have every student create their own meme, split the class into groups, or have them partner up to create memes in pairs.
 - No matter how you decide to do this, all memes should be original creations and have at least one Membean word, a school-appropriate image, contain school-appropriate language, and avoid offensive meanings – racially, culturally, or otherwise.
 - If you want to limit the kinds of memes your students make, use the meme templates we've provided and place their text over the image they choose.
 - Have your students carefully consider their target audience. Remember that their meme could be seen nationally by students in grades 5-12.

Closing Activity:

Have your students reflect on the own meme (*discussion or exit slip*):

- How did your target audience affect your choice of image, text, and word(s)?
- What did you find easiest and most challenging about this activity?
- Do you think your meme is broadly relatable? Why or why not?