I Love You To Death

Intended Audience: Literature/English Class for Ninth and Tenth Grade Students

Prerequisite: Students must have already read William Shakespeare's play, *Romeo and Juliet.*

Objectives: After watching the *Virus of Violence* video, students will analyze and conclude whether past incidents of violence can or do lead to a higher degree of violent behavior.

Overview: National advocates for eliminating teen violence explore the impact different media have on teenagers in the video, *Virus of Violence*. This lesson seeks to integrate the information presented in the video and the impact of media violence with Shakespeare's tragic play *Romeo and Juliet*.

Needed Materials/Resources:

- *Virus of Violence* Video
- Six Follow-Up questions to *Virus of Violence* video
- Continuum of Violence list
- DVD player

Video Description/Length: Entire video (44 minutes)

Activities:

Activity 1 – Video
Students will watch the entire *Virus of Violence* video.

Activity 2 – Discussion

Students will answer the six follow-up questions as a tool to discussing the video;

1. What are your first reactions to the video?
2. Does the violent media we view influence increased levels of violence in teenagers?
3. What is it that broke down the resistance to killing in the children who murdered and who were depicted on the video?

4. Are violent video games, violent movies, and violent television shows teaching children to accept increased violence in our society?
5. Does news coverage of violence and crimes increase "copy-cat" crimes by making celebrities out of those who kill?
6. How can we stop the violence before it happens?

Activity 3 – Continuum of Violence List
Students will analyze the list and decide for themselves which behaviors they have witnessed in themselves and in others. They will provide five written examples in accordance with the list. They will further assess and discuss the validity of the continuum and give examples from the video of how some behaviors might progress to other behaviors.

Activity 4 – Analyzing the Play
In groups of three, students will analyze the play *Romeo and Juliet* for elements of violence starting with those depicted on the lowest level of the Violence Continuum. Students with the greatest number of examples of violence from the play will earn participation points. (Students may start out with the name-calling incident that occurs in the first act of *Romeo and Juliet* and end with the suicide deaths of both characters depicted in the last act of the play. It might be useful for students to see a screenplay version of the play.)

Activity 5 – Comparing Analyses
Students will develop a five-paragraph essay comparing their assessments of the violent patterns of teenagers depicted in *Virus of Violence* with their assessments of the levels and progressions of violence depicted in the play. They will conclude by referencing the play whether past violent behaviors of the characters depicted in *Romeo and Juliet* led to the suicide deaths of the main characters.

Assessment:

1. Participation in discussion sessions.
2. Written responses to the six follow-up discussion questions.
3. Written examples of at least five behaviors from the Continuum of Violence list.
4. Group participation points for analyzing the play for elements of violence.
5. Five paragraph essay.