Unit 4/Week 4

Title: America’s Champion Swimmer: Gertrude Ederle

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RI.3. 1, RI.3.3, RI.3.4, RI.3.7; W.3.2, W.3.4; L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.4, L.3.5

Teacher Instructions

*Refer to the Introduction for further details.*

**Before Teaching**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis. Please do **not** read this to the students. This is a description for teachers, about the big ideas and key understanding that students should take away **after** completing this task.

Big Ideas and Key Understandings

Being one of a kind can be very difficult. Hard work, determination and perseverance are some of the attributes needed to face challenges in a world that tries to limit you.

Synopsis

Gertrude Ederle grew up in the early 1900s when equality for women was not the same as today. In this story

Gertrude Ederle faces obstacles, both physical and social that she overcomes in order to prevail at her lifelong dream of being the first women to swim the English Channel.

1. Read entire main selection text, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.
2. Re-read the main selection text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Vocabulary.

**During Teaching**

1. Students read the entire main selection text independently.
2. Teacher reads the main selection text aloud with students following along. (Depending on how complex the text is and the amount of support needed by students, the teacher may choose to reverse the order of steps 1 and 2.)
3. Students and teacher re-read the text while stopping to respond to and discuss the questions and returning to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and discussion (i.e.: whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.)

Text Dependent Questions

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| **Text-dependent Questions** | **Evidence-based Answers** |
| The text states that Gertrude Ederle’s place was in the water. What can be concluded from this statement? | Gertrude Ederle’s place was in the water which according to the statement in the text as well as the illustration, one can conclude that she enjoyed swimming. |
| The text states that “It wasn’t until she was seven that she had her first adventure in the water.” What was her adventure and how did this adventure impact her life? Find evidence from the text to support your answer. | Gertrude fell into a pond and nearly drowned while visiting her grandmother in Germany. After this event Gertrude’s father was determined to teach her how to swim. Soon she swam better than any of her siblings. |
| Gertrude became a member of the New York Women’s Swimming Association. This organization is for women only. What could be concluded through evidence in the text about the rights of women in the early 1900’s? | In 1906 women were kept out of many clubs and restaurants, some states women were not even allowed to vote and many people felt that a women’s place was in the home.  She joined the association to take swimming lessons.  It was hard to keep her out of the water. She loved to swim. |
| Gertrude began taking swimming lessons. How did Gertrude improve as a swimmer? | At fifteen she won her first race, a year later she attempted to be the first woman to swim seventeen miles from lower Manhattan to Sandy Hook, New Jersey. She accomplished this task and even beat the men’s record. |
| Trudy’s mother refers to her as a “plain home girl” Using evidence from the text, what does this mean about Trudy as a person? | Trudy enjoys swimming and doesn’t seem to allow her accomplishments and the attention that these accomplishments have brought to her affect her as a person. |
| the text states that swimming the English Channel is the ultimate challenge for Trudy. Why is this event considered to be such a challenge? | Many have tried to swim the channel, which is more than twenty miles wide and very cold. Only five men – and no women- had ever made it all the way across. This is a very difficult task. |
| Trudy was not able to finish the swim across the English channel. A newspaper editorial also declared that Trudy wouldn’t make it and that women must admit they would “remain forever the weaker sex.” What effect did this have on her determination to succeed? | Trudy did not give up on her dream. She found a new trainer, and a year later, she was ready to try again. These events did not discourage her. |
| What did Margret protect Trudy from? | To protect her from the icy cold water, Margaret coated Trudy with lanolin and heavy grease. |
| Why are these ships in the English Channel? Find evidence from the text. | A tugboat names Alsace accompanied Trudy to make sure she didn’t get lost in the fog and was safe from jellyfish, sharks, and the Channel’s powerful currents. Trudy’s sister, father, and trainer also rode upon the tugboat. The second boat in the illustration consisted of reporters and photographers. |
| Why did Margaret, Trudy’s sister and some others on the tugboat begin to sing American songs? | They began to sing songs to entertain Trudy as she swam and to keep her brain and spirit good as she swam. |
| Why did Trudy eat chicken, chocolate, sugar cubes, and drink beef broth while swimming on her back? | The English Channel was a twenty mile wide body of water, which contained cold waters and strong currents. These foods would give energy as she continued her swim and might help to warm her up. |
| The English Channel can be described as a cold, treacherous body of water that can change very quickly. | At about one-thirty in the afternoon it started to rain. For a while Trudy would swim forward a few feet only to be pulled back. By six o’clock the tide was stronger; the waves were twenty feet high. In the next few hours, the rain and wind became stronger and the sea rougher. Trudy’s left leg had become stiff. |
| The text states that “It was eerie being out there all alone.” What evidence from the text, as well as the illustration on page 100, helps give the meaning of the word eerie? | The text says that Trudy was alone and scared. The weather was rainy, dark, and windy. The illustration shows the severe weather as well. Eerie means scary and gloomy. |
| Earlier in the story the text states that a newspaper article described Trudy as being courageous, determined, modest, and poised. | Trudy swam through twenty feet high waves. There were times when the boats were unable to be seen, she felt alone and scared in the eerie waters. Her left leg had gone stiff. Trudy’s trainer was frightened for her and wanted her to get out of the waters, but she refused, she kept swimming. She knew she would either swim the Channel or drown. She said after she got ashore, “All the women of the world will celebrate.” She was thinking of not only her success, but as well what her accomplishment for women around the world. |
| The text states that once Trudy got ashore she stated, “All the women of the world will celebrate.” In newspapers across the world, Trudy’s swim was called history making. Using the evidence stated throughout the story, what does Trudy mean when she makes this statement and why is her accomplishment some important to women as well as history? Find evidence from throughout the text to support the claim. | In 1906 women were kept out of many clubs and restaurants, some states women were not even allowed to vote and many people felt that a women’s place was in the home.  A newspaper editorial also declared that Trudy wouldn’t make it and that women must admit they would “remain forever the weaker sex.”  Trudy swam the Channel in fourteen hours an thirty-one minutes, beating the men’s record by almost two hours.  Reporters declared that the myth that women are the weaker sex was “shattered and shattered forever.”  Her accomplishment was not only personally important, but as well impacted women and their role in society as a whole. |
| The text states that Mayor Jimmy Walker as Trudy arrived in New York city hall said, “American women, have ever added to the glory of our nation.” President Calvin Coolidge sent a message to Trudy that called Trudy “America’s Best Girl.” What do these statements about Trudy mean? Use evidence from the text to support your claim. | Trudy was the first women in history to accomplish the task of swimming the English Channel. She also set a new record in doing so, which meant she had beaten the men’s worlds record. She was an American girl from New York that had not only made her nation proud, but women around the world. |

Vocabulary

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|  | **KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING** | **WORDS WORTH KNOWING**  General teaching suggestions are provided in the Introduction |
| **TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION**  not enough contextual clues provided in the text | adventure, disaster, strokes  courageous, modest, poised, records  aboard, salute  athletic prowess  beacon, strength | eerie |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | drowned, determined, mastered  ultimate, challenge  newspaper editorial, declared, current  lanolin, complained  tugboat, reporters, photographers, choppy  entertain | ordered, refused  stirred, seasick  constant, coast, flares, waded, ashore, celebrate, coast  myth, shattered |

Culminating Task

* Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write
* *Gertrude Ederle showed determination, hard work, and perseverance throughout the story. Using a timeline and/or flowchart trace the obstacles she faces throughout her journey in becoming a world renowned swimmer and how she reacts to these challenges. Use your flowchart and/or timeline to assist you in writing a paragraph describing Gertrude Ederle’s journey in becoming one of the best women swimmers in the world.*

Answer:

Gertrude Ederle grew up during a time period where women had very little rights. At the age of seven she has what the text refers to as an adventure, meaning she nearly drowns in a pond while visiting her grandmother in Germany. From that moment on, her father was determined to teacher her to swim. She instantly fell in love with swimming. Later joining the New York Women’s Swimming Association and taking lessons. At fifteen she wins her first big race, beating the men’s record. She goes on to improving her swimming abilities and winning three U.S. Olympics medals in Paris, setting twenty-nine U.S. and world records. Gertrude still had one task she wanted to accomplish; swimming the English Channel. Newspapers wrote that she would not be able to complete such task, because no women had ever tried before and as the news article wrote, women are weaker than men. This did not discourage Gertrude. She tried swimming the Channel and failed. Still determined, she hired a new trainer and a year later tried to swim the Channel again. After swimming for hours, eating food while swimming, battling strong currents, rain, and wind, losing movement in her left leg, she had accomplished her goal. She was the first women to swim the English Channel, once again beating the men’s record by nearly two hours. This was not only an accomplishment for Gertrude, but women around the world. She had proven time and time again that women were not the weaker gender.

Note to Teacher

* Students may be interested in looking at real photos of Gertrude Ederle. One can go to Discoveryeducation.com to research further about this amazing women athlete.
* Research the time period of the 1900s.