Unit 6/Week 3

Title: Ramona Quimby, Age 8

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.4, RL.3.7; W.3.1; SL.3.1, SL.3.2; L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3, 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

Even “nice” families disagree and argue at times.

Synopsis

“Ramona Quimby, Age 8” tells the story of a family on a rainy Sunday in household full of bad moods. To improve their sullen moods, Ramona’s father suggests they all go out to dinner. While out to dinner, they encounter an old man who pays for their dinner because he believes they are a nice family and he misses his own family.

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** | **Answers** |
| What mood words does the author use to describe the feelings of Ramona’s family and the weather on Sunday afternoon? What other activities is Ramona longing for? | * **Dreary**, discouraged, **dismal**, **cross**, moody, * Sunshine, sidewalks, roller skating, a smiling happy family |
| Ramona felt as if everything she did was wrong. What did her mother say to make her feel this way? Explain what her mother said to make her feel this way. | * She tells her that she has not cleaned her room. * Then she adds, “And don’t press your nose against the window. It leaves a **smudge**.” |
| Ramona wanted to “learn to twirl a lariat”. How would you define a **lariat**? What other exciting things would she rather do? | * A type of rope or lasso used by cowboys * A lariat is a lasso. She would rather play a musical saw, flip around and over bars in a gymnastic competition while crowds cheered |
| How does the author use a pencil to prove that Ramona’s father, Mr. Quimby is cross? How would you define **cross** based on these actions? | - His “made his pencil scratch angrily across a pad of paper”   * “Mr. Quimby threw down his pencil.” * “Ramona heard the sound of a pencil being slammed on the table” * “Once again Mr. Quimby threw down his pencil.” * “Mr. Quimby slammed shut his book and threw his pencil so hard it bounced on the floor.” * Throwing and slamming a pencil are signs of anger. Students should realize that cross is another word for angry or the state of being in a bad mood. |
| How does the author show that Ramona and her parents are getting cross with each other? | * Mrs. Quimby raises her voice to Ramona and repeats her command to clean up your room. The author uses italics and an exclamation point to show that she is getting cross. * Ramona is hurt by her mother’s tone of voice and tells her she doesn’t have to yell at her * Mrs. Quimby snaps at her and tells her to do it. * Mr. Quimby throws his pencil down and calls her “young lady” while he orders her to do what her mother says. * Ramona tells him he doesn’t have to be cross but thinks to herself, “nag, nag, nag.” |
| Why was Beezus angry at her mother, and why has Ramona decided to defend her sister to her mother? | * Beezus wants to have a sleep over at her friend’s house with a bunch of girls from her class. * Ramona knew that someday she might want to have a sleep over as well. |
| Use evidence from the text to explain how Ramona feels about being at Willa Jean’s house. | * It is boring and no fun being at Willa Jean’s house. * She has to read boring books to Willa Jean. Willa Jean likes to play beauty shop and paint Ramona’s nails, and Ramona gets blamed when she spills the finger nail polish. Instead of Mrs. Kemp taking care of Ramona, Ramona always takes care of Willa Jean. Ramona feels bad that she doesn’t have a bicycle to ride too. |
| The author shows that even though Ramona’s parents are cross with her, they still care about her. What do they do that helps her to feel better? | * Her mother gives her a half smile and acknowledges that it is hard for Ramona to go to Willa Jean’s house. Then she tells her not to give up. * When she talks to her father, he stops studying and talks with her seriously. He assures her that her thoughts are private and smiles at her and rumples her hair. |
| The author states, “The Quimby’s house seemed to have grown smaller during the day until it was no longer big enough to hold her family and all its problems.” What problems is each family member having? | * Ramona is bored and wants to play outside. * Beezus wants to have a sleep over. * Mrs. Quimby is paying bills, sighed to let the cat out, and Beezus thinks she’s mean. * Mr. Quimby is studying for a class and keeps getting interrupted. * Each one is cross with the others. |
| Mr. Quimby decides to take the family out to dinner. Explain why this is a good idea for their family. | * They will smile and be pleasant. * Mrs. Quimby appeared cheerful for the first time that day. * Mr. Quimby can put in extra hours to afford it. * The Whopperburger is a once in a while treat. * Gloom and anger were forgotten. |
| Ramona describes the old man dressed as if he had come from a **rummage** sale. Describe the old man, his clothing, and why she has this first impression. What changed her mind? | * “Neatly trimmed gray hair” * “A moustache that turned up at the ends” * “Flowered shirt, striped tie, tweed coat, plaid slacks” * Because of his mismatched clothes, she thought they all came from different places and ended up at a **rummage** sale, “except that the crease in his trousers was sharp and his shoes were shined.” |
| The old man asks Ramona if she is good to her mother. Why does this make her angry? | * She was stunned, and her face turned red like she was embarrassed. * She realized she wasn’t always good to her mother. * She felt he was prying into something that wasn’t his business. * When she looks around, she realizes that her parents and other diners were watching her to see how she would respond, which was also embarrassing. * When she realizes that he was just teasing, she was still angry with him for prying into something that wasn’t his business. |
| How does the author use imagery to describe Ramona’s dinner? | * Her hamburger was “warm, soft, juicy, tart with relish” * “Juice dribbled down her chin.” * “The French fries – crisp on the outside, mealy on the inside.” |
| The family shows each other kindness. What are some examples? | * Ramona wants to say that Beezus acted badly, but stops herself. * Beezus also wants to talk about what Ramona did that was bad behavior, but she stops herself too. * Their parents look stern, but they smile instead and everyone laughs. |
| At the end of the story, the old man pays for the Quimby’s meal. Why did he do that? | * He thought they were a nice family. * He missed his own children and grandchildren. |
| Ramona is surprised that the man thought they were a nice family. When her family talks about it, what evidence do they give to show they are a nice family? | * Her mother says they get along and they stick together. * They eat dinner together. * Beezus and Mrs. Quimby solve their disagreement about the sleep over. * Ramona realizes that she can get along with Wilma Jean and Mrs. Whaley if she tries. |

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 | Cross  Lariat  Rummage | Indignant  Vexed  Sullenly  Cognitive  Gourmet |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | Dismal  Dreary  Smudge  Cross | Ceaseless  Pelting  Stalked  Mute  Sulkily  Flounced  Relented  Emerged  Balked  Seeting  Pry |

Culminating Task

* Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

*The old man refers to Ramona’s family as such a nice family. Do you think Ramona’s family is nice? Why or why not? Give evidence to support your thinking.*

Answer: (Answers will vary, but there is ample evidence of both. Students could answer yes or no, or a combination, as long as they provide evidence from the story to support their thinking and reflect on how the evidence supports their argument.) In the beginning, everyone is cross and is grouchy with each other. Mr. and Mrs. Quimby and yell at Ramona about her room, the cat is unsettled and wants to go in and out repeatedly, Beezus wants to argue with her mother about the sleepover, Mr. Quimby throws his pencil and makes noise to show he is not happy. However, when Ramona is feeling badly, Mrs. Quimby smiles at her and tells her not to give up and Mr. Quimby takes time to talk with her and make her feel better. Then Mr. Quimby takes them all out to dinner. Mr. Quimby reminded his family to smile and enjoy themselves. Ramona’s father smiled at her when he said she didn’t have to eat off the kid’s menu. The family ate in companionable silence, sat up straight, and smiled. Although her parents looked stern, everyone relaxed and laughed. The smiles of her family became genuine, not determined.

Additional Tasks

* The author speaks of the log burning in the fireplace throughout the day. How does the log compare to the mood in the house?

Answer:

* “In the fireplace a log sullenly refused to burn.”
* “The log in the fireplace settled, sending a puff of smoke into the living room.”
* “The smoking log settled in the fireplace, sending up a few feeble sparks.”
* In the beginning, the log is sullen, like the Quimby family. It begins to settle but sends out puffs of smoke, just as the Quimby’s have bursts of anger. It finally sends up a few feeble sparks, as Mr. Quimby sparks the mood of his family by taking them to dinner.
* Personification means giving human attributes to nonhuman things. “The Quimby’s house seemed to have grown smaller during the day until it was no longer big enough to hold her family and all its problems” is an example of personification. Can you find more examples of personification throughout the story?

Answer:

* “Bare black branches clawed at the electric wires in front of the house.”
* “Picky Picky hesitated, vexed, by the cold wind that swept into the room.”
* “As the windshield wipers began their **rhythmic** exercise, the family rode in silence, each thinking of the events of the day.”

Teacher’s Note

* Consider doing some background on symbolism before setting your students to work on the first “additional task.”