Unit 4/Week 2

Title: Seal Surfer

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.3.1, RL.3.2, RL.3.3, RL.3.7; RF.3.3, RF.3.4; W.3.2, W.3.4; SL.3.1, SL.3.4, SL.3.6; L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.4

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

All creatures change as they go through the life cycle. There are many ways to change but change is always constant.

Synopsis

Ben enjoys going to the beach with his grandfather and one day they watch a seal being born. Over the next few seasons, Ben develops a special bond with this seal, a bond that Ben knows will last the rest of his life.

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 setting is important to this story. List three words from the text that tell about the setting. | -Rocky beach  -water  -habitat for sea animals  -the seal, so you have to be near its habitat |
| The reader starts to see a relationship growing between Ben and the seal family. Where on these pages does the text give evidence of this? | -Ben sees the mom & newborn seal pup  -Ben asks his grandfather to help him gather fish for the seal family  -Ben and his grandfather return often to watch the seal family throughout spring  -The seal pup watches Ben  -Ben cheers (is excited for) the seal pup when she goes into the water for the first time |
| Ben goes down to the harbor to meet his granddad. What does he find his granddad doing? What conclusions can you make from these pages about how Ben’s granddad feels about the seal family? | - His granddad was feeding the seal family without Ben being there (he wasn’t just doing it for Ben’s benefit)  -The granddad is feeding the fish he just caught to the seal family while playing music loud enough for the seals to enjoy also |
| Using the text, to explain how the author shows that the surface of the water is both the same and different from a mirror. | - the reflection is visible in the water, then it dissolves and then it reforms  -it is a liquid while a mirror is solid |
| The author writes, “Rain and mountainous waves wrenched great rocks from the cliffs.” What does wrenched mean in this sentence? Why would the author use this word as a descriptor of the winter setting? | -wrenched means ripped or torn away with great force  -it evokes forceful action, winter storms |
| The winter storm is very dangerous for the seals. What do you think happened to the seal pup? Select a piece of text to support your prediction. | - The seal died: “The young seals dived deep, trying to escape the falling boulders…some seals were dashed against the rocks…  -The seal lives: The seal learned to dive deep looking -up to see fish…The mom stays around the same area. |
| What evidence from the text and the illustrations indicate that Ben’s life is in danger? | - Ben has limited use of his legs (illustrations)  -The water is dark and full of sand  -Ben hits his head on a rock  -His body is being pulled farther into the darkness |
| What does the author mean by saying that the wave Ben is riding “suddenly broke? “ What words or phrases help you understand what that phrase means? | -plunged  -head first off his board  -somersaulted through the surf |
| How do the seal’s earlier life experiences help her save Ben? Find three examples from the text. | -she was taught to swim by her mother  -she has spent many seasons in the water  -she’s become a strong swimmer, having been through many winter storms  -she has frequently surfed with Ben and knows his movements |
| The author writes that “Ben cheered as he saw the once young seal...” What words describe Ben’s outlook on the future? | -he is hopeful that he will ride the waves with seals now and in the future  -he would lie on the cliffs with his grandchildren someday  -Ben smiled which would indicate that he feels contentment. |

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 | reflection, dissolved, reformed  wrenched  quay | horizon, surf |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | molted, basked, basked, panic  buffeted  swell, elated, swooped, horizon | mussels  sensation, deserted |

Culminating Task

* Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write
* *Changes happen throughout the two and one half years of the events in Seal Surfer. Using examples from the text, write at least three paragraphs that compare and contrast the activities of Ben and the seal throughout the story. In your paragraphs, describe how the activities of both characters reflect changes.*

Answer: All characters grow older; granddad stops going to the beach and the quay with Ben; Ben and the seal grow in strength and confidence; Ben is not yet an adult, but the seal grows up and becomes a mother.

Additional Tasks

* Students write an acrostic poem using a word from the story. They will choose a word such as ocean, summer, Ben or seal and write a descriptive or evocative sentence or phrase beginning with each letter. They may wish to share completed poems with the class.
* Working with a partner, students compare and contrast Ben and the seal using a Venn Diagram.
* Student teams research seals online, collect facts and organize them in an informational web or poster. Information is then presented by the teams to the class.
* Have students rewrite the story from either the perspective of Ben or the seal and discuss the differences in the stories.
* The language in Seal Surfer was very descriptive. In small groups or as partners, students choose three of the highly descriptive words and compile a list of synonyms for each. Group or partner lists are then shared and merged to create more comprehensive lists for class use.