Unit 2/Week 4

Title: A Very Important Day

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.3, RL.4.4, RL.4.7, RL.4.9, RF.3.3, RF.4.4, W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.9, W.4.10, SL.4.1, SL.4.2, SL.4.4, L.4.1, L.4.2, L.4.3, L.4.4, L.4.6

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

America is comprised of people from around the world who chose to become citizens.

Synopsis

In this story, several different families from other countries prepare to become US citizens. Characters from different cultures share one exciting and important event.

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.)

1. 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** |
| In what city does the story take place? What is happening outside? | “It’s three A.M. here in New York City, and it’s snowing.” |
| According to the text, what country is Nelia Batungbakal and her family from? | Nelia was thinking about the snow and thought, “This would never happen in the Philippines.” |
| Why would the family need “to allow extra time for the trip downtown?” | There are at least two inches of snow. |
| In the sentence, “All right!” said Miguel, bounding from his room. What does *bounding* mean? | Rosa said, “there are at least two inches of snow” and Miguel said “All *right*!”, then scooped up some snow. Infer: he came happily running, bouncing from his room to check out the snow. |
| What country is the Huerta family from? | Miguel had snow in his hand, Papa said, “This would not happen in Mexico, at least not in the south.” |
| What country is the Patel family from? | They must allow extra time because of the snow. “That’s one worry we never had in India.” |
| According to the text, the snow reminds Mrs. Leonov of what country? Is the family from that country? | “Snow reminds me of Russia” Yes. |
| In the text, Mr. Dionetti called out, “Are you headed downtown?” How are the Leonov’s going to get downtown? | They are going by subway. “Yes,” answered their father. “This snowball fight is headed to the subway.” |
| Kostas and Nikos Soutsos were clearing the sidewalk in front of the family restaurant, what were they clearing? | Their mother came out the side door carrying Kiki. “Kiki, this is snow,” said Kostas. |
| What country is the Soutsos family from? | Their mother laughed. “She’ll get used to it, living here. Not like Greece, where it snows maybe once in ten years.” |
| In the sentence, They chorused together, “Closed for a very important day.” What does the word *chorused* mean? | “He went to make a sign for the door. See, there he is.” “Set those shovels inside, and let’s be off,” their father called. “And read this sign, everyone. What does it say?” They chorused together… |
| The Duong family is going downtown, too. How are they getting downtown? What country are they from? | “Finally! There’s the bus. It was crowded at first, but a few stops later, they all got seats.”  “Here we are,” said their mother, “in the middle of a snowstorm on the most important day since we arrived from Vietnam-“ |
| The Baez family is traveling downtown by ferry. Using information provided in the text, what is a *ferry*? | Use illustration to determine they are on board a boat in the harbor. “I love the ferry,” said Jorge Baez. His cousin Pedro said, “Let’s go up on deck.” “Not by yourselves, but I’ll go with you,” said Pedro’s father. (Infer/discuss) |
| What country did the Baez family come to New York from? | “And now we will all remember is as part of the most important day since we came from the Dominican Republic.” |
| The Zeng family was also traveling downtown. How did they get there? What country did they come to New York from? | “Through narrow streets on the unshoveled sidewalks the Zeng family made their way on foot.” “This is such an important day. The most important since we arrived from China.” |
| The Idris family left early to travel downtown, too. What country did they come from? | “It’s the most important day for us since we came from Egypt.” |
| Kwame Akuffo and his wife Efua saw the courthouse as they rounded the corner. “I used to run in Ghana,” Kwame said, “but never in snow.” What did Kwame and Efua do the last two blocks to the courthouse. | Efua stopped and said, “Only two blocks to go. I’ll race you to the steps.” …  Note the dialogue between them. |
| In the sentence, So they asked a stranger, who gladly *obliged*, and then hand in hand they climbed the courthouse steps. What does *obliged* mean? | Efua took the camera from her purse and said, “Before we go on this very important day, let’s get someone to take our picture.” They asked a stranger who gladly obliged, then they climbed the courthouse steps. Obliged means they did what was asked and took the photo. |
| How does the author show Robert McTaggart is not going to miss being at the courthouse on such an important day? | Robert’s friends Elizabeth and Alan were at the entrance. He thanked them and said he was afraid the snow would stop them. Alan said, ‘We were getting worried about you” “A few snowflakes defeat a man from the highlands of Scotland? Come on.” |
| All of the families are in the chamber at the courthouse.  Re-read page 263. What is the *examiner* doing? What did each person receive? What did the *certificate* signify? | Calling the names of the families. “Many names were called; many people went forward.” “When I call your name,” he said, “please come forward to receive your *certificate*.” “Your honor,” said the examiner, “these petitioners have qualified for citizenship in the United States of America.” |
| Re-read the judge’s words. What does the word enrich mean in the sentence, “May citizenship enrich your lives as your lives enrich this country.”? Restate the judge’s message in your own words. | In this context, enrich means to improve the quality of or to make better. So the judge is wishing the new citizens a better life and welcoming them by inferring that America is “enriched” by their being in the country and a part of it. |
| What was in the package?  Other than his family, whom did Zeng share this gift with? What made this gift so special? | Zeng tore open the package. “Inside he found small American Flags, a dozen or so, enough to share with everyone in his family and with other new citizens surrounding him." The gift from his friend symbolized the family’s new bond all of these “strangers” now shared-- American citizenship. |
| Who is speaking during the last line of text, “This has become our country on this very important day!” Why was this day so important to the characters in this story? | All of the new citizens. In a wave of excitement, they all made their way out of the chamber, through the hallway, and back to the courthouse door. “Look!” they exclaimed, everybody talking at once. “This has become our country… This day was important because they have traveled from other places to become American citizens. Evidence of the importance of the day can be found in the fact that relatives and friends attended, (“People poured in. There were so many…”). Congratulations are offered (“I’m so happy for you.”, “You must be so proud.”, “Isn’t this wonderful?”) and families dressed and prepared to be on time. |

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 | subway  courthouse  examiner | fire escape  harbor  chamber |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | bounding  lobbed  chorused  ferry  obliged  certificate  enriched | congratulations  important  fortunately  petitioners  citizenship |

Culminating Task

* Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

1. *Why did the author introduce us to so many characters?* Give examples from your notes to describe the families. Include the country each family came from and how they got to the courthouse.
2. *Describe how the author showed that it was a “very important day” for each of the families.*

Answer: Each family made their way through the snow to the courthouse so they could participate in the ceremony as they became Citizens of the United States of America. Students should include details from discussions and notes.

1. *The author connects different families working toward one goal. Compare their journeys and make a connection to the common goal.*

Answer: The snow made travel to courthouse difficult for all the families, just like becoming a US citizen is not an easy journey.

Additional Tasks

1. Why did the author introduce us to so many characters? Give examples from your notes to describe the families. Include the country each family came from and how they got to the courthouse.
2. On a *very important* snowy day in New York City, each family made their way to the courthouse. What were they making their journey to accomplish?

\*Using notes and text for support, describe each family’s journey to the courthouse that day. Create a pathway that illustrates each of the journeys and the culmination at the courthouse, becoming US Citizens. (a roadmap with each family’s path leading to the courthouse)

Note to Teacher

It is important to connect the theme that people come from all over the world and become US citizens. The US was built on immigrants and their tenacity for bettering their lives, which makes this a great country.