Unit 2: Week 7

Title: Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.3, RL.4.4; RF.4.3, RF.4.4; W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.9; SL.4.1, SL.4.2; L.4.1, L.4.2, L.4.4, L.4.5

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

An inability to do a task leads to feelings of incompetency and shame, but kind instruction can guide a person to be

successful with those tasks. Both genders can perform the same tasks and experience similar feelings (i.e. boys can cry, etc.).

Synopsis

Justin is upset that he is unable to perform the household chores as well as his sisters. After his outburst of tears over this fact, his grandpa invites him to visit his ranch. During that visit Justin observes his grandpa performing the household chores with pleasure. Not only does he see his grandpa doing these chores, but his grandpa also takes the time to show Justin how he can become better at them. Justin begins to grapple with his feelings of guilt and shame about calling those chores “women’s work” and learns that what matters is that we try to learn and do the best we can in the most enjoyable way. He also learns from his grandpa that it is okay to cry even though he originally thought that made him a baby.

Instructional Focus

Resolving conflicts

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** |
| At the beginning of the story, while Grandpa is visiting, Justin gets so upset he begins to cry. What caused Justin to have this reaction? | He feels as though everyone complains about the way he does things; he can’t do anything right – at least not the things his friend Anthony calls “women’s work.” |
| The author writes that “Justin stood around downstairs. He had a strange feeling of guilt and wished he had helped with the dishes.” What does it mean to feel guilty? Why does Justin consider this feeling to be a strange one? | A person may feel guilty when they don’t do something they think they should have done – or did something they shouldn’t have done. Justin may have a strange feeling of guilt because he is confused about Grandpa doing “women’s work” so easily and pleasantly. Grandpa asked him to help, and he didn’t because he doesn’t feel competent – yet he feels he should have helped. |
| Justin moved from being reluctant to saying, “…That was easy, Grandpa.” and Grandpa responded, “Everything’s easy when you know how.” What led to Justin feeling a “surge” or a sudden strong burst “of love for his grandpa”? | Justin had been reluctant to do his chores because he couldn’t do them well. Grandpa showed him how to wash and dry dishes, make his bed, and fold his clothes. Grandpa was patient with him and encouraged him to do a good job. |
| What does “riding fence” mean? Why is it important for a rancher like Grandpa to “ride fence”? | Inspecting the fence for weak spots so they can be repaired and the cows will be safe. |
| Justin said, “I guess that’s a joke, eh?” What was the joke? | His grandpa referred to the nursery rhyme “Hey Diddle Diddle” with a serious look on his face. |
| The author uses a series of words and phrases to help paint of picture of Justin and Grandpa’s surroundings. What words or phrases help you to “see” their setting? | Sun heated up the morning; foothills were varying shades of green; shadows dotted the plains; fog lingered like lazy clouds; insects buzzed; a small cloud of mosquitoes swarmed just behind their heads; beautiful cardinals splashed their redness on the morning air. |
| Why does Justin feel this “surge” of happiness after witnessing his surroundings that morning? | The author’s words paint a picture of a new day. This pretty and calm setting allows Justin to forget his troubles and enjoy the outdoors with his grandpa. |
| What evidence does the author provide to show that Grandpa is gentle and understands the feelings of others?” | The incident with the fawn and the way Grandpa handled it shows us a lot about his character. He is gentle with the fawn, and he is careful not to upset the doe. We know this by the way he carefully handles the fawn and tells Justin to stay still so the doe doesn’t get upset. He is also understanding of Justin and Black’s reaction to the blood on the fawn and encourages them to “run” for a few minutes. |
| What did Justin learn from watching Grandpa prepare lunch? | Men can be cooks. |
| The author writes, “The look he [Justin] gave Grandpa revealed his doubts.” Based on clues in the text, what do the words “reveal” and “doubt” mean? What does this sentence tell us about Justin and how he felt about what Grandpa was telling him? | To reveal means to show something that you haven’t shown others before, and doubts are feelings you have when you’re not sure about something. The author was showing us that Justin wasn’t totally convinced that men can be good cooks (he remembered the egg on the floor and his rice burning). He still has doubts about whether or not Grandpa is right. |
| What do the facts about black cowboys have to do with the characters in this story? How do the illustrations help us to understand why Grandpa might have told Justin about these people? | Grandpa and Justin are both African American, and Grandpa was sharing stories about other prominent African Americans in which Justin might be interested. For instance, he asked Grandpa, “Were there lots of Black Cowboys?” |
| Justin said, “I bet you don’t like boys that cry like babies.” What was Grandpa’s response, and why did he tell Justin about the time he cried? | Grandpa said we all cry sometimes. He told Justin that he had cried when Justin was born. He was “flooded with joy” at the sight of the baby. Grandma had just died and he knew she would never be able to see the beautiful boy. |
| In the final lines of the story, the author writes, “A warmth spread over Justin and he lowered his eyes. He wished he could tell his grandpa all he felt, how much he loved him.” Based on what we know about Justin, what inferences can we make about why he didn’t tell his grandpa how much he loved him? | This circles back to the doubt that Justin was still harboring over men being cooks and reinforces the questions about crying. Justin is still unsure about what is and is not “okay” for him to feel or do. He didn’t think men cook and he didn’t think men should cry. He thought crying made him look like a baby. Therefore, we can infer that Justin either thinks he shouldn’t talk about his love because he is a boy or because it would make him look like a baby. He still has a lot to learn from his grandpa. |

Vocabulary

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|  | **KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING**  Words addressed with a question or task | **WORDS WORTH KNOWING**  General teaching suggestions are provided in the Introduction |
| **TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION**  not enough contextual clues provided in the text | Surge | Convinced, ranch  Stacks, helpings, measuring, strange, meadow  Razor sharp  Hurriedly, surge, graze, linger, taut  Cautiously, pranced, restlessly, bounded, trembled  Resounding, mimicking  Amazed  Lurked, rustling  Offered  Shame |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | Reluctant  Riding fence  Reveal, doubt | Complaints  Quickly, cleared, carefully, guilt  Well-made, faded, rumpled  Inspecting, mending,  Bitter, alarmed  Protect, untangled  Suggested  Pounded, revealed  Teasing |

Culminating Task

Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

* *Justin’s inability to complete household chores leads him to feel bad about himself and deem that kind of work to be “women’s work”. Through the help of his grandpa, Justin learns that chores become easier the more you practice and that both boys and girls, grown-ups and children experience many of the same emotions. Using specific examples from the story, write one well-developed paragraph that explains how Justin’s grandpa helps him come to these realizations.*

(Answers may vary) At the beginning of the story, Justin feels as though he can’t do anything right after hearing complaints from his sisters and mother about the way he does his chores. His friend Anthony refers to these chores as “women’s work”, and after the things his family says, he begins to think that phrase is true. This all changes after Justin visits his grandfather’s ranch. Justin watches his grandpa cook breakfast, wash dishes, and sweep the floor--all things he previously thought to be women’s work. His grandpa even helps him make his bed and fold his clothes. According to Grandpa, “Everything’s easy when you know how.” This statement helps to show Justin that maybe he couldn’t complete his chores to the best of his ability because he didn’t really know how to do them in the first place. Another example of Justin not really knowing or understanding something is when he brings up the idea that his grandpa probably thinks he is a baby because he saw him crying. Grandpa responds by saying, “We all cry sometime.” Then, he goes on to tell Justin the story about how he cried the day Justin was born because he was so happy. After this, Justin looks at his grandpa and a “warmth spread over” him. This warmth is a signal that Grandpa’s words had an effect on Justin. He was starting to understand that it’s okay to cry even though he is a growing boy. Justin would not have learned these things about cooking and cleaning and other household work or even his emotions if it were not for Grandpa and his guidance.

Additional Tasks

* Replace suggested writing prompts on T96 and T97 with the following from T143:

Compare an animal that lurks with an animal that runs.

What noises resounded across the prairie as Justin and Grandpa rode through the tall grass.

Describe how Grandpa prepared to cook lunch.

Why doesn’t Justin think Grandpa is a real cowboy?

By the end of the story, what important lessons did Justin learn from Grandpa?

* Make a word web of words in the story that relate to ranch life or cowboy.
* Draw pictures or explain the meaning of phrases from the story, such as snug a bug, rein the horse, riding fence, razor sharp, well made bed can be a warm welcome, break horses, tighten the cinches

Note to Teacher

* Oral reading – the Lexile is 620 (2nd-3rd grade). Students can read story aloud with a focus on fluency – beginning on with the top of column 2 through the bottom of column 1. Use activities to increase the complexity of the task.