Unit 2, Week 2

Title: Tanya’s Reunion

Suggested Time: 5days (45minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards:RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.3, RL.4.4, RL.4.7;RF.4.4; W.4.1, W.4.4, W.4.9,W.4.10; SL.4.1, SL.4.2, SL.4.6; L.4.1-5

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 their work with this text.

Big Ideas and Key Understandings

Things don’t always happen the way you expect or imagine them to be, but what you do learn and discover can be even better!

Synopsis

Tanya is initially thrilled to be heading early to Grandma’s Virginia family farm for a reunion but is disappointed when it does not appear to be the fun place she imagined at home. When Grandma shares her memories and Tanya discovers an important artifact, Tanya embraces the farm for what was in the past and what is in the present.

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 without interruption.
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 return to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and discussion (e.g., whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.)

Text Dependent Questions

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| **Text Dependent Questions** | **Answers** |
| **A tradition is a custom or regular practice that is important. What is one family tradition in Tanya’s family?**  | “It was Saturday. Baking day. One of Grandma’s special days.” The reader knows this is one day Tanya shares with grandma. |
| **Why was the family silent when Grandma announced that she would be going to the farm earlier than originally planned?**  | “Neither Tanya nor her brothers, Ted and Jim, could remember their grandmother going *anywhere* without the rest of the family.” Tanya was confused. She questioned whether this meant that perhaps the whole family may no longer be going. “Aren’t ***we*** going to the farm and reunion too?” Note: “*we”* is italicized drawing attention to the family considered to be one “unit”.“But, Mother,” said Mama, “you were sick not too long ago. Do you really think this trip is wise?” Tanya’s Mother is worried about her mother (Tanya’s grandma).  |
| **What does the author mean by “all the history people will be bringing with them”?**  | “Tanya remembered Mama and Grandma talking about the plan to have as many items that were once part of the homestead…the farm…returned for the biggest family gathering ever!”The “history” is referring to items that were from the farm that hold special memories. |
| **What is a reunion? What in the story helps you know?** | It is a “big family event” being held on a farm where “all the family arrives”. People will be bringing items to share.  |
| **How does Tanya feel when her mother agrees to let her go to the farm with Grandma? What evidence supports your answer?**  | Tanya feels excited. She had “pleaded excitedly” to go. She is pleased and gloating a bit because she can tell that her brothers are a little jealous. “Tanya couldn’t hide the pride she felt when she saw the surprised looks on Ted’s and Jim’s faces.” |
| **As Tanya and her Grandma travel, how is Tanya feeling and how is Grandma feeling? How do you know?**  | **Tanya:** is feeling that she is **leaving** home and everything familiar to her. “…all her familiar places vanish behind her. Past her schoolyard and the park. Past row after row of houses and traffic lights.”**Grandma**: is feeling that she is **going** home. Tanya listened while Grandma spoke about “going home” to the great land of Virginia (*with pride*) that ‘borned four of the first five Presidents of these United States.’” AND “We’re here, Tanya honey, wake up…we’re home.” |
| **When they arrive at the farm, how does Tanya feel and how does Grandma feel? Use evidence from the text to support your answers.** | **Grandma:***Grandma is happy to be home and is going back in time reliving old memories. Evidence:*“Grandma walks slowly but steadily up the *familiar* roadway.”“’Memories die hard,’” Uncle John whispered to Tanya. ”Tanya looked up at Grandma as she stared off into the distance a faraway look in her eyes.”“Just open your heart to it,” Grandma said. “Can’t you feel the place welcomin’ ya?”**Tanya:***Tanya feels a disappointed and uncomfortable in her new surroundings.Evidence:*Disappointed: The farm wasn’t what she expected: “What Tanya saw didn’t look like the pictures in her schoolbooks or magazines or the pictures in her head. “There wasn’t a horse in sight and the farmhouse was just a faded memory of its original color.” “Tanya didn’t feel anything but hot and tired and disappointed. The farm wasn’t what she expected. No, it wasn’t what she expected at all.”  |
| **What does Grandma say that lets the reader know that Grandma is aware of how Tanya is feeling?**  | “Just open your heart to it,” Grandma said. “Can’t you feel the place welcomin’ ya?” |
| **What does it mean when Grandma says, “Yes, on summer days like this it’s as if time were standing still a bit”?**  | *Even though they have grown old, Grandma still calls her sister her “baby” sister. Family dynamics often stay the same as do memories. Also that you may be separated for a long length of time and/or distance; but, when you get together, it can be like old times.*“ Both Grandma and Rose are remembering what it used to be like when they were younger. “…a large dog at her side, was Grandma’s **baby sister**, Kay. “Grandma sucked her teeth and sighed. “Now, what’s all the fuss” My baby sister asked me to come home early.” “Watchin’ you walk up that road, Rose Buchanan, “Aunt Kay began, then gave Grandma a hug. “Yes, on summer days like this it’s as if time were standing still a bit,” Grandma finished for her.  |
| **At the end of the first day, describe how Grandma feels and how Tanya feels and why. Use specific details that support your descriptions.**  | ***Grandma:*** *feels happy to be back with her family and in her family home and the warmth of the homecoming.*Shares hugs with family members.“Tanya was swept into the house by the laughing, talking grown-ups. The room was filled with wonderful aromas…”  ***Tanya****: Feels unhappy, miserable. She misses her immediate family and the familiarity of her home.* “When Tanya went to bed that night, she was miserable… She missed her own room. She missed Mama and Papa, even Ted and Jim.” *Grandma feels the day was special yet Tanya doesn’t feel the day was special at all.*“What happened to our special days, Grandma?” whispered Tanya. “Seems to me our first one went just fine,” said Grandma. “The land needed the rain and it’s finally getting’ it. Makes today kinda special don’t you think?”While the rain makes Tanya feel gloomy, Grandma welcomes the rain. |
| **Describe the events of the next morning at the farm in your own words. How do the illustrations help tell the story and explain the actions of the characters? (Helps students connect description with the actions and thoughts of characters.)**  | *Tanya is awakened by the rooster and rain. She realizes it is Saturday and looks at the family “history” in the sitting parlor on her way down for breakfast. She is smiling and happy as she looks at all the items. Tanya played checkers with Celeste and dominos with Uncle John and Keisha. She is getting bored because it is raining outside all morning. The illustration of the busy kitchen helps to explain why Grandma forgets it is baking day.*  |
| **What items displayed in the sitting parlor provide clues to the history and traditions of Tanya’s family?**  | *The genealogy (ancestry) is celebrated and brought to life through* ***items*** *such as:*“baptismal gowns, baby blankets, rocking chair and baby crib….pots and pans…blacksmithing and gardening tools, candle molds and a few toys.” Often quilts “tell stories” about family history. Many quilts are displayed.*Clues into traditions and history:*“Even a broom that couples jumped over when they married during slavery times.” This gives a window into the history and heritage of Tanya’s family.  |
| **How do Grandma’s stories about past days on the farm provide clues to the history and heritage of Tanya’s family as well as Grandma’s history? How does Tanya feel about this? Use specific examples from the story to support your answer.**  | *Grandma’s stories provide Tanya with information that helps her understand why Grandma seems so happy at the farm. The stories also provide Tanya with information about the genealogy and history of her family. Grandma says… “I see my* father’s father (her grandfather) and his **Indian bride.** They built this farm so many, many years ago.” (IMPORTANT PAGES) History: Tanya begins to understand why Grandma feels so connected to the farm.In response to Tanya’s question asking if Grandma was “ever lonely,” Grandma describes ways in which the farm was “filled with activity.” Grandma’s history: Grandma explains why she left the farm:“It was after the Second World War. My Isaac-your grandpa Franklin-…-thought we’d find better opportunities, better jobs closer to the cities up north.” Tanya begins to further understand the family connections Grandma feels on the farm:Grandma reminisces: “I see your aunts and uncle and cousins when they lived on the farm…” “My, yes, Tanya. Your grandpa’s always with me. But here on the farm he’s specially close,” Although Tanya’s grandpa has died, grandma still feels a warm connection to him at the farm.  |
| **What did it mean when Grandma said, “We had the land and the land had us”?**  | This was a farm with animals, pastures and an orchard. “We worked over it, tilled and planted it.” The land, “In turn…gave us water, food, clothing and roof over our heads.” The family took care of the land and the land gave them everything they needed. |
| **How does Tanya’s attitude and behavior change after sitting with Grandma? Include specific instances from the text.**  | Tanya now understands that she is “a part of this farm” and decides to listen to Grandma when she says, “Everybody just pitches in and does the best they can. I know you will too.” She answered the phone, found the diapers, fed the chickens and begins playing with Keisha. The girls also picked apples and Tanya showed Keisha how to “roll the dough for the crust”.  |
| **How does Tanya feel at the conclusion of the story? How do you know?**  | Tanya feels like she is “a part of this farm” at the end of the story. She contributed “history” with “…a piece of the fence” that she found when picking apples. The fence “had once separated the farmland from the orchard. Carved in the wood were the initials: R.B. (“Rose Buchanan”- Grandma) + I.F. (“Issac Franklin” Grandfather) “This is your history, isn’t it, Grandma, yours and Grandpa’s?”“Oh yes, child, A special memory of your grandpa and me…We’ll put it in the parlor for everyone to share.” Tanya feels at home on the farm now – he and Keisha are “camping out”. Grandma says the crickets are “night sounds telling us all is well.” And it was.  |

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 | Fly stripBaptismal gownsBlacksmithingHayloft | PersistedHumid |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**sufficient context clues are provided in the text | ReunionHistoryMemories (remembering, memory)DisappointedPitch inAnnouncement, announceArrangementFamiliarLabeled  | AromaMurmuredDrapedThreesome |

Possible Culminating Tasks

* Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

1. Tanya’s feelings about the family farm change throughout this story. Trace her thoughts and impressions from the beginning to the end using evidence from the text. What does Tanya learn from this trip with Grandma?

*Answer: At first, Tanya is excited to visit the farm and spend special time with Grandma. When the place does not “look like the pictures in her schoolbooks or magazines or the pictures in her head”, the dust gets on her socks and a fly strip hangs above the table, Tanya is disappointed. The first day is disappointing and she asks, “What happened to our special days?” Her feelings start to change as she listens to Grandma’s stories and she contributes to the “history” of the farm by “pitching in” and helping with chores and teaching Keisha how to roll pie crust. At the end, Tanya is pleased that she found the old piece of fence with Grandma and Grandpa’s initials on it. She and Keisha are camping out and she is feeling more at home and that “all is well.” Through this experience with Grandma, Tanya learns that sometimes what happens, even though it is disappointing at first, turns out to be better than expected.*

2. How does the weather reflect Tanya’s mood as the story progresses? What can you assume at the end of the story about the trip?

*Answer:* *As soon as Grandma and Tanya arrive at the farm the sky begins to turn gray. The sky stays gray and the weather rainy and gloomy (“It rained through checkers…”)until Tanya shares time with Grandma at which point, “The rain fell in a straight, steady stream, like a curtain separating the porch from the barnyard beyond.”Grandma also sees the rain as something that made the first day, which was so disappointing to Tanya, as something that made the day, “… kinda special.” As Tanya begins to understand the connection and love that Grandma feels a connection to the farm as well, “the steady rain” begins “to taper off”. As she goes to the barn to pitch in, she begins feeling more and more connected to the farm and family. At this critical time, the “sun” shines “bright and hot” Now the cousins are able to be outside and she is feeling attached to the family and is finding her place. At the end of the story, the “hot, humid night air” is just right for camping out on the porch. At the end of the story, we assume Tanya is glad that she came on the trip with Grandma and she is finding that she fits in on the farm and in the family. She is happy.*

Additional Tasks

* Pick out some of the phrases that Grandma and some of the older family members use. Tell what the phrases mean in your own words.

Answer: *Some examples students might choose are: Grandma said Virginia, “borned four of the first five presidents of these United States.” Grandma is proud of the fact that four of the first five presidents were born in her home state of Virginia. “I think I’ll just let these old limbs take me the rest of the way” means “I’ll walk.”
“August weather down here’s meant to be eased on through, not run through” means you have to take it easy because it is hot and humid. Uncle John says, “Looks like it’s comin’ up a cloud” and means, “…it’s finally gonna rain!”*

Notes to Teacher

* Do not have students read the “Get Set to Read” Background and Vocabulary story prior to reading Tanya’s Reunion. Use this additional piece for after-reading scaffolding, if necessary.