Title: Everglades

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RI.5.2, RI.5.3, RI.5.4, RI.5.7 RI.5.8, RI.5.9, RI.5.10; RF.5.3, RF.5.4; W.5.2, W.5.7, W.5.9; SL.5.1; L.5.1, L.5.2, L.5.5, L.5.6

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

The reader will learn about the Florida Everglades, past, present and future.

**Synopsis**

As five children travel through the Florida Everglades by canoe, their guide, storyteller tells them about the evolution of the landscape and life forms around in the Everglades. They listen and ask questions as he tells of the Everglades creation and the interesting animals that live there. Although this is informational text, the language is poetic as is the use of imagery. The language and illustrations describe the beauty and diversity of the Everglades and how it was ruined by people draining the water and building farms and cities on what used to be the Everglades. The children are given the charge of restoring the Everglades to its former spectacular natural beauty.

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** |
| 1.How and when did the Florida peninsula take shape?  | The Florida peninsula took shape during the Age of the Seashells. The seashells formed limestone on the sea bottom. Over the eons the sea lowered, and the rock became land.  |
| 2.How was the miraculous Everglades of Florida formed?  | Lake Okeechobee filled to its brim and spilled over. The spill became a river that seeped one hundred miles down the peninsula from Lake Okeechobee to the Florida Bay. It was fifty miles wide and only six inches deep in most places.  |
| 3.The storyteller described the Everglades as a “living kaleidoscope” of color and beauty. Describe the Everglades.  | It glittered with orchids, grass, trees, birds, panthers, raccoons, snakes, mosquitoes, fish – all things large and small that make the Earth beautiful. |
| 4.There were many settlers in the Everglades. List the settlers from first to last. Who are still there?  | The Calusas were the first to arrive in the Everglades. The Spanish conquistadors arrived next, then the Calusas disappeared. They moved on. The Seminole Indians arrived last. They are still there along with the Modern Americans.  |
| 5. The children looked around after the storyteller paused. Why were the students puzzled?  | The children were puzzled because they didn’t see the clouds of egrets, quantities of alligators, the cathedral windows of orchids, the mammals, snails and one-celled plants and animals anymore. |
| 6.Eventually the students grew up and ran the Earth. “What happened when the children grew up and ran the Earth?”  | The children knew when they get older the clouds of the birds would return to the abundance of fish in the water. The flowers would tumble into bloom. Quantities of alligators would bellow through the saw grass again. A multitude of panthers, deer, raccoons, and others would be on the islands. |
| 7.Synonyms are words that have the same meaning. In this story, there are many words showing great numbers of measurements. Reread the story and list the words. Most of these words mean almost the same thing. How does the author’s use of particular words (profusion, abundance) affect how you as a reader feel about the Everglades? Does the author present evidence that children should run the Earth in order to restore the Everglades to what the storyteller describes as it’s former beauty?  | They are quantities, myriad, profusion, multitude, abundance, plentitude, plethora, enormous. |

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 | eons cavorted  | chortle scurried pondered multitude  |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**sufficient context clues are provided in the text | profusion myriad conquistadors limestone kaleidoscope  | plethora quantities abundance myriad profusion multitude plentitude enormous  |

Culminating Task

* Have students make a diagram illustrating an animal’s habitat and source of food. (see below). Students can use the text and illustrations in the story to help them find their plant or animal’s role in the ecosystem. They may also use other resources to complete their diagrams or charts.

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| **Animal** | **Habitat** | **Food** |
| Ex: Alligator | Alligators live in sluggish streams or swamps. | Young alligators feed on insects, frogs, or fish. Older alligators eat larger fish and animals. |

* Vocabulary Focus: Check for Contextual Meaning: After re-reading the text and determining the meaning of the words in parenthesis, complete each of the sentences using the vocabulary words.

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|   **Meaningful Sentences: Use a vocabulary word from the story Everglades to complete each sentence.**1. Baja California is a \_\_\_that is surrounded by the Gulf of California. (peninsula)
2. The groundhog \_\_\_from one hole to the next, as if he couldn’t move fast enough to find his own home. (scurried)
3. Watching the \_\_\_of fish in the aquarium was like watching hundreds of bees swarming around their hive. (multitude)
4. \_\_\_means “thought about something deeply and thoroughly”. (Pondered)
5. The abundance, or fullness, of fresh fruit on the island was evidence of its \_\_\_. (plentitude)
6. The people thought \_\_\_had passed as they waited in the long line; in reality, it had been only thirty minutes. (eons)
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Additional Tasks

* As you read the story, many visuals were given, either through words or illustrations. Use passages from the text to describe how the author uses imagery to help readers see how the river becomes rich with life.
* Write an article or essay comparing the Everglades described by the storyteller with the Everglades today. Include opinion, based on evidence in the text, about why the Everglades should be restored and/or preserved.
* For students in other states, find a similar natural feature that has been damaged by people and research what is being done to preserve or restore it.
* Read other accounts and histories of the Everglades and compare the information presented there with the information presented in this story. Do other authors reach the same conclusion, that children should run the Earth and solve the problem of what has been done to this natural wonder?
* Create a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast the Everglades of eons ago and the present one.
* Write an opinion on how we can stop the destruction of the Everglades. Draw a picture of how it would look “If we ran the Earth.”