Unit 1/Week 3

Title: Island of the Blue Dolphins

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.5.1, RL.5.2, RL.5.3, RL.5.10; RF.5.3, RF.5.4; W.5.2, W.5.4, W5.9; SL.5.1, SL.5.6; L.5.1, L.5.2, L.5.4

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

Determination and resourcefulness can help you achieve your goals and even save your life.

Synopsis

Karana is a Native American girl who lived with her people on a rugged island 75 miles off the coast of California. When a friendly ship’s crew came to rescue her people, Karana stayed to be with her brother who was left behind by the ship’s crew. Wild dogs later killed her brother and Karana was left alone to survive on the island alone until another ship should come to rescue her. Karana only had the resources of the island to figure out how to survive.

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** |
| What does the author tell us about Karana and why she is on this rugged (or rough) island off the coast of California? | Karana is a Native American girl, who lived alone on a rough island off the coast of California. She stayed behind with her brother who was later killed by wild dogs. |
| What is the first thing Karana needs to do in order to survive? *Using specific quotes from text.* | She needs to find shelter and she needs to consider the wind, distance from Coral Cove, and if it is near a good spring. She also needed to consider the wild dogs. Her shelter needs to have protection. |
| Why does Karana want to kill the wild dogs? | She wants to kill them because they killed her brother and she will not be able to survive if she doesn’t. |
| What evidence does the author provide to show that Karana weighed her options carefully before deciding where to build her house? Why did she ultimately choose this location?  | Karana explains each of her decisions based on facts. She ultimately made her decision based on the fact that the sea elephants were too noisy, the place to the south near the old village reminded her too much of the people who were gone, and the wind was too strong.  |
| An omen is a sign of good or evil for the future. Why does Karana believe the day was an “omen of good fortune”? | The morning was fresh from rain, the smell of the tide pool was strong, sweet odors came from the wild grasses and from the sand plants. She felt that it was a good sign.  |
| As the narrator, Karana says the foxes “were clever thieves and nothing I stored would be safe until I had built a fence.”Using specific quotes from the text, explain how she meets this challenge.  | She uses whale ribs to build a fence. “These I used in making the fence. One by one I dug them up and carried them to the headland…. And set them in the earth, they stood taller than I did.” She made sure they were close together and impossible to climb. She wove sea kelp to hold them together tightly rather than seal sinew so the animals wouldn’t gnaw it down. She dug a hole underneath so she could get in and out.  |
| What do Karana’s decisions about building her shelter tell you about her character? | Karana’s decisions tell that she is determined to survive since she is making sure her shelter is safe from the animals on the island. |
| Based on clues from the text, what does scarce mean? Why was wood so scarce on the island? | Scarce means hard to find and not being available. Karana had to search many days and nights to find wood for her house. There were not many tall trees and it took her a long time to find enough that would make good poles for the sides and roof. There was a legend from the island that tells a story of how wood became scarce.  |
| Karana says that by winter’s end “I was sheltered from the wind and rain and prowling animals. I could cook anything I wished to eat. Everything I wanted was there at hand.” Find the evidence to support this statement.  | She shot two of the prowling animals. She used the island’s resources for food (She wove a tight basket of fine reeds which she lined with pitch to hold water, she used stones to cook in, she used stones, water, and seeds to make gruel) and shelter (she made a place for the fire that she could use again each night, she cut out cracks in the rock to make shelves for her food). |

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 | RuggedShelteredOmenProtection | FashionedSpring, headland, league, lair, brackish, ravineClamorLegend, bound, broad, wove, kelp, sinewShellfish, quarreled, hollow, fine, gruel, prowl, hollow |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**sufficient context clues are provided in the text | ScarceFavorableClever, gnaw | Cease, odor, ornament, matCrooked, secure |

Culminating Task

* Throughout the story, Karana shows that she has many skills and a lot of useful knowledge to survive. Using specific details and quotes from the text, explain how Karana shows that she is a resourceful and determined person.

Answer:

Karana was determined to survive on the Island and used her many skills to do this. On page 75 she states, ”I could not live without a roof or a place to store my food. I would have to build a house.” She understood that she needed to find shelter, food and protection from the animals that lived on the island. Karana first decision was to find a favorable location for her house, keeping in mind that she needed,” a place that was sheltered from the wind, not too far from Coral Cove and close to a good spring”. In her search she had to find materials to build her house with only what was available from the island. “On the third day, I went out to look for things that I would need in building my house. I likewise needed poles for a fence.” She recognized that she needed to build a fence to keep the “clever thieves” away from her food and shelter. She used the remains of whalebones to fashion a fence and wove strands of “bull kelp” in between the posts to keep animals from gnawing their way into her shelter. In building her house she needed wood that was “scarce”. Karana says, ”I searched many days, going out early in the morning and coming back at night, before I found enough for a house.”

Karana also needed food to survive. Her useful knowledge of cooking and the what food was available to her on the island guided her in being able to provide for herself.”…I ate shellfish and perch, which I cooked on a flat rock. Afterward, I made two utensils.” For cooking seeds and roots she wove a tight basket that was easy because ”I had learned how to do it from my sister Ulape”. She also made a place for fire in the floor of her home covering ashes at night and then having the embers available the next day saving her much work. In order to protect her food from one meal to another she needed to keep out the island’s gray mice. She used cracks in the face of the rock ”as high as my shoulder”. She smoothed them out to make shelves “ and the mice could not reach it.” The selection concludes with this statement from Karana, “ By the time winter was over and grass began to grow, my house was comfortable. I was sheltered from the wind and prowling animals. I could cook anything I wanted to eat. Everything I needed was here at hand.” Karana used her knowledge and skills to be resourceful in order to survive.