Unit 1/Week 5

Title: Sleds on Boston Common

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.5.1, RL.5.2, RL.5.4, RL.5.7, RL.5.10; RF.5.4; W.5.2, W.5.4, W.5.10; SL.5.1, SL.5.2; L.5.1, L.5.2, L.5.3, L.5.4, L.5.5

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

If you can explain your reasons, you can sometimes get people to change their minds and come to agreement, no matter what your age or difference in opinion. Henry learned that just because someone has a different viewpoint on how a country is run does not mean that he is not a good person.

Synopsis

This is a story set in December 1774, six months after King George III had closed the Boston Harbor. Now only the King’s ships entered the harbor. This left very little work for the men because there was no trade. Henry Price, who is celebrating his ninth birthday, tells the story. He heads to Boston Common to try out his new sled where he finds that the soldiers have taken over the area where he and his siblings normally went sledding. The whole town used the common area before it was taken over. He decides to speak up to General Thomas Gage who listens and provides an area for the children to sled.

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** |
| How does the author let you know the story takes place in the historical past? | It is 1774, British have closed Boston Harbor, new governor Thomas Gage |
| Patriots are people who love their homeland and defend it. Who are the patriots in this story? | Sam Adams, John Hancock, William Price |
| How does the closing of Boston Harbor lead to hard times for the people of Boston? | Boston Harbor was closed by King George, food and other necessities could not come into Boston, fewer jobs for people who worked in the harbor |
| Henry says there are more and more British soldiers marching on Boston Common. What do you think “common” means in this selection? | Common is a multiple meaning word. In this context, it means a public open area in a town or city |
| What evidence does the author provide to show how the people of Boston feel about the British soldiers’ presence in their town? | The soldiers have cut down fences and trees for firewood, taken over the harbor, and monitored people’s payment of their taxes. All of these things would have angered the people of Boston. The author also writes, “Most of us didn’t like General Gage’s troops in our town. Most of them didn’t like us either.” |
| Why did Henry think, “It was the best kind of New England day”? | It was his ninth birthday, there was lots of snow, he got a sled for his birthday, perfect day for sledding |
| What in the text helps you to infer that Henry’s family is having a hard time due to the closing of the harbor? | Old mittens, patched leather boots |
| Why were Henry and his siblings steaming mad? Why did the author put “our” and “their” in italics toward the end of the page? How do these italicized words shed further light on the kids’ feelings? | Henry and his siblings were mad because the Common was supposed to belong to everyone in the town. Now, “It was covered by the barracks of General Gage’s troops. And they were everywhere, these troops, officers and soldiers, drummers and cooks.” And they had set up tents and other obstructions all over the Common.  The author puts our and their in italics to further separate the two groups. It went from being “our” Common to “their” Common. The italics further emphasize the children’s hateful feelings at how overrun “their” (and the town’s) Common had become. |
| Henry’s father told his children to “look sharp but don’t look like you’re looking” when they go to the Common. What did Henry’s father mean by this statement? How did Henry and his siblings follow through on this advice? | They are angry at the British troops for taking over their Common. They want to notice everything so that they can help the patriots, one of which is their father. They don’t want to get in trouble by looking like they are spying.  The siblings followed through on his advice by being very attentive, “We walked among the barracks, and listened with our eyes and with our ears.” |
| How does Henry stand up for what he believes? | He stands up for his right to use the Common by deciding to speak up to General Gage. He told General Gage that “the Boston Common belonged to all of us…” and how “his troops knocked down our snow forts, ruined our ponds for skating, and built fires in the middle of sled runs.” He also shared that it was his birthday and that he wanted to use his new sled. |
| How did General Gage respond to what Henry had to share? Thinking about how Henry first perceived General Gage, how was his response different than what Henry might have expected? Cite evidence from the text to support your answer. | General Gage responded by thinking silently for a moment, “General Gage crossed his arms and looked out across the snowy Common…No one spoke a word.”  He put his hand on Henry’s shoulder and told him he had a “fine sled.” Then he asked who made it. General Gage shared that he had sons and daughters as well and that he knew “my own children would like to sled this hill if they were here.” Finally he ordered the troops to let the children use the hill.  This response was different from Henry’s impression in the beginning of the story. The impression was that the soldiers would only follow the orders of King George. Since General Gage was British, and under King George’s rule, he would not be open to what a Bostonian, Patriot, especially a kid, would have to say. |
| What evidence does the author provide to show how much Henry enjoyed sledding on that first day? | Students should be able to cite that paragraph that reads, “I’ll never forget the first time I came down that hill on a sled I could call my own...” Henry felt joy sledding with the wind in his face, going over bumps faster and faster. |
| How does Henry feel about General Gage at the end of the story? State examples from the text. | Henry compares him to his father, which means he must like him. He said: “General Gage looked like a man who would listen, a good man, a man like my father.” Also Henry states that he is “a man of his word” meaning that he kept his promise to let them sled and skate. That is another reason why I believe Henry respected General Gage. Also the Henry and General Gage shaking hands, which is another example of how someone shows respect for another. |

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 | patriot | spectacles, governor  wharf, dock, masts, swagger  navigation, plank, steeple  expect, stark, ruts  barrack, keg  tyrant, glare, sternly  courage, spunk, rebel, swiftly  sprawl siege |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | common | steady  tuck, tramp  harsh  inspect  instruct  independent |

Culminating Task

* Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

*What lesson did Henry learn from his encounter with General Gage? Cite evidence from the story to support your answer. Include at lease three quotes from the story to support your answer. Be sure that your ideas are expressed in a comprehensive paragraph including an opening and concluding sentence.*

Answer: Henry learned that just because someone has a different viewpoint on how a country is run does not mean that he is not a good person. ”We were Americans now, my family and I. We were Boston patriots hoping to win a war against a king. But we’d never forget the tall British general that we’d met on my birthday. General Gage had given us back a pond and our sled runs on Boston Common because he had children of his own. Indeed, he was a good man.” I remember that General Gage was sent by the King of England, the king we were in a war against but also Henry states that he is “a man of his word” meaning that he kept his promise to let them sled and skate. That is another reason why I believe Henry respected General Gage. Also the illustration shows Henry and General Gage shaking hands, which is another example of how someone shows respect for another.

Additional Tasks

* A tyrant is a person who uses power in a cruel or an unjust way. The base of the word tyrant is the Greek word tyrannos, which refers to a king who has taken power by force. Other words with this base include tyranny and tyrannical. You can figure out the meaning of words in the same word family by breaking them into parts. What do the words tyranny and tyrannical mean? Answer: Tyranny adds the suffix y, which makes it a noun. It means rule by a tyrant. The word tyrannical has the adjective suffix -ical, which very often means like. So tyrannical means like a tyrant. Have the students reread the page and find all the words that are related to ships.

Answer: trade, harbor, wharf, dock, masts, port

* Fluency practice activity,

Have students practice fluency, “Then General Gage asked me...”, “instruct all troops...” Assist in chunking the sentences, using phrasal marks to help students with meaning and how punctuation plays a part.

* Looking at the 5 stories we have read, they all have aspects of communicating beliefs in order to change or transform a situation. Give examples from each text in how this was demonstrated.
  + - “Going Someplace Special” - Tricia Ann builds confidence in herself through the people and situations she encounters throughout the story.
      * Her Grandma constantly encourages her to believe in herself and not to believe what others say.
      * Mama Frances
      * Peace Fountain experience
      * Jimmy Lee
      * Southland’s Hotel situation
      * Blooming Mary in the garden
      * Grand Music Palace
      * Public Library
    - “Shiloh”- Marty believes that unjust acts such as cruelty to animals should need to be voiced.
      * Marty brings the Shiloh home
      * He takes him to Doc Murphy’s
      * He cares for him
      * Speaks up to Judd Travers
    - “Maya Lin” – Maya Lin communicates her beliefs through art.
      * Civil Rights memorial
      * Viet Nam Memorial
    - “Night of San Juan”- The sisters want to have Jose Manuel included in all their activities and fun. They believe he should have friends to play with.
      * The sisters come up with a plan to get Jose to go to the beach with them.
      * Amalia spoke to Jose’s grandma, asking if he could go to the beach with them
      * By taking this chance, the sisters find that grandma is not so mean, and she gave permission for Jose to go with them
    - “Sleds On Boston Common”- Henry Price believed that the Common belonged to the people and so he stood up to General Gage. He was calm and reasonable in his arguments and General Gage listened and granted his requests.

His arguments were:

* + - * The Common belonged to all the people of Boston
      * Children need a place to play
      * It was his birthday
      * He wanted to try his new sled given to him by his father
* In each story we witnessed the characters engage within “acts of courage.” Compare and contrast these “acts of courage” in each of the 5 stories. Cite evidence from each story to support your thinking and conclusions.
  + - “Goin’ Someplace Special”
      * Tricia Ann speaks up to the girl at the Music Hall
    - “Shiloh”
      * Marty speaks up to Judd Travers
    - “Maya Lin”
      * Maya Lin was courageous in putting out works of art that were controversial because of the subject matter and what they represented
    - “Night of San Juan”
      * The sisters stood up to Jose Manuel’s grandma
    - “Sleds On Boston Common”
      * Henry Price spoke up to General Gage

1. In “Goin’ Someplace Special” the main character was being judged by people. In “The Night of San Juan” and “Sleds On Boston Common” the main characters make judgments about other people. What lessons did each character learn? Cite examples from each text.
   * + “Goin’ Someplace Special”
       - The character Tricia Ann is judged by the color of her skin. She has to deal with unfair laws and treatment by others. She learned to believe in herself and not let other people’s judgments affect her.
     + “The Night of San Juan”
       - The 3 sisters saw the grandma as being mean, judging her because she “never smiled” and let Jose Manuel play in the streets. They learned that grandma was just concerned about Jose and that she was generous by sharing a meal with them. They learned not to judge others, but rather to approach them to find out who they really are.
     + “Sleds On Boston Common”
       - Henry Price judged General Gage by what others had perceived him to be and also that he worked for the King of Great Britain who had ordered the Harbor to be closed. After seeing what General Gage’s troops had done at the Common, Henry decided to approach and voice his concerns with the General. Before and after this encounter with the General, Henry learned that Gage was a reasonable man, comparing him to his father. He learned not to judge a person for what they stand for or who they work for, but rather making an effort to find out who they really are.

Note to Teacher

* **For EL/SEL support**:
  + To support ELs to assist with setting: Have students read the title of the story and the first sentence. Then pose the question: Where and when does the story take place?
  + Stopping at points for clarification with questions like:

What problems are the people of Boston having and why? Cite evidence from the story.

Based on what you have read, who is telling the story (narrator) and what have we learned about him so far?

What does he mean when he says, “Thomas Gage is a powerful man indeed?”