Unit 1/Week 4

Title: The Night of San Juan

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

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

Sometimes helping a friend requires you to take a stand even if the situation is uncomfortable.

Synopsis

This is a story of three sisters, Aitza, Amalia, and Evelyn, who enjoy the freedom of playing together in the streets of San Juan. They have a friend Jose Manuel who is not allowed to play outside because his grandmother, with whom he lives, thinks it is too dangerous, but the sisters want to help him. The girls come up with a plan to ask the grandmother for permission to have Jose Manuel join them on an outing to the beach the Night of San Juan. On this evening at exactly midnight, everyone would walk backward into the sea 3 times. The tradition was to bring good luck. They are successful and are hopeful that the grandmother will trust that her grandson will be safe and because he will be able to participate, Jose will have greater luck.

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** |
| “When something is forbidden to you, you are not allowed to do it. Using evidence from the text, what is Jose Manuel forbidden from doing? Why? Based on the text how does he feel about this? What clues help you to know this?” | Jose is forbidden from playing on the streets with the neighborhood children. His grandmother feels it is too dangerous: “Too many crazy drivers! Too hard, the cobblestones!” The illustration shows a boy with his head in his hands, looking sad. |

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| “What evidence does the author provide to show how the children feel about Jose Manuel’s grandmother? Use specific details from the text in your answer.” | “Jose Manuel’s grandma kept to herself and never smiled…” |
| What does Amalia do in the story that shows her bravery? Find two examples in the text. | She announces that she is going to ask Jose’s grandmother to let him come down and play even though everyone is afraid of her. She also is not afraid to do things that she shouldn’t: flipping the two elegant women’s skirts. |
| The author writes, “I couldn’t help but feel sorry for my friend as we left him behind.” From this sentence, what do you think the phrase “wistful eyes” means? | He has sad eyes wishing he could be with them. |
| “It was June twenty-third, and that night was the Night of San Juan. For this holiday, the **tradition** was to go to the beach, and at exactly midnight, everyone would walk backward into the sea...” Use context clues to find the meaning of the word *tradition*. | A tradition is a custom. Something that is passed down from generation to generation. Context clues*: “go to the beach, exactly at midnight, walk backwards into the sea three times, and good luck would come.” “People say that doing this three times on the night of San Juan brings good luck.”*  This tradition (Night of San Juan) is important because Evelyn thought of Jose Manuel*. “Perhaps if he did this with us, his luck would change, and his grandma would allow him to play with us outside on the street.”* |
| What holiday and tradition are the sisters’ celebrating? How do they think this will help their friend, Jose Manuel? | Evelyn thinks they should get José Manuel to join them at the beach for the Night of San Juan celebration. According to tradition he can change his luck by walking backwards into the sea. Evelyn thinks if he does this, his grandmother will let him play outside. |
| How does the author help the reader who does not understand Spanish know what she is talking about? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. | The author puts the Spanish words in italics and follows with the meaning in English. (Examples: *muy peligroso”* too dangerous”, *vendo yuca, plátanos, tomates* “sell his fresh cassava, plantains, tomatoes”) |
| Why do the sisters want to get home soon? | It is almost dinnertime, and they want their parents to take them to the beach that night. |
| How do the details the author chose to illustrate help you understand what life was like in 1940’s Puerto Rico? Use specific details from the pictures in your answer.” | Men playing dominoes, women gossiping by the fountain, a vendor selling fruits and vegetables, children playing in the street. Everybody knew everybody else. It was a safe and welcoming environment. |
| Using clues from the text, what does the word reluctant mean and what is Aitza reluctant to do? | Reluctant means to be unwilling to do something. She is afraid to go through with the sisters’ plan to talk to the grandmother. Aitza was reluctant but her sisters convinced her. |
| The author uses a simile to describe the grandmother’s frown. A **simile** is a figure of speech that compares two different things by using the words "like" or "as". Locate a simile and explain what it means. | “…Jose Manuel’s grandma *wearing a frown as grim as her black widow’s dress.”*  His grandma was not happy, and her face showed her discontent with a giant frown*.* The author uses the simile to describe the grandmother’s frown.  (Note: Teachers may need to explain to students what a widow is in order for the comparison to make sense to them.) |
| What do Amalia’s actions show about who she is as a person? Use details from the text to support your answer. | She is brave because she speaks up to the grandma. She takes a step forward, and asks if he can go to the beach with their family. |
| The author writes, “Y-y-yes,’ I stuttered.” A person who stutters can’t speak easily. They repeat sounds. Why does Evelyn stutter when she talks to José Manuel’s grandma? | The grandma answered the door with a frown. She scowled at the girls. Evelyn stuttered because she was nervous, and these things made her more nervous. She was no longer sure of herself. |
| How do the sisters’ feelings about the grandma change during their time at Jose Manuel’s house? How do you know? | The grandma offers them corn fitters. “Somehow, sitting there with Jose Manuel, his grandma seemed less scary.” |
| The author writes, “When we got home we found Mami waiting with her hands on her hips…She had reason to be upset.” Using evidence from the text, why does the girls’ mom have reason to be upset? | They did not ask her before inviting Jose to the beach with their family.  But, the mother felt it was very nice of the sisters to invite him, and that is why she was not mad. |
| What was the biggest problem Evelyn had to overcome to get Jose Manuel to join her and her sisters? What was the solution? Use story details to explain your answers. | Evelyn and her sisters had to find a way to persuade Jose Manuel’s grandmother to let him play with them. Because his grandma “kept to herself and never smiled,” the girls were afraid to approach her. |
| Evelyn holds onto Jose Manuel’s hand,“But my other hand remained tightly clasped to Jose Manuel’s.” Why does Evelyn hold onto Jose Manuel’s hand during their irresistible dip in the ocean? Include details from the story to support your answer. | When they carry out their plan to help Jose Manuel, it is Evelyn’s sister Amalia who boldly asks Jose Manuel’s grandmother if he can accompany her family to the beach. But I know that Evelyn is the sister who first gets the idea to help Jose Manuel after watching the vegetable vendor. So I think she probably wanted to help him the most. She may be holding onto Jose Manuel’s hand because she wants her wish for him to come true. She also knows that this may be the first time he has been in the ocean, and she wants him to stay safe. |

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 | balcony, forbidden  stutter | peer, convince, blare, cobblestones, dangerous, watchful  daring, mischievous, spreading, strolled, swiftly, elegant, scolded, amusement, wistful, amusement  humidity, chatter, perched, knobby, ancient, square, horizon, plaza, puzzled, chanting offer, triumphantly  hesitation, glimpse, declare, meekly, scowl, raspy, aroma  swarm, reveler, irresistible, plunge |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | tradition  reluctant | Breeze, tradition, vendor  gossip, replace, approach  purchase  permission, coward  clasp |

Culminating Task

* Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

The sisters had to face several challenges before reaching their ultimate goal, which was to have Jose Manuel come with them to the beach for the Night of San Juan so he could have good luck. Describe at least three challenges from the text that the sisters faced, and how they resolved each challenge in order to reach their goal. Finally, explain how facing these challenges helps to show the kind of friends the sisters are. Cite evidence from the text to support your ideas.

Answer:

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| Challenge | How the Sisters Resolved the Challenge |
| Aitza was reluctant to the idea.   * “Evelyn, you know very well his grandma will never let him go,: Aitza said. * “It will never work,” Aitza said, It will never work…” in regards to the plan for Jose to drop something down from the balcony in order to get to the door to see grandma. | The sisters convinced her “to try our plan.” |
| It was getting close to dinnertime and the sisters knew they had to be home soon so they could go to the beach that night. | They took the shortcut across the main square. They also made sure to apologize to Mama when they arrived home late. |
| * Asking the grandma permission for Jose to go to the beach with them for Night of San Juan even though they were afraid of her. * Having the courage to actually ask grandma’s permission. | * They made a plan to send a note to Jose for him to drop something down so they can come to the door to return it. This would give the sisters an opportunity to ask grandma. * She had the courage to ask grandma. “Amalia took a deep breath… We also wanted to know if he could come to the beach tonight with our family.”   They found out that grandma was not so mean after all. |
| * The sisters took on these challenges because they cared about their friend Jose Manuel. Even though Aitza was reluctant to her sister’s plans, her sisters still convinced her to go along, even though she was not totally agreeable. The sisters could have created a argumentative situation, but felt the goal of Jose Manuel was more important. It was also a challenge to face Jose’s grandma. The perceptions that were painted of the grandma were ones that were not kind. The sisters had the courage to face her even though what they knew or heard about her was unkind. They also risked being late for dinner, and possible punishment from their mom. Once again their belief to help Jose Manuel was stronger than the situation they had to address. | |

Additional Tasks

* Explain that people talk in many different ways, or dialects, and writers try to capture how individuals speak in realistic and lively dialogue. The author mixes Spanish and English in *The Night of San Juan*. For example:

“Too many crazy drivers! Too hard the cobblestones! Muy peligroso!”

Discuss why the author mixes the two languages. Ask students to predict how the story would be different without this technique.

* Ask students to write a paragraph describing what happens the next time the sisters ask Jose Manuel’s grandmother whether he can play with them. Students should include Spanish words or phrases from the selection in the dialogue.

Note to Teacher

* Use of illustrations to assist with comprehension: