Unit 1/Week 1

Title: A Package for Mrs. Jewls

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.5.1, RL.5.2, RL.5.4; RF5.3, RF.5.4; W.5.2, W.5.4; SL.5.1, SL.5.2, SL.5.6; L.5.1, L.5.2, L.5.3, 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

In this unit, students should analyze the overall structure of this story—i.e., how the strange details add up and lead to the ending.

Synopsis

While cleaning the schoolyard, Louis accepts a package for Mrs. Jewls. It is very large and heavy, and Louis is sore, but he carries it up 30 flights of stairs because he likes Mrs. Jewls and her students, and he thinks the package might be important. When Louis finally gives Mrs. Jewls the package, she does something surprising with what’s inside (a computer) in order to teach a lesson about gravity.

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 (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** |
| **Do you think this day started out normally or unusually for Louis? What makes it seem normal or unusual?** | Unusual: “the school yard was a mess”; pencils and paper were all over the ground; a package arrived. |
| **How did Louis feel about the Wayside school children? Give 3 examples.** | He cared about them and, therefore, he did nice things for them:   1. “He loved all the children at Wayside School” 2. He told the delivery man to be quiet so he didn’t bother the children 3. He took the package himself so that the delivery man didn’t “interrupt” or “disturb” the children (Discuss the words “interrupt” and “disturb” here.) |
| **What was unusual about the architecture of Wayside school?** | The building was 30 stories high with one room on each floor and no elevator; also, there was no nineteenth floor. (You may want to use this opportunity to discuss different meanings of the word “stories”.) |
| **What does “squashing” mean? Use the words around it in the text to help you.** | Pressing against, pushing on, flattening. Helpful evidence: “the box *pressed* against Louis’s face” |
| **How did Louis feel while he went up the stairs? What words and phrases from the text tell us this?** | Uncomfortable — the box was “squashing” his nose; he “huffed” and “groaned;” “his arms and legs were very sore” |
| **Why didn’t he stop to rest? What does this tell us about what kind of person Louis is?** | Louis thought the package might be “important”, so he wanted to give it to Mrs. Jewls as quickly as possible. Louis is responsible, thoughtful, selfless, kind, etc. (Some students may also link this action to his picking up the yard on page 24, which was also a kind gesture.) |
| **Why did Louis knock on the door with his head?** | He was holding the box; it was so big and heavy that he couldn’t hold it with one hand to knock with the other. |
| **What was Mrs. Jewls teaching when Louis arrived on the thirtieth floor?** | Gravity. (Give students a very simple explanation of gravity—it is the force that attracts objects to each other or to the ground. Gravity is what causes objects to fall on the ground when you drop them.) |
| **Which verbs describe how Louis felt by the time he got to the thirtieth floor?** | “Struggled”; “gasped”; “complained” |
| **Why were the students eager to open the door for Louis? Do you think this would have surprised Louis? Why or why not? (Hint: Re-read the first page if you’re not sure.)** | The students all offered to open the door because “they loved to be interrupted when they were working.” But on page 24, the text says that Louis takes the package because “he knew how much they hated to be interrupted while they were working.” |
| **Louis had a pretty good attitude while he carried the box, he complained for the first time. What inspired him to finally complain?** | He was so sore from carrying the heavy box, but Mrs. Jewls still didn’t let him come into the classroom—she made him wait while she held a spelling bee to determine who should open the door. |
| **After the sentence, “He felt his hands go numb,” the author immediately wrote, “Actually, he *didn’t* feel them go numb.” Why does the author correct himself here?**  **Why do you think the author included both of these sentences in the story, rather than editing out the first one? How does this influence the tone of the story?** | The word “numb” indicates a loss of feeling, so to say that he *felt* himself go numb wouldn’t make sense.  By including both sentences in the story, the author is making a joke. |
| **During the spelling bee, two students spelled different words than Mrs. Jewls asked them to spell. Why do you think she didn’t correct them? (Hint: What is the relationship between the words she says and the words they spell?)** | These words have similar meanings—they are *synonyms*. |
| **What are some more verbs that describe Louis struggling?** | He “staggered” into the room; his legs “wobbled”; he “collapsed” on the floor. |
| **What did the students think about what was inside the package? What did Mrs. Jewls think about it?** | The students didn’t like it—they “booed” and told Louis to bring it back. Mrs. Jewls said it will help them learn because it is “quicker than a pencil and paper”, but that upset them because that means they’ll have to do more work. |
| **What did Mrs. Jewls do with the computer on the last page? Why?** | She pushed the computer out the window to teach the students about gravity. The computer’s crash to the ground demonstrated gravity better than the pencils and paper she had thrown out the window earlier, because it fell faster. |
| **Why did the computer fall to the ground faster than the pencils and pieces of paper?** | Because it was heavier. |
| **Where else in the text did the “pencils and pieces of paper” appear?** | where Louis picked them up in the school yard; when Mrs. Jewls and the students discussed that computers are faster than pencils and paper. |

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 | Sighed  Huffed and groaned  Gravity  Shifted, grip  Numb  Staggered |  |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | Disturbing, interrupted  Struggled  Collapsed |  |

Possible Culminating Task

* Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

*Reread the last sentence in the text: “I’ve been trying to teach them about gravity all morning. We have been using pencils and pieces of paper, but the computer was a lot quicker.” Though what Mrs. Jewls does with the computer may be surprising, if we know how the story ends and go back into the text, we can find clues that “foreshadow”, or suggest earlier, what might happen. What are these clues, and on what pages do you find them?*

Answer:

* + “The schoolyard was a mess,” which was unusual. There were pencils and pieces of paper everywhere, but Louis didn’t know from where they came.
  + Mrs. Jewls is teaching a lesson about gravity; also, her classroom is very high off the ground, on the thirtieth floor
  + The discussion between the students and Mrs. Jewls recalls the pencils and paper on the first page; Mrs. Jewls says that the computer is quicker than the pencils and paper;
  + The final quote ties all these clues together.

Additional Task

* After students complete the culminating task, have them sit in pairs or small groups and debate the following question: *Is it possible to guess the ending of this story before reading it? Why or why not?*

Answers will vary.