Title/Author: *Nightsong* by Ari Berk with illustrations by Loren Long

Suggested Time to Spend: 5 Days (five 30-minute sessions)

Common Core grade-level ELA/Literacy Standards: RL.1.1, RL.1.3, RL.1.4, RL.1.7; W.1.2, W.1.8; SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.5, SL.1.6, L.1.4, L.1.5

Lesson Objective:

Students will listen to this literary text read aloud and use literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) to understand the nature of bats and how they are able to “see.”

Teacher Instructions:

**Before the Lesson**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis below. **Please do not read this to the students**. This is a description to help you prepare to teach the book and be clear about what you want your children to take away from the work.

Big Ideas/Key Understandings/Focusing Question

Bats have a special sense called echolocation that helps them find their way.

How does Chiro use his “sense” to find his way in the world? One key takeaway is that Chiro finds his way by using his special song that he sends out into the world. Chiro uses his echolocation to find his way out in the world and back to his cave.

Synopsis

This is a beautifully illustrated story of a young bat, Chiro, who is sent out on his very first solo adventure into the dark night. When Chiro is at first afraid to fly in the dark alone, his mom encourages him to use his “good sense.” During his adventure, the trees chanted, bugs hummed, the sand called out, and the music of the land helped him find his way back. When he returned, he revealed to his mom that he “saw everything!”

1. Go to the last page of the lesson and review “What Makes This Read-Aloud Complex.” This was created for you as part of the lesson and will give you guidance about what the lesson writers saw as the sources of complexity or key access points for this book. You will of course evaluate text complexity with your own students in mind, and make adjustments to the lesson pacing and even the suggested activities and questions.
2. Read the entire book, adding your own insights to the understandings identified. Also note the stopping points for the text-inspired questions and activities. *Hint: you may want to copy the questions, vocabulary words, and activities over onto sticky notes so they can be stuck to the right pages for each day’s questions and vocabulary work.*
3. Consider pairing this series of lessons on *Nightsong* with a text set to increase student knowledge and familiarity with the topic. A custom text set can be found[here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3069/nightsong-with-companion-text-set)[.](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B66A6Ds77LpiU3dIZVFxMFFkLUk) *Note: This is particularly supportive of ELL students.*

*Note to teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs): Read Aloud Project Lessons are designed for children who cannot read yet for themselves. They are highly interactive and have many scaffolds built into the brief daily lessons to support reading comprehension. Because of this, they are filled with scaffolds that are appropriate for English Language Learners who, by definition, are developing language and learning to read (English). This read aloud text includes complex features which offer many opportunities for learning, but at the same time includes supports and structures to make the text accessible to even the youngest students.*

*This lesson includes features that align to best practices for supporting English Language Learners. Some of the supports you may see built into this, and /or other Read Aloud Project lessons, assist non-native speakers in the following ways:*

* *These lessons include embedded vocabulary scaffolds that help students acquire new vocabulary in the context of reading. They feature multi-modal ways of learning new words, including prompts for where to use visual representations, the inclusion of student-friendly definitions, built-in opportunities to use newly acquired vocabulary through discussion or activities, and featured academic vocabulary for deeper study.*
* *These lessons also include embedded scaffolds to help students make meaning of the text itself. It calls out opportunities for paired or small group discussion, includes recommendations for ways in which visuals, videos, and/or graphic organizers could aid in understanding, provides a mix of questions (both factual and inferential) to guide students gradually toward deeper understanding, and offers recommendations for supplementary texts to build background knowledge supporting the content in the anchor text.*
* *These lessons feature embedded supports to aid students in developing their overall language and communication skills by featuring scaffolds such as sentence frames for discussion and written work (more guidance available* [here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3159/ell-supports-for-writing-and-discussion)*) as well as writing opportunities (and the inclusion of graphic organizers to scaffold the writing process). These supports help students develop and use newly acquired vocabulary and text-based content knowledge.*

The Lesson – Questions, Activities, and Tasks:

Note to teacher: Since the book is not numbered, the page numbering starts on first page of illustration of Chiro and his mom hanging upside down in a cave.

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| **Questions/Activities/Vocabulary/Tasks** | **Expected Outcome or Response (for each)** |
| Day 1:FIRST READING: **Initial Read** Read aloud the entire book with minimal interruptions. Stop to provide word meanings or clarify only when you know the majority of your students will be confused. | The goal here is for students to enjoy the book, both writing and pictures, and to experience it as a whole. This will give them some context and sense of completion before they dive into examining the parts of the book more carefully. |
| Day 2:SECOND READING: **Vocabulary & Text-Dependent Questions (1st half) Pages 1-18**Why was Chiro so afraid to go out on his own?Highlight the passage “sense is the song you sing out in to the world and the song the world sings back to you. (p.5) Model a think aloud, “a song the world sings back? Does the world sing? I wonder what the author means here…”Do you think the world is really going to sing? I’m going to pay a lot of attention to this in the story to figure out if the world sings back to Chiro.”What does mother mean when she says, “…do not go farther than the pond, not unless your song is sure”? (p.5) Re-read this sentence a couple times. What does it mean when something is “sure?” For example, if your mom tells you not to go into the pool unless you’re sure you can swim well, what does she mean? Now that you know what “sure” means, why do you think Chiro’s mom wanted his song to be sure?What does the author mean by “mouth of the cave?” (p.7)Look carefully at the picture while I read this page (p.9). What are the “arms” Chiro was frightened by? “Glee” is the base word of the word “gleefully.” The suffix “ful” means “full of.” Glee means happiness, so “gleefully” means “full of happiness.” Why is Chiro happy on this page? | Text-evidence: “The night was dark.” “And when it is dark outside, I cannot always see.” pg. 3Sample response: When something is sure, that means you are confident about it and certain that it will happen. Chiro’s mom wanted his song to be sure because she wanted him to be able to explore on his own and also make it back to his home safely.“Mouth” in this context means cave opening. Have students point to their mouths. Can you stick your tongue out of your mouth? Now, imagine your tongue is Chiro and he is in the cave (stick tongue in). Now make him fly out of the “mouth of the cave” (stick tongue out) The “arms” were really tree branches, but Chiro could not see them clearly yet and didn’t know what they were.Chiro is happy because he was able to fly through the forest and away. |
| Day 3: SECOND READING: **Vocabulary & Text-Dependent Questions (this reading will begin on page 18)**What does it mean that the songs of the flying tasty things sounded like breakfast?Chiro is traveling through the woods beyond the pond. But what does “margins” mean? A margin is the edge or a boundary line. So when Chiro was traveling from his cave to the forest, past the geese and pond out to the margins of the world, where was he? Notice the next page shows Chiro flying over the ocean. Where is Chiro traveling? What are “margins” of the world?“Kin” means family. Why is the sea foam becoming kin to Chiro?Continue reading the rest of the book. Short Answer Written Response: Was Chiro’s song sure? | Chiro was very hungry, so as he heard the bugs’ sounds, he wanted to eat them for breakfast.Chiro is traveling farther than he ever has before. The margins are the edge of the area that is around his home. So he is going all the way to the edge of the world that he knows (his home). Chiro is becoming more familiar with his surroundings. He is becoming comfortable with each splash of the water. Students will answer yes or no and give justifications for why or why not. Possible response: In the end, Chiro’s song was sure because he was able to make it back to his home (the cave) safely. |
| Day 4: THIRD READING: **Structure & Language** Explain that the previous readings have focused on vocabulary and the text. Now, we are going to use the illustrations and the text (starting with page 9) to better understand what Chiro is experiencing. As an initial understanding of the concept, ask the students to describe the pictures on pages 9 and 13. After reading each page, ask, “Why does the illustration look like this?” Why do the illustrations change (from page 9 to page 13)?” On page 13, ask, “Why is the picture colored in front of Chiro and not behind him?” On each page, ask students, “How is Chiro’s song helping him?” Students need to start connecting the illustrations, the call and response, and how afterwards Chiro is able to keep traveling. Create a visual aid to illustrate the idea of call and response between Chiro and his surroundings. Draw or glue a picture of Chiro in the middle of a large piece of chart paper. Refer back to page 5 when Chiro’s mom said, “sing and the world will sing back”. Remind the students that you were curious about that when you read it before. “Let’s go through the sequence of the story and see what happened when Chiro sang out into the world.” Refer back to page 9 (on your chart, draw or glue a picture of trees) and ask them what did Chiro did on this page. Once the students respond with “Chiro sang out,” draw a line to the trees and along the line write, “Chiro sang out”. Then when you get to the trees, ask the students, “What happened once Chiro sang? Did the “world sing back”?” You might need to lead them to what the trees did. When they give you the response, “The trees called back/chanted,” draw a line from the trees back to Chiro and write along it. Then you can ask, “What happened once the trees chanted back?” “Chiro made it past the trees.” You could continue with these illustrations and sequences of the book, making a connection between Chiro’s song, the world singing back, and him finding his way in the world and back to his cave. This chart could be done in a circular style. *Note to teacher: When I did this chart in class, it was a great visual aid and I displayed it when I did the dramatic play section. However, it is really difficult to explain on paper.* Below are sample charts to illustrate the idea of call and response between Chiro and his surroundings. For each page, use arrows and record what happened before or after Chiro sang his song. Examples of evidence from the text are to the right.  | Students should notice that when he is not singing, the illustrations are very dark. When he starts to sing and his song becomes more “sure,” the illustrations become lighter. When Chiro sings, the picture is colored in front of him because that is his song being sure.Chiro’s song is helping him find his way in the world.“Boys and Girls, do you really think light is coming out of his mouth?”

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| (pg. 13) | -Singing back-Trees called out-Chanted |
| (pg. 26) | -Each grain of sand calling out in chorus |
| (pg. 28) | -Each wave rising up to greet him-Each splash of sea foam becoming kin |
| (pg. 29)Only read the first sentence and ask students to make a prediction about what Chiro might be listening for? What do they think he will hear?  | -Music of the land rose up in all of its many textures-Song of home |
| (pg. 31) | -His cave called out |

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| Day Four: **Show the video clip of bats using echolocation,** [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p08Y0oRAX3g**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p08Y0oRAX3g) **and read the brief passage about echolocation from *Bats* by Gail Gibbons (refer to the RAP lesson).**Explain to the students that now they are going to watch a video of a real bat who eats real “tasty flying things” and read a non-fiction passage with facts about bats. Connect back to *Nightsong*, asking students, “How are these bats similar to Chiro?” Also ask, “How are the bats using their senses?”  | Students will participate in a class discussion about how bats use their senses to make their way around the world. Using teacher provided comparison words (both, similar, alike, etc.), students will describe how these real bats are similar to Chiro. Examples: They both live in caves, fly, eat bugs, are nocturnal, real bats give out a high pitched sound, and Chiro also let out a sound (echolocation). |
| Day Five: **Drama (refer back to the large chart paper you made of the call and response between Chiro and the world around him.)**Bring students to a large area to act out what happened on Chiro’s adventure in *Nightsong*. Assign students the roles of Chiro and the different objects that sang back to him. Refer back to page 9, where Chiro is “peering in the dark.” Ask the students, “If we are going to reenact what was happening in the book, what would need to change?” Hopefully, this will lead to the suggestion of a blindfold for Chiro. Once Chiro is blindfolded, direct him to sing out into the world. Then direct the tree to “sing back, chant” (refer to chart for specific vocabulary). Then Chiro will go through all the objects. After this activity, pose the question…”Are the trees really chanting? Are the bugs really humming a tune?” Connect the metaphorical ideas from *Nightsong* to the scientific explanation of echolocation. Final question: Chiro’s mom said the world was going to sing back to him. What did she mean by that?  | Students will take on the character assigned to them, acting out Chiro’s adventure.Students will start to understand how Chiro’s “sense” is helping him find his way through the world. Students will realize that no, the trees aren’t really chanting or calling out to Chiro, but Chiro’s voice is being reflected as an echo, helping Chiro to locate his surroundings. She was talking about the echo that would come back from Chiro’s own song. |

FINAL DAY WITH THE BOOK - Culminating Task

Students will write in response to the focusing question: How does Chiro use his “sense” to find his way in the world? Students may either provide a figurative response: “Every time Chiro uses his song, different things sing back to him and it helps him find his way to the pond and back.” Or a literal response: “In the book, Chiro is using his “song” but really that is echolocation and it is echoing off different things allowing him to see in the dark and find his way.”

Vocabulary

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| **These words merit less time and attention** (They are concrete and easy to explain, or describe events/processes/ideas/concepts/experiences that are familiar to your students )  | **These words merit more time and attention**(They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes or experiences that most of your student will be unfamiliar with) |
| Page 2 - **shadows** – darkness caused by the setting of the sunPage 3 - **dawn** – the first appearance of light in the morningPage 3 - **twitching** – moving back and forthPage 3 - **admitted** – to make knownPage 13 - **chanted** – to sing in one tonePage 13 - **girths** – a measure around a body or trunkPage 16 - **flock** – a group of animalsPage 16 - **errands** – short trips taken to get somethingPage 19 - **reeds** – tall thin grasses of wet areasPage 19 - **tune** – musical tones or songPage 26 - **dune** – a hill of sand piled up by the windPage 26 - **strand** – the land bordering a body of water; shore; beachPage 31 - **sheltering** – covering or protectingPage 34 - **lull** – to cause to sleep or rest | Page 2 - **clinging** – sticking toPage 3 - **sense** – awareness using sight, hearing, smell, taste, or touchPage 7 - **instant** – very small amount of timePage 9 - **peer** – to look closelyPage 18 - **flowed** – to glide or pass by smoothlyPage 22 - **lay beyond** – located on the other side of somethingPage 23 - **familiar** – knowing well or experienced oftenPage 26 - **in** **chorus** – in unison, all at the same timePage 28 – **memory** –something remembered |

Extension learning activities for this book and other useful resources

* Write an informative piece about how bats really use echolocation.
* A review by a children’s author of *Nightsong*—includes links to printable and online bat activities, worksheets, bat mask template, echolocation game, National Geographic’s Creature Feature on the vampire bat, and much more! <http://pennyklostermann.com/2013/02/01/perfect-picture-book-friday-nightsong/>
* This website includes research links for topics related to *Nightsong* (bat facts, echolocation, Bat Conservation International) as well as suggestions for literary connections to pair with *Nightsong.* <http://suzyred.com/pbks2013_Nightsong.html>
* This fun bat echolocation video/rap helps students review key vocabulary from the text. *Note: This is particularly supportive of English Language Learners.* —<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hr-Y2Tt8gFE>

**What Makes This Read-Aloud Complex?**

1. **Quantitative Measure**

Go to <http://www.lexile.com/> and enter the title of your read-aloud in the Quick Book Search in the upper right of home page. Most texts will have a Lexile measure in this database.

Most of the texts that we read aloud in K-2 should be in the 2-3 or 4-5 band, more complex than the students can read themselves.

2-3 band 420-820L

4-5 band 740-1010L

790 L

1. **Qualitative Features**

Consider the four dimensions of text complexity below. For each dimension\*, note specific examples from the text that make it more or less complex.

The theme of echolocation is subtle and revealed over the entirety of the text: “Sense is the song you sing out into the world and the song the world sings back to you. Sing, and the world will answer.”

The story is chronological – over the course of a night. “The sun had set (first page)…the rising sun (last page).”

Figurative language: “Tall trees called out to him, chanted the lengths of their long branches…”

Ambiguous/purposefully misleading: “Sense is the song you sing out into the world, and the song the world sings back to you.”

Explores the theme of echolocation, which differs from human experience. Explores the habitat of bats, including that bats are nocturnal. “It was very, VERY dark…and I saw everything!”

**Meaning/Purpose**

**Structure**

**Language**

**Knowledge Demands**

\*For more information on the qualitative dimensions of text complexity, visit <http://www.achievethecore.org/content/upload/Companion_to_Qualitative_Scale_Features_Explained.pdf>

1. **Reader and Task Considerations**

What will challenge my students most in this text? What supports can I provide?

* The figurative language and prior knowledge about bats will be challenging. Support using repeated readings, questions to clarify, and vocabulary analysis will aid students in grappling with this complex concept.

How will this text help my students build knowledge about the world?

* Students will come to understand that animals such as bats experience the world differently than we do as humans. This can lead to a comparison/contrast activity with multiple animals.
1. **Grade level**

What grade does this book best belong in?

* As a read-aloud in grade 1

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