Unit 3/Week 3

Title: The Challenge

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.6.1-5; W.6.1, W.6.4, W.6.9, SL.6.1, L.6.1, L.6.2

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

It is better to be yourself and not lie to impress others.

Synopsis

In this short story, Jose learns a valuable lesson about himself when he tries to impress Estella by challenging her to a game of racquetball.

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** |
| p. 302 What do you learn about the characters in the opening paragraph? | Jose has been trying to get the attention of Estela, a new girl at his middle school, who he believes is cute and “can grub.” |
| Re-read pages 302-304. Describe the ideas Jose both considered and tried to get Estela’s attention. Why was each idea **rejected** or why did each fail? | He thought of tripping in front of her, but an earlier attempt with another girl resulted in him being ashamed. He thought of speaking to her like James Bond, but didn’t try. He studied hard in class to try to impress her, but she didn’t seem to notice and the teacher thought he was cheating. Finally, he was going to tell her a story about getting in a fight with three guys, but didn’t get the chance because she was absent when his face had signs of his bike accident. |
| p. 304/305 What details show that Estela is probably a good athlete? What language does the author use to indicate or imply her athletic abilities? | She eats a lot which indicates an active lifestyle. The author talks about “slabs” of meat, “blood-red” tomatoes, and “monstrous bites.” These infer to an almost manly appetite, reminding him of his father, which can be associated with strength and power. Estela also “flattened” the empty milk carton, “slapped” her book closed, and “hurled” it into to garbage. These imply competitive behaviors common in sports, implying strength and power. Also, she has “a grimy, sweat-blackened racquetball handle sticking out of her backpack and she’s called by a nickname, Stinger. |
| p. 305 What decision does Jose make as he tries to **connect** with Estrela? | Seeing a racquet in her backpack made Jose think to challenge Estela to a game of racquetball. He told her he was pretty good and had won a couple of tournaments. He lied to her because he wants to impress her and he’s embarrassed that he doesn’t know how to play. |
| Reread pages 307 – 309. What affects Jose’s thinking about his **challenge**? | Jose begins to recall how powerful and strong Estela is. He does not practice well the night before and his father is not encouraging. Jose thinks maybe she now looks tough – not cute. Finally, Jose “walks slowly” to the court to practice and is finding the game confusing. He curses himself for bragging about his ability to play. |
| p. 308/309 As the match is about to begin, how does the author compare Estrela and Jose? | The author uses similes to compare the characters. The first, Estela’s legs quivered “like the flanks of a thoroughbred horse” helps to portray Estela as a trained and competitive athlete as thoroughbred horses are raised to race. They are also strong and powerful which are traits the author also tries to connect to Estela. In contrast, Jose felt “limp as a dead fish.” This is meant to show his weakness and lack of confidence. |
| p. 311 After “sizing him up,” Estela tells Jose to go first. What does this phrase mean and what details would Estela have noticed for her to make this offer? | “Sizing him up” means to notice details about someone and to make assumptions about them. Estela probably noticed that Jose seemed inexperienced when he was warming up. She also probably noticed that he was skinny and not athletic looking. |
| Reread pages 311 – 312. Summarize the key details of the game and explain how the author’s choice of words helps to reinforce the characters’ traits. | Jose begins by serving into the ground. When Estela serves, Jose swings “wildly” and misses; having to run after the ball. Estela “sizzled” the ball, and when Jose “grimaces” in pain after hitting himself in the knee with the racquet, Estela chases after the ball. Jose continues to miss the ball when it is served, his racquet “spinning like a whirlwind.” When Jose finally hits the ball, his eyes are closed, and Estela “killed” the ball into a corner. These words all emphasize Estela’s experience and athletic abilities, and Jose’s weakness and lack of experience. When Estella gets cold and has to put her sweats back on, it is because she is not playing very hard and does not expect to. She even tries to serve gently so Jose can return the ball. Jose, realizing how Estrela earned her nickname, mutters, “Good shot, Stinger.” The game ends 21 to 0, as expected. |
| Reread pages 312 – 313. How does Jose handle the results of the challenge? | Jose feels humiliated and relieved that the game is over. Jose “hobbled” to his uncle’s house feeling “miserable.” He now hopes that Estela will stay away from him rather than notice him. He maintains a bit of pride when he takes a turn lifting weights saying he needed strength to mend his broken heart and also again hoping “for the slight chance that Stinger might come back.” |
| What evidence in the story shows that Jose may have learned a lesson? | Jose did not “feel like lying” to his uncle about losing the game and even showed him where he got hit which was humiliating. |

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 | racquetball p.304  rally, p. 308  abrupt, p. 308  quivered, p. 309  service box p. 311 | code, p. 302  nonsense, p. 304  Mishap, p. 304  tournaments p. 305  vaguely, p. 307  protective, p. 308  whirlwind p. 311 |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | challenge, p. 301  rejection p. 302  notice p. 302  connect, p. 304  grimacing p. 311  offer p. 311  lobbed p. 311  managed p.312 | conversation, p. 304  awkward, p. 305  recalled, p. 307  encountered, p. 307  sizzled p. 311  lamely p. 311  briskly p. 311  surrounding, p. 311  cowered, p. 312  poised, p. 312 |

Culminating Task

* Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

1. At the beginning of the story, Jose lies to Estela in hopes of impressing her. Using details from the story, describe the lie, the consequences of this lie and the lesson that Jose learned.

Answer:

When Jose challenged Estela to a game of racquetball, he lied by telling her he had played before and had even won some tournaments. Because Jose had never played, he first began to get nervous and to even question whether he was actually attracted to Estella or not. During the match, Jose was completely embarrassed and humiliated when he lost the game 21 to 0. He was worn out and even injured when he got hit by the ball. He decided he wanted Estela to stay away from him rather than notice him. Because of his humiliation and because he was truthful about losing to his uncle, Jose probably learned it was better to tell the truth and just be himself.

1. Using details, explain how and why Jose’s feelings for Estela change over the course of the story.

Answer:

At the beginning Jose thinks Estella is cute and wants to find a way to get her attention. He notices that she is athletic and is impressed by her large appetite. After he challenges her to a racquetball game, he begins to get nervous because he knows he doesn’t know how to play and he worries he may get beaten by a girl. As the match approaches, Jose begins to think of Estela as “tough” rather than “cute” as he remembers the traits he was first impressed by and wonders why he ever liked her. During the match, Jose is completely embarrassed by his “skinny chest” and humiliated by his inability to play. After the match he leaves, hoping Estela will stay away from him. At the very end he may again be feeling a slight attraction for her as he begins to lift weights for the slight chance of a rematch

Additional Tasks

* On page 304 and 305, Jose has a conversation with Estella at lunch. In groups of threes, take turns reading the parts of Jose, Estela, and the narrator. Practice reading with fluency and expression.
* Choose a section of the text containing dialogue and rewrite it so the language is more formal. How does this change the tone and mood of the story?

Note to Teacher

* Since this text is not as challenging as others, additional academic and domain-specific vocabulary is listed for the passage so it can be a focus for discussion and instruction.

Supports for English Language Learners (ELLs)

to use with Basal Alignment Project Lessons

When teaching any lesson, it is important to make sure you are including supports to help all students. We have prepared some examples of different types of supports that you can use in conjunction with our Basal Alignment Project Lessons to help support your ELLs. They are grouped by when they would best fit in a lesson. While these supports reflect research in how to support ELLs, these activities can help ALL students engage more deeply with these lessons. Note that some strategies should be used at multiple points within a lesson; we’ll point these out. It is also important to understand that these scaffolds represent options for teachers to select based on students’ needs; it is not the intention that teachers should do *all* of these things at every lesson.

**Before the reading:**

* Read passages, sing songs, watch videos, view photographs, discuss topics (e.g., using the [four corners strategy](http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/four-corners)), or research topics that help provide context for what your students will be reading. This is especially true if the setting (e.g., 18th Century England) or topic (e.g., boats) is one that is unfamiliar to the students.
* Provide instruction, using multiple modalities, on selected vocabulary words that are *central to understanding the text*. When looking at the lesson plan, you should note the Tier 2 words, particularly those words with high conceptual complexity (i.e., they are difficult to visualize, learn from context clues, or are abstract), and consider introducing them ahead of reading. For more information on selecting such words, go [here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3167/selecting-and-using-academic-vocabulary-in-instruction). **You should plan to continue to reinforce these words, and additional vocabulary, in the context of reading and working with the text. (See additional activities in the During Reading and After Reading sections.)**

**Examples of Activities:**

* Provide students with the definition of the words and then have students work together to create [Frayer models](http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/frayer-model) or other kinds of word maps for the words.
* When a word contains a prefix or suffix that has been introduced before, highlight how the word part can be used to help determine word meaning.
* Keep a word wall or word bank where these new words can be added and that students can access later.
* Have students create visual glossaries for whenever they encounter new words. Then have your students add these words to their visual glossaries.
* Create pictures using the word. These can even be added to your word wall!
* Create lists of synonyms and antonyms for the word.
* Have students practice using the words in conversation. For newcomers, consider providing them with [sentence frames](https://achievethecore.org/page/3159/ell-supports-for-writing-and-discussion) to ensure they can participate in the conversation.
  + Practice spelling the words using different spelling practice strategies and decoding strategies. Students could take turns spelling with a partner.
* Use graphic organizers to help introduce content.

**Examples of Activities:**

* Have students fill in a [KWL chart](http://www.nea.org/tools/k-w-l-know-want-to-know-learned.html) about what they will be reading about.
* Have students research setting or topic using a pre-approved website and fill in a chart about it. You could even have students work in groups where each group is assigned part of the topic.
* Have students fill in a bubble map where they write down anything that they find interesting about the topic while watching a video or reading a short passage about the topic. Then students can discuss why they picked the information.

**During reading:**

* Read the text aloud first so that ELLs can hear the passage read by a fluent reader before working with the text themselves.
* Allow ELLs to collaborate in their home languages to process content before participating in whole class discussions in English. Consider giving them the discussion questions to look over in advance (perhaps during the first read) and having them work with a partner to prepare.
* Encourage students to create sketch-notes or to storyboard the passage when they are reading it individually or with a partner. This will help show if they understand what they are reading as they are reading it.
* Ask questions related to the who, what, when, why, and how of the passage. For students that may need a little more help, provide them with [sentence stems](https://achievethecore.org/page/3159/ell-supports-for-writing-and-discussion).
* Continue to draw attention to and discuss the words that you introduced before the reading.

**Examples of Activities:**

* Have students include the example from the text in their glossary that they created.
* Create or find pictures that represent how the word was used in the passage.
* Practice creating sentences using the word in the way it was using in the passage.
* Have students discuss the author’s word choice.
* Use graphic organizers to help organize content and thinking.

**Examples of Activities:**

* Have students fill in a chart to keep track of their 5ws while they read to help them summarize later and figure out the central idea of a passage.
* It may again be beneficial to have somewhere for students to store new words that they encounter while reading the text. Students could use a chart to keep track of these new words and their meanings as they read.
* If you had students fill in a KWL, have them fill in the “L” section as they read the passage.
* Utilize any illustrations or text features that come with the story or passage to better understand the reading.
* Compare/contrast the passage with what the illustrations convey about the passage. Have students consider if the illustrations look the way they visualized the passage in their own minds or if the passage matches their predictions based on the illustrations.
* Identify any text features such as captions and discuss how they contribute to meaning.

**After reading:**

* Present directions for any post-reading assignments orally and visually; repeat often; and ask English Language Learners to rephrase.
* Allow ELLs to use English language that is still under development. Students should not be scored lower because of incorrect spelling or grammar (unless the goal of the assignment is to assess spelling or grammar skills specifically). When grading, be sure to focus on scoring your students only for the objective(s) that were shared with students.
* Scaffold questions for discussions so that questioning sequences include a mix of factual and inferential questions and a mix of shorter and more extended responses. Questions should build on each other and toward inferential and higher-order-thinking questions. There are not many factual questions already listed in the lesson instructions, so you will need to build some in as you see fit. More information on this strategy can be found [here](https://achievethecore.org/aligned/creating-sequencing-text-dependent-questions-support-english-language-learners/).
* Reinforce new vocabulary using multiple modalities

**Examples of activities:**

* Using the words that you had students work with before reading, have students write sentences in reference to the passage that you just finished reading.
* Require students to include the words introduced before reading in the culminating writing task.
* For newcomers, print out pictures that represent the words that you focused on and have students match the words to the pictures.
* Based on different features of the words, have the students sort them into different categories and explain their choices. For example, the students could sort the words by prefixes, suffixes, connotation, etc.
* After reading the passage, continue to examine important sentences (1–2) in the text that contribute to the overall meaning of the text. Guide students to break apart these sentences, analyze different elements, and determine meaning. More information on how to do this, including models of sentence deconstruction, can be found [here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3160/juicy-sentence-protocol).
* Provide differentiated scaffolds for writing assignments based on students’ English language proficiency levels.

**Examples of Activities:**

* For all students, go over the prompt in detail, making sure to break down what the prompt means before having the students get to work. Then have the students explain the directions back to you.
* Have students create an evidence tracking chart during reading, then direct them to look back over their evidence chart and work with a group to see if their evidence matches what the rest of the class wrote down. If some of the chart does not match, students should have a discussion about why.
* For students who need more support, model the proper writing format for your students and provide them with a properly formatted example for reference.
* For newcomers, you may consider creating sentence or paragraph frames to help them to write out their ideas.
* To further discussion about the passage, have students create their own who, what, when, where, why, and how questions related to the passage to ask each other and have students pair up and practice asking each other the questions. If available, pair students of the same home language to support the use of language still under development.