Unit 2

Title: The Third Wish

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.7.1, RL.7.2, RL.7.3, RL.7.4, RL.7.10; W.7.1, W.7.4, W.7.9; SL.7.1; L.7.1, L.7.2, L.7.4

Teacher Instructions

**Preparing for 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

Everyone faces both internal and external conflicts, and how we choose to resolve these conflicts has a significant impact on our character and quality of life.

Synopsis

Almost every culture has a traditional tale about character who is granted three wishes. Two are usually used unwisely, and then the third wish is needed to undo one or both of the first two wishes. In “The Third Wish”, Mr. Peters frees a swan entangled in the brush. After being saved, the swan changes into the King of the Forest, Mr. Peters receives three wishes. First, he wishes for a wife and marries Leita. Mr. Peters soon learns that Leita used to be a swan and misses her earlier life. Seeing his wife unhappy, Mr. Peters must decide how to use his remaining wishes.

1. Read the entire selection, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.
2. Re-read the text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Tier II/academic vocabulary.

**During Teaching**

1. Students read the entire selection independently.
2. Teacher reads the text aloud while students follow along or students take turns reading aloud to each other. Depending on the text length and student need, the teacher may choose to read the full text or a passage aloud. For a particularly complex text, 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, continually 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** | **Evidence-based Answers** |
| In the first paragraph, why does Mr. Peters stop to help? What does this say about his character? | He hears faint crying, struggling and crying  Rustling and faint cries that are almost human  He saw something white in the bushes  Answers may vary: This shows that Mr. Peters is a kind, helpful, and compassionate man. He could have kept driving, but he stops to help someone in need. He is not sure what he is walking up to, yet he goes anyway. He is not concerned with the possible danger he might face. He puts the needs of someone else before his own and his safety. |
| What is the swan’s external conflict? What evidence from the text indicates that the swan does not want to be rescued by the human? What does this tell us about the swan’s character? | The swan’s external conflict is that he is entangled in the brush. “The bird struggled all the more frantically as he approached, looking at him with hate in its yellow eyes, and when he took hold of it to free it, it hissed at him, pecked him, and thrashed dangerously with its wings which were powerful enough to break his arm.”  It becomes clear after he transforms into the King of the Forest that he doesn’t have much respect for humans, which may be the reason he struggled so much when Mr. Peters was untangling him. |
| What can you infer from Mr. Peters’ first wish? How is his wish different from the forester’s wish? | He wished for a companion because he was lonely  He didn’t want to grow old lonely  He wanted someone to share his treasures and home with  The forester wished by mistake for a sausage  In a rage, the forester wished to put the sausage on his wife’s nose  The forester wasted his last wish on getting the sausage of her nose  Mr. Peters thought carefully before using his wishes  Mr. Peters saved 2 wishes for emergencies |
| What details does Mr. Peters see that tells him how Leita feels about her new life? What new conflict arises for Mr. Peters because of his observations?” | Leita was restless  Leita disappeared very often  Leita wandered much in the garden  Mr. Peters must decide if he should focus on his own happiness and keep Leita as a human, or focus on Leita’s happiness and change her back to a swan. |
| Is Mr. Peters *content* with his *companion?*  What does this say about the way he resolved his conflict? | Answers will vary  Mr. Peters was happy with his wife because he would always try to make her happy- in whatever means  When he got sick, he didn’t move away because he wanted to remain with his companions  In his old age he spent his days with the swans and they protected his home  When he died, he was surrounded by Leita and Rhea (with a smile on his face)  Mr. Peters resolved his conflict by making Leita happy. Her happiness, have him happiness and contentment. |
| What internal conflicts does Leita share with the reader? | She misses her swan sister Rhea  She loves Mr. Peters  She misses old life in the forest  Difficult being human |
| How does Mr. Peters attempt to help Leita resolve these conflicts? | He offers to wish her back to a swan  Build a seat for her by the river  Goes for long drives  Buys her clothes  Plays music  Suggests a trip around the world |
| How did Mr. Peters show his love for Leita with his second wish? | He used his second wish by changing her back into a swan while she was asleep |
| What inferences can you make from knowing what Mr. Peters held in his hands when he died? | Swan’s feather suggests they were with him upon his death  His smile suggests he was content  The leaf suggests he saved his last wish |

Tier II/Academic Vocabulary

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|  | **These words require less time to learn**  (They are concrete or describe an object/event/  process/characteristic that is familiar to students) | **These words require more time to learn**  (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, are a part  of a word family, or are likely to appear again in future texts) |
| **Meaning can be learned from context** | bank  thrashed  extricate  verge  dabbling  companion  distressed  astonishment | reflecting  rash |
| **Meaning needs to be provided** | presumptuous  reward  composure  preening  malicious  rheumatism  serenely  withered | content  remote |

Culminating Writing Task

* **Prompt**

*Did Mr. Peters make the right decision to help him resolve his internal conflict? Compose an argument that is at least one paragraph in length. Support your claims with at least two valid and relevant pieces of evidence from the text, including direct quotes and page numbers.*

* **Teacher Instructions**

1. Students identify their writing task from the prompt provided.
2. Students complete an evidence chart as a pre-writing activity. Teachers should remind students to use any relevant notes they compiled while reading and answering the text-dependent questions.

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| ***Evidence***  ***Quote or paraphrase*** | ***Elaboration / explanation of how this evidence supports ideas or argument*** |
| “Now he understood that Leita was really a swan from the forest, and this made him very sad because when a human being marries a bird it always leads to sorrow.” | This quote foreshadows that Mr. Peters knows that Leita will not be happy as a human. |
| “Poor Mr. Peters was very distressed on his wife’s account and he did his best to make her life happier…drives…music…clothes…trip…” | Mr. Peters was unhappy because Leita was unhappy. By his actions he tried to make her happy, but it did not work. |
| “Then he knew that it was hopeless and she would never be happy as a human.” | Mr. Peters cares about Leita and her happiness. He can not be truly happy if he knows she is unhappy. |
| “I’ve learned that even if your wishes are granted they don’t always better you.” | Mr. Peters accepted that even though he had his wish granted, it did not bring him the happiness he was searching for. Instead, his companion turned out to be a swan and that was just fine with him. |
| “In the morning Mr. Peters was found peacefully dead in his bed with a smile of great happiness on his face. In his hands, which lay clasped on his breast, were a withered leaf and a white feather.” | Mr. Peters died content and happy. He did not choose to use his last wish and the feather infers that Leita was with him when he died. She continued to be his companion, even as a swan. |

1. Once students have completed the evidence chart, they should look back at the writing prompt in order to remind themselves what kind of response they are writing (i.e. expository, analytical, argumentative) and think about the evidence they found. (Depending on the grade level, teachers may want to review students’ evidence charts in some way to ensure accuracy.) From here, students should develop a specific thesis statement. This could be done independently, with a partner, small group, or the entire class. Consider directing students to the following sites to learn more about thesis statements: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/ OR http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/ thesis\_statement.shtml.
2. Students compose a rough draft. With regard to grade level and student ability, teachers should decide how much scaffolding they will provide during this process (i.e. modeling, showing example pieces, sharing work as students go).
3. Students complete final draft.

* **Sample Answer**

*In the literary work titled The Third Wish, Joan Aiken shows us how the main character Mr. Peters must choose between his happiness or the happiness of his wife. By examining Mr. Peters’ internal conflict, the reader learns a lot about Mr. Peters’ character by the actions that he took. On page 316, the author points out, “Poor Mr. Peters was very distressed on his wife’s account and he did his best to make her life happier…drives…music…clothes…trip…”. The text evidence suggests that Mr. Peters did things to try and make Leita happy, but he becomes unhappy because Leita was unhappy. The author then stated, “Then he knew that it was hopeless and she would never be happy as a human.” It is apparent that Mr. Peters knows for sure that Leita is not happy as a human. In the author’s own words, “In the morning Mr. Peters was found peacefully dead in his bed with a smile of great happiness on his face. In his hands, which lay clasped on his breast, were a withered leaf and a white feather.” Mr. Peters died content and happy. He did not choose to use his last wish and the feather infers that Leita was with him when he died. She continued to be his companion, even as a swan. Without a doubt, Mr. Peters made the right choice, because in the end, both he and Leita were happy and together.*

Additional Tasks

* *List two details in the story that support the inference that Mr. Peters loves Leita more than he loves himself.*

Answer: He uses his second wish for her benefit instead of his own benefit and he declines to take another wife

* *List two details in the story that support the inference that Leita still loves Mr. Peters even after changing back into a swan.*

Answer: She spends much time with him and she protects him until he dies. She mourns his death.

* *List two details that suggest that Mr. Peters is not afraid to die.*

Answer: He doesn’t use his last wish to avoid death, he dies with a smile on his face.

* *Swans are a common feature in myths, fairytales, and fiction from around the world. Many cultures have their own stories of humans who transform into swans, with the swan often acting as a representation of love and loyalty. Research another piece of literature that features a swan. Compare and contrast the two.*

Answer: Answers will vary. Swans transforming into humans appear in folklore of many countries in Europe and even Japan. Example- in Celtic mythology, Aengus was the Irish god of love who fell in love with a young woman named Caer who was magically turned into a swan. Aengus turned into a swan as well so that he could be with her.

Example- In the ballet Swan Lake by Russian composer Tchaikovsky, a Prince falls in love with a girl named Odelle who has been enchanted to turn into a swan during the day and returns to human at night.

* *Research the constellation Cygnus the Swan, and write a brief description that contains at least 3 facts.*

Answer: Answers will vary. The constellation Cygnus (Latin for swan) is often pictured flying south, down from the Milky Way. It is also called the Northern Cross, from the cross shape formed from the bright stars. It is also known as Galina (hen) or the Cross of Calvary.

* *What similarities can you find between the story (myth) of Cygnus and “The Third Wish”?*

Answer: In both stories, humans are changed into swans or swans into humans. Each story involves separation and each includes a fierce and powerful character (Zeus and The King of the Forest).

Note to Teacher

* It is important for teachers to ensure that students understand the following terms when reading this story: internal conflict, external conflict, inference, resolution