Unit 3/Week 1

Title: *Zlata’s Diary*

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.4, RI.6.6, RI.6.10; W.6.2, W.6.4, W.6.9; SL.6.1, SL.6.2; L.6.1, L.6.2, L.6.4

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

*Zlata’s Diary* reveals to the reader war’s devastating effects on war torn countries and their people. Food shortages, bombings, and deaths of friends are just some of the distresses people experience because of war in Sarajevo.

Synopsis

*Zlata's Diary* chronicles the daily life of Zlata, an eleven year-old girl during wartime in Sarajevo, and the war's increasing impact on her hometown of Sarajevo and her family. The selection begins with Zlata talking about school and studying for tests. She then talks about a classical music concert she is supposed to go to with her class and reveals that she decides not to go because of the possibility of kidnapping or bombing. Zlata Filipovic becomes a witness to food shortages, bombings, and the deaths of friends. She shares with us her fear, sadness, and anger over the war. She worries about those close to her, and about her own safety as well. She is sad when friends and relatives leave Sarajevo for a safer environment, and sadder still, when those who remain are killed. She is angry for the disruption and loss of her childhood. Yet somehow Zlata strives to preserve what she can of her former life, continuing to study piano, finding books to read, and celebrating special occasions. This courageous, intelligent young woman has been called "the Anne Frank of Sarajevo" for her searing account of war's effects, but her story has had a happier ending. Readers will be relieved to know that Zlata survived the war and moved to France with her family.

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** |
| What is the impact on Zlata’s life of the possibility of violence of the coming war? | On March 30, 1992 Zlata tells us that her classmates were all studying for their tests and the next day they were planning a field trip to a classical music concert. Her teacher says they “shouldn’t go because … somebody might take us as hostages or plant a bomb in the concert hall. Mommy says I shouldn’t go, so I won’t.” The normal activities of school tests and fieldtrips are overshadowed by the war. |
| Zlata reveals her very explicit feelings toward war. Cite evidence that tells Zlata’s feelings about war. | Zlata says she’s afraid to even say what is going to happen, “there’s going to be a BOOM-BOOM, BANG-BANG, CRASH Sarajevo…they’re going to bomb Sarajevo.” She states that people don’t want war and that it is the worst thing in the world. She joins an anti-war march. She states that war is inhuman. |
| Re-read the Tuesday, April 14, 1992 diary entry. Describe some of the details that show how the war is beginning to affect people’s lives. | Zlata describes people leaving in large numbers and crowding the airport and train and bus stations. Friends and families are separating. People are whispering and crying, undecided about what actions to take. |
| Zlata writes about the worst day ever in Sarajevo. Why is it the worst day and what is happening to the Filipovic family on this day? | For Zlata, May 2, 1992 was the worst day ever in Sarajevo because the shooting started. The family had to go down to their cellar. “This awful cellar was the only place that could save our lives.” It was “ugly, dark, smelly.” Zlata says. |
| Zlata also gives us an insight into her vivid feelings while sheltering in the cellar. What are her feelings? Cite evidence to support your answer. | Zlata writes, “We listened to the pounding shells, the shooting, the thundering noise overhead. We even heard planes.” “We heard glass shattering in our street. Horrible. I put my fingers in my ears to block out the terrible sounds. I was worried about Cicko…Would something hit him? I was terribly hungry and thirsty.” Words like, “ shooting,” “thundering noise,” “Horrible”, “terrible sounds,” “worried,” paint a picture of feelings of fear, confusion, and uncertainty. |
| The word ‘coped’ means to handle something successfully.  A statement explains how Zlata coped with sheltering in their awful, ugly, dark, and smelly cellar. How did she cope? Cite your evidence. | Zlata writes, “At one moment I realized that this awful cellar was the only place that could save our lives. Suddenly, It started to look almost warm and nice.” She coped by changing her perspective of the cellar and looking at how the cellar was saving their lives versus just for the undesirable traits of the space. |
| Zlata’s family “adapted” in order to cope with the situation of living in a war zone. Cite evidence to show one way they have adapted. | “We’ve rearranged things in the apartment. My room and Mommy and Daddy’s are too dangerous to be in…. We’ve turned everything around for safety.” Zlata talks about being scared to be in those rooms because the windows face where the shooting is coming from. A safe corner of the sitting room became the bedroom and mattresses were put on the floor for safety. |
| In the first line of the May 7th entry, Zlata holds onto a hope that the war would stop. How do Zlata’s feelings change in this entry? Cite your evidence. | Zlata goes on to tell about a shell that fell near her house. It wounded several of her neighbors and killed Nina, a fellow student of Zlata. Zlata states, “I feel sad. I cry and wonder why?” She wonders why because Nina was just an innocent 11-year-old girl who didn’t do anything to bring this on. |
| Zlata’s realization that the war has stolen her childhood. Cite evidence from the text that compares Zlata’s idea of an innocent childhood with the facts of her life after war came. | “BOREDOM!!! SHOOTING!!! SHELLING!!! PEOPLE BEING KILLED!!! DESPAIR!!! HUNGER!!! MISERYY!!! FEAR!!!” This is what the war has exposed her to. Before the war she had a normal childhood. She had fun and the excitement of school. She enjoyed games, friends, sunshine, nature, and food – fruit, chocolates, and sweets. |
| Zlata’s October 29, 1912, talks about the struggle she has deciding whether she should stay or leave Sarajavo. Why was this a difficult decision for her to make? | If Zlata leaves with her mom she will leave her dad, grandma and granddad, and her uncle behind. If she stays, there is the war, winter, hunger, and her stolen childhood waiting for her. |
| Why did Zlata’s mother make the decision to leave Sarajevo with Zlata? Refer to the November 2 diary entry to support your answer. | Mom decided to take her daughter and leave because the situation in Sarajevo was too much for Zlata. Zlata admits that she can’t stand it anymore. Her aunt tells her the war is hardest on the children and the children should get out of the city. |
| What does Zlata tell her diary about her birthday? Explain how she feels about the events on that day. Cite evidence from the text. | Zlata tells us her day starts out happy with kisses and congratulations from mom and dad and then everyone else. She mentions that even though there is no electricity, her Aunt came with her family and gave her a book. The whole neighborhood got together in the evening and she received several little gifts – and a birthday cake! She tells us there was no shooting on that day so everyone could celebrate with her. She felt, “it was nice, but something was missing. It’s called peace.” |
| Zlata’s July 27 diary entry tells us some things have changed and some things remain the same. Based on the details of the text, explain what is the same, different, and why it is so. | The media from all over the world has become interested in Zlata’s diary. Zlata feels this is exciting and a nice change because it takes your mind off things happening in the war. What hasn’t changed is that there is still a war going on, so there is shooting, no electricity, no water no gas, no food. |
| What are some of the things that Zlata has written in her diary on October 7 that reveal things that have cheered her up? | Zlata sent a pen pal letter to America and got a response from a boy named Brandon in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He sent a reply envelope and a pencil with his letter. Also, a Canadian TV crew and Journalist from *The Sunday Times* came to her gym class and gave her 2 chocolate bars. |
| A metaphor is a comparison of one thing to another. In the December 1993 entry Zlata talks about how happy she is to be in Paris. What metaphor is Zlata using when she talks about “moving into the light?” What does she mean by this? | Zlata begins this entry talking about electricity. She says she is moving into the light and the darkness has played out its part. She is talking about the darkness of war and all that that entailed for her compared to the ‘light’ of the absence of war. She now sees the bright lights of Paris. She is leaving the darkness, meaning the war, behind. She says, “Now we’re bathed in light lit by good people…bulb by blub, not candles.” It is such an extreme difference between her wartime life and her life in Paris, she feels like she is in a fairy tale. |

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** | devoured, edgy, dying down, misery  witnessing  vanity  journalists, crews | grants, victim, specialize  invented  bathed |
| **Meaning needs to be provided** | classical, plant, shells  intercom, cellar  shrapnel | cope  politics  humanity  manage |

Culminating Writing Task

* Prompt
  + *War has a devastating effect on war torn countries and their people. In* Zlata’s Diary*, Zlata records the terrible events that happened to her family, her neighbors, her city, and her country. The excerpt of diary entries span from March of 1992 through December of 1993. Using direct quotes and evidence from the text, write an essay of four or more paragraphs that examines the intense challenges war presented to Zlata’s family and ways they coped with these challenges and managed to survive during this devastating time.*
* 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 guide students in gathering and using any relevant notes they compiled while reading and answering the text-dependent questions earlier. Some students will need a good deal of help gathering this evidence, especially when this process is new and/or the text is challenging!

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| ***Evidence***  ***Quote or paraphrase*** | ***Elaboration / explanation of how this evidence supports ideas or argument*** |
| On March 30, 1992 Zlata tells us that her classmates were all studying for their tests and the next day they were planning a field trip to a classical music concert. Her teacher says they “shouldn’t go because … somebody might take us as hostages or plant a bomb in the concert hall.” The war is slowly creeping into their town. What impact does this have on Zlata’s life? | Zlata is just a normal student thinking about tests and school one day and the next day, instead of thinking about enjoying a field trip, she is plunged into an alternate reality. Now she has to think about kidnapping and bombs, a product of the coming war. This shows how even the possibility of violence impacts the normal events in Zlata’s life. It is as if there isn’t a “normal” anymore. |
| Zlata says she’s afraid to even say what is going to happen, “there’s going to be a BOOM-BOOM, BANG-BANG, CRASH Sarajevo…they’re going to bomb Sarajevo.” She states that people don’t want war and that it is the worst thing in the world. She joins an anti war march. She states that war is inhuman. | This evidence shows us that Zlata fears even talking about the war. It lets us know what she thinks about war. |
| Zlata describes people leaving in large numbers and crowding the airport and train and bus stations. Friends and families are separating. People are whispering and crying, undecided about what actions to take | Here the reader is being given some of the details that show how the war was beginning to affect people’s lives. |
| For Zlata, May 2, 1992 was the worst day ever in Sarajevo. Because the shooting started, the family had to go down to their cellar. “This awful cellar was the only place that could save our lives.” It was “ugly, dark, smelly.” Zlata says,“ We listened to the pounding shells, the shooting, the thundering noise overhead. We even heard planes.” “We heard glass shattering…I put my fingers in my ears to block out the terrible sounds. I was worried about Cicko…Would something hit him? I was terribly hungry and thirsty.” | Even though the family is sheltered in the cellar, what the family was hearing gives the reader a realistic sense of what was happening outside as the war approached the Filipovic family home. With words like, “ shooting,” “thundering noise,” “Horrible”, “terrible sounds,” “worried,” Zlata creates a sense of the confusion and feelings of terror, and uncertainty that the family is experiencing as they wait in the cellar for the shooting to stop. |
| A statement on page 385 explains how Zlata coped with sheltering in their awful, ugly, dark, and smelly cellar. How did she cope? Cite your evidence. | On page 385 Zlata writes, “At one moment I realized that this awful cellar was the only place that could save our lives. Suddenly, It started to look almost warm and nice.” She accepted the cellar as a safe haven. |
| “We’ve rearranged things in the apartment. My room and Mommy and Daddy’s are too dangerous to be in…. We’ve turned everything around for safety.” Zlata talks about being scared to be those rooms because the windows face where the shooting is coming from. A safe corner of the sitting room became the bedroom and mattresses were put on the floor for safety. | This shows that Zlata’s family has accepted the reality of the situation and will do whatever it takes to survive. They have adapted to the situation in spite of their fear because they want to survive. |
| “I was almost positive the war would stop, but today…” Zlata goes on to tell about a shell that fell near her house. It wounded several of her neighbors and killed Nina, a fellow student of Zlata | This shows the hopefulness of a young girl being shattered by a war tragedy, the loss of Nina, an innocent eleven-year-old child. |
| “BOREDOM!!! SHOOTING!!! SHELLING!!! PEOPLE BEING KILLED!!! DESPAIR!!! HUNGER!!! MISERY!!! FEAR!!!” This is what the war has exposed her to. Before the war she had a normal childhood. She had fun and the excitement of school. She enjoyed games, friends, sunshine, nature, and food – fruit, chocolates, and sweets. | This shows Zlata’s realization that the war has stolen her childhood. It compares Zlata’s idea of an innocent childhood with the facts of her life after war came. |
| In her diary on October 7, Zlata tells about sending a pen pal letter to America and how she got a response from a boy named Brandon in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He sent a reply envelope and a pencil with his letter. Also, A Canadian TV crew and Journalist from *The Sunday Times* came to her gym class and gave her 2 chocolate bars. | These are some of the things that have cheered Zlata. In spite of her stress, anxiety and fear from war Zlata can find things in life that cheer her up. |

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

*Zlata’s Diary* tells us how Zlata and her family coped with the realities of war and managed to survive when war came to their city of Sarajevo. At first, when Zlata talks about school and studying for tests and going on a field trip, she sounds like any student anywhere. Then her teacher tells them they shouldn’t go on the field trip because she is afraid somebody might take them hostage or plant a bomb in the concert hall (p.383). Now Zlata has to think about kidnapping and bombs, a product of the coming war. instead of thinking about enjoying a field trip to a music concert, she is plunged into thinking about the alternate reality the coming war presents. This shows how even the possibility of violence impacts the normal events in Zlata’s life. It is as if there isn’t a “normal” anymore.

When Zlata hears that they are going to bomb Sarajevo, she writes that she is afraid to even say those words. Instead she writes, “there’s going to be a BOOM-BOOM, BANG-BANG, CRASH Sarajevo” (p.384). She states that people don’t want war and that it is the worst thing in the world. She joins an anti-war march because she feels that war is inhuman. Nevertheless, sections of town are being shelled and the war is beginning to affect people’s lives. Zlata describes people leaving in large numbers and crowding the airport and train and bus stations. Friends and families are separating. People are whispering and crying, as they are undecided about what actions to take (p.385).

For Zlata, May 2, 1992 was the worst day ever in Sarajevo, because the shooting started. The family had to take cover in their cellar, a dark, ugly, smelly place. Even though the family is sheltered in the cellar, what the family was hearing gives the reader a realistic sense of what was happening outside as the war approached the Filipovic family home. With words like, “shooting,” “thundering noise,” “Horrible”, “terrible sounds,” “worried,” Zlata creates a sense of the confusion and feelings of terror and uncertainty that the family is experiencing as they wait in the cellar for the shooting to stop (p.385). Zlata copes with being down in the inhospitable cellar when she has a realization that this awful cellar was the only place that could save their lives and “Suddenly it started to look almost warm and nice” (p. 385). In the family’s apartment, the windows in Zlata’s room and her parent’s room face where the shooting is coming from. Zlata talks about being scared to be those rooms. Her family adapted to this situation by rearranging things in the apartment. A safe corner of the sitting room became the bedroom and mattresses were put on the floor for safety (p. 387). They do whatever is necessary for survival.

When Zlata hears that a shell that fell near her house wounded several of her neighbors and killed Nina, a fellow student, Zlata feels that she can’t stand it anymore. “BOREDOM!!! SHOOTING!!! SHELLING!!! PEOPLE BEING KILLED!!! DESPAIR!!!HUNGER!!! MISERY!!! FEAR!!!” (p. 388). These are Zlata’s words emphasizing what the war has exposed her to. Before the war she had a normal childhood. She had fun and the Excitement of school. She enjoyed games, friends, sunshine, nature, and food – fruit, chocolates, and sweets. Now there are so many challenges to cope with (p. 388).

In spite of these intense challenges Zlata’s family finds a way to celebrate her thirteenth birthday and share some happy moments. Despite her stress, anxiety and fear from war Zlata can find things in life that cheer her. She sent a pen pal letter to America and got a response from a boy named Brandon in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He sent a reply envelope and a pencil with his letter. Also, A Canadian TV crew and Journalist from *The Sunday Times* came to her gym class and gave her 2 chocolate bars (p. 391). Zlata and her family cope with and survive the challenges of the devastating effects the war in Sarajevo presented to them by snatching happy moments from the chaos of war.

Additional Tasks

1. Research Zlata Filipovic to find out where she is today, what she is doing, and her thoughts about her diary. Go to the website listed below. With a partner, read the interview with Zlata. Decide which part of the interview you would like to present to the class. Present to your class, one student taking the part of the interviewee and the other taking the part of Zlata.
   * Go to: <http://motherdaughterbookclub.com/2010/02/interview-with-author-zlata-filipovic/> for an interview with this author.
   * Key questions you may consider:
     + Intro: Zlata began her diary when she was 11 years old. This is an interview Zlata did in 2007, when she was 26 years old. Here she will be speaking about her war-time experiences.

* How long had your family lived in Sarajevo before the war started?
* When did you realize war had come to your city?
* Why didn’t your family leave?
* What was the most frightening part of the violence?
* How did you adjust to life away from conflict and how long was it before you felt safe again?
* Where do you live now and do you still keep in touch with friends from Sarajevo?
* If you could say something to the girl, your younger self, who is pictured on the cover of Zlata’s Diary, what would it be?

1. Watch the video of the aftermath of the bombing of Sarajevo. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0kfeo-S_8w> . Take notes on what you are seeing. Imagine Zlata visiting Sarajevo after the war has ended. Write an entry to Zlata’s diary telling something about what you see in the pictures.

* Sample Answer:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mimmy,

I just walked through my beautiful Sarajevo. It made me so sad to see the ruined bombed out buildings. It brings back difficult memories. It seems that even the desecrated buildings are weeping. They are riddled with bullet holes, and have missing parts, and broken glass. Seeing the burned out library, so many books, gone, was especially sad for me. It is so hard for me to see this. But I know the people will rebuild. We must not let that war win.