Unit 2/Week 8

Title: Balto, The Dog Who Saved Nome

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.4, RL.3.5, RL.3.7, RL.3.10; RF. 3.3, RF. 3.4; W.3.2, W.3.4; SL.3.1, SL.3.6; L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.4, L.3.5

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

Extreme circumstances require teamwork, leadership and perseverance.

Synopsis

Diphtheria has broken out in Nome, Alaska. Teams of sled dogs carry medicine 800 miles over snow and ice to prevent an epidemic. Everyone was brave but one dog, Balto, made the difference between failure and success, even though Gunnar Kasson was the human leader of the pack.

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** |
| What is the problem on page 186? List all the ways the setting impacts the problem. | A deadly sickness has broken out in Nome called diphtheria. They have no medicine to treat it and keep it from spreading. Nome is 800 miles away from the medicine in Anchorage and  there is a major snowstorm. Airplanes and trains can’t get through the storm. The sea is frozen so boats cannot travel. The road from the south is completely blocked by deep drifts of snow. |
| Why are the words at the top of page 186 printed in large, dark type? (page 186) | The words are a message that was sent by telegraph. The message is very important The type helps get the reader’s attention. |
| Why did the author use and repeat the words “Click-click-clack”? | Click-click-clack imitates the sounds of the telegraph key. |
| What can we learn from the map and the text on pages 187? After looking at the map, how do things look for the people of Nome? | The medicine will be carried by railroad. You can tell because the map shows railroad tracks between two cities. The map also shows that the railroad will not carry the medicine very far and that the dog sleds will have to complete most of the trip. Dog sleds will be slow and the storm will slow them even more. |
| How do the people plan to get the medicine to Nome? (page 188) | They plan to take it by train as far as the train can go, and then have different dogsled teams take turns carrying it the rest of the way. |
| Why is it necessary to use several dog teams instead of just one? (page 188) | It was more than 600 miles from Nome. Six hundred miles is too far for one dog team to run. It is tiring for a dog team to pull a sled through a snow storm. |
| How do you know that the plan to get medicine to Nome is working so far? (page 189) | The train has carried the medicine part of the way, and the first two dogsled teams have reached their goals. |
| On page 191, how do things look for Gunnar Kasson’s team? | Things do not look good. The wind was screaming. The snow was piling up deeper and deeper on the ground. It was thirty degrees below zero and the temperature was falling fast. |
| Why does Gunnar Kasson decide to ignore Olsen’s advice and continue on with the journey? | Gunnar realizes the importance of the medicine to the people of Nome. He believes his part of the trip is short and that he has Balto to lead the way? |
| What does the author tell us about Balto? Why is he telling us this now? | Balto is not an ordinary dog. He is half wolf. He is kind and intelligent. Gunnar is willing to go out in the storm because he believes Balto will lead the team safely to the next stop. |
| What makes this part of the journey more difficult? (page 192) | It is snowing so hard that Gunnar Kasson cannot see the trail. This part of the trail crosses sea ice, which is bucking up and down because of the storm. |
| How does the author describe the icy trail? | The ice was moving as they traveled along. The author said the ice seemed to be ‘alive” and it was like being on a roller coaster. |
| Earlier in the text the author told us that Balto could “ think for himself.” Give examples of this “thinking” from this part of the text. | Balto waited patiently each time Gunnar had to pick up the sled. His calmness settled the other dogs. He knew the ice was breaking and led the team around the ice. He was always searching for the trail to Nome and found it after their detour around the cracked ice. |
| Compare the land journey to the sea journey. | The sea journey was difficult because the ice was inconsistent. It moved, and bumped the dogs along. In other parts it was slippery and the dogs struggled to stay on their feet. The ice was dangerous because it cracked and Balto had to change directions. The land journey brought more wind and ice. The team encountered snowdrifts up to their heads and it was impossible to see. The dogs were tired and they missed the next stop. |
| On page 197, how do things look for the team? | Things are not going well. They missed the next stop. The storm is not getting any better and the dogs are tired. If they stop they will die. They have no choice but to continue all the way to Nome. |
| At the end of this true story, the author tell us how Gunnar pulled long ice splinters out of Balto’s paws? What was the purpose of this detail? | This helps us understand that Gunnar wants people to recognize that Balto is a hero. He saved the people of Nome by leading Gunnar’s team through the ice and snow. His own pain and discomfort did not distract Balto from completing this important journey and bringing his team to safety. |

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 | Page 186 - Telegraph, diphtheria, drifts, dogsled  Page 191 - Staggered  Page 192 - Trail  Page 197 - Drifts | Page 191 - Managed, hitched  Page 198 - Postcards |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | Page 192 - Guided | Page 186 - Signal, operator  Page 191 - Mixed-breed, tame  Page 194 - Sure-footed, skidded  Page 197 - Limped  Page 198 - Splinters |

Culminating Task

* Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

*Write a newspaper article about Balto and how he saved Nome, Alaska, using information form the text.*

Answer: Balto kept the team calm and safe; he solved problems; he did not give up or let the other dogs give up. Students should reference the events on page 194 and 197.

Additional Tasks

* *How do the illustrations add to your understanding of how difficult it was for the people and the dogs, and how they felt about each other?*

Answer: The map shows how far north and how close those towns are to the ocean. The illustrations show that the weather was stormy.

* *Write what a guide would tell visiting students about the statue of Balto in Central Park? Students must include details of Balto’s actions that made him so special.*
* *Gunnar Kasson and his dogs finally arrived in Nome after twenty hours on the trail. Write a message that Kasson might have written on a postcard to his family.*

Teacher Notes

* Students will need additional instruction on how newspaper articles are constructed and organized. Teacher should model writing a newspaper article to the students. Students can also review local newspapers to get authentic examples of newspaper articles.

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.