Unit /Week

Title: Hattie’s Birthday Box

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.5.1, RL.5.2, RL.5.3, RL 5.4, RL.5.9, SL.5.1, SL.5.3, SL.5.4, RF.5.4, L.5.2, L.5.4, L.5.5, L.5.6, W.5.1, W.5.3, W.5.4, W.5.7

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**

Gifts don’t have to be expensive to be special. Love between family members, even if you haven’t seen them for a very long time, endures and is more important than material things such as expensive gifts. The consequences of a lie are more serious for the person who tells the lie than for the person who believes it.

**Synopsis**

Spencer and Hattie are sister and brother. Seventy-four years ago, Spencer gave Hattie a wooden box as a wedding gift.

The box was empty because Spencer didn’t have the money to put in a special present, so he lied and said there was something special but not to open it unless times were very hard. He worried about the box being empty, and the lie, for 74 years. Since Hattie didn’t know

about the lie, she believed that the box contained something to get her through her hardest times, and because of her love for Spencer and her belief in him and, ultimately, herself, it did. Now, Hattie returns for Spencer’s 100th birthday party and brings the box with her.

Instructional Focus

For this text, there needs to be some instructional focus on the temporal challenges of this selection- the present (now, when the kids are reading the story), the 1940’s after the war (the setting of the story but distant past for students), and the 1870’s when Hattie takes off for Nebraska. The first sentence is very complex and sets the stage for going back and forth in time: “The sign stretching across the ceiling of the nursing home’s rec room says “HAPPY ONE HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY, SPENCER McCLINTiCK, and on the wall in bright numbers and letters it says JULY 5, 1847 TO 1947.” The second sentence establishes the narrator’s identity and point of view: “Spencer McClintick is my great-great-grandfather, and our whole family is coming to celebrate.”

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.)

1. 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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Text Dependent Questions** | **Answers** |
| A narrator tells the story. Who is the narrator in this story? What are the settings of this story? Where and when does it take place, and in how many different time periods? How do you know? (pg. 371-380) | The great-great-granddaughter is the narrator of this story.  The story takes place between the years of 1873 – 1947. The setting is an elderly care facility. |
| An idiom is a fixed distinctive expression whose meaning can not be deduced from the combined meanings of its actual words. (example: It’s raining cats and dogs) This story contains figurative language. One type of figurative language is an idiom.  How do the idioms “She’s going to skin me alive” and “Love her to pieces” add to the reader’s understanding of how Spencer feels about his sister coming to see him after so long? (pg. 372) | Answers may vary. Spencer was obviously apprehensive about facing his sister after the lie he told regarding the empty box. He also had a lot of love and affection for his sister. |
| What are three reasons mama said they would really celebrate? (pg. 371) | The three reasons mama said they would really celebrate are the war is over, everyone is back home, and rations are things of the past. |
| What makes granddaddy so nervous about seeing his sister at his 100th birthday party? (pg. 376) | Granddaddy is nervous because he wanted to buy her something to put in the box when things got better. He didn’t have any money, so he lied and told her that something special was in the box, but not to open it until times were hard. He always meant to send her something special, but never did. |
| Compare how Hattie and Spencer feel when they see each other after 74 years. | Hattie is calm, but excited to see her brother. Spencer is nervous and upset because he’s been worrying for 74 years that Hattie is mad at him for lying to her so long ago. |
| Gifts are not always objects we can see. Who received the gifts at the end of the story? What were the gifts? (pg. 379-380) | Hattie’s gifts were that she learned to “let people be neighborly,” to let her husband “have his pride,” and that “no matter how bad things got, they never got their worst.” The narrator shares the ultimate gift- “a wondrous wild and lasting hope.” |
| In Hattie’s box, the granddaughter smells “A young farmer’s stubbornness, a pioneer mother’s sorrow, and a wondrous wild and lasting hope.” Name one event for each. (pg. 379) | A young farmer’s stubbornness was shown when Otto refused to ask for help when their whole crop was lost in a prairie fire.  A pioneer mother’s sorrow was shown when Hattie’s son drowned. A wondrous wild and lasting hope was that learned to have faith in herself, her husband, and her neighbors and to always have hope that things will get better. |
| How and why do granddaddy’s feelings change from the beginning to the end? (p 371,377) | In the beginning of the story, granddaddy was nervous about Hattie coming to his 100th birthday party. Once Hattie arrives, and tells him the story of her Birthday Box, he is filled with pure and undeniable love. |

Vocabulary

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING**  Words addressed with a question or task | **WORDS WORTH KNOWING**  General teaching suggestions are provided in the Introduction |
| **TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION**  not enough contextual clues provided in the text | rations (pg. 371)  times (pg. 374)  hard (pg. 374)  brooded (pg. 374)  concocted (pg. 374)  undeniable (pg. 377)  prairie (pg. 377) | homestead (pg. 372)  lantern (pg. 373)  chink (pg. 379)  soddy (pg. 379)  stovepipe (pg. 377) |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | perch (pg. 374)  despair (pg. 379) | Upturned (pg. 376) |

Culminating Task

* Think about how granddaddy’s feelings changed from the beginning to the end of the story. Write a narrative about a time you received or gave a special gift to someone and compare your experience to that of Hattie’s or Grandpa McClintick’s. Describe how you felt about receiving or giving the gift. Was the gift used or received as the giver intended?

The author of Hattie’s Birthday Box wants the reader to believe that the box was more valuable to Hattie empty than if it had contained a special piece of jewelry such as a gold pin. Do you agree or disagree? Discuss with a partner or small group. Find evidence from the text to support both an agreement or disagreement. For example, was there a time in Hattie’s life when a special piece of jewelry would have been a comfort more valuable than what she learned from not opening the box? Finally, write your own opinion that includes evidence from the text.

Additional Tasks

* Have students complete a story map for Hattie’s Birthday Box. The story must include a box for each of the following: characters, setting, problem, important events, and solution.
* Create a timeline for key events in the story, starting with when Hattie was small and Spencer took care of her and showed her the special things in their world, like new calves being born.
* Research what life was like for the first pioneers in Nebraska in the 1870’s. What were some of the hardships that people endured. What made these hardships worth enduring?

Note to Teacher

This selection fits well into the 5th grade study of American History, and would be enhanced by reading biographies of people who experienced life in Nebraska during the 1870’s, as well as historical fiction set in that time and place. Check state standards in history/social science for key standards that relate.

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.