Unit 2 / Week 11

Title: Summer of Fire

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.4, RI.6.6; W.6.1, W.6.2, W.6.4; SL.6.1, L.6.1, L.6.2, 6.5

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

A catalyst is something that causes activity between two or more persons or forces without itself being affected. Sometimes forces of nature, although harmful, prove to be a catalyst for renewal.

Synopsis

In the summer of 1988, fires raged out of control in Yellowstone National Park. Though it seemed like total devastation to outsiders, the fires burned in only one-third of the park, and the new growth that resulted promoted the flourishing of certain birds, animals, and plants.

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** |
| Reread page 116. Use evidence from the text to describe the setting. Why does the author start with this description? | The author describes the setting by saying, “the sun blazed…, baking fields and withering crops. Ponds and streams dried up. Rivers shrank. In places the very earth cracked open as underground water supplies dwindled away…forests were tinder dry…little rain fell.” The author was very intentional when describing the summer conditions that contributed to the wildfires so that readers would be able to understand why lightning strikes were able to start the first fires of the summer. |
| On page 117, the author says, “Many people thought you couldn’t set fire to the forest if you tried”. Use evidence from the text to explain what this means. | It would be difficult to set fire to the forest because, “In Yellowstone, winters are long and cold, summers short and often rainy.” Students may also use the quote right before that, “The fire stayed small. Rain fell later in the day and put it out. That was what usually happened”. |
| In this selection, what is the policy toward fires in Yellowstone? Why did park officials decide to change the policy in 1988? (Pg. 117) | The policy is to let fires burn unless they threatened lives or property. In 1988, park officials changed the policy because, “…the rains of summer did not come. The Shoshone and other fires blazed and spread. By mid-July, 8,600 acres had burned.” |
| Reread page 118. What is the significance of the cold fronts? | As the cold fronts passed through the park, with strong forceful winds of 60-80 miles per hour, they spread the fires and gave them oxygen. The oxygen helped to fuel the fires, which leaped everywhere in the forests. |
| What picture does the author attempt to create on page 118 in the third paragraph with language like, “…In forests flames galloped through the tops, or crowns, of trees, through the canopy.” | The author wants to show readers the force and quickness of the fires. When a horse gallops, it is moving quickly. Readers are able to picture the flames galloping or moving quickly through the tops of the trees that looked like a canopy. |
| What details does the author include to show us how devastating and harmful this fire was? (Pg. 118) | “Snags….burned like Roman candles. Boulders exploded in the heat. Sheets of flame leaped forward. Gigantic clouds of smoke ringed the horizon….” “Fires jumped rivers, roads, canyons, parking lots. Glowing embers, some the size of a man’s fist shot a mile or more ahead, starting new fires.” |
| Personification means giving human characteristics to something nonhuman. What are some examples of personification on page 118? What is the effect of personifying the fire? | “Winds whipped….**fed** them …”  “In forests flames **galloped**…”  “Fires **jumped**…”  By personifying the fire, the author is able to make it seem alive, as if it had a mind of its own and was able to make decisions about where and how to move, just like we can. |
| As the fire approached Old Faithful, it was especially horrifying. How does the author convey that horror to the reader? (Pg. 119) | “There it jumped roads and rivers, snarling its way through the crossroads…”. “Long before they could see the flames, fire fighters heard the deep rumble and saw a churning wall of dark smoke towering skyward.” “The fire came on, a mass of red flames whipped by winds gusting up to 50 miles an hour. Sparks and embers were everywhere, flying over the inn, parking lots, and geyser, and setting fire to the woods beyond.” |
| As devastating as these fires appeared to be, there was hope for the forests and for Yellowstone. Use evidence from the text to explain why there was hope. (Pg. 120) | “The geysers, steam vents, and hot springs were unharmed. Park communities had been saved. Nearly two-thirds of the park had not even been touched by the fire.” Within two weeks after the fire, new plant life was taking root and in some areas, green grass started to shoot up. The wildfire had shaped the landscape and renewed it. |

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** | Page 116 - tinder, dwindled  Page 117 - policy  Page 118 - canopy, embers, whipped, merged  Page 119 - veered, snarling  Page 120 - drenching | Page 116 - raged  Page 119 - bearing  Page 120 - sifted  Page 117 - threatened  Page 118 - galloped  Page 120 - blanketed, landscape, renew |
| **Meaning needs to be provided** | Page 119 - geyser | Page 116 - withering  Page 119 - churning |

Culminating Writing Task

* Prompt

*In “Summer of Fire”, the author describes how sometimes forces of nature, although harmful, prove to be a catalyst for renewal. Use evidence from the text to write a one-page paper explaining how the forest fires, while horrifying, were also a catalyst for renewal.*

* 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*** | ***Page number*** | ***Elaboration / explanation of how this evidence supports ideas or argument*** |
| “Night skies turned red and yellow where flames soared 300 feet into the air.” Airline passengers could smell the smoke. “… 2,600,000 acres had burned…” | 116 | This shows how far-reaching the fires were and what a huge area was impacted by the fires. |
| “By mid-July 8,600 acres had burned.” It took hundreds of fire-fighters had to fight the fires. | 118 | This also shows how massive an area the fires covered. It is hard to conceive of a fire that would require hundreds of firefighters to fight it. |
| “In forests flames galloped through the tops, or crowns, of trees, through the canopy.” | 118 | Part of the reason these fires were so devastating was that they moved quickly and it was all but impossible to get ahead of them. |
| “Snags….burned like Roman candles. Boulders exploded in the heat. Sheets of flame leaped forward. Gigantic clouds of smoke ringed the horizon….” “Fires jumped rivers, roads, canyons, parking lots. Glowing embers, some the size of a man’s fist shot a mile or more ahead, starting new fires.” | 118 | The author uses these words to describe how devastating and harmful the fire was it so that the reader can picture it. |
| 2,000 firefighters were fighting fires on 150,000 acres | 118 | These numbers show how massive the fires were and how many people it took to fight them. |
| “There it jumped roads and rivers, snarling its way through the crossroads….” “Long before they could see the flames, fire fighters heard the deep rumble and saw a churning wall of dark smoke towering skyward.” “The fire came on, a mass of red flames whipped by winds gusting up to 50 miles an hour. Sparks and embers were everywhere, flying over the inn, parking lots, and geyser, and setting fire to the woods beyond.” | 119 | These descriptions bring the fire to life and show how quick, powerful, and scary it was. |
| “The geysers, steam vents, and hot springs were unharmed. Park communities had been saved. Nearly two-thirds of the park had not even been touched by the fire.” Within two weeks after the fire, new plant life was taking root and in some areas, green grass started to shoot up. The wildfire had shaped the landscape and renewed it. | 120 | Despite all the evidence above, the horrifying fires actually became a catalyst for renewal. It shaped the landscape in new ways, and new life began to take over: new plant life and green grass came 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

The summer of 1988 was a particularly devastating one as far as wildfires go, especially for the western part of the United States. As massive and destructive as the wildfires were, they were actually a catalyst for renewal. The horror and devastation of the fires was almost unbelievable, yet out of the horror a new landscape appeared.

During that summer, over 2,600,000 acres in the western United States burned. At the fires’ worst, the flames soared 300 feet into the air and turned the night skies yellow and red (116). At one point it took hundreds of firefighters to fight fires that spanned 8,600 acres. Part of the reason these fires were so devastating was that they moved quickly, and it was all but impossible to get ahead of them: “In forests flames galloped through the tops, or crowns, of trees, through the canopy” (118). The fires were horrifying, almost unimaginable: “Snags . . . burned like Roman candles. Boulders exploded in the heat. Sheets of flame leaped forward. Gigantic clouds of smoke ringed the horizon . . . Fires jumped rivers, roads, canyons, parking lots. Glowing embers, some the size of a man’s fist shot a mile or more ahead, starting new fires” (118). These descriptions help to bring the fires to life for readers, as the author gives them human-like qualities, detailing the ways in which the mammoth fire moved and just how powerful it was. By this time over 2,000 firefighters were fighting fires on over 150,000 acres (118). As the fire swept through Yellowstone National Park, it continued to grow and to destroy: “There it jumped roads and rivers, snarling its way through the crossroads . . . Long before they could see the flames, fire fighters heard the deep rumble and saw a churning wall of dark smoke towering skyward.” The use of the word “towering” is important to note. It puts the fire in perspective with relation to the fire fighters. If something towers over somebody, it is a lot bigger than him/her, and it is as if it is looking down on him/her. So, because the fire was towering over the firefighters, readers get the image of them being small and powerless to stop it.

After such devastation, it was feared that the park would never recover, but people soon discovered that there was hope. Despite the massive damage done, many parts of the park were untouched by the destructive fires. While the fire was huge in scope, “The geysers, steam vents, and hot springs were unharmed. Park communities had been saved. Nearly two-thirds of the park had not even been touched by the fire” (120). Although black and charred, the wildlife was not dead. Life began to regenerate as it had after past fires. Within two weeks after the fire, new plant life was taking root and in some areas, green grass started to shoot up (120). So, although the authors descriptions help readers to understand just how massive and destructive the fires were in the summer of 1988, the evidence of renewal reminds us that destruction can give way to regeneration.

Additional Tasks

* *Have students track the cause and effect relationships in the story.*

Answer: This table shows the beginning of the table

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cause** | **Effect** |
| Forests were tinder dry | Lightning strikes caused forest fires |
| Flames soared 300 ft. into the air | Airline passengers could smell the smoke |
| Summer rains did not come | By mid-July 8,600 acres had burned |

* *Reread the policy about fires in the “Summer of Fire.” Do you agree or disagree with this policy? Write an argumentative paragraph to support your position. Cite from the text and/or additional resources to support your viewpoint.*

Answer: Those who agree might cite the following points: historically, the policy was successful, it had been proven to be healthy for forests to burn and renew themselves naturally, winters are usually long and cold and summers short and rainy in this area of the country. An argument that disagrees might include the points that as the country undergoes climate change the policy should be reviewed, if a fire is started by human carelessness it should always be put out because that does not have to do with nature, the possibility of fires becoming uncontrollable is too great to take a chance on not extinguishing them, etc.

Supports for English Language Learners (ELLs) to use with Anthology Alignment 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 Anthology Alignment Lessons to ensure ELLs can engage fully with the 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 reading:**

* Read passages, 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 explicit 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, and 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.
* Use graphic organizers to help introduce content.

**Examples of Activities:**

* Complete a [Know, Want to Learn, Learned (KWL) graphic organizer](http://www.nea.org/tools/k-w-l-know-want-to-know-learned.html) about the text.
* Have students research the setting or topic and fill in a chart about it. You could even have students work in groups where each group is assigned part of the topic.
* Fill in a bubble map where they write down anything that they find interesting about the topic while watching a video or reading a passage about the topic. Then students can discuss why they picked the information.

**During reading:**

* 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.
* 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 that objective.
* 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/).
* Provide explicit instruction, using multiple modalities, on selected vocabulary words (e.g., 5–8 for a given text) that are central to understanding the text. During reading, you should continue to draw attention to and discuss the words that you taught before the reading.

**Examples of Activities:**

* Have students include the example from the text in a student-created glossary.
* Create pictures that represent how the word was used in the passage.
* Create sentences using the word in the way it was used in the passage.
* Have students discuss the author’s word choice.
* Examine important sentences in the text that contribute to the overall meaning of the text.
* Examine sentence structure of a particular sentence. Break down the sentence to determine its meaning. Then determine how this sentence contributes to the overall meaning of the passage. Determine if there is any figurative language in the sentence and have students use context clues to determine the meaning of the figurative language.
* Use graphic organizers to help organize content and thinking.

**Examples of Activities:**

* While reading the text, have students fill in a story map to help summarize what has happened.
* Have students fill in an evidence chart while they read to use with the culminating writing activity. Make sure to model with the students how to fill in the evidence chart by filling in the first couple of rows together as a class. Go over the prompt that the evidence should support, making sure to break down what the prompt means before having the students get to work. If some of your students frequently struggle to understand directions, have the students explain the directions back to you.
* Provide somewhere for students to store new words that they encounter. Students could use a chart to keep track of these new words and their meanings as they read.
* If you had students start a KWL before reading, have them fill in the “L” section as they read the passage.

**After reading:**

* Reinforce new vocabulary using multiple modalities.

**Examples of activities:**

* Using the words that you had students work with before the reading, require students to include the words in the culminating writing task.
* Create Frayer models with the words. Then cut up the Frayer models and have the students put the Frayer models back together by matching the pieces for each word.
* 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).
* When completing the writing assignments after reading, consider using these scaffolds to support students depending on their English proficiency.

**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.