

Day 1: "The Legend of Keesh"

Begin lesson

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Begin lesson

Teaching notes

Click the "Begin lesson" button to view this lesson.
Teaching notes for each slide will appear in this box.

Before the Lesson

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Before the
Lesson

Teaching notes

Anchor Text

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The legend of Keesh

The Legend of Keesh

Adapted by R.F. Silken
from the book *London*
story, "The Story of
Keesh"

How does a person who began in humble circumstances become a legend? Along the rim of the Polar Sea, Keesh lived and died. From father to son, from brother to sister, from summer when the sun does not set, until winter when the sun does not shine, Keesh's story is still told over and over again.



When Keesh's father was killed while hunting to save the village

Teaching notes

Download and print copies of the anchor text for each student.

Student Notes Sheet

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Student notes for: "The Legend of Keesh"

Day: 1

- The council plays a very important role in the story. Who is the council and what is their role in the village?
- Describe Keesh's father using key details to support your description.
- Why do Keesh and his mother "go proudly over that's full of bones"?

Teaching notes

- This guided notes sheet provides students with a list of the text-dependent questions to be explored in the lesson along with supporting graphic organizers, as necessary. During class, students may use the sheets as directed by you to record their responses, notes, or ideas. These sheets may be modified to meet the needs of each learner.

- Space is also provided on the back for recording responses to the focus question.
- Following class, collect student notes and use as a formative assessment.

Getting Started

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Teaching notes

Getting Started

Introduction 1 of 3

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The Legend of Keesh

Adapted by B.P. Skinner
From the book *London*
also: *The Story of
Keesh*

How does a person who began in humble circumstances become a legend? Along the rim of the Polar Sea, Keesh lived and died. From father to son, from brother to sister, from summer when the sun does not set, until winter when the sun does not shine, Keesh's story is still told over and over again.



- "The Legend of Keesh"
- Adapted by B.P. Skinner from author Jack London

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~25 minutes

Notes:

- Tell students that this week they are reading the story, "The Legend of Keesh" closely. This means reading and carefully annotating the text so that they can answer questions based on evidence in the story.
- Make sure to establish an annotation system with

your students (e.g. underlining important parts, circling important and unfamiliar words, starring main events).

- Make sure that students have their copy of the article and the student notes worksheet. Students should also have writing utensils to annotate the text.
- Tell students you will start with a shared reading of the text. Display the text large enough for all students to see and distribute personal copies to all students. Read the text aloud to students. Remind students they should be tracking the text as you read aloud, and can annotate as needed.
- Consider providing definitions for content-specific vocabulary during shared reading. Suggested words include: village, council, chief, cubs, skinning, rank, marrow-bone, blubber, and hollow.
- Tell students that after the shared reading, they will "zoom in" on the first 5 paragraphs. Students will reread this section independently, annotating according to the established system.

Introduction 2 of 3

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The Legend of Keesh



- Today we will focus on an event in the first 5 paragraphs.
- You will reread and annotate this section on your own after we read the text together.

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~25 minutes

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Introduction 3 of 3

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Teaching notes

Pacing: ~25 minutes

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- Consider providing definitions for content-specific vocabulary during shared reading. Suggested words include: village, council, chief, cubs, skinning, rank, marrow-bone, blubber, and hollow.
- Tell students that after the shared reading, they will "zoom in" on the first 5 paragraphs. Students will reread this section independently, annotating according to the established system.

As we explore the text we will be asking and answering questions.

We will find and keep track of evidence from the text to support our ideas about each question.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Student notes for "The Legend of Keesh"

Day 1

1. The council plays a very important role in the story. Who is the council and what is their role in the village?

2. Describe Keesh's father using key details to support your description.

Exploring the Text

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Teaching notes

Exploring the
Text

Supporting Question 1

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The council plays a very important role in the story. Who is the council and what is their role in the village?

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~3 minutes

Standard: RL.4.1

Purpose: In order to understand the importance of Keesh speaking up, it is important to make sure students understand the role of the council in the village. This key piece of information establishes much of the essential background information.

Answer: The council is a group of people who are in charge of the village. They decide who gets food, and make decisions for the village.

Look for students....

- Using evidence from the story, referencing the fact that the council decides who gets the food.
- Supporting their assertions about the council with specific details from the text, such as their role in food distribution.
- Inferring the council's role in food distribution based on Keesh's request.

Guiding questions and prompts:

- Ask: "What does Keesh want from the council?"
- Ask: "Who leads the council?"
- Ask: "Who is on the council?"

Additional Notes:

- Engage in a whole class discussion to answer this question, as it establishes important background information.
- Students should jot down information on their notes sheet, as understanding the council will be important for further discussions.
- Use this as an opportunity to focus on key cultural components, including the words "chief" and "elders". Many students may be unfamiliar with these concepts, so make sure students have a clear understanding of the council and the village structure.

Supporting Question 2

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Describe Keesh's father using key details to support your description.

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~4 minutes

Standard: RL.4.3

Purpose: In order to understand Keesh's motivations, students should also understand his father's philosophy (sharing meat with the entire tribe). This question will help students establish the importance of Keesh's father in his life and the establishment of his own belief system.

Answer:

- A great hunter
- Generous: he made sure everyone in the tribe had enough food

Look for students....

- Describing Keesh's father using concrete details from the text.
- Inferring character traits based on Keesh's father's actions (e.g. "killed while hunting to save the village from starvation").
- Using specific details from the text to support their answer (e.g. "'He saw to it that the neediest of the village received their fair share.'").
- Noticing the two potential answers for this question: one explicit (a great hunter), the other inferred (generous).

Guiding questions and prompts:

- Ask: "What does Keesh say about his father?"
- Ask: "What happened to Keesh's father?"
- Ask: "How did Keesh's father die?"

Additional Notes:

- Have students engage in a think-pair-share to answer this question.
- This is a potential "tricky point" in the text as students may miss that Keesh's father has died or misunderstand his role in the text. Make sure to use this question to help clarify the situation and develop students' understanding the role Keesh's father plays in his life.

Supporting Question 3

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Why do Keesh and his mother "get gristly meat that's full of bones"?

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~4 minutes

Standard: RL.4.1

Purpose: This question helps students further understand Keesh as a character, as well as his motivations. This question also establishes the dynamic between Keesh and the village.

Answer: Keesh and his mother get bad food because the village has forgotten them. Keesh and his mother can't speak at the council meetings and they don't hunt, so they get the worst food.

Look for students....

- Referring to details from the text when explaining why they get the worst meat.
- Using specific examples from Keesh's speech to help them answer ("You speak for your wives and mothers").

Guiding questions and prompts:

- Ask: "Who gets the best meat in the village?"
- Ask: "Who does the council stick up for?"
- Say: "Reread what Keesh says before the sentence we're discussing. What does it tell you?"
- Ask: "What is gristly meat?" If students still struggle, direct them to make meaning of the word "gristly" based on context.

Additional Notes:

- Have students think-pair-share to answer this question.
- To answer this question, students must comprehend the sequence of events that followed the death of Keesh's father. Use this opportunity to solidify students' understanding of Keesh's difficult situation at the outset of the story.
- This question contains some interesting descriptive language ("gristly"; "full of bones") that might be difficult for ELLs. Draw students' attention to these words, making sure students have a clear picture of what they mean to ensure they understand the question.

Supporting Question 4

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Reread the second paragraph. What does the word "neglect" mean? Use clues from the text to support

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~3 minutes

Standard: L.4.4.a

Purpose: In order to understand Keesh's motivations, they will need to understand what neglect means. This word establishes background that will help students answer the Focus Question, while also framing Keesh's position in his society.

Answer: The word "neglect" means to ignore. The village and council ignored Keesh's family after his father died, and they did not get enough food.

Look for students....

- Using examples from the text (such as the fact that the village forgot Keesh's family) as a clue to the meaning of the word neglect.
- Referencing details from Keesh's speech, including the phrase "all we get is gristly meat".
- Connecting the established context of Keesh's family being ignored/maltreated to create a definition.

Guiding questions and prompts:

- Say: "Reread the sentences before and after the word 'neglect'. What clues do those sentences give about the word's meaning?"
- Ask: "What happens to Keesh and his mother after Keesh's father dies?"
- Say: "Think about who is neglecting Keesh and his mother."

Additional Notes:

- Have students engage in a whole group discussion to answer this question.
- Students should jot down information on their notes sheet, as understanding this word will be important for further discussions.
- Use this as an opportunity to practice the process of establishing a definition via context clues. There are enough details present in the text for students to figure out the definition of the new word (though some students may need additional support). Point out that this is a valuable skill that students can practice independently when reading this text, as there are other words that students can figure out by following the same process.

Focus Question

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**Focus
Question**

Teaching notes

Focus Question

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Why did Keesh speak up during the council meeting? Use details from the text to support your answer.

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~10 minutes

Standard: RL.4.1

Purpose: This question helps students establish understanding of a key moment in the text by drawing on details from the story. It also establishes Keesh's primary motivations and his role in the tribe. By answering this question, students will be better prepared to find evidence to support the

text's overall theme.

Answer: Keesh speaks up because his family has been neglected by the tribe. Keesh and his mother are not getting enough food because the village has forgotten about them. While Keesh and his mother go hungry, the council "stuffs themselves with the best meat." This makes Keesh angry, especially because his father was a great hunter, who made sure everyone got enough food. He thinks everyone in the village should be fed, so he decides to speak up at the council meeting.

Look for students....

- Referring to details about Keesh's situation at the outset of the story.
- Using examples from Keesh's speech to his village's council.
- Referring to explicit details and phrases, such as the word "neglect."

Additional Notes:

- Give students time to return to the text to gather evidence. Encourage them to underline details that show why Keesh spoke up.
- Provide students time to write the response independently.
- Students should write a short paragraph to respond, using examples from the text.
- The teacher can assess each student's understanding by analyzing the final written product.
- Look out for any possible misconceptions so they can be corrected early in the lesson sequence.

After the Lesson

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After the Lesson

Teaching notes

Comprehension Skill Video

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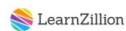
Core Lesson

Reread a section of text, underlining key details that tell you how the character thinks, acts, and feels.

"When my father hunted, he brought home more meat than any of the two best hunters combined," Keesh explained. "With his own hands he divided the meat, and with his own eyes he saw to it that the neediest of the village received their fair share."

The elders and onlookers jeered at the one so young speak out at the council? Despite them, Keesh continued to his wives and mothers. So, I speak for my mother, Ikeega, who said, "Keesh is right. All we get is gristly meat that's full of bones."

The anger of the men boiled. Keesh said to the council with no dinner and was promised a beating. Keesh's eyes flashed. "Take this, you men, as my last word. My father said, 'When he was alive, he made certain that no widow or child went hungry because there was no meat. Today, many go hungry while you, the strong men, stuff yourselves with the best meat.'"



Visit <https://haywood.lzill.co/r/43152>

Teaching notes

Use this video as an intervention tool for students who struggle to answer the focus question. The video uses a metacognitive approach to model the targeted reading comprehension skills.