


# Day 3: "The Legend of Keesh"


## Begin lesson

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	<b>Teaching notes</b>
	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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	<b>Teaching notes</b>

# Anchor Text

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The legend of Keesh

## The Legend of Keesh

Adapted by R.F. Silvers  
from the book *Legend*  
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: 3

1. When Keesh speaks in front of the council, why did the author include the phrase "despite his youth"?
2. When Keesh speaks in front of the council, he reminds them of his father, saying, "With his own eyes he saw to it that the menfolk of the village received their fair share." Why does Keesh say this?
3. Why is Keesh's decision to hunt the weather bear "unprecedented"? What does this tell you about Keesh?
4. What does the phrase "I've devised a way to kill the ice bear with ease, that's all. It's kindness, not wickedness" tell us about Keesh?

## 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 *Keesh*  
by Jack London

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:** ~20 minutes

### Notes:

- Remind students that they are closely reading the text "The Legend of Keesh." This means going back and rereading the story, answering questions based on evidence for the text.
- Explain that today students will be focusing on the character of Keesh, answering questions about his words and actions.
- Make sure that students have their copy of the article and the students note worksheet.
- As today's lesson involves several potentially difficult vocabulary words, make sure students are prepared to annotate and mark definitions in the text (suggested words are included in supporting question section).
- Tell students that today, they will reread the text with a partner. They will reread the entire text, marking parts of the text that tell the reader information about Keesh (a suggested annotation would be underlining key information).
- Students should also be encouraged to circle words that are still unknown. The teacher should circulate during the partner reading and note the words students continue to struggle with, as they may require an explicit definition.
- During the partner reading, the teacher should consider possible supports for struggling readers. Consider pairing higher readers with strugglers. Conversely, the teacher could pull aside a group of struggling readers and read the text aloud (in its entirety or excerpts).

# Introduction 2 of 3

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"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 young boy; how dare one so young speak out in the council? Despite them, Keesh continued. "You speak for your wives and mothers. So, I speak for my mother, Oreega, who should have her fair share of meat. All we get is gristly meat that's full of bones."

The anger of the men boiled. Keesh was ordered to leave the council with no dinner and was promised a beating. Keesh's blood pounded in his head and his eyes flashed. "Take this, you men, as my last word. My father, Bok, was a great hunter. When he was alive, he made certain that no widow or child ever cried at night because there was no meat. Today, many go hungry while you, the strong men of the village, stuff yourselves with the best meat."

- Today we will focus on the character of Keesh.
- You will reread the text with a partner, annotating important information about Keesh.

## Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~20 minutes

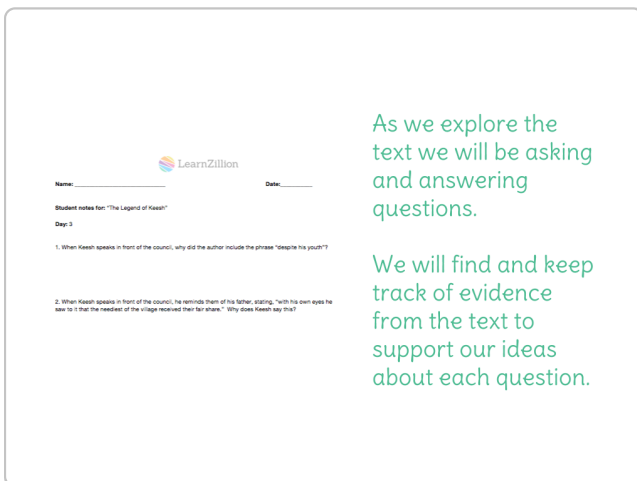
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# Introduction 3 of 3

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The thumbnail shows a student worksheet with the LearnZillion logo and the text "Student notes for: 'The Legend of Keesh'". It includes two questions: "1. When Keesh speaks in front of the council, why did the author include the phrase 'despite his youth'?" and "2. When Keesh speaks in front of the council, he reminds them of his father, stating, 'with his own eyes he saw it. I met the members of the village whenever their fair eyes.' Why does Keesh say that?". Handwritten notes in green ink are present: "As we explore the text we will be asking and answering questions." and "We will find and keep track of evidence from the text to support our ideas about each question."

## Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~20 minutes

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## Exploring the Text

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# Exploring the Text

### Teaching notes

## Supporting Question 1

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When Keesh speaks in front of the council, why did the author include the phrase "despite his youth"?

### Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~2 minutes

**Standard:** RL.4.4

**Purpose:** An understanding of Keesh's desire to speak even though he is young establishes a key point about his character traits/leadership ability, which will be helpful when students answer the day's Focus Question and the culminating task. Further, the question allows students to interact

with a tricky syntactic phrase ("despite his youth").

**Answer:** The author includes this phrase to show that Keesh is brave. He speaks up at the council meeting even though he is young.

#### Look for students....

- Recognizing the meaning of the word "despite" (and its significance as a negation).
- Connecting the phrase to what has been established about Keesh as character.
- Using contextual evidence (specifically the phrase "how dare one so young speak out at the council") to make meaning of the phrase.

#### Guiding questions and prompts:

- Ask: "Why is the council surprised Keesh spoke up?"
- Ask: "What is surprising about the fact that Keesh speaks?" If confusion persists, follow up by asking: "What do we know about the council and who is usually allowed to speak?"
- If students are failing to connect the phrase to Keesh, ask: "What does this phrase tell us about Keesh?"
- Ask: "What does the word 'youth' mean?" If confusion persists, say: "Youth means young age."
- Ask: "What does the word 'despite' mean?" If students cannot respond, say: "Despite is a different way to say 'even though'. With that in mind, what does the phrase mean?"

#### Additional Notes:

- Students should answer via a whole class discussion. They should jot down answers, as those ideas will help them complete the Focus Question.
- The word "despite" may be unfamiliar to students, especially ELLs. Make sure to establish the definition (see the final guiding question above). This is a valuable vocabulary word, but will potentially require some explicit instruction.
- Similarly, the word "youth" might be unfamiliar. Consider providing explicit instruction for ELLs/struggling readers.
- Make sure students not only make meaning of the phrase "despite his youth", but also connect the phrase to the author's goal of establishing Keesh's essential traits.

## Supporting Question 2

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When Keesh speaks in front of the council, he reminds them of his father stating, "With his own eyes he saw to

#### Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~2 minutes

**Standard:** RL.4.1, RL.4.3

**Purpose:** Keesh's invocation of his father establishes a great deal about Keesh as a character. His emulation of his father establishes several character traits, and it is important students make this connection.

**Answer:** Keesh says this because the council is ignoring the needy people. They only give food to the rich and powerful. Keesh says this because he doesn't think the council is being fair. He respects how his father made sure everyone had enough food, and thinks the council should do the same.

#### Look for students....

- Connecting Keesh's later action of providing food to the needy, to the actions of his father.
- Making inferences about Keesh's motivations to help the needy based on his references to his father's legacy.



- Using evidence (the council only gives food to the powerful) to support their answer.
- Making inferences about Keesh's character traits (generosity) based on his statements about his father's beliefs.

**Guiding questions and prompts:**

- Ask: "What does this quote tell us about Keesh's father?"
- Ask: "What did Keesh's father want for the village?"
- Ask: "How is the council not living up to the wishes of the father?"
- Ask: "What does Keesh admire about his father?"

**Additional Notes:**

- Students should answer this question via a Turn and Talk.
- Students should record their answer on their notes sheet or by annotating the text, as the information will help them answer the Focus Question.
- ELLs/struggling readers may be unfamiliar with the word "neediest." Use this opportunity to clarify the word's meaning and explore the suffix -est (most). As this is an important language skill, it may warrant explicit instruction.
- Keesh never directly states that the council should feed the neediest of the village; students need to infer his compassion for those in need based on Keesh's references to his father's former position.

## Supporting Question 3

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Why is Keesh's decision to hunt the mother bear "unprecedented"?  
What does this tell you

### Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~2 minutes

**Standard:** RL.4.1

**Purpose:** This question will help establish Keesh's bravery. First, it draws students' attention to the idea that it was uncommon for someone so young to hunt alone. It also requires students to understand the danger of the situation, thereby highlighting Keesh's bravery.

**Answer:** It was unprecedented because he was so young. Also, hunting a bear alone is very dangerous. This shows that Keesh is a very brave person

#### Look for students....

- Using evidence from the text (Keesh is young; the villagers think Keesh has died because hunting a bear is dangerous) to support their answer.
- Inferring Keesh's bravery based on his actions.
- Making meaning of the word "unprecedented" based on contextual evidence (i.e. the villagers were surprised).

#### Guiding questions and prompts:

- Ask: "What does 'unprecedented' mean? Use clues from the text to help you." If confusion persists, say: "Look at the clues around the word: the villagers were whispering because a young boy was hunting alone. What does this tell us about the word?"
- Ask: "Why did Keesh's actions surprise the villagers?"
- Ask: "What does this decision tell us about Keesh?"

#### Additional Notes:

- Students should answer this question via a whole class discussion.
- Students should record their answer on their notes sheet or by annotating the text, as the information will help them answer the Focus Question.
- Students may be unfamiliar with the word "unprecedented". Make sure to draw their attention to the word prior to having them answer (see the first suggested guiding question). Consider drawing students' attention to the prefix -un (not), as this gives them a clue about the word.

## Supporting Question 4

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What does the phrase "I've devised a way to kill the ice-bear with ease, that's all. It's headcraft, not

### Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~2 minutes

**Standard:** RL.4.4

**Purpose:** This question focuses students on an important plot point, as this line concretely establishes that Keesh is intelligent and clever. It also clarifies Keesh did not use witchcraft to kill the bear, a potential point of confusion.

**Answer:** This phrase tells us Keesh is intelligent. He used his head, not magic, to kill the bear. He found a clever way to kill the bear without putting himself in too much danger.

#### Look for students....

- Using context/clues from the text (he killed the bear "with ease") to determine the meaning of "headcraft".
- Connecting the idea of killing the bear "with ease" to potential character traits (clever).
- Making meaning of the phrase by connecting the phrase to Keesh's explanation of how he killed the bear (using intelligence to trick the bear, rather than fighting the bear directly).
- Inferring that Keesh is intelligent based on the word "headcraft".

#### Guiding questions and prompts:

- Say: "Reread Keesh's explanation of how he killed the bear. What does that tell us about how Keesh killed the bear?"
- Say: "To do something 'with ease' means to do something easily. How was killing the bear easy for Keesh? What does this tell us about Keesh?"
- Ask: "What was special about the way Keesh killed the bear?"
- Ask: "What does Keesh mean when he says 'headcraft'?"

#### Additional Notes:

- Students should answer this question via a Think-Pair-Share.
- Students should record their answers on their notes sheet or by annotating the text, as the information will help them answer the Focus Question.
- Students should infer that Keesh is intelligent and clever. Students might use the word "smart" in their response; push them to incorporate academic words like intelligent and clever.
- Students may not be familiar with the word "headcraft", as it is not a "real" word. However, they should be able to infer the meaning. Make sure to draw attention to this word (consider using the last guiding question as a support). As with previous questions, this is also a chance to draw students' attention to the role of suffixes by explaining the role of the suffix -craft.

## Supporting Question 5

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At the end of the story, the author writes "long as he lived, no one cried at night because there was no meat."

### Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~2 minutes

**Standard:** RL.4.3

**Purpose:** The final sentence summarizes Keesh's emphasis on caring for others. This should help students identify further key traits about Keesh (e.g. his role as a leader, his care for the needy). Additionally, the end features the return of the strong voice of the narrator, an interesting

structural component that may be worthy of discussion.

**Answer:** This tells us Keesh is fair and generous. He shares what he has, and makes sure everyone is taken care of. This changes the village because before, only the strongest people got meat.

### Look for students....

- Inferring Keesh is fair and generous based on the detail that he provides for all the villagers.
- Connecting this phrase to Keesh's overarching traits (he is fair, he is generous).
- Connecting this phrase to other events/actions (e.g. Keesh sharing the meat; asking the council to care for the needy).
- Supporting their answer with details from the text, including the fact that he shares the meat with everyone in the village.

### Guiding questions and prompts:

- Ask: "Who is the 'he' in this phrase?"
- Ask: "Why does no one in the village 'cry at night because there is no meat'? What does this tell us about Keesh?"
- Ask: "What does this phrase tell us about Keesh's actions?"
- Ask: "Based on this phrase, how does Keesh change the way his village shares food?"

### Additional Notes:

- Students should answer this question via a stop and jot (making sure to record their answer either on the notes sheet or by annotating the text).
- Make sure students understand how Keesh's actions have changed his village in a permanent fashion, as this is an inference they might not automatically make.

## Focus Question

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# Focus Question

### Teaching notes

## Focus Question

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What character traits does the author convey through Keesh's words and actions? Use key

### Teaching notes

**Pacing:** ~15 minutes

**Standard:** RL.4.3

**Purpose:** As the story's primary protagonist, it is important students are familiar with Keesh and his motivations. Further, in order to complete the culminating writing task, students need a thorough understanding of Keesh. This question requires students to consider Keesh's most important

characteristics, which should help students understand what contributes to him becoming a leader.

### Answer:

Trait 1: Brave	Trait 2: Smart	Trait 3: Generous
Action: He hunts the bear even though he is young.	Action: He finds a way to kill the bear.	Action: He shares the meat he gets with the village.
Words: He speaks up at the council meeting, even though he is young.	Words: He uses "headcraft" to kill the bear.	Words: He says that the neediest people in the village should be fed.

### Look for students....

- Tracking and annotating character actions, including: Keesh hunting the bear, finding a way to trick the bear, and sharing the meat he gets with the village.
- Tracking and annotating character words, including: Keesh speaking up at the council meeting, referencing "headcraft" and stating that the neediest in the village should be fed.
- Inferring overarching character traits (brave, smart, generous) based on grouped evidence.
- Appropriately grouping similar evidence together (e.g. hunting the bear should be grouped with Keesh speaking up at the council meeting, as these words and actions show his bravery).

**Additional Notes:**

- Give students time to return to the text to gather evidence. Students should annotate places in the text where they notice important actions and words.
- Encourage students to return to their notes, as the text-dependent questions should have helped them start to gather ideas.
- Provide time to write the response independently.
- This response should be in writing so the teacher can assess each students' understanding.
- As a possible differentiation, consider providing the first trait and one sample example (i.e.. Trait 1: Brave; Action: He hunts the bear even though he is young). There are many possible variations on this differentiation (i.e.. providing the traits and having students look for actions and words; providing actions and words and have students generate traits). Consider the needs of your students when planning to differentiate this task.

## After the Lesson

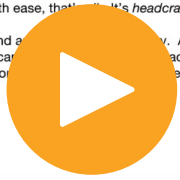
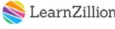
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**Teaching notes**

After the  
Lesson

# Comprehension Skill Video

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<p><b>Core Lesson</b> Reread the text focusing on a character's thoughts, actions, and words.</p> <p>I'm just a boy," Keesh explained, "I'm ignorant of all these things. I've devised a way to kill the ice-bear with ease, that's all my <i>headcraft</i>, not witchcraft."</p> <p>The council was satisfied and a... And this is how Keesh rose from being an insignificant... head man of the village, and as long as he lived, no one... there was no meat.</p>  <p></p> <p>Visit <a href="https://haywood.lzill.co/r/46977">https://haywood.lzill.co/r/46977</a></p>	<h2>Teaching notes</h2> <p>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.</p>
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