

Day 4: "The Legend of the First Fire"

Begin lesson

Card 1 of 15

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

Card 3 of 15

**The Legend of the First Fire,
or How the Water Spiker Got His Red Hair**

Adapted from a Cherokee Legend
From *Myths and Legends of the Great Plains*
Courtesy of Gutenberg.org

At the beginning of the world, there was no fire. As a result, much of the earth was always cold and dark. The animals shivered constantly and, because it was so dark, were always running into each other and getting hurt. One day the Thunder, who lived high in the clouds and saw this problem, sent down a bolt of lightning. The lightning struck the trunk of a spruce tree that grew in the middle of an uninhabited island. This created a spark that developed into a flame and the flame became a roaring fire. The animals from the mainland, who had never seen anything like it, were curious.

As the word spread, the animals decided to meet in a small clearing to decide what they would do. Deer, raccoons, squirrels, rabbits, snakes, ants, and other woodland creatures all gathered there, each giving their two cents. From where they assembled, they could see the smoke and smell the burning wood. However, they all came to the same conclusion: they needed to get a closer look in order to figure out the cause. At first they did not know how to get to the island, as it was surrounded by water on all sides, but every animal that could fly or swim eagerly volunteered to get the fire.

Raven, who saw himself as the smartest and strongest, was the first to offer to go. His large, strong wings carried him smoothly over the water and he gracefully landed on the branches of the spruce tree. He wondered what to do next, he glanced down and saw that the heat of the fire had blackened his beautiful, snow-white feathers. Raven was so frightened by this discovery that he flew back across the water without completing his mission. Raven's wings and those of his children have remained as black as night ever since.

Now it was Screech Owl's turn. With confidence, he soared high and far across the

Teaching notes

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

Student Notes Sheet

Card 4 of 15

 LearnZillion

Name _____ Date _____

Student name for: The Legend of the First Fire

Day: 4

1. What does the author mean about the animals "each giving their two cents"?
2. Why did each animal feel needed to give their opinion during the meeting?
3. Why did only some of the animals try to get the fire?
4. Why did some animals have "confidence"?

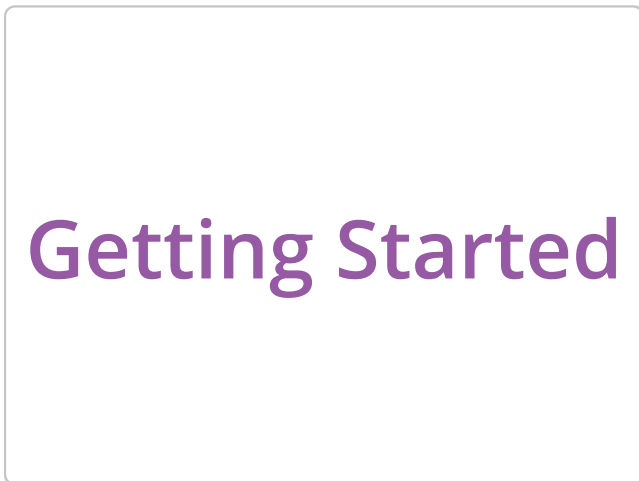
Teaching notes

- 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

Introduction 1 of 2

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The Legend of the First Fire, or How the Water Spider Got Its Red Bowl
Adapted from a Cherokee Legend
From *Myths and Legends of the Great Plains*
Courtesy of Gutenberg.org

At the beginning of the world, there was no fire. As a result, much of the earth was always cold and dark. The animals shivered constantly and, because it was so dark, were always running into each other and getting hurt. One day the Thunder, who lived high in the clouds and saw this problem, sent down a bolt of lightning. The lightning struck the hollow of a sycamore tree that grew in the middle of an uninhabited island. This created a spark that developed into a flame and the flame became a roaring fire. The animals from the mainland, who had never seen anything like it, were curious.

As the word spread, the animals decided to meet in a small clearing to decide what they would do. Deer, raccoons, squirrels, rabbits, snakes, owls, and other woodland creatures all jumbled away, each giving their two cents. From where they assembled, they could see the smoke and smell the burning wood. However, they all came to the same conclusion: they needed to get a closer look in order to figure out the cause. At first they did not know how to get to the island, as it was surrounded by water on all sides, but every animal that could fly or swim eagerly volunteered to get the fire.

Raven, who saw himself as the smartest and strongest, was the first to offer to go. His large, strong wings carried him swiftly over the water and he gracefully landed on the branches of the sycamore tree. As he wondered what to do next, he glanced down and saw that the heat of the fire had blackened his beautiful, snow-white feathers. Raven was so frightened he did not know what to do next, but he saw that the fire had blackened his beautiful, snow-white feathers. Raven was so frightened he did not know what to do next, but he saw that the fire had blackened his beautiful, snow-white feathers.

The Legend of the First Fire, or How the Water Spider Got Its Red Bowl

Adapted from a Cherokee Legend

Teaching notes

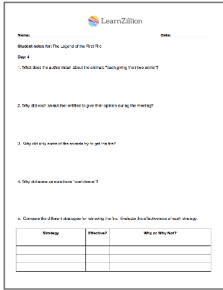
Pacing: ~5-10 minutes

Notes:

- Remind students that they will be closely reading and analyzing "The Legend of the First Fire." This means they will go back and reread the Cherokee legend to answer questions that are dependent on the text.
- Make sure students have their copy of the legend and the student notes worksheet.
- Tell students, "Today you will focus on the the characters and the wisdom they show in carrying out their plans to get the fire." Have the students reread the text independently while paying attention to details or evidence about each animal's plan.

Introduction 2 of 2

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As we explore the text we will be asking and answering questions to consider the wisdom of the animals.

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

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~5-10 minutes

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Exploring the Text

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Exploring the Text

Teaching notes

Supporting Question 1

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What does the author mean by the animals "each giving their two cents"?

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~5 minutes

Standard: RL.4.4

Purpose: This question helps ensure that students understand the meaning of the idiom as it used in the text.

Answer: The author means that each animal wanted to share their idea or opinion about what

they should do about the fire. The text says that "they all came to the same conclusion: they needed to get a closer look." Even though they all agreed, each wanted to make a suggestion at the meeting of the animals.

Look for students....

- Reading the text around the idiom.
- Highlighting or underlining clues that help determine the meaning.
- Jotting notes in the margins of the text with conclusions about the author's meaning.

Guiding questions and prompts:

- Say, "Reread paragraph 2. Why did the animals decide to meet?"
- Ask, "What can you infer the animals were 'jabbering' about?"
- Ask, "What conclusion did the animals come to?"

Additional Notes:

- Discuss the definition of "jabbered" as it is used in the text.
- Discuss idioms and the literal versus figurative meanings a reader could perceive. Authors use idioms figuratively. Help students understand that the phrase is not referring to money, but to participating in the discussion at the animals' meeting.

Supporting Question 2

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Why did each animal feel entitled to give their opinion during the meeting?

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~5 minutes

Standard: RL.4.1

Purpose: This question asks students to make an inference on why each animal might feel the need to express their opinion by using details from the text and their own schema.

Answer: Each animal felt entitled to give their opinion during the meeting because no one animal clearly knew the answer, and they each felt their idea or answer might be the best. They were all facing something they did not understand, since none of the animals had ever seen fire or smoke before. Some animals felt that they were smarter and might be able to come up with a better solution than the others. Some of the more confident animals may have wanted to be the one to solve the problem because they desired to reinforce their self-perception of being the biggest or best.

Look for students....

- Jotting down ideas in the margins of the text.
- Highlighting or underlining textual evidence that supports their answer.
- Making connections to their own schema to help infer the answer to the question.

Guiding questions and prompts:

- Ask, "How did the animals feel when they first saw the 'roaring fire'?"
- Say, "Consider what you know about how some of the animals viewed themselves and their abilities. Were they humble, accurately confident or proud?"
- Ask, "How does your schema, or background knowledge, help you make an inference to answer this question?"

Additional Notes:

- Discuss the meaning of "entitled" as it is used in the supporting question. Entitled means that the animals felt they each had the right to give their opinion.
- Students may benefit from a discussion protocol to verbally share their ideas with a partner or small group.

Supporting Question 3

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Why did only some of the animals try to get the fire?

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~5 minutes

Standard: RL.4.1

Purpose: This question demands that students use inferences and explicit details from the text to consider the physical capabilities that made it possible for only some to try and reach the island.

Answer: The fire was located "in the middle of an uninhabited island" that was "surrounded by water on all sides." In order to get the fire, an animal would require certain physical capabilities that would allow them to get to the island and return with the fire. Only animals that could "fly or swim" volunteered to go. Later in the legend, Water Spider also volunteered to go. She had the unique ability to both walk on water or dive to the bottom, which made it possible for her to reach the island.

Look for students....

- Identifying valid, evidence-supported reasons why only some animals volunteered.
- Highlighting or underlining characteristics of animals that made it possible to get to and from the island.
- Using details about the fire's setting to help them answer the question.

Guiding questions and prompts:

- Say, "Describe the location of the fire. Use evidence from the text."
- Ask, "What characteristics or abilities would an animal need to get to the fire's location?"
- Ask, "Which types of animals would have these characteristics or abilities?"

Additional Notes:

- ELLs and struggling readers may benefit from drawing a quick map of the setting -- identifying the location of the fire so they understand some of the textual phrases like "uninhabited island" or "surrounded by water on all sides."

Supporting Question 4

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Why did some animals have "confidence"?

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~5 minutes

Standard: RL.4.3

Purpose: This question helps ensure that students draw on specific evidence from the text to consider the feeling of superiority held by some animals because of their physical traits.

Answer: Some animals had "confidence" because they felt their physical characteristics made them more capable than others. Their strength, climbing ability, or size led them to believe they were superior to other animals who were smaller or weaker than them. The reader can infer that their strength or knowledge had probably worked well for them in the past. The challenge they faced in the legend, however, was something they had never encountered before ("they had never seen anything like it"). Their self-perception and pride in their abilities gave them "confidence."

Look for students....

- Highlighting or underlining descriptors of the animals' physical characteristics and self-perceptions.
- Making inferences about why the animals had "confidence."
- Discussing ideas with a partner, including evidence from the text that supports their ideas.

Guiding questions and prompts:

- Ask, "How did Raven see himself? Why would he think he was the 'smartest and strongest'? Make an inference using clues from the text and what you already know."
- Ask, "What physical features did the animals have that would give them confidence?"
- Ask, "How did the failure of such 'powerful birds' affect other animals' confidence levels?"
- Ask, "Why did Climbing Snake feel like his 'climbing ability' would make him more capable than the other animals'?"

Additional Notes:

- This supporting question asks students to begin to consider the reasons why some animals felt confident. The sense of pride they felt in their perceived strengths kept them from being more careful and calculated in approaching the challenge. The question prepares students to consider the idea of wisdom in the day's focus question.

Supporting Question 5

Card 13 of 15

Compare the different strategies for retrieving the fire. Evaluate the effectiveness of each

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~5-10 minutes

Standard: RL.4.1

Purpose: This question demands that students use explicit details from the text to consider each character's method and whether they were successful. This question lays the foundation for considering which was wise in their strategy for the day's focus question.

Answer:

Strategy	Effective?	Why or Why Not?
Owls flying to tree	No	Heat rises and birds got burned by heat above tree
Snake crawling through base	No	Crawled through fiery ashes and got burned
Snake climbing tree	No	Choked by smoke, fell into fiery stump, and got burned
Spider collecting coal on her back	Yes	Climbed tree and placed piece of coal in web basket

Look for students....

- Focusing on different *strategies*, which may require students to group animals who had similar plans for getting the fire together (see sample answers above).
- Adding details from the text to complete the graphic organizer.

Guiding questions and prompts:

- Ask, "Did some of the animals have a similar strategy for getting the fire? Were the results the same for each animal who tried that strategy?"
- Ask, "Does it surprise you that all the birds tried the same approach even though they knew what had happened to the birds who tried before them? Explain."
- Ask, "Why did the two snakes try different strategies?"
- Say, "Consider Water Spider's plan to get the fire. How would you describe her strategy?"

Additional Notes:

- Check students' graphic organizers to make sure they are recording the strategies and not each individual animal attempt.
- Engage students in a discussion to verbally explain whether they felt the strategy of each group of animals was a "good" plan or not.

Focus Question

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**Focus
Question**

Teaching notes

Focus Question

Card 15 of 15

In *The Legend of the First Fire*, it says that "Water Spider was very wise". What qualities make characters

Teaching notes

Pacing: ~10 minutes

Standard: RL.4.1

Purpose: Understanding the qualities that make a character wise will help students evaluate the motives of each character and how their actions demonstrate wisdom. The supporting questions provide scaffolded practice considering evidence to understand the meaning of wisdom. This

understanding will support students in the culminating writing task.

Answer: Characters are wise if they are patient and think carefully about the solutions to a problem before they act, like when Water Spider "knew she must prepare and plan". They use their minds and their "unique skill" or strengths to solve a problem, like when Water Spider ran "across the top of the water". Another characteristic of having wisdom is using good judgment to consider how choices might turn out before taking action. Repeating the same mistakes as someone else does not show wisdom, but learning from mistakes in order to try something that may be more successful is wise.

Look for students....

- Considering each character to determine which were wise and which were not.
- Synthesizing the information they have learned about the characters to decide the characteristics of one who is "wise."
- Citing evidence from the text to support their answer.

Guiding questions and prompts:

- Say, "Raven thought he was 'the smartest.' Did he show that he was smart?"
- Say, "Reflect on the actions of each character and their success in getting the fire."
- Ask, "Which animal was the wisest? Why do you think so?"

Additional Notes:

- Students will need to make inferences using evidence from the text to explain their understanding of wisdom. Even though some students may already know what it means to be wise, they must support their definition with evidence from the legend that proves a character had wisdom and used that wisdom to get the fire.

