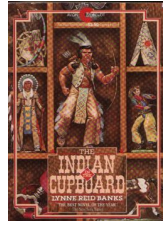


The Indian in the Cupboard: A 5th Grade Literacy Focus Unit Created by Angela MacInnes



FEATURED SELECTION

The Indian in the Cupboard by Lynne Reid Banks. New York: Avon Books, 1980.

The Indian in the Cupboard is written at a fourth or fifth grade reading level and was named the best novel of the year by *The New York Times*. The story is about a boy named Omri who gets a plastic toy Indian from his friend Patrick and a cupboard for his birthday. Omri was disappointed with Patrick's gift until he puts it in his new cupboard and locks it with his special key his mom gave him. To his surprise, Omri realizes his cupboard turned his plastic Indian into a real Indian who can talk and move and has a name: Little Bear. Omri wants to tell people but decides to keep it a secret with the exception of his best friend Patrick. Omri and Little Bear have many different adventures, dangers, and wonderful times through the story and they build a special friendship.

RELATED MATERIALS

The Story of Jumping Mouse: A Native American Legend Retold and illustrated by John Steptoe. New York: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books, 1984.
Reading Level: 3rd grade.

The Story of Jumping Mouse is a tale that originated among Native Americans about a small mouse's courage, unselfishness, and desire to find more and the magic that helps him succeed. This story is a good introduction to reading *Indian in the Cupboard* because it deals with compassion and magic.

The Iroquois Indians by Victoria Sherrow. New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1992. Reading Level: Children's Literature.

This book examines the history, culture and future prospects of the Iroquois people. It can be used as a source for a presentation on Iroquois Indians or to check the accuracy of how Lynne Reid Banks portrays the Iroquois Indians through the character Little Bear.

The Indians of Northeastern America by Karna L. Bjorklund and Illustrated by Lorence F. Bjorklund. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1969.
Reading Level: Children's Literature.

Learn about the origin, history, culture, and folklore of the Indians of the Northeastern America, with emphasis on their rise and fall following the arrival of the first white man. This book will help you to learn more about the character Little Bear, an Iroquois Indian and to compare the information Lynne Reid Banks put in her book to how the Iroquois were.

Indian Arts written and illustrated by Robert Hofsinde (Gray-Wolf). New York: William Morrow and Company, 1971. Reading Level: 3rd-6th grade.

Learn about the different arts of the American Indians and what materials they were made from. Little Bear wanted more and more things throughout the story; find out what arts his people had.

Indian Costumes written and illustrated by Robert Hofsinde (Gray-Wolf). New York: William Morrow and Company, 1968. Reading Level: 3rd – 6th grade.

This book describes everyday, wartime, and ceremonial dress characteristics of the various tribes of North America: Apache, Blackfoot, Crow, Iroquois, Navaho, Northwest Coast Indians, Ojibwa, Pueblo, Seminole, Sioux, and Indians of today. Compare how Little Bear's people dressed with other North American Indian tribes.

Indians Games and Crafts written and illustrated by Robert Hofsinde (Gray-Wolf). New York: William Morrow and Company, 1957.
Reading Level: 3rd – 6th grade.

This book describes all the different games played by North American Indians and the different crafts they made. It can be used as a source to find a Native American game for one of the presentations or to do as a class activity.

Indians on the Move written and illustrated by Robert Hofsinde (Gray-Wolf). New York: William Morrow and Company, 1970. Reading Level: 3rd – 6th grade.

This book discusses how and why Indians traveled and the materials they used to get them there. Compare Little Bear's people, the Iroquois, with other Indian tribes.

Indian Crafts by Janet and Alex D'Amato. New York: The Lion Press, 1968.
Reading Level: Children's Literature.

In *The Indian in the Cupboard*, Omri made a tepee for Little Bear and Little Bear made a longhouse. This book will help you in being able to make your own tepee or longhouse as well as many other Indian crafts.

Indian in the Cupboard, the movie (1995). Sony Pictures. Rated PG

The Four other books of the *Indian in the Cupboard Series*:
Reading Level: 4th – 6th grade.

The Return of The Indian (1986) – The sequel. Find out what happens when Omri brings Little Bear to life again.

The Secret of the Indian (1989) – The third book in the series. Omri and Patrick risk grownups discovering their secret when they find themselves in need of a friend's toy plastic doctor to save wounded people from the dangerous world of the Old West, which the cupboard enabled them to enter.

The Mystery of the Cupboard (1993) – The Fourth book in the series. After the family moves to a house in the country, recently inherited by his mom, Omri finds many secrets revealed to him when he accidentally discovers the link between the house and the magic cupboard.

The Key To The Indian (1998) – The last book of the series. As Omri and other members of his family learn more about the cupboard in his room, they get caught up in several dangerous adventures that reveal more about its powers.

GOALS

- ❖ For every two chapters the students will find definitions of new vocabulary words from the story. They will first write down what they think the definition is after reading the chapter and looking at the text and then they will look up and write down the actual definition to compare.
 - Illinois Standard 1.A.2b – Clarify word meaning, using context clues and a variety of resources including glossaries, dictionaries, and thesauruses.
- ❖ The students will make an appealing and creative advertisement for the magic cupboard and they will write a persuasive letter to recommend to read or not to read the book to other students.
 - Illinois Standard 3.C.2a – Write for a variety of purposes and for specified audiences in a variety of forms including narrative (e.g., fiction, autobiography), expository (e.g., reports, essays), and persuasive writings (e.g., editorials, advertisements).

- ❖ The students will actively participate in class and small group discussions about what they read.
 - Illinois Standard 4.B.2b – Use speaking skills and procedures to participate in group discussions.
- ❖ The students will research information from various sources about Iroquois Indians and other Indian groups and give an oral presentation on what they found out.
 - Illinois Standard 5.C.2b – Prepare and deliver oral presentations based on inquiry or research.
- ❖ As a class the students will use other sources to check the accuracy of how Lynne Reid Banks portrays Iroquois Indians.
 - Illinois Standard 5.B.2a – Determine the accuracy, currency, and reliability of materials from various sources.
- ❖ The students will write journal responses through out the reading about how they can relate a personal experience to something that happened in the story, make predictions of what they think is going to happen, and any other discussion questions relating to the reading.
 - Illinois Standard 2.B.2a – Respond to literary material by making inferences, drawing conclusions and comparing it to their own experience, prior knowledge, and other texts.

UNIT PLAN

Pre-reading

Activity: The teacher reads the story *The Story of Jumping Mouse: A Native American Legend*, or a different book that is about a toy or an object coming to life (either of the two kinds of books work as an introduction to *The Indian In The Cupboard*) aloud to the class. Then after either reading a story about a toy or object coming to life or giving a book talk for *The Indian in the Cupboard*, have the students write a journal entry about what they think a toy of theirs secret life is. After talking about the book, the class will discuss and come up with a list, which the teacher will write on an overhead sheet, about what it means to be responsible for taking care of another person and what things do you need to do.

Grouping: Whole-class and Individual

Reading

Activity: The teacher will read the beginning of the first chapter of the book aloud to the class and then ask for volunteers to read sections of the rest of the chapter aloud. Throughout the reading the teacher will stop to ask questions that relates to the reading. For the rest of the chapters the students will either read on their own (individual), with a partner (buddy reading), or the class (reading aloud) will read the chapter together aloud.

Grouping: Whole-class, Individual, and Partner

Responding

Activity: The students will respond to their reading through at least one journal entry or whole-class/small-group discussion for every two chapters (about every other day). The journal entries will be questions about relating a personal experience to something that happened in the story, what would you do in Omri's or another character's situation, and predictions of what you think is going to happen. The whole-class or small group discussions will consist of questions about what happened in the reading to check for comprehension and reasons why they think a character acted in a particular way or did something.

Grouping: Whole-class, Small-group, and Individual

Exploring

Activity: For every two chapters (about every other day) the students will be given a list of vocabulary words for them to find out what they think the definition is based on the text it is written in the book. Then they will look up in a dictionary or a glossary to find out what the actual definition of the vocabulary word is and compare their definitions. The students will glue sentence strips in the order they occurred in the story onto a piece of notebook paper that will go in their final journal and then reread the two chapters that go with the sentences to check their work. They will do this two times (once after reading chapter 4 and then again after reading chapter 14). After reading chapters one and two the students will create a poster advertisement to sell the cupboard and the key from the story using drawings and sentences. This can be done either individually or in partners. As a class, after reading chapter two, we will talk about what things Omri did for Little Bear to make him more comfortable and compare it with our list we made earlier on the overhead sheet. After reading chapter six the students will look up information about Iroquois Indians in partners or small groups and write down two or three important facts they found and as a class we will compare that information to the information Lynne Reid Banks included in the story about Iroquois Indians. After reading chapters seven the teacher will teach a minilesson on homonyms and then the students will individually write a homonym for each word the teacher gave them that is from chapter 7.

Grouping: Whole-Class, Small-Group, Partner, and Individual

Applying

Activity: After reading the book the students will write a journal entry on whether or not they enjoyed the book, what parts they liked best, and what parts did they not like. This journal entry will be more of a planning stage for a letter they are going to write. The letter is going to be a persuasive letter where they are going to recommend to a fifth grader who isn't in the class or to a fourth grader as to why they should or should not read the book. Along with their letter they will draw a picture of the scene they liked the best, which they will talk about in the letter, and write a sentence or two to explain the drawing. The students will also be broken up into small groups to research information and deliver an oral presentation to the class. They could either all have the same

presentation topic or they could each have a different one. The research topics are The French and Indian War, Native American games (research about at least 3 games and pick one that is your favorite to do with the class), Native Americans – Iroquois Nation, and compare Iroquois who had longhouses with a different Indian group who had tepees. After all the presentations are done, as a class we will watch the movie *Indian In the Cupboard* as a reward for all their hard work.

Grouping: Individual, Small-Group, and Whole-Class

The Indian In The Cupboard Focus Unit

Name _____

- _____ 1. Read the Indian in the Cupboard (aloud, buddy reading, and independently)
- _____ 2. Participates in all class and small-group discussions
- _____ 3. Completes all journal entries
- _____ 4. All eight vocabulary sheets completed
- _____ 5. Two sets of sequence sentence strips in correct order on notebook paper
- _____ 6. Poster advertisement
- _____ 7. Two or three facts about Iroquois Indians to compare with the information in the story
- _____ 8. List of Homonyms to go with words from chapter 7
- _____ 9. Persuasive letter – planning, peer edit, and final copy
- _____ 10. Drawing to go with the letter

- _____ 11. Written down what you found for research for presentation
- _____ 12. Oral Presentation
- _____ 13. The final folder turned in and it includes 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11

Ideas for Focus Unit taken from:

http://tech.psd3.org/projects/HERO/html/Moore/html/lesson_plan_7.html

<http://www.catawba.k12.nc.us/pages/techtrac/techtrac9/harriet/acmyweb.htm>

<http://www.occdsb.on.ca/~proj1615/Indian.pdf>