Iditarod

Katie Brandon
Education 340
April 18, 2005
**Grade Level**
The grade level that will be focused on during this unit plan is fourth grade.

**Theme**
The theme that I chose to focus on in the Literature Focus Unit is the Iditarod. The Iditarod is a race that consists of a musher and a pack of dogs that race through the Alaskan land. The race occurs in March and usually takes nine days to cover 1,151 miles. I chose the Iditarod as the focus unit theme because it is an exciting race that can be linked to a variety of subjects. I also recollect focusing on the Iditarod when I was in elementary school and I remember it being very engaging and exciting.

**Book**
“Woodsong” written by Gary Paulsen will be the chapter book that the class will read during the Iditarod Unit.

**Other Resources**
The students and I can gain more knowledge about the Iditarod through a number of websites. I have listed some websites below that will help the students learn more about the Iditarod.

1. www.iditarod.com
2. www.dogsled.com
3. www.pics4learning.com

The students will also have the opportunity to read juvenile fiction trade books which are listed below.

1. “Togo” written by Robert J. Blake
2. “Akiak” written by Robert J. Blake
3. Kiana’s Iditarod written by Shelley Gill

**Academic Standards**

**Math**
4.5.9 Add time intervals involving hours and minutes

4.6.2 Interpret data graphs to answer questions about a situation.

**Language Arts**
4.6.3 Create interesting sentences by using words that describe, explain, or provide additional details and connections, such as adjectives, adverbs, appositives, participial phrases, prepositional phrases, and conjunctions.

4.7.5 Present effective introductions and conclusions that guide and inform the listener’s understanding of important ideas and details.

**Geography**
4.3.2 Estimate distances between two places on a map, using a scale of miles and use cardinal and intermediate directions when referring to relative location.

**Science**
4.6.2 Show that something may not work as well, or at all, if part of it is missing, broken, worn out, mismatched, or incorrectly connected.

### Objectives
- The student will understand how to add time intervals together.
- The student will understand and interpret graphs to find specific information.
- Students will understand when and how to use adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases, conjunctions, participial phrases, and appositives.
- Students will create a speech about their selected musher and inform their classmates.
- Students will understand how to use cardinal direction and intermediate directions.
- Students will learn many facts about the Iditarod that they did not understand before.

### Activities
- **Word Wall** - During this activity the teacher will reveal a word strip with a word from “Woodsong,” that may be difficult for some individuals. The teacher will say the word and then the students will repeat it. After the word has been stated, the teacher will ask if anyone knows what the word means. If no one knows the meaning of the word, then the teacher will give the students the definition. This will be a pre-reading activity with a chance to add additional problematic words after the reading. (Verbal/Linguistic and Visual/Spatial)
- **Acrostic Poem** - Before the book, “Woodsong,” is read, the students will create an acrostic poem. They will create the poem from the word, Iditarod, and they will think of as many words as possible to describe the Iditarod. The poem will be created by using the website [www.readwritethink.org](http://www.readwritethink.org) (Verbal/Linguistic and Musical)
- **Musher Biography** - The students will each choose a musher that will be racing in the Iditarod. Once they choose a musher, they will research their musher. As they write the biography, the students will be instructed to use adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases, and conjunctions. After completing a biography, the students will orally present the musher’s biography to their classmates.
• **Musher Bio Poem** - The students will create a poem about their musher from the information that they found while doing research. The poem will start by stating the musher’s first name on line one. For line two the students will choose three positive adjectives that describe their musher. The third line will start with “Who likes…” and the student will write two to four things their musher likes. The fourth line will start with “Who feels…” and the student will write a short phrase to finish the sentence. The fifth line will be “Who needs…” and a phrase to finish the sentence. The sixth line will be “Who would like to see…” and a phrase to finish the sentence. The seventh line will be “Who enjoys…” and a phrase to finish the sentence. The eighth line will be “Who likes to wear…” and a phrase to finish the sentence. The student will finally end the poem with the musher’s last name. This poem allows them to be creative and use their imagination to decide what their musher feels, needs, enjoys, and so on. (Verbal/Linguistic and Musical)

• **Cardinal and Intermediate Directions** - The students will be given an index card with a checkpoint or city and they will be asked to find it on a floor map of Alaska. Once they locate their checkpoint or city, they will be asked to give a cardinal or intermediate direction to another city. (Example: The child’s city is Anchorage and they will state that Anchorage is Southwest of Nome.) (Bodily/Kinesthetic)

• **Weather Update** - Each day the students will find what the weather is like for the Iditarod. Once the weather is found, they will write a log and color a thermometer to show the correct temperature. When the students write in the log, they will state the temperature, amount of wind, and if there is any precipitation. (Intrapersonal, Naturalist, and Visual Spatial)

• **Interpret Data Charts** - Students will be given charts with different information about the Iditarod. After they look at the charts, they will answer questions to check for understanding. After the students understand the charts they will graph some information of the Iditarod as a class and they will make the graphs talk. (Logical/Mathematical and Interpersonal)

• **Guest Speaker** - The students will have the opportunity to listen to an individual who is either training for the Iditarod or trains dogs for races. Hopefully the speaker can bring in equipment and possibly a dog. After the speaker is done, the students will have the opportunity to ask questions. (Verbal/Linguistic and possibly Visual/Spatial)

• **Scavenger Hunt** - The students will participate in a classroom scavenger hunt. They will be given clues about certain items, facts, temperatures, and so on, that deal with the Iditarod, to find throughout the classroom. (Bodily/Kinesthetic, Interpersonal, Visual/Spatial, and Verbal/Linguistic)

• **Race Update** - There will be a bulletin board or area on the wall that will have a map of the Iditarod Route. The students will then have a cut-out of a sled with their musher’s name and once their musher reaches a specific checkpoint, the student can place the sled on that spot. (Visual/Spatial and Logical/Mathematical)
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<th>Week One</th>
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<td>*History of Iditarod</td>
<td>*Research Musher</td>
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<td>*Finish Sleds</td>
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