

Quarter 1 / Unit 2

Title: Sees Behind Trees

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL1, RL2, RL3, RL4, RL10, RF3, RF4, W2, W4, SL1, SL2, SL6, L1, L2, L4, L5

Teacher Instructions

Refer to the Introduction for further details.

Before Teaching

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis. Please do **not** read this to the students. This is a description for teachers, about the big ideas and key understanding that students should take away **after** completing this task.

Big Ideas and Key Understandings

Overcoming a deficit and turning into a positive is a difficult challenge.

Coming of age and the stress related to not fitting in as a young man affects family relationships.

Synopsis

In the beginning, Walnut isn't taking the task of using the bow and arrow to shoot the moss seriously. He is sure his mom will relent. However, he also knows that he must demonstrate his ability to shoot in order to become a man. When he repeatedly cannot shoot the moss, his frustration and his mom's frustration grows. Walnut uncle realizes he has bad vision, and we can infer that the uncle shares this information with Walnut's mom. After this, Walnut's mom switches tactics. Rather than practicing shooting, she blindfolds him and asks him to describe the things he hears around himself. He does not understand what she's doing, and he thinks he's playing a game. When the tribe convenes, Walnut demonstrates his ability to "see" and is given the name of "Sees Behind Trees." He is no longer a boy, but rather a man, and his name reflects his newfound role to the community.

2. Read entire main selection text, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.

3. Re-read the main selection text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Vocabulary.

During Teaching

1. Students read the entire main selection text independently.
2. Teacher reads the main selection text aloud with students following along.
(Depending on how complex the text is and the amount of support needed by students, the teacher may choose to reverse the order of steps 1 and 2.)
3. Students and teacher re-read the text while stopping to respond to and discuss the questions and returning to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and discussion (i.e.: whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.

Text Dependent Questions

Text Dependent Questions	Answers
Re-read the first three paragraphs beginning on page 48. What can you cite as evidence to show that Walnut has difficulty seeing?	Walnut asks, "Track what?" for the third time, squints to see better, describes his mother as a blurry image, and only when she is close enough to touch can he see her face and sense the tenseness in her body.
What is moss and how does it connect to Walnut's life?	Moss is the soft grass-like growth on the outside of trees and along the ground in dense, humid forests. It is the target that walnut must hit with his arrow in order to pass the test to be a man.
How is Walnut and his mom feeling as Walnut tries to hit the moss? What clues can be found in the text that point to these feelings? Why is being able to shoot the moss important to Walnut and his mother? (Pg. 49)	His mother is frustrated and feels as though Walnut is not trying. Walnut is frustrated because he is doing his best, but he cannot see the moss. It is important to them because this is the test Walnut must pass in order to be considered a man.
On page 49 the seriousness of Walnut's lack of vision is evident. How do you know that this isn't typical of what happened in the past and that his mother was not going to relent on his completing the task? Share specific	Mother quote- "Today we will not surrender" Mother was stern, no laughing when Walnut made a comparison of her face looking like a dried onion when she suggested he squint to see better.

examples from the text.	
As Walnut leaves the forest he starts to inventory things he does well. What are some of the things he does well? What does this list tell us about Walnut? And why might he make this list? (Pg. 50)	<p>List - smelling violets and berries, whistle from a stiff reed, sing songs after hearing just one time, and hear his father's footsteps before no one else.</p> <p>This list emphasizes the notion that he is very talented in other ways. Walnut makes this list because he feels bad about not being able to shoot the moss. He doesn't understand why he can't do that, but he can do these other things so well.</p>
How does Walnut try to solve his problem? What does this tell us about Walnut?	Walnut tries to solve his problem by asking his uncle for advice. This shows that he wants to improve his shooting skills, and it shows that he is resourceful.
What is the process that his Uncle goes through to determine what Walnut is doing wrong?	<p>Walnut's uncle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks Walnut's bow string • Asked if he is closing his eyes in the last second • asks Walnut to identify how many fingers he is holding up • he changes the number with each question • Finally he says he is not holding up any fingers
Towards the end of the passage on page 51 what does Walnut say to his uncle and why?	Walnut says, "I knew that, I said, I was making a joke." Brings Deer does not laugh. Walnut is trying to "save face." He is embarrassed that he can see.
In your own words, describe how Walnut's mother changes his training. (Pgs. 51-53)	Mother has Walnut blindfolded, and he must describe in detail the spot where there are without looking. Basically, he must use his nose (smell) and ears (sound) in order to see. They repeat the activity every day in a new spot, and it takes the whole summer.
Walnut's mom asks him to "look with [his] ears", and, in response, he thinks that the longer they went without talking, "the more separate parts announced themselves". What does Walnut mean by this? And what	Walnut hears more keenly as he sits and listens. He is able to distinguish the noises from one another, as opposed to them just sounding like one noise - the noise of the forest. He hears the hummingbird's wings. He hears:

<p>“parts” does Walnut hear?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The hush of the brook ○ Buzz of the beehive ○ Rush of the river ○ Hummingbird’s wings ○ Smell of roses
<p>As the feast begins, what is Walnut thinking and feeling? How do you know? (Pg 54)</p>	<p>Walnut is worried he will embarrass his father. He is afraid the people of the tribe will blame his mother for not teaching correctly to show a bow and arrow. He is nervous because he knows he can not hit the target.</p>
<p>Weroance is introduced on page 57. Use two details from the story to describe Weroance and explain her place in the story.</p>	<p>She is their “most important person” and an “expert in hunting”. She judges the tests of manhood. She had to approve the addition of the new test that Walnut takes.</p>
<p>Compare Frog’s and Walnut’s reaction to the new trial to be a man. (Pg. 58)</p>	<p>Frog is worried and anxious, but Walnut is confident because he knows how to listen and smell the forest. He used the wind and differentiated the sounds of the usual and the unusual.</p>
<p>In your own words, describe how Walnut passes the test to be a man. Use at least 5 details from the text. (Pgs 58-60)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ties the sash over his eyes ● “Thought so hard that [his] head felt tight between [his] ears” ● Afraid to make a mistake; pretended he was just with his mother ● Nervously, Walnut describes the man coming from the south ● Gray Fire appears ● Walnut is given a man’s name--Sees Behind Trees

Vocabulary

	KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING Words addressed with a question or task	WORDS WORTH KNOWING General teaching suggestions are provided in the Introduction
TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION not enough contextual clues provided in the text		<p>p. 48 Pemmican</p> <p>p. 50 Flickered</p> <p>p. 50 Fire flies</p>
STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING sufficient context clues are provided in the text	<p>p. 48 Moss</p> <p>p. 57 Weroance</p>	<p>p. 48 Moccasins</p> <p>p. 49 Straggly</p>

Culminating Task

Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

- *In a three-paragraph essay, trace the role of the moss throughout the story, trace the role of the sash throughout the story, and explain their connection with the plot and the characters. Be sure to re-read the story and provide specific evidence from the story in each of your paragraphs.*
- *Helpful Hint: Re-read the last passage where “Sees Behind Tree” thinks, “I turned the sash in my hand, the sash my mother had woven. It was soft to the touch, as if it had been made from silky moss” (pg. 60).*

Answer:

- Symbolism of the moss - used as a target, sign of manhood, it’s a threat to something he can’t figure out how to “fix”
Source of stress, he’s worried about disappointing his family (mother/father/uncle)
- Symbolism of the sash - piece of the “game” that he plays with his mother, becomes a tool that takes away his sight (which is the source of his frustration) completely blinds him that allows him to sharpen his sense of smell and hearing, and in the end it aids him in refining his other skills.
- In the last paragraph, the writer will weave together how the two objects become symbols of his weakness to his strength but also his transition manhood.

Additional Tasks

- *Names*

What are the differences between the adult names and the children’s names? We know how Sees Behind Trees received his name. What do you think is the history of the names Brings the Deer and Gray Fire? Create a name for yourself based on your personality and strengths.

Answer

The adult names are specific to their skills or personalities. The children's names are not. They are specific to everyday objects.

Gray Fire is named because he moves silently like smoke. Brings the Deer is named because of his archery skills.

- *Fluency*

Re-read the story aloud and look for passages where the author used a lot of description and images. What kind of figurative language does the author use in these passages? Which ones create the strongest images and why.

Name _____ Date _____

“Sees Behind Trees”

1. Re-read the first three paragraphs beginning on page 48. What can you cite as evidence to show that Walnut has difficulty seeing? (Pg. 48)

2. What is moss and how does it connect to Walnut’s life?

3. How are Walnut and his mom feeling as Walnut tries to hit the moss? What clues can be found in the text that point to these feelings? Why is being able to shoot the moss important to Walnut and his mother? (Pg. 49)

4. On page 49 the seriousness of Walnut’s lack of vision is evident. How do you know that this isn’t typical of what happened in the past and that his mother was not going to relent on his completing the task? Share specific examples from the text. (Pg. 49)

