

The Sign of the Beaver

Summary

In this ongoing activity, students will read the book "The Sign of the Beaver". Through discussions and activities they will use higher level thinking by identifying problems, predicting the immediate and long-term consequences as well as the cause/effect.

Time Frame

9 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Large Groups

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication

Materials

A copy of the book The Sign of the Beaver, by Elizabeth George Speare for each student, or one copy if used as a teacher read aloud

Instructional Procedures

Here is a list of suggested learning activities that can be performed during the reading of this book:

Before you begin the book have the class look at the cover and predict what the story is about. Go over the key words, discuss with the students what they would need to survive alone in the wilderness. Make a list.

As you read the story, have the students keep a journal of all of the problems the boy faces followed by the solutions.

After reading Chapter 3, have each class member make a wanted poster, listing all of the descriptive information given about Ben. Ask students to include a drawing of what they think Ben looks like.

In the story, Attean's family marks their territory with a beaver on the tree. Have each student select an animal and draw a picture of it on a tree.

Attean cannot believe the kind of work that Matt has to do. In Attean's culture, Matt's work is considered that of a woman. Make a list of the activities Matt has to do and then a list of the activities Attean does. Now see how many of the activities are similar.

After you finish the book, talk about the several events that caused Matt and Attean to change their attitude toward each other.

Matt had to decide between going north with the Beaver Clan or waiting alone during the long winter for his family. Have the class list reasons for going and reasons for staying. Next, have them write one paragraph about what they would do if they were in that situation, and why.

Hold a debate where students argue for going or staying.

Here are some questions that may help to get the students thinking:

If Matt and Attean met after a 20 year separation, describe their conversation.

Share an important lesson you have learned from a friend.

What good things resulted from Ben's visit?

If Ben were arrested and tried for his crime how might his lawyer defend him?

How are Matt and Attean alike? How are they different?

Which of your prized possessions would you be willing to give to a friend?

Assessment Plan

From the students journals they will choose one event and write in detail the problem and how that problem was resolved. The students will be assessed using the six traits of writing.

Rubrics

[Rubric for Beginning Writers](#)

Bibliography

The Sign of the Beaver - Author Elizabeth Speare, Cooperative Learning Story Questions by Christa Chapman, "Mailbox" Magazine.

Authors

[BONNIE CROOK](#)