

Woodsong by Gary Paulsen (Published by Puffin)

Approved for use in Communication Arts, Grade 8

Summary

In an autobiographical account, Gary Paulsen describes lessons he has learned about nature and about himself while running his sled dogs in the Minnesota wilderness and experiencing his first grueling Iditarod race across Alaska.

Connection to the Curriculum

Paulsen takes the reader through the trials and tribulations of his life with dogsledding. This first-person account gives readers a high-interest look at this style of writing. Students can examine the text's strong themes, plot structure, and story elements. With its real-life issues, teachers and students can also connect the topic with other curricular areas including math, history, science, FACS, technology, and P.E.

Standards

Course Objectives (Benchmarks)

Reading: 1.2- The students read fluently. 1.3- The students expand vocabulary. 1.4- The students comprehend a variety of texts.

Literature: 2.1- The students use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text. 2.2- The students understand the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures.

Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)

Reading:

1.2.1- The student uses knowledge of conventions and text features to read fluently at instructional or independent reading levels.

1.2.2- The student reads expressively with appropriate pace, phrasing, intonation, and rhythm of speech.

1.2.4- The student adjusts reading rate to support comprehension when reading narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

1.3.5- The student determines the meaning of words using context clues from sentences or paragraphs.

1.3.6- The student infers implied meaning or nonliteral meaning.

1.4.15- The student uses information from the text to make inferences and draw conclusions.

1.4.18- The student explains cause-effect relationships in appropriate-level narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

1.4.19- The student uses paraphrasing and organizational skills to summarize information (stated and implied main ideas, main events, important details) from appropriate-level narrative, expository, persuasive, and technical texts in logical order.

1.4.21- The student explains the relationship between elements of an author's style in a text (e.g., word choice, sentence structure) and his or her purpose for writing the text.

Literature:

2.1.1- The student describes different aspects of characters (e.g., their physical traits, personality traits, feelings, actions, motives) and analyzes how major characters are developed (through their thoughts, words, speech patterns, actions) and how they change over time.

2.1.2- The student identifies and describes the setting (e.g., environment, time of day or year, historical period, situation, place) and analyzes connections between the setting and other story elements (e.g., character, plot).

2.1.3- The student identifies major and minor elements of the plot (e.g., conflict, crisis/turning moment, climax, resolution, rising action, falling action, subplots, parallel episodes) and explains how these elements relate to another.

2.1.4- The student understands aspects of theme (e.g. moral, lesson, meaning, message, author's ideas about the subject) and supports with implicit/explicit information from the text.

2.1.5- The student identifies the use of literary devices (foreshadowing, flashback, figurative language, imagery, symbolism) in a text and how the author uses such devices to help establish tone and mood.

2.2.7- The student identifies common structures and stylistic elements in literature, folklore, and myths from a variety of cultures by comparing and contrasting customs, ideas, and shared characteristics.

A Note on the Text

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

This first-hand account includes the gruesome reality of an injury suffered by Paulsen during his adventure.

Additional Unit Design Connections

Coming soon:

To be completed during future curriculum development activities