Unit 1/Week 2

Title: *Papa’s Parrot*

Suggested Time: 4 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.7.1; W.7.2, W.7.4, W.7.9; SL.7.1; L.7.1, L.7.2, L.7.4

Teacher Instructions

**Preparing for 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

As we grow, things that once were unnoticed about our family members become more apparent and help us to realize how important they really are.

Synopsis

Harry Tillian’s father owns a candy and nut shop. Harry used to visit the shop with his friends every day, but his priorities change once he enters middle school. Mr. Tillian buys a talking parrot to keep him company. One day Mr. Tillian gets sick and must go to the hospital. Harry takes care of the shop while his dad is ill, and the parrot helps Harry realize how much his dad has been missing him.

1. Read the entire selection, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.
2. Re-read the text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Tier II/academic vocabulary.

**During Teaching**

1. Students read the entire selection independently.
2. Teacher reads the text aloud while students follow along or students take turns reading aloud to each other. Depending on the text length and student need, the teacher may choose to read the full text or a passage aloud. For a particularly complex text, 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, continually 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

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| **Text-dependent Questions** | **Evidence-based Answers** |
| Explain Harry’s daily routine after school. | After school, Harry always stopped in to see his father at work at the candy and nut shop. All his friends would stop as well and sample all of his dad’s latest treats. |
| How does Harry’s relationship with his father change when he enters middle school? | In the beginning of the narrative, the author states that Harry used to stop by the candy shop every day with his friends. However, when he entered middle school, “he didn’t come by the candy and nut shop as often.” As a result of this, Harry and his father see each other less. |
| What causes the change in the relationship? | One reason for this change is that Harry is more interested in being independent and hanging out with his friends. As mentioned, instead of eating candy and nuts, Harry and his friends like to get burgers, play video games and shop for records. As their interests broaden, they have expanded their activities to more than just the candy shop. |
| What was the importance of the year that Harry turned twelve? | The year that Harry turned twelve, Mr. Tillian decided to get a parrot. |
| What was Harry’s reaction to Mr. Tillian’s purchase? | Harry thought that it was very strange that his father bought a parrot. He couldn’t understand why his father seemed to be making friends with the parrot. |
| Explain the relationship between Mr. Tillian’s closeness with the parrot and Mr. Tillian’s distance with his son, Harry. | Mr. Tillian’s closeness with the parrot has a significant impact on his relationship with Harry. The author points out, “The more Mr. Tillian grew to like his parrot, and the more he talked to it instead of people, the more embarrassed Harry became.” This passage shows us that as Mr. Tillian spends more time with the parrot, Harry avoids his father more. This causes Harry and his father to be more distant from each other. |
| Where does Harry’s relationship with his father stay the same? What can the reader infer from this? | The author states, “at home things were different…at home things were all right.” The reader can infer that without the distractions of friends and the parrot, Harry and his father are able to be close. Furthermore, their closeness at home reveals that they still both enjoy each other’s company. |
| What does the reader learn about Harry’s feelings toward his father when he agrees to take care of the shop? | The reader learns that he cares very much for his father and understands the importance of the candy shop to his father. When his father becomes sick, Harry willingly takes on the responsibility of going “to the store every day after school” to unpack boxes, sort candy and nuts and feed Rocky. |
| What can the reader infer from reading “After school he left his friends and walked to the shop alone”? | The reader can infer that Harry chooses family over friends. In addition, when his key gets stuck in the lock three times, the reader can infer that he is upset and nervous about his dad being gone and taking care of the shop by himself. |
| How does Harry react when he hears Rocky asking, “Where’s Harry?” | Harry gets chills down his back. Harry learns the truth by hearing Rocky repeat words that his father must have said often. |
| What does Harry learn from Rocky? What affect does this have on him? | As Harry is cleaning up the shop, he hears Rocky say ‘Miss him! Miss him! Where’s Harry?’ From this, Harry realizes that his father had been telling the parrot that he missed his son. This realization causes Harry to cry. He now understands that his father wanted to spend more time with his son, but never said anything to Harry. The end result is that Harry leaves to go visit his papa. |

Tier II/Academic Vocabulary

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|  | **These words require less time to learn**  (They are concrete or describe an object/event/  process/characteristic that is familiar to students) | **These words require more time to learn**  (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, are a part  of a word family, or are likely to appear again in future texts) |
| **Meaning can be learned from context** | bins  remained  in spite of  afford  ignored  blubbery  mumbled  sobbed  furnace  perch | instead (of)  shipments |
| **Meaning needs to be provided** | batch  clusters | merely |

Culminating Writing Task

* Prompt

*In this short story, the relationship between Harry Tillian and his father changes and, in the end, Harry comes to a new understanding about his relationship with his father. Write a three-paragraph response explaining the causes and effects of Harry’s character development from the beginning to the end of the narrative. Support your claims with valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence from the text, including direct quotations and page numbers. Be sure to include proper punctuation, spelling and grammar.*

* Teacher Instructions

1. Students identify their writing task from the prompt provided.
2. Students complete an evidence chart as a pre-writing activity. Teachers should guide students in gathering and using any relevant notes they compiled while reading and answering the text-dependent questions earlier. Some students will need a good deal of help gathering this evidence, especially when this process is new and/or the text is challenging!

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

*“When Harry entered junior high school, though, he didn’t come by the candy and nut shop as often. Nor did his friends.”*

Explanation of this cause:

*When Harry starts middle school, he does not visit his father in the candy shop as much. Hanging out with his friends is more important to Harry right now.*

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

*“None of them were much interested in candy and nuts anymore. A new group of children came to Mr. Tillian’s shop now. But not Harry Tillian and his friends.”*

Explanation of this effect:

*As Harry and his friends lose interest in candy and nuts, they spend less time in the candy shop. As a result, Harry sees his father less and they are not as close as they were before middle school.*

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

*“The more Mr. Tillian grew to like his parrot, and the more he talked to it instead of to people, the more embarrassed Harry became. Harry would stroll past the shop, on his way somewhere else, and he’d take a quick look inside to see what his dad was doing. Mr. Tillian was always talking to the bird. So Harry kept walking.”*

Explanation of this effect:

*As Mr. Tillian spends more time with the parrot, Harry is pushed away even more. Harry is embarrassed that his father talks to the parrot and visits his father even less. In fact, he has the intention of visiting his dad, but when he sees his dad talking to the parrot, he avoids the shop.*

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

*“The year Harry turned twelve was also the year Mr. Tillian got a parrot.”*

Explanation of this cause:

*Due to the less frequent visits from his son, Mr. Tillian buys a parrot to keep him company. He talks to the parrot all the time.*

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

*“Harry sighed and wiped his face on his sleeve…He understood now: someone had been saying, for a long time, ‘Where’s Harry? Miss him.’”*

Explanation of this effect:

*As a result of this incident, Harry realizes that his father has been missing his company after school. All those times he saw his father talking to the bird, it was because his father was missing talking to Harry. Harry will likely decide now to spend more time with his father.*

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

*“Harry told his father he would go to the store every day after school and unpack boxes.”*

Explanation of this cause:

*Harry’s father becomes ill, so Harry agrees to take care of the shop. He sacrifices his time with his friends to help his family.*

1. Once students have completed the evidence chart, they should look back at the writing prompt in order to remind themselves what kind of response they are writing (i.e. expository, analytical, argumentative) and think about the evidence they found. (Depending on the grade level, teachers may want to review students’ evidence charts in some way to ensure accuracy.) From here, students should develop a specific thesis statement. This could be done independently, with a partner, small group, or the entire class. Consider directing students to the following sites to learn more about thesis statements: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/ **OR** http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/thesis\_statement.shtml.
2. Students compose a rough draft. With regard to grade level and student ability, teachers should decide how much scaffolding they will provide during this process (i.e. modeling, showing example pieces, sharing work as students go).
3. Students complete final draft.

* Sample Answer

In the short story, “Papa’s Parrot,” by Cynthia Rylant, the main character Harry Tillian experiences a series of events that eventually cause him to realize the importance of his relationship with his father. At the beginning of the narrative, Harry visits his father every day after school at his candy and nut shop. However, when Harry enters junior high school, his relationship with his peers takes center stage. “None of them were much interested in candy and nuts anymore. A new group of children came to Mr. Tillian’s shop now. But not Harry Tillian and his friends.” This shift toward spending time with his friends rather than with his father significantly impacts how close he and his dad feel toward one another. His dad begins to feel lonely and Harry loses some of his connection to his father.

As a result of this shift, Mr. Tillian purchases a parrot to keep him company in the shop. Unfortunately, the addition of a talking parrot only causes Harry to feel more alienated from his father. The author writes, “The more Mr. Tillian grew to like his parrot, and the more he talked to it instead of to people, the more embarrassed Harry became. Harry would stroll past the shop, on his way somewhere else, and he’d take a quick look inside to see what his dad was doing. Mr. Tillian was always talking to the bird. So Harry kept walking.” Mr. Tillian craves the companionship of his son and misses the regular visits. Harry is embarrassed by his father’s attention to the bird and actively avoids the shop even more. This cycle causes their connection to deteriorate even further. Interestingly, at home Harry and his father remain close and continue to joke and play around. The author states, “at home things were different…at home things were all right.” This demonstrates that they both continue to care for each other, but the pressures of the outside world pull them apart.

As the conflict develops, Mr. Tillian becomes ill and goes into the hospital. Harry agrees to take care of the shop and the parrot. At this point, the reader can see that Harry willingly accepts the responsibility to help out his family, despite having to give up the time he spends with friends. We can infer that the distance between the father and son is not intentional, but rather one of miscommunication and normal adolescent development. While in the shop taking care of Rocky, Harry hears the bird ask, “Where’s Harry?” At first, Harry is frustrated and confused, but then he comes to a new realization. “Harry sighed and wiped his face on his sleeve…He understood now: someone had been saying, for a long time, ‘Where’s Harry? Miss him.’” Harry realizes that Mr. Tillian had been missing Harry and talked to the bird about his feelings of loss. This incident with Rocky gives Harry a new understanding and an opportunity to repair the distance between the two of them. At the end, Harry leaves the shop to go visit his father. The reader is left with the hope that Harry and his father will be closer as a result of this experience.

Additional Tasks

* Using evidence from the scientific article, write a well developed paragraph explaining why Harry’s behavior in   
  *Papa’s Parrot* is normal for an early adolescent. See article at <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/Pages/Stages-of-Adolescence.aspx>.
  + Answer: When Harry enters middles school and chooses to spend more time with his friends, he is showing normal emotional development for an early adolescent. According to the article, as kids become more independent, they may show less affection and spend more time with friends.
* Use the suggestions in the attached article to help give advice to Harry about his problem. Set up your response in the form of an advice letter.
  + See article at <http://www.ehow.com/how_2265887_get-over-fear-being-embarrassed.html#ixzz23CsutOmP>. [Possible source for examples of advice letters: <http://www.askdrm.org/col_kids.html> (use this website with discretion, print out a few quality examples, rather than providing the whole website to students)]
  + Answer: Dear Advice Person, My father just bought a parrot and talks to this bird all the time. I’m so embarrassed every time I walk by his store, I don’t even want to go in. What should I do? I want to hang out with him, but I don’t want to hang out with the bird! –Embarrassed Teen. Dear Embarrassed Teen, It is important to try to tell your dad how you feel and how you miss spending time with him. To avoid the embarrassment of the bird, perhaps you could ask your dad to hang out with you outside of the shop. – Advice Person

Note to Teacher

* Attached is a sample template of the cause and effect graphic organizer.
* Also helpful in analyzing the events of the story is the “Literary Analysis: Narrative Writing,” in *Pearson Literature: Unit 1 Resources*. Teachers could not only order the events, but also discuss the events in terms of cause and effect.

Use this cause and effect chart to help organize your ideas for your writing task.

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

Explanation of this cause:

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

Explanation of this effect:

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

Explanation of this cause:

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

Explanation of this effect:

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

Explanation of this cause:

Evidence (quotation/paraphrase):

Explanation of this effect: