

Mushing to Learn Non-Fiction Text Features

Developed by: Jen Reiter, 2014 ExxonMobil Iditarod Teacher on the Trail

Discipline / Subject: Reading/ Language Arts

Topic: Non-Fiction Text Features

Grade Level: 3-8, others with modification

Resources / References / Materials Teacher Needs:

Mush! Sled Dogs of the Iditarod, Scholastic Books

Lesson Summary:

Students will read and analyze the non-fiction book, Mush! Sled Dogs of the Iditarod.

Standard's Addressed: (Local, State, or National)

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.1** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.2** Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.5** Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.7** Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.8** Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).

Learning Objectives:

Day One: TLW identify features that are specific to non-fiction texts.

Day Two: TLW identify key details to create a bio cube.

Day Three: TLW use evidence from the text to support their opinion.

Day Four: TLW use information gathered from the text to identify the characteristics of the husky breed.

Day Five: TLW compare and contrast changes in equipment over time.

Assessment:

Day One: Students can be assessed on their completed posters.

Day Two: Students can be assessed on their completed bio cubes.

Day Three: Students can be assessed on their constructed response.

Day Four: Students can be assessed on their husky web.

Day Five: Students can be assessed on their assignment sheets.

Procedural Activities:

Day 1: Identifying text features of non-fiction texts

1. Review with the students the elements of fiction texts.
2. Give each student a copy of Mush! Sled Dogs of the Iditarod and a pack of sticky notes. Challenge them to search through the book and identify elements in this non-fiction book that are typically not found in fiction books. They should place a sticky note on each element they find (titles & subtitles, captions, photos, maps, sidebars, table of contents, subheadings, diagrams).
3. Have the students share and discuss their findings. Discuss why the authors of non-fiction texts would choose to include these features in their books. How do they help the reader better understand the text.
4. Split the students into partners or teams. Assign each team a non-fiction text feature found in Mush and have them create a poster explaining the feature. The poster should name the feature, show an example, and explain why an author may include that feature.

Day 2: Bio Cubes

1. Have the students read the first chapter of the book, “Meet the Race Champs.” Have them identify the text features in the chapter. Remind them that good readers use the text features to help improve their knowledge of the subject.
2. Have the students identify key facts about Dallas Seavey in order to complete the bio cube. As they read they can fill out the planning sheet found here:
http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/cube_creator/media/planning_bio.pdf I edited the planning sheet to make it more specific to the chapter. My planning sheet is attached.
3. Students can then complete the Bio Cubes at:
http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/cube_creator/ Students can choose “Create Your Own Cube” and type in their topics and responses. They can save and print their cubes. I opened a “Create Your Own Cube” and typed in the topics for each side and saved it as a template that the students could open and complete.
4. When the cube sides are completed and printed, the students can cut them out and assemble them.

Day 3: Constructed Response

1. Review with the students the key facts they pulled from yesterday’s chapter about Dallas Seavey.
2. Preview today’s chapter, “The Winning Route” and have the students predict what this chapter will be about based on the title.
3. Review and discuss Dallas’ race strategy of staying back early and pushing forward at the end. Let them know that today they will be identifying other advantages that Dallas has that make him a great racer.
4. Have the students read “The Winning Route” either together or independently.
5. Discuss the idea that everyone seems to agree that the dogs are excellent athletes. Talk about what preparation the dogs go through for the race.
6. Pose the following question to the students: “Are the mushers as athletic as their dogs?” Let them share their thoughts with a partner or small group for a few minutes before writing their final constructed response on the attached assignment sheet.

Day 4: Husky Web

1. Share with the students the breed requirements for dogs running the Iditarod from the official rules: “Rule 43 -- Dog Description: Only dogs suitable for arctic travel will be permitted to enter the race. Suitability will be determined by race officials.”
2. Have the students brainstorm a list of characteristics that they think “dogs suitable for arctic travel” would have.
3. Preview the chapter “Balto and the Sled Breed.” Tell the students that they will be gathering information to prove or disprove their brainstorm list.
4. The students will gather details to complete the attached Husky Web while reading.

Day 5: Compare and Contrast

1. Share with the students some facts about the first Iditarod Race:
 - a. Thirty-four mushers signed up to race.
 - b. Double teams were allowed (two mushers).
 - c. Twenty-two teams finished the race.
 - d. Dick Wilmarth won in 20 days, 49 minutes, and 41 seconds.
 - e. John Schultz won the red lantern in 32 days, 5 hours, 9 minutes, 1 second.
2. Compare that to the data from the 2013 race.
 - a. Sixty-six mushers signed up to race.
 - b. Fifty-four mushers finished the race.
 - c. Mitch Seavey won the race in 9 days, 7 hours, 39 minutes, 56 seconds
 - d. Christine Roalfs won the red lantern in 13 days, 22 hours, 36 minutes, 8 seconds
3. Have the students brainstorm and discuss some of the reasons why the data is so different from the first race to most recent race.
4. Tell the students in the chapter “Tools and Trails” they will learn about some of the innovations that have helped change the race into what we are used to seeing today. Stress that these changes have happened slowly over an extended period of time.
5. Have the students read the chapter and complete the attached assignment sheets.

Materials Students Need:

Mush! Sled Dogs of the Iditarod

Sticky notes

Bio Cube planning sheet attached or from:

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/cube_creator/media/planning_bio.pdf

Attached worksheets

Technology Utilized to Enhance Learning:

Read, Write, Think – Cube Creator: http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/cube_creator/

Other Information:**Modifications for Special Learners/ Enrichment Opportunities:**

Students who finish early can try their hand at writing trivia questions like the ones found at the end of the book. If you are playing the Idita-opoly game, the trivia questions could be used at the Race Trivia Stops on the board.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Mush! Sled Dogs of the Iditarod
Meet the Race Champs

Bio Cube Planning Sheet

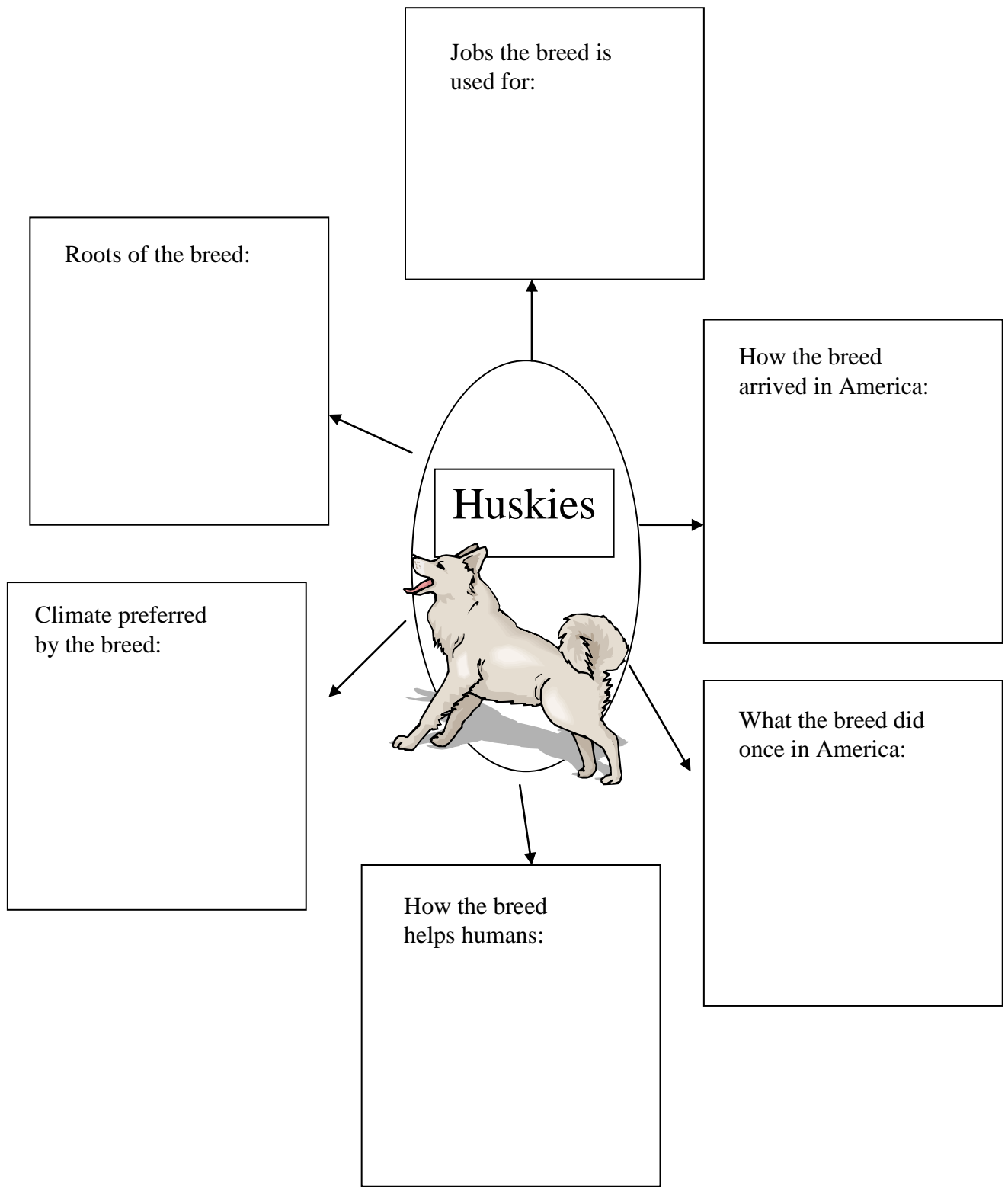
Use this planning sheet to help you prepare to make your Bio Cube. As you are reading, fill in the information for each side of the cube.

Side	Topic	Response
1	Name, Birthdate, Location	
2	Accomplishments & Awards	
3	Personality Traits & Evidence	
4	Strategy	
5	Family Members & Their Accomplishments	
6	Dog Spotlight (choose one dog to highlight): Physical & Personality Traits	

Name: _____ Date: _____

Balto and the Sled Breed

Directions: Complete the organizer below to record information about the husky as a breed.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Tools and Trails

Complete the chart below to show how various elements of the Iditarod have changed over time.

Element:	In the Past:	Modern Day:
Sleds		
Dog Food		
Booties		
Dog Breeding		
Race Course		
Race Strategies		
Musher Food/ Cooking		
Comfort		

