

Lesson Plans from Cassandra Wilson

2003 Teacher on the Trail™



Portland, Oregon

Readers Theater or Classroom Play: Where's the Boss? **Book by Lois Harter ** Play adapted by Cassandra Wilson**

Where's the Boss?

Language Arts ,Reading, Art, and Drama

Grades 3-9

Goal: Students will understand the adventure, teamwork, skills and caring that is needed to be in the Iditarod Sled Dog Race.

Motivator: Read, **Where's the Boss?** by Lois Harter to the class.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will understand the concept of teamwork shared by mushers and their sled dogs by reading **Where's the Boss?** By Lois Harter
- Students will perform a play adapted by Cassandra Wilson with the permission from the author of **Where's the Boss?**
- Students will make hats and sets for the Reader's Theater. (Reader's Theater is when children read the script with expression rather than having to memorize their parts. This is good for students who are shy, English Learners or have learning disabilities.)
- Students will read with expression.

Materials needed:

- **Where's the Boss?** By Lois Harter
- Script of **Where's the Boss?** Adapted with permission from Lois Harter by Cassandra Wilson (provided with this lesson plan)
- Construction paper
- Paint

Instructional Steps:

- If possible have several copies of the book **Where's the Boss?** Read the book out loud with class. Stop and discuss the information about the various aspects of the Iditarod.
- Read the script of **Where's the Boss?** There are enough parts for 10 students. I have 21 students. I split my class into two groups. For those students who are shy or uncomfortable about performing, I have them work on the hats and sets for the story. There are also two mushers who do not have speaking parts. This may be good for shy students, too.
- Have students practice their lines both at school and at home.
- When students are finished with the desired results let them perform it to other classrooms, entire school or an evening performance for parents and the community to learn the positive concepts of the Iditarod.

Extension for Grades 6-9

- Students can memorize, make costumes and block the story in play/stage setting.
- Have students read, **Storm Run**, by Libby Riddles or **Believe it or Not! Adventure in Alaska**, By S.A. Kramer. Students can adapt these books, write and perform the story. Or let them choose any book about the Iditarod and adapt it for a play performance or "Reader's Theater".

Readers Theater or Classroom Play: Where's the Boss?

By Lois Harter

Play adapted by Cassandra Wilson

Narrator #1: The greenish glow of the northern lights danced across the Alaska sky, like sheer curtains moving in the breeze at an open window. It was a cold, clear night, perfect for mushing along Alaska's famous Iditarod Trail.

Narrator #2: Toby thought about all the time that had gone into training for this particular race as he and his teammates padded along the hard trail, mile after frozen mile. All those trips into the wilderness they had made to get ready for the Iditarod Race.

Narrator #3: Toby remembered the first time he had been in a harness and how the older dogs had laughed when he got tangled in the tug lines. He smiled to himself remembering how scared he was when he was put in the lead position. Toby had been so proud when the team had followed him on the trail.

Narrator #4: It had taken three years to pick just the right team of dogs for this race. Toby puffed out his chest with pride as he thought of where they were, The Iditarod Trail. He had heard other dogs in other races boast that they had run the Iditarod and had envied them. Finally he was here!

Narrator #1: The dog's boss was professional musher Joe Haddock. Joe and his dog teams had been competing in many sled races for seven years. When Toby and his littermates were born, Joe had dreamed of traveling on the Iditarod Trail, from Anchorage to Nome. Now, it had become Toby's dream. He wanted to see the light of Nome almost as much as Joe.

Narrator #2: Joe built a three-room cabin to live in. In the backyard he built doghouses for Toby and his teammates. He also built a big dog barn for use when the weather was really cold or snowy. The dogs were Joe's life and he was always thinking of better ways to care for them. He gave his dogs constant attention.

Narrator #3: Toby was a large dog for a leader, weighing sixty-seven pounds. He had long legs that made him the ideal lead dog for working in deep snow. He was gray and white, with the typical mask and coloring of an Alaska husky. He had a black stripe down the middle of his tail. His big brown eyes missed very little of what went on around him.

Narrator #4: The team was very excited when they ran past the starting line. They were running in the famous Iditarod Sled Dog Race! As the miles flew by, the dogs felt comfortable and some dogs were able to close their eyes. They can doze off and run at the same time! The lead dog, Toby looked over to his teammate Crystal. He noticed she was dozing.

Toby: Psssst, hey Crystal you need to open your eyes! We are almost at the checkpoint where we can rest and Joe will fix something delicious to eat.

Crystal: Sorry Toby. I was just dreaming about the finish line.

Beauty: I can't wait to rest on some nice fresh smelling straw. Joe always makes a wonderful bed to rest on!

Toby: I'm drooling about the big chunks of warm beef and that tasty broth he cooks for all of us.

Socks: I'm looking forward to our 24-hour layover. We will have enough time to rest and visit with each other.

Sweetpea: I look forward to these checkpoints. I get a little bored always being in the back. I know I am a good teammate, but I miss being able to chat with the rest of you.

Digger: I'm glad Joe gives us lots of breaks. Hey, didn't you love those frozen fish snacks we had a couple of hours ago?

All Dogs: Yes siree!! Yum!

Beauty: How are everybody's feet feeling?

All Dogs: Great!

Socks: These booties are so comfortable to wear.

Crystal: I like it when Joe changes our booties. He always gives us a foot massage.

Digger: Yeah, and he puts them on so carefully. The booties are never too tight.

Sweetpea: I like the colors of the booties!

Toby: The colors are great Sweetpea, but they really help protect our feet from the hard snow and ice. We have to have healthy paws so we can trot through the race without any trouble.

Narrator #1: The team arrived to their 24-hour layover checkpoint. Joe wasn't feeling too well. He didn't say too much to his dog team.

Beauty: Boy, our boss is sure quiet.

Socks: He is usually so talkative and plays with us for a while.

Crystal: I don't think he looks too good. Maybe he is feeling ill.

Toby: Don't worry, I bet with this long layover he will get plenty of rest and he will be back to his old self.

Digger: Joe is a great boss! He wouldn't want us to miss out on the finish line in Nome.

Narrator#2: After the layover, the team was ready to go! They traveled several miles. Toby looked back over his shoulder to check on the team. He made sure each dog was in line and that no one was in trouble.

Toby: All of you look good. You are trotting just the right speed, thanks!

Sweetpea: I feel great!

Crystal: Me too!

Socks: I feel like I could run 1,000 miles!

Beauty: Now socks, we have to pace ourselves.

Narrator #3: The dogs continued to keep their steady pace. The weather was good, their paws felt great and they were all feeling proud of themselves. Toby again, looked over his shoulder. Unfortunately, this time something didn't look right. At first he couldn't quite figure out what was wrong.

Narrator #4: His entire team was trotting at a good pace. All of them were alert. The sled looked okay. Then suddenly Toby realized what was bothering him.

Toby: Where's the boss? Where's Joe? I can't see him on the sled. Hey, Sweetpea, is he running next to the sled?

Sweetpea: I don't see him. Is he in the basket sleeping? Take a look Digger.

Digger: No, he isn't in the basket!

Socks: If he isn't in any of those places, where is he?

Toby: Hey, we have to stop! The boss is gone! Joe's gone! Crystal, help me stop the team!

Crystal: Everybody! We have to stop!

Narrator #1: Both Toby and Crystal got the team to stop. Both of them looked over their shoulders, past the team, past the sled and as far behind the sled as the darkness would let them see. There was no sign of Joe anywhere.

Beauty: Oh no! What are we going to do? Where could he have gone? He just gave us snacks a couple of hours ago.

Sweetpea: Now don't you go getting yourself all upset, Beauty.

Digger: I'll bet Joe dozed off and fell off the sled.

Socks: He is probably back there on the trail yelling at himself for not paying better attention.

Toby: Crystal and I have been alone on a trail before and we know just what we need to do.

Crystal: Don't worry Beauty, Toby and I can help the team turn around and go look for our musher.

Toby: Okay, team we need to work together. We have to make a narrow turn and it will take all of you to get this done.

All Dogs: We're ready to help!

Narrator #1: Toby and Crystal guided the team in a full turn to the right, going back down beside the fourteen other dogs and cutting a path past the sled. Each pair of dogs made the turn as the duo in front of them passed alongside.

Narrator #2: When it came time to swing the sled around, there was barely enough room on the trail, but the dogs pulled together slowly and eased the sled around without spilling it.

Narrator #3: Looking down the trail, the leaders still could not see any sign of Joe. Now they would have to get down to the business of finding the boss.

Toby: Not too fast. We don't want to run over Joe when we come up on him.

Crystal: Toby and I will set the pace and everyone will need to keep a lookout for Joe.

Socks: All of us will look to the side of the trail in case you might miss something in front.

All Dogs: You bet! We need to find Joe!

Narrator #4: The team began back tracking on their trail. Everyone's eyes were searching the trail ahead and on both sides, looking for the boss. Toby would stop the team every now and then and sniff the air, trying to pick up the scent of their musher.

Crystal: Toby, look up ahead, there is something in the trail.

Toby: Yes that's him!

Digger: I see him too, but why is he lying in the snow?

Narrator #1: The team stopped beside the lump in the snow. It was their musher and beloved friend. Toby and Crystal sniffed at the cold body.

Socks: Is our boss all right?

Beauty: He isn't moving! He has to be all right, he just has to be!

Narrator #2: Toby put his nose close to the musher's face. He waited to see if he could feel Joe's breath.

Toby: He's alive!

Narrator #3: Crystal and Toby quickly licked the snow off Joe's face and nuzzled him, trying to get him to wake up. No luck.

Sweetpea: I think we are going to need some human help! Who should go for help?

Digger: Crystal is the fastest runner. I think she should go for help.

All dogs: Yeah!

Toby: Crystal, we will stay here and keep the boss warm.

All dogs: Good luck Crystal!!

Narrator #4: Before Crystal could leave she needed to be free from the tug line. Thinking quickly, she asked Beauty to help her chew through the back straps of her harness.

Beauty: Oh, the boss gets so angry with anyone who chews a line or harness. I don't want him to be mad at me and make me stay home next time.

Crystal: Now beauty, don't panic. I think in this case the boss would want you to help. Now let's get to work. We need to get help for Joe before he freezes to death!

Narrator #4: While Crystal and Beauty tended to chewing Crystal loose, Toby was trying to figure out what to do for Joe. Sled dogs have two layers of fur that keep them warm in almost any kind of weather. This same fur can help keep a musher warm too.

Socks: While Crystal and Beauty go for help why don't we snuggle close to Joe?

Digger: That's a good idea. Our warm bodies and fur will help keep the boss warm until help arrives.

Narrator #1: Soon Joe was covered with the furry bodies of his dogs. They snuggled as close as he or she could without smothering Joe. Meanwhile, Crystal was free from the tug line and ready to go get help.

Toby: Whatever you do Crystal, don't let any human or dog catch you. Stay just out of their reach, but if they stop chasing you, stop and bark like crazy until they start to follow again. Lead them back here as quickly as you can.

Sweetpea: All of us will help Toby take care of the boss as best we can until you get back.

Narrator #2: Toby and rest of the team were slightly worried about Crystal's journey. The night before they caught the scent of a wolf pack. They all hoped that Crystal would have a safe trip.

Narrator #3: The team did their best to insulate Joe from the severe arctic night.

Beauty: I don't know what I would do if something happened to the boss.

Sweetpea: I can't imagine giving up running the trails, but my heart wouldn't be in it with any other musher.

Socks: **He's going to be all right, Sweetpea. I know it looks bad, but we can't give up.**

Digger: We can take care of him until Crystal brings help.

Narrator #4: Toby raised his head and listened intently to the night sounds. In the distance, he could hear the howl of a wolf. Soon he heard another wolf begin his song and before long, a chorus of wolves was singing its lonely song.

Narrator #1: The hairs on the dog's backs stood almost straight up as they listened to the wolves.

Beauty: I hope the wolves are not on a hunt tonight with Crystal out there all alone.

Toby: Pipe down! We have to stay calm until Crystal's return.

Narrator #2: Crystal flew along the hard, fast trail toward the last checkpoint. It seemed like she had been running for a very long time and she had no idea how much longer it would take to reach help.

Narrator #3: She heard the wolves and knew that she would be easy game should they decide to attack her. Her thoughts turned back to her musher and she promised him silently that she would bring a human to take him to safety.

Narrator #4: Suddenly, up ahead, she saw a light bobbing in the distance. She knew it was too soon to be a checkpoint.

Crystal: Could it be a musher's headlight?

Narrator #1: It was another team! Crystal spotted the lead dog Foxy. She slowed her pace and slowly moved forward so as not to appear as a threat to the approaching team.

Crystal: My musher is in trouble up ahead and we need help. Can you bring your musher?

Narrator #2: Foxy relayed the information to his teammates. Crystal began to bark her frantic message to the approaching musher. This startled the musher, Michael O'Donald. He put his foot on his brake only to find that his team didn't want to stop. They kept pulling against the brake!

Narrator #3: Michael O'Donald recognized Crystal as being one of Joe's dogs. He called her and wanted to put her in his sled and take her to the next checkpoint. However, Crystal remembered what Toby had said, "don't let anyone catch you."

Crystal: Oh Foxy, please follow me! My musher is hurt! I need your boss to help him. Please hurry!

Narrator #4: Foxy began barking and Michael realized that Joe might be hurt, so he and his dogs followed Crystal. Meanwhile, the team was doing their best to take care of Joe. They checked to make sure he was breathing.

Socks: He is still breathing and he seems a bit warmer than when we first got here. I think he will be all right. I hope Crystal arrives with some human help, soon!

Digger: Hey look! Over there I see a headlight!

Beauty: Could it be a musher? Oh, I hope so!

Sweetpea: It sure is a musher! Look how fast Crystal is running!

Crystal: We made it! Thanks to Foxy, his teammates and his boss! Now lets make sure Joe gets some help.

Narrator #1: Michael put Joe into his sled bag. Toby and his teammates pulled Joe's sled and followed Michael's team to the next checkpoint. There, Joe was taken into a warm cabin. The dog team was taken to a nice area and fed some delicious warm stew. After they ate there were nice straw beds waiting for them to rest.

Socks: Boy that stew was great and these beds are nice, too!

Beauty: I'm sure glad that Joe is okay. I wonder if we are going to finish the Iditarod.

Toby: Joe is going to be all right!

Digger: He has to be. I wouldn't want another human for my musher.

Toby: We will be sent home. I'm sure Joe isn't going to be able to go on, but I'm sure he'll be all right.

Socks: I think we should all try to get a little rest.

Narrator #2: Several hours later, Toby heard footsteps in the snow. He called softly to the team, all of whom were only dozing fitfully waiting for some sign of their musher. There was Joe, bundled in heavy outdoor gear. He knelt slowly to pet and whisper **kind words to each dog. Joe had pneumonia and could have died in the cold.**

Narrator #3: Joe would have died if the dogs hadn't known just what to do. Joe gave love and thanks to his loyal friends. Toby felt a little sad that his team didn't get to finish the race to Nome. However, he knew there would be another time to try again. The team would continue to have many adventures with their friend Joe...but those are stories for another time.

Pen Pal Postcards

Integrated: with Language Arts, Social Studies and Art
Grades K-9

Goal: Students creating postcards about themselves and where they are from.

Motivator: Discuss with your students the importance of written communication. Ask students to share their experiences of receiving mail or lack of receiving mail. I share old postcards with my students that I have received from friends and family. Let the students look through them and then ask what they learned.

You could incorporate the history of mail and don't forget to mention the sled dogs that carried the mail all over Alaska.

Materials needed:

- Large index cards (lined one side and blank on the other)
- Pencil
- Crayons
- Possible photo of student (get permission from parent)
- Post card stamps

Instructional steps:

- Discuss your familiar landmarks in your state and city.
- Student will need write a brief note about themselves and the area in which they live.
- Student will draw and color a picture of their favorite thing about their city or state on the unlined side of card.
- Use the line side of postcard to write message and return address.
- Find a school in Alaska to send your postcards or send them to another city or state you might be studying in class.

Extensions:

- Older students can make and send brochures about their city or state.
- Spring break is right around the corner. If you are planning a trip take your student's postcards with you and hand them to children you meet on your trip or contact a school in that area and drop off the cards.
- 3. Write to other states and tell them about the Iditarod Sled Dog Race.

Lesson Plan Writing Music

Integrated with: math patterns
Grades 2-9

Goal: To show students how they can write music in an alternative style.

Objectives: Students will be able to write lines of music.

Motivator: Play some of Hobo Jim's Alaskan songs. However, don't play the Iditarod song. Save that song for the students to listen to after they have written their own Iditarod songs. After listening to several songs turn the player off and begin snapping and clapping your hands in different patterns. Have the students echo your patterns with their hands. Ask students to share a simple pattern with their snapping and clapping.

Materials:

- Chart paper or chalk board
- Hobo Jim's CD
- Simple instruments like drums, hands or sticks or anything you can find around the classroom that makes sound. Have students bring items from home.

Instructional Steps:

- On chart paper, draw 4 squares.
- Put an "X" in the boxes where you want students to clap or snap or whatever. Leave empty boxes where you want them to pause.
- Show the students how the line of music sounds. Then have the students try it with you. After that, let them try on their own.
- Add three more lines of boxes and have the students tell you where they want the "X" and the pauses. Again, go through it with the students and then let the students try it alone.
- Have the students work in pairs making two lines of patterns. Let each pair share their creative sounds.
- Ask students to think about the pattern of sled dogs running along the trail. Sometimes the dogs trot, run, walk fast, stroll or rest. See if we can write these traits in our patterns of music.
- Put the students in pairs to work together to create a music line.
- Then have the pairs write four lines of music and share it with another pair of students.
- Once the students understand the pattern of music let them add more squares to each line. Not any more than 10 squares per line. They can write as many lines of music they want.
- Instead of just clapping and snapping let students use different items for sound. It doesn't have to be regular instruments. Let the students find things around their homes that make delightful sounds.
- Once the music is written have the students create words about the Iditarod. You'll be surprised at some of the great songs and music you will hear.
- Have each pair share the musical rendition of their Iditarod song with another pair of students.
- When students are comfortable with their creation have them share it with the class.
- If your class is really comfortable with an audience, have other classes come in for a concert.

Social Studies Trail Line Travel

Integrated with: Art & Language Arts
Grades 3-9

Goal: Students will research the villages along the Iditarod Trail.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will research the different villages along the trail and write about their population, name and interesting facts.
- Students will display their written information and illustrate what each village looks like using an art media of their choice.

Motivator: Share some interesting facts about the area that you live in. For instance my city, Portland, was named by doing a coin toss.

Instructional steps:

- A very helpful book to use with this lesson is, *“Iditarod Country: Exploring the Route of The Last Great Race”*, by Tricia Brown. This book tells you the population and many interesting facts of each village along the trail. Also have students use the Internet to do some of their research. Check out www.iditarod.com and <http://www.cabelasiditarod.com/index.html>.
- Assign a checkpoint to a student or use partners.
- The students can collect information from above book, websites or have them explore and find different websites. When they find a new website and it's useful give the student extra credit points.
- The students will take their information and present on a sheet next to the artwork that will illustrate the checkpoint.
- Display this work either in the hallway or your classroom.

Extensions:

- You may want to create a 3-D display of the checkpoints. Either doing dioramas or using clay.
- Do some extra research and find out if any mushers are from any of the checkpoints.
- Write to a musher and ask what their favorite checkpoint is. Addresses for some mushers can be found by contacting the Iditarod Education Department.

Social Studies
Transportation in the Arctic World
The Use of Sleds
Integrated with: Art
Grades 3-9

Goal: Students will be able to build a model of an Arctic sled.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will practice their measuring, cutting and assembling skills.
- Students will put their own original art on the sides of the sleds.
- Students will list the various uses of sleds.
- Students will present and talk about their sleds to the other students.

Motivator: There are many books you can read to your classroom about sleds. I use *Arctic Adventure*, by Dana Meachen Rau. This story told the ways of the Inuit Life in the 1800's. It explained and had wonderful illustration on how sleds, kayaks and huskies were used for transportation.

Use websites for research, too.

Material Needed:

- Popsicle sticks
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Scissors
- White glue
- Masking tape
- String
- Brown paint
- Paint brush
- Anything a student can find around the house

Instructional Steps:

- Give students about 30 Popsicle sticks.
- Students will draw up a plan for their sled.
- Build a sled.
- Write an essay on the process they used to create their sled.
- This is an excellent project for home. See project sheet below.

Note: You will be delightfully amazed what kids can create on with their own ideas.

Sled Project

Date _____

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This is a weeklong project to work on at home. You may help your child with this project. In fact, I encourage you to be part of this fun project.

Assignment: Draw up a plan to build a sled. Then build the sled. Write an essay on the process you used to build your sled.

Materials: I have given your child a handful of Popsicle sticks. You can use whatever else you have around the house to make this sled too. Let your child use their imagination.

Size: The sled has to be able to sit on top of a school desk.

Date Due: _____

Student _____ **Parent** _____

Social Studies
Integrated with: Art & Writing
Grades 2-9
Timeline

Goal: Students will research and compare the Iditarod winners to the different years in their life.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will make a time line of their life.
- Students will coordinate the winning musher's name to each year of their life.

Materials:

- Access to the Internet
- Butcher paper
- Markers
- Pictures of themselves and the mushers

Instructional Steps:

- Give each student a 4-foot piece of butcher paper.
- Students will glue their pictures on top of each year and glue the Iditarod winners under each year.
- Students will write an exciting event that happen to them each year.
- Students will write and interesting fact about each musher.

Adaptations for Grades K-1

- Instead of writing students could draw an action picture about each year of their life and a fact about the musher.

Adaptations for Grades 6-9

1. For each year of the Iditarod, students can put a picture and facts about each winning musher on top of the timeline and a world or U.S. event on the bottom of the .

Northern Lights Activity Science & Language Arts

Integrated with: Art

Grades 3-6

Goal: Students will create an artificial Aurora Borealis.

Motivator: Read the mythical stories, *Aurora: The Tale of the Northern Lights*, By Mindy Dwyer and *The Blizzard Blanket*, By Robert Sabuda. Discuss the stories with the students. Another book to share with students before they start their research on the Internet is, *Northern Lights: The Science, Myth and Wonder of Aurora Borealis*, by Calvin Hall. You could check out your local library or go to www.amazon.com and order them for your classroom library.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will research on the Internet about the Aurora Borealis.
- Students will be able to display an artificial Northern Light show in the classroom.
- Students will be able to discuss the scientific reason why the Aurora Borealis occurs in the north.
- Students will write their own legend or folklore story about the Aurora Borealis.
- Students will create a picture of the Aurora borealis that will go along with their story.

Materials Needed:

- *Aurora: The Tale of the Northern Lights*, by Mindy Dwyer
- *The Blizzard Blanket*, By Robert Sabuda
- *Northern Lights: The Science, Myth and Wonder of Aurora Borealis*, by Calvin Hall.
- Links on the Internet: <http://www.watsonlakeinfo.com/northernlightscentre/> and http://www.exploratorium.edu/learning_studio/auroras/selfguide1.html
- 2lbs or 3lbs of dry ice
- Warm water
- Funnel
- 3 large flashlights
- Colored cellophane
- Small hairdryer
- Colored chalk or pastels
- Black construction paper

Instructional Steps:

Day #1

- Read the book *Aurora: The Tale of the Northern Lights*, by Mindy Dwyer and *The Blizzard's Robe*, by Robert Sabuda. Discuss the story.
- Share the book, *Northern Lights: The Science, Myth and Wonder of Aurora Borealis*, by Calvin Hall.
- Put the students in pairs and have them do some research on the Internet.
- Discuss the tale and scientific reason for the Aurora Borealis.

Day #2

- Put students into small groups.
- Set up the following materials:
 - Teacher will set a large bowl of warm water on a high shelf. She will conduct this part of the show.
 - Place several pieces of dry ice into the bowl
 - Cover the bowl with a 6”diamter funnel. If you don’t have one you can use paper to a cone shape.
 - As the vapor escapes, use the small hairdryer (cool setting) to blow the vapor around.
 - Cover the flashlight lenses with non-flammable cellophane.
 - Have students shine the light toward the vapors.
 - Make sure your blinds and lights are off to get a better affect.
- Let each group try out their flashlights one at a time so the entire class can enjoy each effect of the vapor.
- Have the student journal about their observation along with what they had learn from the Internet.

Day #3

- Have the students get out their journals and have them begin writing their own imaginary tale of the Aurora Borealis. A page long should be adequate, but they could write more if they choose.

Day #4

- After the final copy of their tale is finished have them read it to another student and visa versa.
- Hand out black construction paper, colored chalk or pastels. Then each student can create an illustration to go along with his or her story.
- Display both the story and illustration on a bulletin board..

Iditarod Math Game

Integrated with: Art
Grades K-8

Goal: Students will practice various math facts or skills.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will practice a math concept and be able to demonstrate their knowledge
- Students will be able to create their own strategies games for learning math facts
- Students will design a board game

Materials needed:

- File folders
- Paper
- Map of the Iditarod

Instructional Steps:

- Draw the Iditarod Trail on paper, large enough to cover the two sides of a file folder.
- Like a board game, draw squares along the trail to create spaces for game pieces to move along the trail.
- Make small cards using math concepts that you are learning at the time.
- For each correct math fact the student moves as many spaces as the card tells them.
- You could also have story problems on the "trail".
- Either you or the class can make questions/problems for the game.
- Using poster board, draw a small musher on a sled, cut it out and place in a daub of clay, let dry and use it as your marker around the board.
- Throw in bonus cards in the pile where the player can jump ahead to the various checkpoints. Make these math problems a little more difficult.
- Use a pair dice.
- Like the Iditarod, when you have reached Nome you have reached your goal.
- Having the games in a folder design makes them easy to store. I use a lot of these games during indoor recess.

Adaptations for Grades K-1

- Instead of math facts, you could have letter or word recognition on the cards.
- You could use this game board for spelling words. Have one player say the spelling word and the other person spells the word. If the answer is correct they can move forward.
- You could use this board game for other subjects: science vocabulary and social studies dates and facts. Let your students think of an educational game of their own.
- For 8th and 9th graders, have them find the latitude and longitude of each checkpoint.

Luscious Landscapes Lesson
Tasty Tundra & Perfect Permafrost Treats
Science
Integrated with: Math & Cooking
Grades K-6

Goal: Students will understand the concepts of tundra and permafrost.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will use the scientific methods to predict the outcome of their experiment.
- Students will use measurement tools to produce product.

Motivator: Read to or have students read the following books; Tundra Discoveries By Ginger Wadsworth, Arctic Tundra, By Donald M. Silver, Arctic Tundra: Land Win No Trees, By Allan Fowler and Arctic Tundra and Habitats, By Michael H. Forman.

Instructional steps:

- Celebrate the study of the tundra and permafrost by making tasty treats.
- Follow the material list and instructions on the following recipes.

Permafrost Gelatin Desert

- 12 x 9 casserole dish
- measuring cup
- boiling water
- large mixing bowl
- any flavor of a large package of gelatin desert
- vanilla ice cream
- latex gloves
- bowls
- plastic spoons and knives
- napkins

Instructions:

- I usually let a group of 4-6 students work together. Depending on your class size you will need to decide how much of each ingredient you will need.
- Students will follow the instructions on the box of gelatin.
- When the gelatin is firm, spoon vanilla ice cream and spread on top of gelatin.
- Let the vanilla ice cream warm up a bit and melt.
- Have student write down their observations.
- Students will notice the gelatin “permafrost” is solid and will not let the snow or ice “ice cream” penetrate.
- Let students slice or crack the gelatin and observe and record what happens to the ice cream.
- The best part, scoop up the desert into individual bowl and let them enjoy eating their science experiment.

Tundra Pudding

Materials

- small plastic zip-lock bags for each student
 - teacher-made plans for 3 groups of students (8-9 in a group)
 - 3 packages (16 oz.) chocolate sandwich cookies
 - plastic clear cups (7 oz.), enough for each student
 - decorations: colored grated coconut; brown and green
 - 6 cups cold milk
 - 3 packages (4-serving size) chocolate-flavor instant pudding
 - tubs (8 oz.) Coolwhip or other whipped topping thawed
 - plastic spoons/napkins bowls/measuring cups for each group
1. Have students divided into 3 groups of 8-10 students. Place a fifth-grade peer helper in each group (if available)
 2. Provide clearly written directions for each group.
 3. Provide for each group:
 - one package of cookies
 - one package of pudding mix
 - measuring cup
 - bowl
 - mixing spoons
 - topping decorations
 - one tub of whipped topping
 - plastic zip-lock bags for each student
 4. Directions for each group:
 - measure 2 cups of milk into large bowl
 - add pudding mix, beat with spoon until blended let each student participate
 - let mixture stand for 5 minutes
 - during this time have students equally divide package of cookies into the bag of each student
 - each student crushes a zip-lock bag of chocolate cookies by pressing palm of hand on locked bag
 - set bag aside for later use
 - stir in tub of whipping topping into pudding mixture
 - have each student measure out half of their crushed cookies into pudding mixture and stir
 - students then place about 2 tablespoons of crushed cookies into the bottom of the plastic cups
 - teacher or peer student fills cups 3/4 full with pudding mixture
 - top with remaining crushed cookies
 - refrigerate one hour
 - decorate with grated dyed coconut
 5. Eat the tundra pudding.
 6. Have the students retell sequence of making the tundra pudding, in the correct order. Write on the board.

Language Arts
Poetry
Integrated with: Art
Grades 1-9

Goal: Motivate students to feel, touch and smell their words, which will build up a vocabulary to write a poem about the Iditarod.

Objectives: Students will write a poem about Iditarod Sled Dog Race.

Motivator: You or the students bring in snow or shaved ice, and fresh cut tree branches, seeds from various trees, scented candles or oil (cinnamon or spruce), wildlife music or soft music. Students will be able to breathe, touch and see the outdoors in the classroom.

Instructional Steps:

- Have wilderness music playing, scented candles lit or scented oil lingering in the air before students arrive from recess.
- Have stations for each object; branches, pine needles, snow, and seeds.
- Put students in small groups and visit each station experiencing the items with their senses.
- Then hand out sticky Post-it notes so students can write interesting words on what they saw, heard and touched.
- Each group will work together to read each other's words they wrote.
- Working together they will write a phrase with each word they came up with.
- The students will cut out each phrase.
- Put all of the students' phrases into a bowl. Toss the entire classroom's phrases together.
- Send one student from each group to randomly pick out phrases about 4 to 5 phrases from the bowl.
- Each group will build one poem around the phrases that were picked from the bowl.
- The groups will write their poem and decorate on chart paper and share their "teamwork" poem with another group and/or class.
- Day #2, each student will pick several phrases from the bowl and create their own poem.
- Students will write their poem on their pre-made stationary (see art extensions below) and share their work in small groups/or class.

Art extensions:

- The day before the poetry lesson hand out watercolors.
 - Give each student several pieces of white paper.
 - Demonstrate how to paint lightly so their writing will show up on the paper.
 - You may want to hint to them that they'll be writing about the outdoors.
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- Have some dried examples ready to show how students can write along the lines of color.

Art & Language Arts
Grades K-9
Iditarod Art By Jon Van Zyle

Goal: Students will observe Jon Van Zyle Iditarod art as well as many of his other works of art on Alaska.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will design a poster for the Iditarod Race
- Students will create a poem or statement about the Iditarod Race

Materials Needed:

- ***Iditarod Memories*** By Jon Van Zyle. This book contains 25 posters on the Iditarod Race. It also covers the story behind each poster. This book can be read to the lower grades and the students love the pictures.
- ***The Great Serum Run*** By Debbie A. Miller and illustrated by Jon Van Zyle.
- Large white paper
- Paint
- Notebook paper
- Pencils

Instructional Steps:

- Share the pictures and stories from *Iditarod Memories* and the artwork in *The Great Serum Run*
- you don't have any of Zyle's other artwork you can view it on www.jonvanzyle.com
- After viewing and discussing Zyle's artwork, make a classroom list of ideas. First on what they want to paint. Then on what they could write on their poster to encourage the promotion of the Iditarod Race.
- After posters are finished display them in the classroom. Invite other classes to see the classroom's mini art museum.
- Call your school district and display them at their offices.
- Call your capitol and ask to hang them in the capitol building
- Display the artwork in your school's hallways.

Extension for Grades 4-9

- Research and do a biography study on Jon Van Zyle.
- Research another artist who may use the Iditarod Race as their subject.

- Discover other books that Jon Van Zyle has illustrated and do a report.

Musher Research Worksheet

Student Name _____

Your project is to read and research about a musher who has been in the Iditarod Race. Include the following information on your research.

- Musher's name
- Where the musher is from (state or country).
- The year or years they were in the Iditarod.
- Did they win the Iditarod?
- If they didn't win, how did they place in the race?
- What does the musher do when they are not racing?
- Do they have family?
- Include a picture of your musher.
- Add some details about your musher that you find interesting.

Displaying your research:

- Write your information in complete sentences.
- Add descriptive words to make your biography more interesting.
- Display your findings on construction paper. (This will be provided by teacher)
- Include a picture of your musher.
- Decorate your board.

Presenting your research:

- Know your musher well.
- You will dress up and become that musher.
- As that musher you will share the musher's life in a speech format.

Parents/guardians may help you read the articles I have given you and the information you found on the Internet. After you edit your work have someone check it over before you write the final copy.

Social Studies
Research Poster & Speech on a Musher
Integrated with: Art and Drama
Grades 2-9

Goal: Students will do research on one musher and give a speech on that musher.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will use their research skills to gather facts about a musher and prepare their sled dogs for the Iditarod Race.
- Students will practice their library skills and Internet skills to gather information.
- Students will present their facts on a poster, including pictures and designs.
- Students will dress as the musher they did research on. Students will present the information as the “musher”.

Motivator: Read out loud, *Storm Run, The Story of the First Woman to Win the Iditarod Sled Dog Race*, by Libby Riddles. This is an excellent book. It has wonderful illustrations by Shannon Cartwright. The book also has photographs of Libby growing and how she started to be a musher.

Materials Needed:

- Poster board
- Paint
- Construction paper
- Theme stationary
- Colored pens
- Scissors
- Books about mushers and Iditarod
- Computer
- Musher Research worksheet is attached

Instructional Steps:

- Provide the biography book on mushers called, *Iditarod Classics*, by Lew Freedman. The Internet access has many wonderful sites to look at: www.iditarod.com, www.dogsled.com, www.cabelasiditarod.com, Look up Iditarod at your local libraries and you will find many books on this great race.
- Provide poster board and have students create their own theme stationary to write the facts.
- Show students examples of different layouts they could use.
- Have students write a rough draft of their information, edit their work and have a classmate read and edit their work too.
- Students need to write the information on their student created stationary and decorate their posters.
- Students will use the information about their musher to write a speech.
- Using their posters students will become their “musher” and give a speech about “themselves”.
- Invite other classes to meet some famous mushers in your room.

Adaptations for Grades K-1

Read, *Storm Run, The Story of the First Woman to Win the Iditarod Sled Dog Race*, by Libby Riddles. Instead of writing a biography, have the students make a picture book on the facts you shared with them.

Iditarod Measurement
Integrated with: Art & Language Arts & Drama
Grades 2-6

Goal: Students will learn how to use measurement and scale to a real life situation.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will create the Iditarod Trail using the scale of 1" equals 10 miles.
- Students will pick one musher to follow and record the musher's progress throughout the race.
- Students will develop several math problems using their trail.
- Students will write about the daily progress of their musher.
- Students will make a musher marker for their paper trail.

Motivator: Read the book, "*Akiak*", by Robert J. Blake. At the back of the book there is a good map showing both the south and north trail route.

Materials needed:

- Register tape
- Rulers
- Pencil
- Colored pencils
- Tag board
- Map of the Iditarod Trail (You can find this at <http://teacher.scholastic.com/Iditarod/home.htm> At this sight click on Explore the Trail

Instructional steps:

- Share the book "Akiak" with your students. Discuss what it might feel like to be on the Iditarod Trail.
- Have the student measure 10 miles for every 1 inch.
- The students need to mark the checkpoints along the paper trail.
- Hand out tag board. The students will make their musher markers that will mark their musher's progress.
- Next, have students make small Iditarod log books where they can write about their musher's progress.
- Have the students work on creating story problems along the trail. Let them share them with the others or the entire class.

Extensions:

- For added interested, have the students act out their story problem and let the audience tell them the answer at the end of the play.

Jr. Iditarod Graphing Project
Math
Integrated with: Reading & Writing & Art
Grades 2-9

Goal: Students will create various graphs using data from the

Jr. Iditarod biographies

Learning Objectives:

- Students will read and collect data.
- Students will design various graphs with data.
- Students will create questions to go with their graphs.

Materials Needed:

- Jr. Iditarod biographies. You can find these at www.iditarod.com.
- Graphing paper
- Crayons, color pencils or markers
- Direction sheet (at the bottom of this lesson plan)

Instructional Steps:

- Students will read musher biographies. Read as a class, partner read or individually depending on age group.
 - Hand out graphing paper and direction sheet.
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-
- Share graphs and questions with the class.

Jr. Iditarod Biography Graph Project

Name _____ Date _____

Follow the directions below to make your graphs

1. Make a bar graph to record where the mushers are from.
2. Using the data from the biography sheet make a picture graph to compare the ratio between young men and the young women who participate in the race.
3. Graph the ages of the mushers.
4. Highlight the hobbies of each musher and graph the results.
5. Make up a few questions that go with your graphs. Let students answer those questions by using your data.
6. Name each graph. Mark your graph so your audience can understand how to read your graph.

Dusty's Dream

Reading & Language Arts Integrated with: Art & Math Grades 2-5

Goal: Students will understand the responsibility it takes to reach a goal.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will understand the responsibility of how to take care of an animal.
- Students will learn what life is like in Alaska through the eyes of a young boy.
- Students will be able to answer several types of questions about the story using a worksheet.
- Students will design their favorite scene from the story.

Motivator: Ask students about their pets and how they feed and exercise them. Describe (teacher) a childhood story about your pet to your students.

Materials Needed:

- The book, *Iditarod Dream: Dusty and His Sled Dogs Compete in Alaska's Jr. Iditarod*, by Ted Wood.
- Worksheets (attached to this lesson plan)
- Art supplies

Instructional Steps:

- For younger, children read and do the worksheets together on a piece of chart paper.
- For grades 3rd and up, have them read the story and answer the questions on the worksheet.
- Draw or paint a picture of their favorite scene.

Extension:

- Go to www.iditarod.com and look up the Junior Iditarod Musher. There you will find how many girls and boys run the Junior Race, their ages, what state or town they are from, how many are rookies and how many have already been in the race more than once.
- Have students create various graphs to show this information. Hang their results on the bulletin board.

Iditarod Dream

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Write the following vocabulary words in a sentence.

- **(adapt or adapted)** _____

- **(nuzzle or nuzzled)** _____

- **(command or commands)** _____

- **(strain or straining)** _____

1. Explain the other uses for sled dog teams.

2. Where does Dusty live?

3. Other than the teachers who live in the village how does Dusty get some of his instructions? (hint: page 9). _____

4. The longer your sled is the more dogs you need. Why? (hint: page 18).

5. How does Dusty control the sled? (hint: page 30).

6. Explain what Dusty does at the checkpoint. (hint: page 40).

7. Dusty is in the lead at the layover checkpoint. Why does he decide to help other mushers?

Draw a picture from a favorite scene in the book. Write a few sentences to explain your picture. _____

Art Lesson

Integrated with: Writing & Art

Iditarod Patch

Grades 2-9

Goal: As the “Teacher on the Trail” I was asked to design a patch that would go on the official Iditarod sleeping bag. Students will use their imaginations and create a patch.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will journal an idea on what their patch will represent.
- Students will draw and color their patch.
- Students will write an essay explaining the meaning behind their patch.

Motivator: Explain to the students that each year the “Teacher on the Trail” is asked by the Iditarod Committee to design a patch for the official Iditarod sleeping. The sleeping bag is used by the “Teacher on the Trail” while she is traveling between the checkpoints of the race. This is the 5th year that the Iditarod Committee has selected a teacher to travel with the race.

Materials needed:

- White paper
- Pencil
- Markers
- Watercolors
- Colored pencils
- Tempra paint

Instructional steps:

1. Log on to www.iditarod.com and select the menu tab, For Teachers. Click on Teacher on the Trail. Either have students observe this year’s patch or print it out.
2. Have students journal some ideas what they would like to put on their own Iditarod patch.
3. In their journal, have students draw several versions of their patch ideas. Then let them decide which on will be their final project.
4. Let students choose their own art medium to create their project.
5. Have students write the meaning behind their design.