

Unit 6/Week 5

Title: Just Plain Fancy

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards RL.3.1, RL.3.2, RL.3.3, RL.3.4, RL.3.7;

W.3.1, W.3.4, W.3.7; SL.3.1, SL.3.6; L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.4

Teacher Instructions

Refer to the Introduction for further details.

Before 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

Although the Amish choose to live and dress plainly, they appreciate and admire God's fancy handiwork displayed in the beauty of nature.

Synopsis

"Just Plain Fancy" is the story of a young Amish girl, Naomi, who longs to have something fancy in her life. One day as she and her sister are searching the field for eggs, they stumble upon a peculiar, different looking egg. The girls slip the egg into the nest of one of the chickens. When it hatches, the girls name the chick Fancy because it looks very different from the plain, white chickens. As Fancy grows, he certainly lives up to his name and becomes a colorful peacock. Naomi is frightened that the Amish community will shun the beautiful creature for being fancy and not plain. During the frolic the next morning, Fancy unexpectedly escapes the henhouse and runs toward the elders. He is pleased with the attention and spreads his feathers for all to see. Naomi is terrified that she and the bird will be shunned from the community, but that is exactly the opposite of what happens. The oldest woman in the community explains

that the fancy of the peacock is God’s beauty and it is respected and loved. Naomi ends up receiving a white cap that day and learning a valuable lesson about an acceptable and admired kind of fancy.

2. Read entire main selection text, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.
3. Re-read the main selection text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Vocabulary.

During Teaching

1. Students read the entire main selection text independently.
2. Teacher reads the main selection text aloud with students following along. (Depending on how complex the text is and the amount of support needed by students, 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 and returning to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and (i.e.: whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.)

Text Dependent Questions

Text-dependent Questions	Evidence-based Answers
Reread page 250. The Amish are a religious community that lives in rural areas. How does Naomi’s family travel? Why?	Naomi’s family travels in a buggy pulled by a horse. Naomi asked her father why they didn’t have a car. He responded, “It is not our way, child. We are Amish. We use a buggy to travel to places at the farm.”
On page 251, Naomi says, “even our chickens are plain.” What does she mean by this?	She is complaining because she thinks everything is plain and nothing is fancy. When she says “our chickens are plain” she is emphasizing the fact that the chickens are plain and not fancy. Even the chickens are white.
What do Naomi and her sister discover when they are searching for eggs outside the henhouse? (Pg. 251)	Naomi and her sister discovered a very unusual egg hidden in the tall grass.
Reread page 252. Use details from the story and the illustration to describe how this unusual egg is different from the others in Henny’s nest.	This unusual egg is larger and a little darker than the others. The illustration shows that the egg is spotted and the other eggs in the nest are white.

<p>On page 252, Ruth says, “I just know you’re going to get your white cap this year. Momma says you’re ready.” Why is the white cap important?</p>	<p>The white cap is important because it is pride. Naomi feels proud of her chickens and how they look. Students can infer that she feels like she has a white cap because she has done her job well.</p>
<p>Why did Naomi name the chick, “Fancy”? (Pg. 253)</p>	<p>She named the little chick Fancy because she thought the chick stood out and looked different from the other chickens. Naomi sees the chick and says, “That’s fancy inside and out, wasn’t it? Fancy. That’s what I named the chick.”</p>
<p>Naomi and Ruth heard Aunt Sarai talking about a person in a neighboring Amish community. She said, “She dressed too fancy. She had to be <u>shunned</u>!” Using clues from the text, explain in your own words what the word <u>shunned</u> means. (Pg. 255)</p>	<p>When a person is shunned, others avoid them and they purposefully turn away from them. They are isolated and ignored. After that, friends and family are instructed not to speak to that person.</p>
<p>Why is it considered wrong to be fancy in the Amish community? (Pg. 255)</p>	<p>Hannah tells Naomi that the Amish are plain and it is against the law to be plain and not fancy.</p>
<p>When Fancy escaped from the henhouse and ran toward the gathering, why does Naomi think she is being punished for having Fancy? (Pg. 257)</p>	<p>When Fancy escapes the henhouse and runs toward the gathering, Naomi calls out, “This is all my fault. I had something fancy. I should have known better. I had a little kind of wish!” Naomi thought she was being punished because it was against Amish law to have fancy things. Her secret was out.</p>
<p>Using evidence from the text and the illustration on page 258, explain why Naomi and Ruth think Fancy will be shunned? (Pg. 258)</p>	<p>The illustration shows that Fancy is a peacock with brilliant feathers for everyone to see. Naomi and Ruth are trying to catch him before anyone sees him. “Please don’t shun him. I did this! I made him fancy!” Naomi and Ruth thought Fancy would be shunned because he was different from the plain white chickens. He was like a peacock with bright, colorful feathers. He was against Amish law. Naomi was willing to let go of Fancy’s beauty to keep him from being shunned.</p>
<p>Using clues from the text, what does <u>handiwork</u> mean? Why is Fancy allowed to be fancy without being shunned? (Pg. 259)</p>	<p>Handiwork means creation or accomplishment. Martha explains that you can only be shunned if you do things the ways of their people. Fancy is a creation of God. Since God created Fancy with his beautiful feathers, he would not be shunned.</p>

Vocabulary

	KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING	WORDS WORTH KNOWING General teaching suggestions are provided
<p>TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION not enough contextual clues provided in the text</p>		<p>Page 251 - unharnessed, shaw, aughtn't Page 252 - working bee Page 255 - authority Page 257 - stable, ladle Page 259 - organdy, amidst</p>
<p>STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING sufficient context clues are provided in the text</p>	<p>Page 251 - nestled Page 253 - constantly Page 254 - shunned Page 258 - gasped Page 259 - handiwork</p>	<p>Page 250 - reins Page 251 - pleasure Page 252 - eased Page 255 - folk Page 256 - whimpered Page 258 - stunned</p>

Culminating Task

- Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write
- *In “Just Plain Fancy” you discovered that the Amish culture has its own set of laws to live by. One of these laws it to be plain, not fancy. Write one well-developed paragraph explaining what Naomi learns about an exception to this law (an acceptable kind of fancy). Include how Naomi’s perception of fancy changed from the beginning of the story to the end of the story. Support your answer with examples from the story.*

Answer: At the beginning of the story Naomi is complaining that everything around her is plain. “Our clothes are plain, our houses are plain, even our chickens are plain.” She thinks everything in her life is plain and nothing is fancy. She longs for something fancy in her life. Later in the story, Naomi and Ruth overhear their Aunt Sarai talking to Hannah about a person in a neighboring community who is dressed too fancy. Aunt Sarai thinks this person should be shunned. Naomi asks them, “Is it wrong to be fancy?” They tell her it is wrong and that in their laws you are to be plain or you will be shunned. Naomi becomes concerned about this because she has found a fancy egg that has become a fancy bird. When Fancy escapes, Naomi fears he will be shunned because he is a fancy, beautiful peacock, not a plain, white chicken and she believes this is against Amish law. At the end of the story, when Fancy spreads his feathers at the frolic, Martha, an elder, calms Naomi by telling her that Fancy is one of God’s most beautiful creatures and his “fancy” is God’s creation and a miracle. Martha says, “Only God could come up with colors like that.” She explained that one is only shunned for going against the man-made laws of their people, not the laws of nature. From this experience, Naomi learned that even though the Amish believe in being plain folks, the beauty of God’s handiwork is an acceptable and admired kind of “fancy”.

Additional Tasks

- If students seem particularly interested in the Amish culture after reading this story, have them complete some research about the following topics:

Amish dress code

Amish laws/rules

Work the Amish do

Amish family life

Courtship and marriage

History of the Amish

More information can be found at these two websites: <http://www.amish-heartland.com/aboutamishg.html> or <http://www.amishcountry.org>.

- Have the students look again at “Just Plain Fancy”. Ask them to describe the plot’s conflict. (Naomi wants something fancy, but it’s against the strict Amish rules. Then, she gets her wish and must deal with the consequences.) Then, have students look through the selection and note the sequence of events that make up the plot. After this, have students identify the problem and solution in the story.

1st Event: Girls find unusual egg.

2nd Event: Naomi puts egg in hen’s nest.

3rd Event: Chick grows into “fancy” bird.

4th Event: Girls hide Fancy from elders.

5th Event: Elders accept Fancy as God’s handiwork.

- If students have already read the story, “Leah’s Pony”, have them compare and contrast the character Naomi to the character Leah. Have students identify similar and contrasting character traits of these characters. A graphic organizer can be used to organize the traits. Then, students can write a paragraph about their similarities and differences.

Name _____ Date _____

“Just Plain Fancy”

1. Reread page 250. The Amish are a religious community that lives in rural areas. How does Naomi’s family travel? Why?
2. On page 251, Naomi says, “even our chickens are plain.” What does she mean by this?
3. What do Naomi and her sister discover when they are searching for eggs outside the henhouse? (Pg. 251)
4. Reread page 252. Use details from the story and the illustration to describe how this unusual egg is different from the others in Henny’s nest.
5. On page 252, Ruth says, “I just know you’re going to get your white cap this year. Momma says you’re ready.” Why is the white cap important?

