

Unit 1/Week 6

Title: The Legend of Damon and Pythias

Suggested Time: 5 days (90 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.3.1, RL.3.2, RL.3.3, RL.3.4, RL.3.5;
W.3.2, W.3.4; SL.3.1, SL.3.6; L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.4, L.3.5

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

Sometimes it takes sacrifice to be a good friend. Unplanned events sometimes make it difficult to be a good friend, but a friend keeps trying no matter what.

Synopsis

Damon and Pythias are great friends who will sacrifice anything for each other. Pythias finds himself in trouble and Damon helps his friend to realize his last request. The tables are turned when Pythias overcomes an obstacle to get back to his friend. The King realizes what true friendship is.

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 discussion (i.e.: whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.)

Text Dependent Questions

Text Dependent Questions	Answers
What has Pythias and Damon’s names come to mean?	Their names have come down to the times to mean friendship.
Find the word rebel on page _____. Based on clues from the text, what does the word rebel mean? Explain why the people did not rebel against the King.	Rebel means to go against someone who has power like a King. They feared the King’s great and powerful army.
Pythias says to the King, “I speak for myself alone. I have no wish to make trouble for anyone...You do not allow them to speak up for themselves. What does this quote tell you about the kind of person Pythias is?	This quote helps to show that Pythias stands up for what is right. He also takes responsibility for his actions. “I speak for myself alone.” He does not try to blame onto anyone else.
Reread the narrator’s first lines on page _____. Based on this description, what do you think a tyrant is and does? What does the King in this story do to show that he is a tyrant?	A tyrant is a person who controls other people without consideration for their wants, needs, or desires. The King is being a tyrant by having Pythias arrested for speaking out for the people.
Damon says, “I wish I could do something to save you!” What does Damon beg of the king?	He begs for the King to let Pythias go home to bid farewell to his mother and sister. He tells the King Pythias will return at his appointed time and that his word can be trusted.
What in the text shows that Pythias is an honorable person?	“Everyone in Sicily knows you for a man who speaks his word.” (Page 48) “Everyone knows that I speak the truth and my word is trusted.” (Page 50)
Does the King let Pythias and Damon trade places? What does Damon promise to do?	Yes. Damon offers to die in Pythias’s place if the King lets him go on time.

<p>Why is Pythias concerned about Damon? How do you know?</p>	<p>He doesn't want to leave his friend in prison that something could go wrong and not allow him to get back in time.</p>
<p>How does Damon feel about his chances of his being released because of Pythias' return? What in the text makes you think so?</p>	<p>After the King mocks Damon telling him he made a bad bargain, Damon remains calm and says, "I know he will return."</p>
<p>Find evidence that shows how Pythias feels about his family.</p>	<p>We know he loves them because he made a deal with the King to be able to live comfortably for the rest of their lives. He told his mother not to make it any harder for him.</p>
<p>What obstacles does Pythias face in getting back to the city?</p>	<p>Two robbers tie up Pythias and take his money. He has to wait around to hear him and he took up time to get back. He was weak and dizzy. He knew time was running out for Damon.</p>
<p>How is the crowd feeling before the execution? How do you know?</p>	<p>There is an air of excitement the half hour before the execution because Pythias has not yet returned. The crowd is saying, "Long Live the King! The longer he stays, the more miserable our lives will be!" In the stage directions, the crowd's voices go up to a roar, then under; Pythias has a look of despair. All the exclamation marks show the excitement.</p>
<p>How does the King change in the selection?</p>	<p>He was a tyrant in the beginning but in the end he would give all my money and power for one day with Pythias.</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>Proclaimed Appointed Severe Strain Astounded Muttered Condition Faith Exchange</p>
<p>STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING sufficient context clues are provided in the text</p>	<p>Tyrant Rebel Honorable Rule</p>	<p>Suffering Resist Persuaded Bargain Deserted Twilight Struggled Miserable Curious</p>

Culminating Task

- The writing focus for this lesson is a friendly letter. Teach the format of letter writing and the parts. Then, use the culminating activity below to practice or assess.
- *Part One: Have Pythias write a friendly letter to Damon telling how he was able to get away from the robbers and make it back to the city in time. Cite page numbers and paragraphs in parentheses after each example to prove what you are saying in your letter. You must use at least 4 examples in your letter.*

- *Part Two: Write a well-developed paragraph explaining how Pythias' actions in the letter demonstrate that he is a good friend, even when he faces obstacles or must make sacrifices. Use evidence from the story to support your answer.*

Answer Part One:

Dear Damon,

I was on my way back to the city when two robbers attacked me for my money bags (Page 54 - narrator's first speech). I tried to tell them that I was going to die and that I needed to get back to you (Page 54 - sixth paragraph). They did not believe me. They tied me to a tree and took my money (Page 55 - narrator's first speech). I yelled and yelled, but there was no one around me to hear. I struggled to free myself, but it took me well into the day before I could get loose (Page 55 - narrator's first speech). Finally, I was able to work myself free, but I was dizzy and weak (Page 55 - narrator's last speech). I knew that I needed to get back to you or you would die. I traveled day and night without stopping (Page 55 - narrator's last speech). I was desperate to get back to the city to save you (Page 55 - narrator's last speech). At last, all my hard work paid off. I made it to the public square in time to save you (Page 56). I worked very hard to get back to you!

Your Friend,

Pythias

Answer Part Two:

A key idea of our story is that unplanned events sometimes make it difficult to be a good friend, but a friend keeps trying no matter what. Pythias' letter to Damon shows the unplanned event of two robbers attacking Pythias. (Page 54). Pythias never gave up because he knew that Damon would die if he did not make it back on time. The author shows how Pythias did not give up by telling us how he struggled to free himself and that it took him all day to do so. (Page 55) Even though he felt dizzy and weak (page 55), Pythias traveled day and night without stopping to get back to Damon (Page 55). This shows how Pythias kept trying no matter what.

Another key idea of our story is that sometimes it takes sacrifice to be a good friend. Both Damon and Pythias made sacrifices for each other. They were good friends to one another. Damon took Pythias' place in prison (page 49) knowing that if Pythias did not return, he would die in Pythias' place. Pythias returned to the palace in time instead of running away and starting a new life somewhere else. (Page 57) This shows he was also willing to sacrifice his life for Damon. Fortunately, the King rewarded both of them by letting them go free so neither one had to die. (Page 57)

Additional Tasks

- Find Sicily on a map, draw it, and write two facts about modern day Sicily.

Answer: Sicily is desert land. The terrain is rough for someone who is walking.

- In order to practice grammar skills, go back into the text and find action verbs, linking verbs, and verb phrases on page 43. Have the students replace the action verbs with another verb that will affect the meaning of the sentence or make it a silly sentence.

Answer: The action verbs on page ___ are: Listen, lived, named. The link verbs are: "is" in contraction it's, is, was, were, are in the contraction "they're". The helping verbs are: will hear, have come, may hear

An example of a sentence: "Long, long ago there resided on the island of Sicily two young men named Damon and Pythias.

Name _____ Date _____

“The Legend of Damon and Pythias”

1. What has Pythias and Damon’s names come to mean?
2. Find the word rebel on page _____. Based on clues from the text, what does the word rebel mean? Explain why the people did not rebel against the King.
3. Pythias says to the King, “I speak for myself alone. I have no wish to make trouble for anyone...You do not allow them to speak up for themselves.” What does this quote tell you about the kind of person Pythias is?
4. Reread the narrator’s first lines on page _____. Based on this description, what do you think a tyrant is and does? What does the King in this story do to show that he is a tyrant?
5. Damon says, “I wish I could do something to save you!” What does Damon beg of the king?

13. How does the King change in the selection?