

## Unit 5/Week 4

Title: Koko's Kitten

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RI.4.1, RI.4.2, RI.4.3, RI.4.4; RF.4.4; W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.7, W.4.9; SL.4.1; L.4.1, L.4.2, L.4.4

### 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

Animals are capable of experiencing the same feelings as human beings; desire, disappointment, love, nurturing, and sadness. They are also capable of making important connections with other living things.

#### Synopsis

Koko's Kitten is the story of Koko, a gorilla, who longs to have a kitten as her "baby." Koko is able to communicate her feelings to her trainer, Dr. Patterson and the assistants through sign language. After some time, she gets her kitten. Koko treats the kitten as her baby and loves and nurtures him. The kitten grows and one day gets hit by a car. This event upsets Koko but after some time, Koko gets another kitten to love and care for.

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
On page 446, it says “Cereal there. Good there drink,” Koko <b>signed</b> . How does Koko communicate with humans?	Koko uses sign language to communicate with humans.
According to page 446, why did the trainer think Koko wanted a kitten for her birthday? (Use a partial multi-flow map to show the CAUSES/REASONS Koko (Effect) wanted a kitten for her birthday.)	The trainer has read books about cats to Koko. Two of her favorite stories are ones that have cats as characters. The books about cats caused her to feel emotional. The picture books about cats are her second favorite.
Reread page 446. From what point of view is this story being told? How can you tell? Who is telling this story? What evidence do you have?	The point of view is first person. The person telling the story is the trainer and Patterson; the person who takes care of Koko. Evidence of first person: “I” written throughout the story. Evidence of person: you can tell the person who is talking with Koko, from birthdays, to reading books, to the things Koko likes best.
On page 447 the author describes the cat she bought for Koko as “sturdy – gorilla proof.” Often times, we can figure out what unknown words are by reading the words around it and then deciding what would make the most sense. This is called “context clues.” Using context clues, what does sturdy mean? What makes you think that?	Sturdy means that it will not break easily, to be strong because it says it is gorilla-proof. I imagine gorillas are tough on toys and a toy that is gorilla-proof would not get ruined easily.

<p>On page 448, why did Koko relate the cat gift to “red?”</p>	<p>She related the cat to red because she recognized that the cat was not real and she wanted a color that represents anger and Koko felt that way. She realized that the cat was fake.</p>
<p>In the middle of page 448, the author uses the words “display charges.” Think back to our discussion about context clues. What are display charges? When do gorillas usually show display charges? Why was the trainer surprised at the display charges?</p>	<p>Display charges are when a gorilla shows fear. A gorilla runs back and forth on all fours and puffs out its chest to display her feelings. The trainer was surprised because Koko was usually on a happy day, surrounded by the people she loved.</p>
<p>On page 450, Koko seems to be treating the tabby cat as her baby. What are some things she does that show she is treating it as her baby? (Teacher Note: It may be helpful for students to start creating a Circle Map to note the behaviors.)</p>	<p>She carried him on her thigh; pushed him up her neck; examined the kitten’s paws; said she loved him.</p>
<p>Why did the trainer take Ball back to her house for part of the day? What happened over time? Why do you think this happened? (Pg. 451)</p>	<p>The trainer took Ball back because she was worried Koko would treat him if she left them alone. Over time, Ball got bigger and would go to Koko’s house on his own. This may have happened because Ball had a trusting relationship. Ball was not afraid of Koko.</p>
<p>After reading pages 452-453, there is even more evidence to support that Koko was treating the kitten like her baby. What are some things Koko does to show her love towards Ball? (Add to the Circle Map from the question above.)</p>	<p>“Koko love Ball.” “Koko treated ball as if he was her baby.” Tucked him next to her thigh; carried him on her neck and petted him; examined ears, eyes, and mouth for his ear mites Less obvious but important: talked about him like a person; said he was a good cat (even though he was a male cat); played games with him</p>
<p>On page 454, the author writes that Koko was giving “distress calls.” What did the distress calls show about Koko?</p>	<p>Distress calls are calls gorillas make when they are struggling – in need of help or when they are sad. The distress calls showed that Koko was feeling the loss of her kitten Ball.</p>
<p>According to page 456, why was it so hard to find Ball another kitty? (Teacher Note: It may be helpful for students to use a partial multi-flow map to show the different causes/reasons it was (effect) hard to find Koko another kitty)</p>	<p>It was difficult to find a rare, tailless Manx. Koko also wanted a certain color, and special markings.</p>

<p>On pages 456-457, Koko shows signs of really missing her kitten and really looking forward to a new one. How can you tell she missed her kitty? How can you tell she is looking forward to a new kitty?</p>	<p>Missing: When someone asked Koko about look around to see if she could find Ball.                  Looking forward: When she heard she was g she was excited. When it was delayed she s she got it she “purred” with pleasure. She p chest and petted him. She called him “baby</p>
--	--

Vocabulary

	KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING	WORDS WORTH KNOWING General teaching suggestions are provided
<p><b>TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION</b>                      not enough contextual clues provided in the text</p>	<p>Page 447 - vinyl, velvet                      Page 449 - abandoned, judgment</p>	<p>Page 447 - assortment                      Page 451 - permanent, accustomed, accustomed                      obnoxious                      Page 453 - perceptions                      Page 454 - affection</p>

<p><b>STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING</b> suffi cient context clues are provide d in the text</p>	<p>Page 448 - display charges</p>	<p>Page 447 - sturdy Page 455 - sympathy Page 456 - rare Page 457 - breeder</p>
---	-----------------------------------	---

**Culminating Task**

- Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write
- *From reading this selection, one can conclude that animals are capable of forming bonds with other animals much like humans form bonds with their young. Koko displayed many human emotions in dealing with receiving, caring for, and losing her kitten(s). Some of those emotions include desire, disappointment, love, nurturing, and sadness. Choose 2 of these feelings that Koko portrays as she deals with receiving, caring for, and losing her kitten. Support each feeling with evidence from the text.*

Answer: Koko shows that she has strong feelings of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for her kitten. (Students should proceed to cite the pages where they found evidence, pull the quotes and use them correctly in their writing, and then explain how this shows the feeling)

Desire: Pg. 446 when she says “Cat. Cat. Cat.”; 447 when she points to the cat in the picture when asked what she wants for Christmas; pg. 449 when she is upset because she doesn’t get a real cat.

Disappointment: Pg. 449 when she doesn’t get a real cat; pg. 456 when people ask where her cat is and she looks for him but he is gone.

Love: there are multiple examples throughout the text – many have already been discussed and noted throughout the text-dependent questions.

Nurturing: Same as love.

Sadness: pg. 454 when she finds out her kitten is not coming back; pg. 455 when she says things like “Cry, sad, frown” and “sleep cat” and “blind”; pg 456 when people ask where her cat is and she feels sad when she looks but cannot find him.

### Additional Tasks

- Sign language is a universal way that people who are hard of hearing communicate. Look up sign language to learn about how it is used with animals. Who else can benefit from the use of sign language?
- Look up Koko and Dr. Patterson on the internet. Read to learn more about the project Koko was involved in and if there were any other gorillas in the same study. Write down 10 interesting facts you learn about the study and write a short essay or create a poster sharing your finds.

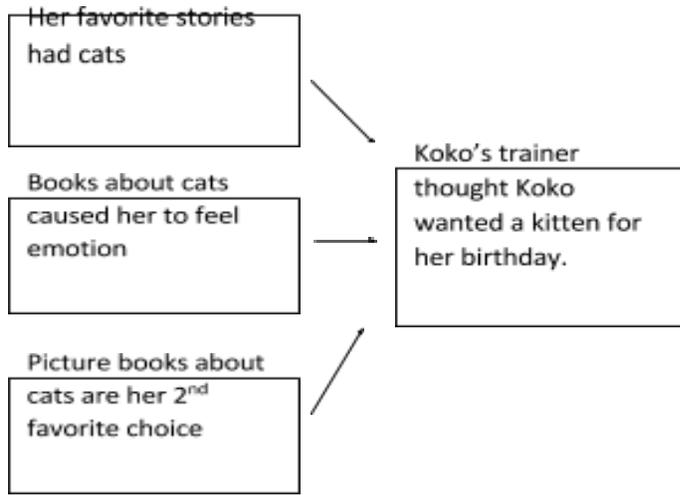
### Note to Teacher

- This passage is not written in a very complex way. The sentences are pretty simple and the message is very clearly conveyed. Use this type of text to explore character feelings at a deeper level; when the evidence is very clear to children, the inferences on character feelings should be able to come through more easily.
- This lesson refers to **Context Clues** as a vocabulary strategy 3 times. It may benefit you to teach this strategy before reading the text or reviewing the strategy if already taught.

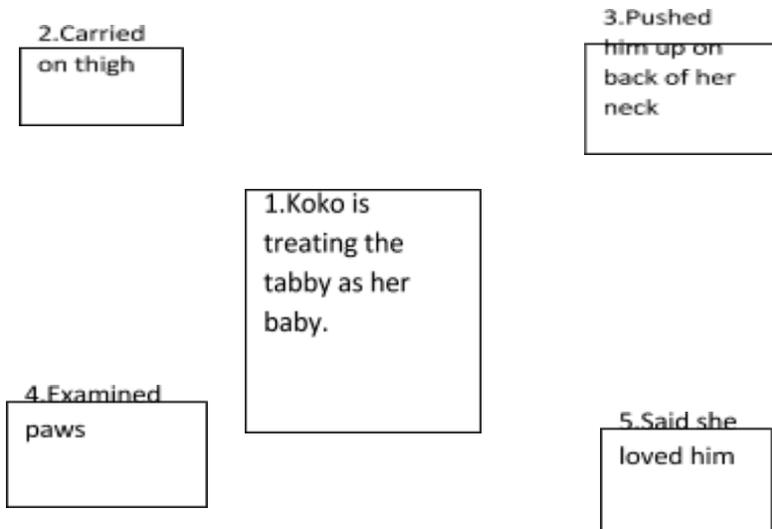
Thinking Map Samples to Support Questions:

Partial Multi-Flow Map:

Why did the trainer think Koko wanted a kitten for her birthday?



On page 450, Koko seems to be treating the tabby cat as her baby.

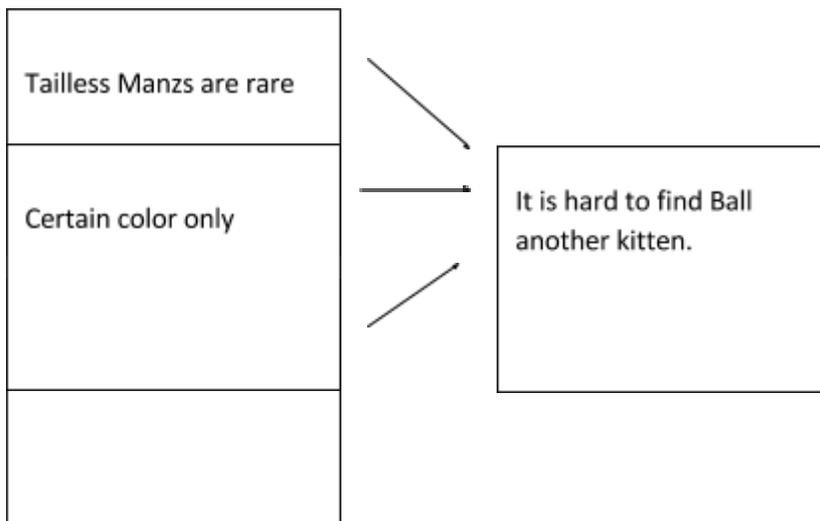


#1 goes in the center circle

#2-5 (any details) go in the outside circle

Partial Flow-Map:

According to page 456, why was it hard to find Ball another kitten?



\*\* If you were to choose which maps to use, choose the Circle Map because this is the only map of the 3 included that leads the students towards responding to the culminating task. The 2 Partial Multi-Flow Maps will support other instruction in trying to show that one event has more than one cause.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **“Koko’s Kitten”**

1. On page 446, it says “Cereal there. Good there drink,” Koko **signed**. How does Koko communicate with humans?
2. According to page 446, why did the trainer think Koko wanted a kitten for her birthday?
3. Reread page 446. From what point of view is this story being told? How can you tell? Who is telling this story? What evidence do you have?
4. On page 447 the author describes the cat she bought for Koko as “sturdy – gorilla proof.” Often times, we can figure out what unknown words are by reading the words around it and then deciding what would make the most sense. This is called “context clues.” Using context clues, what does sturdy mean? What makes you think that?

5. On page 448, why did Koko relate the cat gift to “red?”
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. In the middle of page 448, the author uses the words “display charges.” Think back to our discussion about context clues. What are display charges? When do gorillas usually show display charges? Why was the trainer surprised at the display charges?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. On page 450, Koko seems to be treating the tabby cat as her baby. What are some things she does that show she is treating it as her baby?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Why did the trainer take Ball back to her house for part of the day? What happened over time? Why do you think this happened? (Pg. 451)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. After reading pages 452-453, there is even more evidence to support that Koko was treating the kitten like her baby. What are some things Koko does to show her love towards Ball?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. On page 454, the author writes that Koko was giving “distress calls.” What did the distress calls show about Koko?

11. According to page 456, why was it so hard to find Ball another kitty?

12. On pages 456-457, Koko shows signs of really missing her kitten and really looking forward to a new one. How can you tell she missed her kitty? How can you tell she is looking forward to a new kitty?