

## Unit 3/Week 5

Title: The Night Journey

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.5.1, RL.5.2, RL.5.3, RL.5.4; RF.5.3, RF.5.4; W.5.1, W.5.3, W.5.4, W.5.7, W.5.9; SL.5.1, SL.5.4; L.5.1, L.5.2, L.5.5

### 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

Objects can spark powerful memories for people – painful or pleasurable. Additionally, hearing stories from elders helps people understand where they came from.

#### Synopsis

In this story, Rache is learning about the shocking history of her family through her Nana Sashie’s story about her family’s escape from Russia when she was just a little girl. The story shared has spanned several late night visits to Nana Sashie’s room and picks up the evening Rache’s father gives the gift of the symbolic samovar to the family.

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

<b>Text Dependent Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
The first 2 paragraphs of the story are written in italics. Why are the paragraphs written this way? Who is telling this part of the story? Who will soon be telling the story? (Pg. 249)	The paragraphs are in italics because they are providing the information the reader needs to know to begin the story where it does. The narrator is telling the story. As the story begins, the story continues to be told from the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person, but next it is told from Rache’s perspective, in 3 <sup>rd</sup> person.
From where were Nana Sashie and her family escaping? Why? (Pg. 249)	Sashie and her family were escaping from Russia because they were Jewish and Jewish people were not welcomed there at this time in history.

<p>Reread page 250-251. There are times when someone interjects into the story, written in italics. Who do you think it is? What are the words telling? How do you know?</p>	<p>The italic interjections are the story that Rache has already been told from Sashie. Sashie has already told Rache about the samovar and its significance in earlier stories, so Rache is flashing back to the stories Nana Sashie has already shared. Evidence is on page 250 where it says “the words floated back to Rache...”</p>
<p>On page 253 the text says “...Rache had not even needed the alarm to wake her for this short hike toward the long journey through time, through Nana Sashie’s time...” What does that mean? Why did the author use these words to describe the moment rather than simpler ones?</p>	<p>Not needing the alarm shows how much Rache anticipated the time she spent with Sashie. The author describes the “short hike”, meaning the closeness of the rooms, to the “long journey”, referring to the way the stories take her back in time. The author’s use of language was to make the writing come alive, to make it more poetic, and to give the reader a more intimate picture into the meanings of these night stories.</p>
<p>On page 254, they refer to the father starting with just one piece. When father was rebuilding the samovar, which part did he start with? Where did it come from?</p>	<p>Students will need to go back to page page 250 where it says “The top piece – Ida’s crown – flickered unquenchably in the candlelight.” Father started with the top part, the part that on page 258, Sashie was using as a little girl to cover her face. It came from the old trunk referred to on page 249. The trunk was Nana Sashie’s.</p>
<p>Why does Sashie refer to the samovar as the “good soldier?” Use the illustration on page 251 to support your understanding of a samovar.</p>	<p>The samovar is referred to as the good soldier because it is tall and sturdy. It is a centerpiece in a home and it stands watch like a good soldier would.</p>

<p>Reread page 255 where the point of view changes. Who is telling the story now? But from whose point of view? How old is Sashie in this section?</p>	<p>On page 254, the last paragraph, it shows the transition to the story. The story is being told from the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, but it is Sashie is telling the story. Sashie is a young girl in this section. Evidence is on page 254 where it says “There was a young voice.” Also, this is where the story changes from past to present.</p>
<p>Why are the women (Sashie and Ida) so bothered by Wolf?</p>	<p>Students can use evidence from several pages to show why the women are bothered by Wolf. He had a strange way about him, he was scary looking, gruff with his voice, Ida refers to him as “the devil”, Sashie talks about him and the dragons and the experiences he must have had to make him the way he is.</p>
<p>What is wrong with Ida on page 256?</p>	<p>Ida is frightened by Wolf. She senses something “off” about him and she refuses to get in under the chicken coops. On page 256 she calls him “the devil” and on page 257 she asks “What hell has he been to?”</p>
<p>Who are the babies on page 258? How might having babies on the wagon cause problems?</p>	<p>On page 258 they introduce two babies. The babies are Sashie’s younger siblings. Having babies on the wagon, in confined but open space, could have been bad because people may have heard them talking or crying. The children don’t know the importance of being quiet in this situation.</p>
<p>On page 258, what is happening with the samovar? How is this connected to the rest of the story?</p>	<p>On page 258, Sashie is using a piece of the samovar to cover her face on the journey. The piece she has is the piece that Rache found in the trunk so many years later.</p>

<p>Sashie talks about how she has never been past the “Alexandra Gates of the park.” Why is this mentioned/meaningful? (Pg. 261)</p>	<p>The fact that Sashie is going past the boundaries of her old life and entering into a new world is meaningful because it is an entrance into a new, unknown place. She is being forced out of what she has always and only known as home and beginning a new life.</p>
<p>Sashie describes “dragons” on page 263. Who are the dragons she speaks about? What does she think the dragons did to Wolf? What did they do to her grandparents?</p>	<p>She got the idea of dragons from a book her father read to her. She equates the dragons with the Russian tsars and the people working under them – the people who are persecuting Jewish people. She thinks that the dragons had burned Wolf, made him experience and see things that no person should and these things changed him. The dragons murdered her grandparents.</p>
<p>Reread pages 266-267. The author clearly describes the changes in the road and the sounds she hears. What do the changes in the road and outside sounds symbolize?</p>	<p>The sounds she hears are welcome sounds. They are different from city sounds, they are country sounds. They symbolize how much her life is going to change. They symbolize her anticipation to get to her new life and her optimism in what her new life will bring. “...listening as the country sounds bloomed around her like huge flowers.”</p>
<p>Sashie described the officer’s jacket down to every detail on page 270. Why was this an important moment in her memory?</p>	<p>In their escape, this was the most dangerous moment for her. She felt her life flash before her eyes in the knife that sat just above her face. When a life-changing event happens like that, every moment is clear in your memory.</p>

Sashie describes herself as having “new legs” after Wolf helped her from the wagon. How are her legs like “new”? (Pg. 274)

They could be “like new” because they were wobbly after being in the wagon for so long, it was like she was using them for the first time, like a baby deer or horse. More likely, Sashie’s legs are “like new” because she is beginning a new life, she is touching new ground.

## Vocabulary

	<b>KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING</b>	<b>WORDS WORTH KNOWING</b> General teaching suggestions are provided in the Introduction
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<p><b>TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION</b> not enough contextual clues provided in the text</p>	<p>p. 249 – persecution p. 250 – apprehension p. 258 – emphatically</p>	<p>p. 251 – reverie p. 255 – recoiled p. 255 – disembodied p. 255 – intimacy p. 249 – tsarist p. 250 - unquenchably p. 253 – lambent p. 256 – inexorable p. 268 - timpani</p>
<p><b>STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING</b> sufficient context clues are provided in the text</p>	<p>p. 249 - samovar p. 253 – consequently p. 262 – tumult p. 272 - unfathomable</p>	<p>p. 249 – unison p. 258 – ample p. 264 – sleeping draught</p>

Culminating Task

- Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

*What did Sashie share with Rache about her past? Describe at least two meaningful moments in her story. Why did she include these parts? Why is the samovar included in this story? What did it symbolize?*

Answer: Sashie shared the story of the journey her family took to escape from Russia where Jewish people were being persecuted. Possible moments would include: Getting under the chicken coops, her mother's frozen reaction, leaving her home (Alexandra Gates), when the wagon is stopped by tsars, when they finally arrive in the country. The samovar is included in the story because it was a piece of Sashie's childhood that was rediscovered and that reminded her of the journey. The samovar symbolized Sashie's childhood in Russia and it symbolized family. The samovar was a centerpiece for her family when she was a child and it can now be a centerpiece for her family as an elder.

### Additional Tasks

- If the samovar could talk, what story would it tell? Think about Sashie's story and how the samovar was taken apart for the travels. Think about how the family sees it as being "a soldier" and its reaction to this role. Write a short story from the samovar's perspective. Tell about what it sees, feels, and hears.
- Have students research this time in history, with a particular focus on Jewish persecution in Russia, to have them better understand what Sashie and her family were escaping from. Then, have them research another time in history when Jewish people were discriminated against. Have them compare and contrast the two situations and present their findings to the class.

### Note to Teacher

- “The Night Journey” is an exceptionally long and complex text. Breaking up the independent and shared read portions may increase students’ ability to tackle and appreciate the history and beauty in this story.