

Quarter 3

Unit 6

Title: Rikki-tikki-tavi

Suggested Time: Approximately 15 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.7.1, RL.7.2, RL.7.3, RL.7.4, RL.7.6; W.7.1, W.7.4, W.7.9; SL.7.1, SL.7.4, SL.7.6; L.7.1, L.7.2, L.7.4

Teacher Instructions

Preparing for 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

Loyalty and nature can drive one to commit bold and fearless actions, whether right or wrong.

Guiding Question

When are the acts of loyalty and the protection of the ones you love turn into brutal and heartless actions? Explain.

Synopsis

A mongoose, Rikki-tikki-tavi, comes to live with an English family in their bungalow in colonial India. Two cobras—Nag and Nagaina—live in the garden surrounding the bungalow and threaten the lives of Rikki-tikki's human family. Through a series of battles, Rikki-tikki-tavi kills Nag and Nagaina, protecting his human family and winning their trust and affection.

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

During Teaching

1. Before reading the text, **teacher presents the guiding question to the students** and allows time for students to discuss their initial thoughts pertaining to this question: **When are the acts of loyalty and the protection of the ones you love turn into brutal and heartless actions? Explain.**
2. Students read the entire selection independently.
3. Teacher reads the text aloud while students follow along or students take turns reading aloud to each other. Depending on the text length and student need, the teacher may choose to read the full text or a passage aloud. For a particularly complex text, the teacher may choose to reverse the order of steps 1 and 2.
4. Students and teacher re-read the text while stopping to respond to and discuss the questions, continually 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	Evidence-based Answers
Reread the first two paragraphs of the text. Name three things that we know about Rikki-tikki-tavi from the outset of the story. Cite details directly from the text. (Pg. 408)	From the first two paragraphs, we know that Rikki-tikki was a mongoose, he lived in a cantonment in India, he fought some sort of big battle, he has a pink nose and eyes, a long tail, and a war cry “Rikk-tikk-tikki-tikki-tchk!”
A cantonment is a military base in India. Based on the language in the first paragraph describing Rikki’s actions, why is it fitting that this story takes place in a cantonment? (Pg. 408)	The first paragraph tells us that Rikki-tikki was in a “great war” that he fought “single-handed.” It makes sense that this story about a great battle takes place in a military base.
How does Rikki come to live in the bungalow? In what ways does Rikki exemplify the curiosity of a true mongoose in his first days in the bungalow? Cite three specific examples from the text. (Pg. 408)	Rikki is washed away from his burrow by a flood. An English family discovers him, almost dead, and takes him into their home. Rikki exemplifies the fearless curiosity of a mongoose when he nearly drowns himself in the bath, puts his nose in the ink on the table, and climbs up to see how the big man writes.
Reread the third paragraph on page 410. How does Rikki know	Rikki’s mother, who used to live in a white man’s house, taught

<p>how to behave in the bungalow? What do Rikki's actions in this paragraph demonstrate about his attitude toward being there?</p>	<p>him what to do if he was ever in that situation. Rikki acts very well-behaved because "...every well-brought-up mongoose always hopes to be a house mongoose some day..."</p>
<p>What is Rikki's first impression of the garden? How does this change when he meets Darzee? (Pg. 410-411)</p>	<p>Rikki is delighted by the garden and finds it to be "...a splendid hunting ground..." Then, Rikki hears the sorrowful voices of Darzee and his wife mourning the loss of one of their babies (eaten by Nag), and knows that there is an evil force in the garden.</p>
<p>When Rikki-tikki asks about Nag, "Darzee and his wife only <u>covered</u> down in the nest without answering" (p. 411). Based on what you learn about Nag in the next few sentences, why would Darzee and his wife have <i>covered</i>?</p>	<p>To cower is to crouch or shrink down in fear. Darzee and his wife covered down in the nest because of their deep fear of Nag. Nag is a giant cobra that threatens the lives of many in the garden.</p>
<p>Nag introduces himself to Rikki in the second to last paragraph on page 411. Read his introduction aloud to a partner. What does Nag want Rikki to know about him and how does his language exaggerate this?</p>	<p>Nag wants Rikki to know that he has power in the garden and that Rikki should be fearful of him. Nag says in a grand tone that the god Brahm "...put his mark upon all our people..." His language is elevated, formal, and self-important: "I am Nag... Look, and be afraid!"</p>
<p>What do we find out about the inherent relationship between a mongoose and a cobra? What conflict does this establish between Rikki and Nag? (Pg. 414)</p>	<p>The mongoose and the cobra are natural enemies. Rikki-tikki "...knew that all a grown mongoose's business in life was to fight and eat snakes." This sets up the expectation that Rikki and Nag will battle to take control over the garden.</p>
<p>How does the family treat Rikki after he kills Karait? Cite specific examples from the text. Still, why can't Rikki fully enjoy his triumph? (Pg. 414)</p>	<p>Teddy's mother "... hugged him, crying that he had saved Teddy from death..." and Teddy's father said that he was a providence, a blessing from God. Rikki-tikki enjoys the praise, but cannot fully enjoy it because he remembers Nag and Nagaina are still out there.</p>
<p>What warning does Chuchundra issue to Rikki? How does Rikki treat Chuchundra in this section? Point to a specific example (Pg. 414)</p>	<p>Chuchundra tries to warn Rikki-tikki that Nag and Nagaina are plotting against him and his family. Rikki is harsh and impatient with Chuchundra, even threatening to bite him at one point.</p>
<p>Reread the section in which Nag and Nagaina scheme to kill Teddy and his family. What does this conversation reveal about their differences? Who is the true mastermind? (Pgs. 415-416)</p>	<p>In this conversation, it is Nagaina who comes up with the plan against Rikki and his human family. Nag questions the decision to kill the people, but Nagaina is adamant: "When there were no people in the bungalow, did we have any mongoose?"</p>

<p>Reread the description of the fight between Nag and Rikki (in paragraphs 3-4 on page 416). What do you notice about the length of the sentences in this description? Does this contribute to the feeling of this section?</p> <p>(As a support, students may create a flow map of the battle between Nag and Rikki.)</p>	<p>The sentences describing the fight scene are quite long and include lots of small descriptive phrases. For example, “Then he was battered to and fro as a rat is shaken by a dog—to and fro on the floor, up and down, and round in great circles; but his eyes were red, and he held on as the body cart-whipped over the floor, upsetting the tin dipper and the soap dish and the flesh brush, and banged against the tin side of the bath.” These long sentences create a sense of drive and momentum, and allow the reader to feel the intensity and rhythm of the fight.</p>
<p>What does Rikki call Darzee on page 417? Why is he so frustrated with Darzee at this point?</p>	<p>Rikki calls Darzee a “...stupid tuft of feathers.” He is frustrated that Darzee is singing when he is still facing the wrath of Nagaina. “You’re safe enough in your nest there, but it’s war for me down here,” Rikki claims.</p>
<p>On page 420, Rikki demands of Nagaina, “What price for a young snake’s egg? For a young cobra? For a young king cobra? For the last—the very last of the brood?” What point is Rikki making to Nagaina? How do these four questions build to emphasize his point?</p>	<p>With each sentence, Rikki’s point becomes clearer and more poignant. The structure of the question stays the same, but the language changes from <i>egg</i> to <i>young cobra</i> to <i>young king cobra</i>... the very last possible young cobra to be born of Nag. Nagaina will be losing all that she has left.</p>
<p>Darzee’s wife helps Rikki defeat Nagaina in two ways. What are these two ways? Why is Darzee’s wife wiser than Darzee? (Pgs. 418-421)</p>	<p>First, Darzee’s wife pretends she has a broken wing and lets Nagaina chase her away while Rikki destroys her eggs. Then, in Rikki’s final chase of Nagaina, Darzee’s wife flaps her wings about Nagaina’s head, distracting her for just long enough to allow Rikki to catch up to her. Darzee’s wife is smarter than Darzee because she contributes to Rikki’s battle, while Darzee just sits around and sings about it. Rikki-tikki says Darzee “...doesn’t know how to do the right thing at the right time.” Darzee’s wife does.</p>
<p>When Teddy’s parents wake Rikki-tikki from his sleep following the battle with Nagaina, what does he say? What does this reveal about how he feels about the battle (Pg. 422)</p>	<p>“‘Oh, it’s you,’ he said. ‘What are you bothering for? All the cobras are dead; and if they weren’t, I’m here.’” This reveals that Rikki is quite proud and nonchalant about his accomplishments, perhaps even a bit arrogant.</p>

Tier II/Academic Vocabulary

	These words require less time to learn (They are concrete or describe an object/event/ process/characteristic that is familiar to students)	These words require more time to learn (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, are a part of a word family, or are likely to appear again in future texts)
Meaning can be learned from context	Page 409 - immensely Page 408, 409 - cotton wool Page 410 - nursery Page 412 - fledglings Page 413 - paralyzed Page 414 - insisted Page 414 - whimpers Page 414 - sorrowfully Page 417 - valiant Page 421 - mournful Page 421 - touching part	Page 408 - scuttled Page 408 - revived Page 410 - roaming Page 411 - cowered Page 412 - chattered Page 418 - cunningly Page 418 - consolation
Meaning needs to be provided	Page 408 - cantonment Page 408 - bungalow Page 409 - veranda Page 410 - kerosene lamps Page 411 - Brahm Page 411 - hood Page 415 - bathroom sluice	Page 408 - draggled Page 410 - cultivated Page 414 - providence Page 416 - purchase Page 416 - singed

Culminating Writing Task

- Prompt

“Rikki-tikki had a right to be proud of himself; but he did not grow too proud...” (422). Compose a concise argument, articulating whether or not you agree with the statement that Rikki had a right to be proud of himself. Support your claim with specific examples from the text, including direct quotes and page numbers.

- Teacher Instructions

1. Students identify their writing task from the prompt provided.
2. Students complete an evidence chart as a pre-writing activity. Teachers should remind students to use any relevant notes they compiled while reading and answering the text-dependent questions. (Students should use thinking maps to organize their thinking such as a Tree map.)

<i>Evidence Quote or paraphrase</i>	<i>Page number</i>	<i>Elaboration / explanation of how this evidence supports ideas or argument</i>
He went away for a dust bath under the castor-oil bushes, while Teddy’s father beat the dead Karait. “What is the use of that?” thought Rikki-tikki; “I have settled it all.”	414	After Rikki-tikki kills Karait, Teddy’s father continues to beat the dead snake. Rikki-tikki’s comment on this demonstrates his arrogance: <i>he</i> was the one who took care of the problem, not Teddy’s father.
“I didn’t—so you must tell me. Quick, Chuchundra, or I’ll bite you!”	414	Rikki-tikki threatens to bite an already crying Chuchundra unless he tells him what he heard about Nag from his cousin Chua.
He bit off the tops of the eggs as fast as he could, taking care to crush the young cobras, and turned over the litter from time to time to see whether he had missed any. Rikki-tikki began to chuckle to himself when he heard Darzee’s wife screaming.	419	Perhaps his most merciless act, Rikki-tikki destroys all of Nagaina’s eggs—the eggs made with Nag, who Rikki has also just murdered. While Rikki was doing this to protect his family and those in the garden from being attacked by the cobras, this act is brutal and heartless. Particularly distasteful is

		the fact that he chuckles while doing so.
“The boy is safe, and it was I—I—I that caught Nag by the hood last night in the bathroom.” Then he began to jump up and down, all four feet together, his head close to the floor.	420	Rikki brags to Nagaina that he was the one who killed her beloved Nag.
“Give me the egg, Rikki-tikki. Give me the last of my eggs, and I will go away and never come back,” she said, lowering her hood. “Yes, you will go away, and you will never come back, for you will go to the rubbish heap with Nag...”	420	When Nagaina asks Rikki for mercy, he shows her none. Perhaps Rikki doubts her sincerity, but he gives this plea not even a second of consideration.

3. Once students have completed the evidence chart, they should look back at the writing prompt in order to remind themselves what kind of response they are writing (i.e. expository, analytical, argumentative) and think about the evidence they found. (Depending on the grade level, teachers may want to review students’ evidence charts in some way to ensure accuracy.) From here, students should develop a specific thesis statement. This could be done independently, with a partner, small group, or the entire class. Consider directing students to the following sites to learn more about thesis statements: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/> OR http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/thesis_statement.shtml.
4. Students compose a rough draft. With regard to grade level and student ability, teachers should decide how much scaffolding they will provide during this process (i.e. modeling, showing example pieces, sharing work as students go).
5. Students complete final draft.

- Sample Answer

The narrator of “Rikki-tikki-tavi” concludes the telling of the story with the following claim: “Rikki-tikki had a right to be proud of himself; but he did not grow too proud...” (422). While Rikki protected his family honorably against the cobras, he should not necessarily be proud of all of his actions. In addition to demonstrating courage and fearlessness,

Rikki also demonstrated arrogance and mercilessness. A hint of Rikki's arrogance emerges early on in the story. After Rikki-tikki kills Karait, Teddy's father continues to beat the dead snake. Rikki-tikki's response: "'What is the use of that?' thought Rikki-tikki; 'I have settled it all'" (414). Rikki-tikki asserts that *he* was the one who took care of the problem, not Teddy's father. While this is not horrific in itself, it demonstrates an arrogance that grows in Rikki as the story arrives at its climax.

Rikki-tikki's final battle with Nagaina demonstrates most clearly elements of his behavior that should not inspire pride. Perhaps his most merciless act, Rikki-tikki destroys all of Nagaina's eggs—the eggs made with Nag, who Rikki has also just murdered. While Rikki was doing this to protect his family and those in the garden from being attacked by the cobras, this act is brutal and heartless, especially in light of the fact that "...he began to chuckle to himself..." afterwards (419). Later in the scene, Rikki-tikki brags to Nagaina that he was the one who killed her beloved Nag: "The boy is safe, and it was I—I—I that caught Nag by the hood last night in the bathroom" (420). Then he began to jump up and down, all four feet together, his head close to the floor. Finally, when Nagaina asks Rikki-tikki for mercy, promising to go away with the egg and never return again, Rikki-tikki refuses (420). Perhaps Rikki-tikki doubts her sincerity, but he gives this plea not even a second of consideration.

While Rikki-tikki was perhaps right in the end to attack the cobras to defend his family, there are small details in his actions that suggest arrogance and heartlessness. In particular, the way that Rikki-tikki chuckles when he kills Nagaina's eggs and brags to her about killing Nag are actions for which he should not feel pride, but rather shame.

Additional Tasks

- *Have students complete the “Simple and Compound Sentences-Grammar Lesson” activity from the anthology.*

Answer: Tasks and answers available in the anthology on page 424.

Selection Support practice: Page 123

- *After working on their essays, have students divide into teams based on whether they agreed that Rikki-tikki was right to be proud of his actions in the story. Have each group compile the strongest evidence in support of their position and draft an opening statement. Moderate a 20-30 minute debate between the two groups.*

Note to Teacher

- You may want to consider having students do the first read independently, and then choose critical sections of the text to read aloud to each other while working on the series of text-dependent questions. The culminating task intends to be a brief essay. Challenge students to strive towards succinctness and brevity in this short essay.

Name _____ Date _____

“Rikki-tikki-tavi”

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2. A cantonment is a military base in India. Based on the language in the first paragraph describing Rikki’s actions, why is it fitting that this story takes place in a cantonment? (Pg. 408)

3. How does Rikki come to live in the bungalow? In what ways does Rikki exemplify the curiosity of a true mongoose in his first days in the bungalow? Cite three specific examples from the text. (Pg. 408)

4. Reread the third paragraph on page 410. How does Rikki know how to behave in the bungalow? What do Rikki’s actions in this paragraph demonstrate about his attitude toward being there?

5. What is Rikki's first impression of the garden? How does this change when he meets Darzee? (Pgs. 410-411)

6. When Rikki-tikki asks about Nag, "Darzee and his wife only cowered down in the nest without answering" (p. 411). Based on what you learn about Nag in the next few sentences, why would Darzee and his wife have *cowered*?

7. Nag introduces himself to Rikki in the second to last paragraph on page 411. Read his introduction aloud to a partner. What does Nag want Rikki to know about him and how does his language exaggerate this?

8. What do we find out about the inherent relationship between a mongoose and a cobra? What conflict does this establish between Rikki and Nag? (Pg. 412)

9. How does the family treat Rikki after he kills Karait? Cite specific examples from the text. Still, why can't Rikki fully enjoy his triumph? (Pg. 414)

10. What warning does Chuchundra issue to Rikki? How does Rikki treat Chuchundra in this section? Point to a specific example (Pg. 414)

11. Reread the section in which Nag and Nagaina scheme to kill Teddy and his family. What does this conversation reveal about their differences? Who is the true mastermind? (Pgs. 415-416)

12. Reread the description of the fight between Nag and Rikki (in paragraphs 3-4 on page 416). What do you notice about the length of the sentences in this description? Does this contribute to the feeling of this section?

13. What does Rikki call Darzee on page 417? Why is he so frustrated with Darzee at this point?

14. On page 420, Rikki demands of Nagaina, “What price for a young snake’s egg? For a young cobra? For a young king cobra? For the last—the very last of the brood?” What point is Rikki making to Nagaina? How do these four questions **build** to emphasize his point?

15. Darzee's wife helps Rikki defeat Nagaina in two ways. What are these two ways? Why is Darzee's wife wiser than Darzee? (Pgs. 418-421)

16. When Teddy's parents wake Rikki-tikki from his sleep following the battle with Nagaina, what does he say? What does this reveal about how he feels about the battle (Pg. 422)