



A Lesson on Staying in Phoenix by Collin Cole

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 1 hour

Lesson Keywords: Native American Phoenix Arizona Dam Drought

Lesson Description: The purpose of this lesson is to expand the students vocabulary and to give the students an idea of what sort of problems people faced and how they fixed them.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2: Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.3: Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.5: Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.

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Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

Instructions: Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

Staying in Phoenix

by

Content: Long ago, Native Americans lived in the state of Arizona. They lived in a place that is called Phoenix today. They were farmers. Their environment was very dry. It was a desert. A desert is an environment that gets less than ten inches of rain during a year. They dug great canals. They were ten feet deep and 30 feet wide. Canals are like man-made rivers--they are paths water flows in. The canals brought water from a river to the land. They used it to farm. That was long ago, and many years later the Native Americans left.

Then in 1867, more than 100 years ago, more people came. They were settlers who moved to the area. They saw where the canals had been. Dirt had fallen into them, but they dug them again. Just as before, they got water to their land from the river. They named their new town Phoenix.

For a while people were glad to settle in Phoenix, but then there was a drought. In summer the river dried up. Then they had no water, crops died, and it was difficult to get food. Some people gave up and moved away since they knew they might not have water all the time.

People who stayed figured out a way to solve their problem. They built a dam. A dam is a wall that goes across a river. Some of the water can flow through it, but more water stays behind it. That water makes a kind of lake, which is called a reservoir. The people of Phoenix had water they could count on. They would open the dam when they needed more water for their crops.

Today if you go to Phoenix you will see farms. You can buy fresh fruit and vegetables that grow there. You can see them growing all year. That is because it is always warm in Phoenix. In summer it is very hot because it is a desert. Today there are many more people living in Phoenix even though it is so hot and dry. They have the water they need and they also solved another problem. It was so hot in summer that people did not want to live here, but then someone invented a solution. He invented the air conditioner. Now that there is air conditioning, people can live in this very hot climate. They have come to stay in Phoenix.

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Task 1: Vocabulary

Instructions: Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

Q: 1 WordPhrase: Desert **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: What does the word "Desert" mean in this passage?

- A: A place with a lot of trees.
- B: A place that is very wet.
- C: A place that is very dry.
- D: A place that gets a lot of rain.

Question: Which one of the sentences below uses the word "desert" correctly?

- A: That desert sure is wet.
 - B: His mouth was as dry as a desert.
 - C: Are you going to eat that desert?
 - D: Please pass the desert.
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Q: 2 WordPhrase: Canal **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: What does the word "canal" mean in this passage?

- A: Man-made paths where water flows through.
- B: Man-made jugs to hold water.
- C: Man-made paths for people to walk on.
- D: Man-made paths for the desert to move through.

Question: Which one of the sentences below uses the word "canal" correctly?

- A: The men wanted to dig the canal so sand could flow through it.
 - B: James walked on top of the canal.
 - C: The men didn't need to make the canal, it was already there naturally.
 - D: The canal was finished, and water started to flow through it.
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Q: 3 WordPhrase: Drought **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: What does the word "drought" mean in this passage?

- A: When it is so wet there is no water.
- B: When it is so dry there is a lot of water.
- C: When it is so dry there is no water.
- D: When it is so wet there is a lot of water.

Question: Which one of the sentences below uses the word "drought" correctly?

- A: Damien like to play in the water, thankfully there was a big drought coming.
 - B: Alex really wanted a drink of water, but it was hard to find because of the drought.
 - C: The man slipped and fell in a puddle. "I hate this drought! It's too wet!" he said.
 - D: Fred got to drink a lot of water because of the drought.
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Q: 4 WordPhrase: Reservoir **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: What does the word "reservoir" mean in this passage?

- A: A river that is held by the dam.
- B: A lake that comes out of a dam.
- C: A river that comes out of a dam.
- D: A lake that is held by a dam.

Question: Which one of the sentences below uses the word "reservoir" correctly?

- A: The reservoir had a lot of water, good thing the dam was strong enough to hold it all.
 - B: The reservoir fell into the desert.
 - C: The reservoir was flowing down the canal.
 - D: The reservoir had a lot of water, good thing the dam didn't have to hold any of it.
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Task 2: Forum Discussion

Instructions: This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

1 - What would you do if you didn't have any water?

What would you do if you didn't have any water?? How would you get more?? How would you save it all?? Do you think a dam is a good idea?

2 - Would you want to live in Phoenix back then?

Would you want to live in Phoenix back then?? What about now?? Why?? Be sure to give examples.

3 - Why did the people of Phoenix make a dam?

Why did the people of Phoenix make a dam?? What does it do?? Why would they let water through?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: You are to write and post here 500 words essay summarizing the text. Think about why they made the dam.? Make sure to provide specific examples.

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