



A Lesson on The Astronaut's Diary by Ashlyn Averbek

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 1 hour

Lesson Keywords: Vocabulary, opinion writing, theme

Lesson Description: Students will read the passage, complete vocabulary, answer questions about the passage, and then write their own version of an astronaut's diary.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.2: Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1b: Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4a: Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

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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.

The Astronaut's Diary

by

Content: We were exhausted from all the work. We slept in shifts. One of us had to be awake all the time. There was so much work to do.

Finally, we got to our destination. We had reached the space station. There, we would do more work, but we would have less pressure. We had so much to do every day on our ship. Now there would be more people to help us. We would be on a collaborative team. We would be able to share the work.

When we moved into the space station, I felt great. There was so much more space. We would have real beds to sleep in. We would have better food. They had a garden on the space station. They grew vegetables.

The six astronauts on the space station were happy to see us. They said, We have been waiting for you. We were glad to see them, too. We had been worried. We heard that one of them had been sick.

We asked how she was feeling. She said she was better now. It had been a cold. We were relieved. We could stop worrying now.

That first night on the space station was great. We had good food. We had a good dinner. Then we were going to sleep. But one of the astronauts said, We need to give you a job. Each person has to take turns staying awake. Here is the schedule. So I had a shift again.

I saw I was first. I would have to stay awake tonight. I was disappointed. I felt fatigued. I had been awake and working for 20 hours. But I knew it was my duty. So I sighed and said, See you in the morning.

I became an astronaut so that I could travel in space. Now I'm here. It is hard work. It's even more challenging than I expected.

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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: fatigued **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: Ben felt fatigued after baseball practice.

What does the word "fatigued" mean in this sentence?

- A: tired
- B: excited
- C: happy
- D: angry

Question: Which one of the sentences below used the word "fatigued" correctly?

- A: Amy felt fatigued because she ate too much candy.
 - B: Fatigued milk is my favorite drink after school.
 - C: After playing outside all day, Sarah felt fatigued and decided to take a nap.
 - D: The cat looked fatigued after eating his dinner.
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Q: 2 WordPhrase: destination **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: Our destination for the field trip was the zoo, where we saw lions and elephants!

What does the word "destination" mean in this sentence?

- A: trip
- B: place
- C: animal
- D: theme

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

- A: I put my shoes in the destination to keep them safe.
 - B: My mom packed sandwiches for our destination to eat on the way.
 - C: The destination of the story was about a talking dog.
 - D: We planned our trip to the beach, and our destination was a cozy cabin by the shore.
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Q: 3 WordPhrase: duty **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: As a student, it is my duty to complete my homework every day.

What does the word "duty" mean in this sentence?

- A: responsibility
- B: task
- C: fun
- D: work

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

- A: I have to do my duty before I can watch TV.
 - B: My duty is to eat all my vegetables before dessert.
 - C: It's my duty to play video games instead of doing my homework because I love them.
 - D: It is my duty to take care of my pet dog every day.
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Q: 4 WordPhrase: worried **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: I was worried when I couldn't find my favorite toy, but then I remembered I left it at my friend's house.

What does the word "worried" mean in this sentence?

- A: sad
- B: anxious
- C: happy
- D: angry

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

- A: I worried my bike to school today.
 - B: Sally worried when she saw her favorite cartoon on TV.
 - C: Tom was worried about his math test tomorrow.
 - D: The cat worried its tail while sitting on the windowsill.
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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 do you think the astronaut felt...

What do you think the astronaut felt when they looked back at Earth from space? Why do you think they felt that way?

2 - Why would an astronaut keep a diary?

Why do you think keeping a diary is important for astronauts? What do you think they might write about in their diary entries?

3 - How is space different from Earth?

How do you think the astronaut's experiences in space might be different from our experiences on Earth? What are some things they might miss or enjoy in space compared to being on Earth?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: You are to write and post here a 500-word essay imagining you are an astronaut writing your own journal entry. What would you miss from Earth the most? Explain why. What about being an astronaut would be difficult or easy? Explain why. Make sure to provide specific examples.

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