

Common Core Lesson Plan

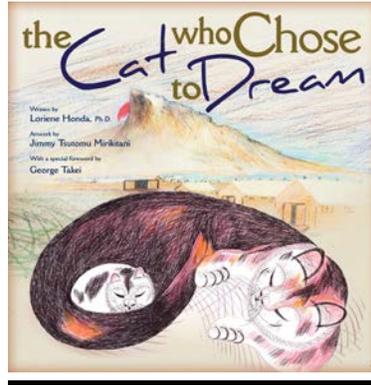
Created by: Daniel Miyake, 2013 integratingart@gmail.com

The Cat Who Chose to Dream

Written by Loriene Honda, Ph.D.

Illustrations by Jimmy Tsutomu Mirikitani

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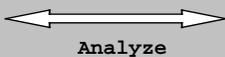


Each Common Core term has two questions that require careful reading of the text to answer. The first question for each term is associated with the written text and the second question is associated with the illustrations.



Determine central ideas or themes.

1. One of the main themes throughout the story is Jimmy the Cat's search for peace. How does Jimmy eventually find peace at the World War II prison camp? Provide at least two pieces of evidence from the story to support your answer.
2. The theme of peace can also be seen in the illustrations. Describe how the illustrations change throughout the story as Jimmy the Cat searches for peace. Which images prove that Jimmy is able to find peace in his life even though he has endured many difficulties?



Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop.

1. How do the Japanese symbols (koi carp, snow tiger, and ferocious dragon) help Jimmy the Cat develop the strength to find peace in his complicated life?
2. How does the image of the dragon on page 22 show that Jimmy has developed the ability to shield himself and his family from the harsh reality of their unjust incarceration?



Assess how point of view or purpose shapes content.

1. From whose point of view is the story being told? Give specific evidence from the text to support your reasoning.
2. Do the colors in the illustrations help the reader understand how the point of view of the speaker changes throughout the story? Which specific images from the illustrations provide evidence to support your opinion?



Interpret words as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings.

1. There is now a “Power of Words” movement (<http://www.jacl.org/powerofwords>) advocating for the use of non-euphemistic terminology to describe the World War II camp experience; for example:

Former Terminology

“internment camp”
“internee”
“interned, relocated”

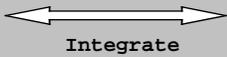
Preferred Terminology

“prison camp, incarceration camp, concentration camp”
“incarceree, prisoner”
“forcibly removed, held, incarcerated”

Why do you think that the former terminology feels euphemistic to some people?

How could the use of more technically-accurate terminology help to build a sense of empowerment for those affected by or learning about this event?

2. The author uses many similes to introduce the Japanese symbols and on pages 19-23 uses personification in the words and illustration. How do these similes and the use of personification help the reader better understand how Jimmy was feeling? In your answer, identify the examples of similes and personification that are used.



Integrate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively.

1. On page 24, the author used the picture of Jimmy the Cat's baby curled up with him to depict her experience of feeling "safe and loved...(reassured that) her beliefs, thoughts and feelings mattered...that her voice is heard".

Draw a picture using symbolic imagery that depicts what you think it would be like for you to experience these same feelings as the baby cat.

2. On page 15, Jimmy "...created a picture in his mind of a magical place just for him, where he could feel safe again." Look at the illustration on page 23, and then draw an illustration of a magical place that you can visit to help you feel safe when your life becomes difficult.



Connect learning to prior knowledge and multiple curricular disciplines.

1. On page 17, Jimmy the Cat says to himself, "Others may have the power to shackle my body, but I always hold the power to free my mind."

Name two people in American history who were able to free their minds in spite of their bodies being shackled. Describe how these individuals freed their minds.

2. In the illustration on page 8, the sun is a deep red. Using knowledge of World War II and the countries with which the United States were at war, tell why you think the illustrator chose to depict the sun as deep red?



Evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance of the evidence.

1. On page 9, Jimmy the Cat could "hear people try to convince his family that they were forced to leave for their own protection. Jimmy knew in his heart this was very wrong..."

Do you agree with the government's reasoning that the forced removal of Japanese Americans would be a form of protection or do you agree with Jimmy's conclusion? Why or why not?

2. Evaluate the colors and images on pages 6-7. Use these colors and images to evaluate how Jimmy felt when he first arrived at the camp? Explain your response with specific examples from the illustration.



Use **reasoning** to evaluate arguments and evidence.

1. Use at least three pieces of evidence to explain how Jimmy the Cat was able to “welcome joy back into his heart.”
2. Rays of sun first appear in the illustrations on page 6. Explain what you believe these rays symbolize. Use evidence from other illustrations to support your argument.



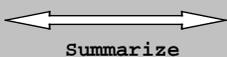
Compare perspectives, themes, and pieces of evidence from multiple sources.

1. During World War II, it was the United States’ perspective that it was appropriate and necessary to incarcerate Japanese Americans. From your perspective, do you believe that Japanese Americans should have been forcibly removed during World War II? Why or why not?
2. Compare the colors and images of the camp on page 13 to the colors and images on page 34. Explain how these two contrasting illustrations show how Jimmy the Cat’s perception of life in the prison camp changed during his stay there.



Support arguments with sufficient and relevant evidence.

1. Do you believe that Jimmy the Cat’s dreams helped him find inner peace? Use two pieces of evidence from the text to support your answer.
2. Each illustration supports the words on that page. Which illustration do you believe best supports the written words on that page? Use specific evidence from the illustration to support your argument.



Summarize research, key details and ideas, and arguments.

1. One of the main ideas of the story is that dreams can help us overcome difficulties in our lives. Explain how Jimmy the Cat used dreams to help him survive the troubles he encountered in his life.
2. The image on page 28 shows Jimmy the Cat with his child. What do you believe Jimmy will teach his child about his experience in the World War II prison camp?