

UNIT TWO

Exploring Author's Language

Read the passages below from *The River*. Underline the literary device in each passage. Then fill in the blank with the correct literary device to label each passage.

- metaphor
sensory words
- alliteration
onomatopoeia
- simile
- idiom
personification

1 _____

The mud was so thick it pulled his right tennis shoe off, and when he groped to find it the mud held his arm, seemed to pull at him, tried to take him down.

2 _____

The mosquitoes. Tearing at him, clouds of them, the awful, ripping, thick masses of the small monsters trying to bleed him dry.

3 _____

Like a camera taking pictures with a strobe light, things would seem frozen in time.

4 _____

He met a girl in school, Deborah McKenzie. They hit it off and went on a few dates.

5 _____

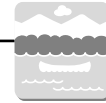
... curling up into his eyes there came the tiny flicker of new flame.

6 _____

... see nothing but images frozen in the split instants of brilliance from the lightning.

7 _____

But there it was again. A hissing? Was that it?
No.
It was lower than that. Not to be heard, but felt.
A *whooshing* — water.
A water sound.

UNIT
TWOGroup and Individual
Classroom Projects

Choose from among the following cross-curricular activities to enhance your students' understanding of the literature selections.

Art

Although *The River* is not illustrated, Paulsen provides many descriptions of the scenery surrounding Brian and Derek. Read aloud with students the paragraph in Chapter 12 that begins "It was full light now..." Discuss the view that Brian sees before him from the shelter. Then have students look through the book for other descriptions of the wilderness that they can use to illustrate a scene from *The River*. Supply students with paper, colored markers and pens, tempera paints, and watercolors.

Language Arts

Suggest that students work in small groups to create a radio play of *The River*. Remind them that a radio play consists only of background music, sound effects, and actors' voices. Have students choose a scene to dramatize and a narrator to give appropriate background information. Small groups can work to find suitable sound effects and background music for the scene. Provide students with rehearsal space. They can then present their scenes to the class.

Math

Recall with students that after Derek falls into a coma, Brian must calculate how long it will take him to get to Bannock's Trading Post. Looking at the map Derek has brought with him, Brian notes that it is laid out in grids and that each grid represents five kilometers. Brian slowly counts out 150 kilometers on the map and deduces that the trading post is 100 miles away, given that there are 1.6 kilometers to a mile. Suggest that a group of students use this information from the map to create math exercises. When they have finished, they can exchange papers and try to solve each other's problems.

Science

Remind students that swarms of biting mosquitoes attack Brian and Derek on their first night in the wilderness. About a week later, during a violent storm, a lightning bolt short-circuits Derek's radio and sends him into a coma. Working in two groups, have students research both mosquitoes and lightning. Ask these questions to get them started: What is the lifecycle of a mosquito? Where are they found? Why are they dangerous to humans? What is lightning? How can it short-circuit a radio or send someone into a coma? Each group can make charts that list interesting facts and safety tips about their topic, and report their findings to the rest of the class.

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1. the mud held his arm, seemed to pull at him, tried to take him down/personification 2. the small monsters trying to bleed him dry/metaphor 3. Like a camera taking pictures with a strobe light/simile 4. They hit it off/idiom 5. flicker of new flame/alliteration 6. images frozen in the split instants of brilliance/sensory words 7. A whooshing—water/onomatopoeia