

Novel Summary

Island Book One: Shipwreck

By Gordon Korman

Published by Scholastic Inc., 2001

ISBN: 0-439-54416-5

Book Format: Novel (129 pages)

Characters:

- Luke Haggerty Sentenced to sail on the *Phoenix* by a court judge, as opposed to spending time in the Williston Juvenile Detention Facility for having a weapon in his school locker.
- Charla Swann On board because she is burned out due to the pressure she faces from her father to do well in sports so she has a “ticket out.”
- Ian Sikorsky On board because his parents believe he spends too much time watching television and playing on his computer.
- J.J. Lane On board because of his destructive activities to gain the attention of his father, a Hollywood star.
- Will Greenfield On board because his parents believe he and his sister, Lyssa fight too much and will kill each other.
- Lyssa Greenfield On board because her parents believe she and her brother, Will, fight too much and will kill each other.
- James Cascadden The captain of the sixty foot ship, the *Phoenix*.
- Mr. Radford The ship’s first mate and cook.
- Dan Rapaport The assistant to Jonathan Lane, J.J. Lane’s father.

Setting:

The sixty foot ship the *Phoenix* is the main setting for this novel. The ship is a sailing vessel complete with masts, booms, and sails, though it also has a back-up engine. The ship is docked in Guam, an island in the Pacific Ocean at the beginning of the novel and leaves port from there heading into the open sea.

Summary:

Six youths (Ian, Charla, Will, J.J., Lyssa, and Luke) are placed in the program Charting a New Course (CNC) all against their own will and all for different reasons. CNC is a sailing program which will see the six youths learn to sail through hard work, experience, and cooperation. The ship, *Phoenix*, houses the youth as well as Captain James Cascadden and Mr. Radford, first mate and cook. Throughout the novel, the events that led to the youths participation in the program are revealed. Despite the problems the youth may have faced before boarding the ship, they face even more problems on board including a storm surprises them all. The storm causes a great deal of damage to the ship and also causes the death of the ship's captain. Just when the youth think that they and the ship will recover from the storm, Mr. Radford abandons them. The youth are then faced with no help from adults, a flooded ship with only one sail, and a useless engine. Working together the six attempt to get the engine going, but in their attempt cause an explosion that rips through the ship, sending them all fleeing into the water. The latter chapters in the novel see four of the six youths surviving aboard a piece of the ship's cabin top hallucinating, dehydrated, and starving. The four eventually drift to a deserted island and assume that their two missing counterparts are dead.

How to Divide the Chapter for Teaching:

- Prologue: The prologue involves foreshadowing of chapter nine when a storm hits, sending sail and passenger into the water.
- Chapter 1-3: Includes a brief introduction of all characters and expanded introductions of all characters, with the exception of Ian and Charla. These chapters also include an introduction of the CNC program, two foreshadows, and many new vocabulary words.
- Chapters 4-6: Includes the expanded introductions of Ian and Charla, more vocabulary, and more foreshadow. This is the section which deals with the youths experiencing their first few days of sail as well as their introduction to the tasks they are responsible for aboard ship.
- Chapters 7-8: This section sees an introduction as to how the ship, the crew, and the youths deal with rough seas and huge waves. This section also sees one of the events foreshadowed in the first few chapters which leads to water in the cabin that has to be pumped out. At the end of chapter eight there is word of an incoming storm.
- Chapters 9-10: These chapters are crucial to the novel as they involve a major turning point in the story. During these chapters the ship is hit by a storm sending gear and sails into the ocean along with the captain. The youth and Mr. Radford are left to deal with the death of their captain and the devastation and flooding caused by the storm.

- Chapters 11-12: These chapters describe life on the ship after the storm. This is the section when the passengers discover that much of their equipment is broken but that they have a life raft. It is also during this section that Mr. Radford leaves the ship in a dinghy with most of their food as well as their global positioning system.
- Chapters 13-14: During these chapters the six youth make plans to sail again. They focus their efforts on pumping out the engine room in the hopes that Lyssa can rebuild the engine and start it again. At the end of this section there is a huge explosion.
- Chapters 15-16: These two chapters see the six separated after the ship explodes and sinks. Four of them are in the water floating on a piece of the cabin top. The others, J.J. and Lyssa, are missing.
- Chapters 17-18: These chapters see the four youths on the cabin top dealing with intense hunger and dehydration as well as hallucinations. Will is unconscious.
- Chapters 19-20: During these concluding chapters Luke is the only one of the four youths that is conscious. Luke believes that dolphins come to their rescue by guiding them to an island. The end of the novel sees all four youths, with the exception of Will, conscious again. All four are alive and safe but are left to mourn the suspected deaths of their two fellow shipmates.

Lesson Plans

Novel Selection

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General Information

This lesson plan which involves using the novel *Island Book One: Shipwreck*, by Gordon Korman, is intended for a grade six class. The particular class this lesson was designed for is comprised of twenty-four students. The students will enjoy reading this novel because the main characters are similar to their ages. The youths in the novel are also dealing with issues many youths deal with, this will help the students relate to the characters. The students will also love the elements of adventure and surprise in the novel as well as the idea that young people can do anything they set their minds to.

Theme

This lesson is meant to be integrated into the theme for the month which is “Sailing The Seas.” Before beginning this theme it is essential to prepare the room. A bulletin board complete with maps, sailing charts, and pictures related to the theme is suggested. If there is a computer in the classroom, a poster listing websites related to the theme is helpful for those students who want to learn more.

Learning Outcomes

After these lessons, students will:

- ◆ understand how to contribute relevant thoughts and stories based on experience
- ◆ understand how to contribute and respond to conversation
- ◆ understand how to ask and respond to questions
- ◆ understand how to make connections within a text
- ◆ understand how to respond critically to text
- ◆ understand how to make predictions
- ◆ understand how to write as a character in the novel might

Lesson Plan - Day 1

Materials:

To complete this lesson the following materials will be required:

- ◆ items found on a ship (eg. bell, chart, wheel, radio, ship's log, etc.)
- ◆ class set of the novel and one for yourself of *Island Book One: Shipwreck*, by Gordon Korman
- ◆ flip chart with paper
- ◆ marker
- ◆ one photocopy of the Chapter 1-3 handout (see appendix) for each student
- ◆ a theme scribbler for each student

Skills and Strategies:

This lesson helps students practice:

- ◆ listening and comprehension during read aloud
- ◆ participating in a discussion
- ◆ making predictions
- ◆ thinking critically
- ◆ responding orally
- ◆ responding by writing

Adapting This Lesson:

This lesson can be adapted for students with special needs in your class:

- ◆ Students with visual impairments will enjoy that the story is being read aloud to all of the class and not just to them. The handout can be enlarged so the font is easier for them to read. Their shipmate's log can be recorded onto a cassette tape as opposed to being written.
- ◆ Students with hearing difficulties can follow along with the reading while you read orally. Be sure to read loudly and clearly to help them understand and know where you are in the novel.
- ◆ Students with reading difficulties can listen to you read orally. Class discussion of the response questions will be less intimidating than trying to answer them in a scribbler. Encourage them to write their shipmate's log, but if they are finding it difficult they may want to record it onto a cassette tape instead.

Assessing Student's Learning:

Upon completion of this lesson it is important to assess students' learning. Possible assessment strategies include:

- ◆ careful observation of the group discussion - be sure to note mentally who is actively participating and who is not
- ◆ how the groups handle answering and discussing the questions
- ◆ collect their theme scribbles to read their shipmate's log - watch for use of new vocabulary as well as how the students write as the character they chose

Lesson Plan - Day 2

Materials:

To complete this lesson the following materials will be required:

- ◆ cassette tape of crashing ocean waves
- ◆ ship bell
- ◆ class set of the novel and one for yourself of *Island Book One: Shipwreck*, by Gordon Korman
- ◆ flip chart with paper
- ◆ marker
- ◆ one overhead of the Chapter 1-3 handout (see appendix)
- ◆ a theme scribbler for each student
- ◆ white 8 ½ x 11 paper (enough for one sheet for every two students)
- ◆ one dictionary for every two students
- ◆ a blank wall or section of a wall
- ◆ tape or “sticky-tac”

Skills and Strategies:

This lesson helps students practice:

- ◆ re-reading text for further comprehension
- ◆ searching for new vocabulary
- ◆ responding orally to questions
- ◆ thinking critically about their novel
- ◆ sharing their writing
- ◆ using dictionaries

Adapting This Lesson:

This lesson can be adapted for students with special needs in your class:

- ◆ Students with visual impairments can be read to by another student or listen to an audio recording of chapters 1-3. The overhead must be large enough for them to read. They may wish to use a large-type dictionary.
- ◆ Students with hearing difficulties can follow along with the overhead as you work through the questions. Be sure to speak loudly and clearly.
- ◆ Students with reading difficulties can re-read the chapters with you or with a partner or listen to them on an audio recording. Using the dictionary to look up new words is great practice for them as they can do the same when they run into a word they do not know during their reading.

Assessing Student's Learning:

Upon completion of this lesson it is important to assess students' learning. Possible assessment strategies include:

- ◆ careful observation of the words they select as new vocabulary (collect their theme scribbles to assess each individual student's list of new vocabulary)
- ◆ how the students answer and discuss the questions from the previous day
- ◆ how the students use the dictionaries and work with the new vocabulary

Lesson Plan - Day 3

Materials:

To complete this lesson the following materials will be required:

- ◆ cassette tape of crashing ocean waves
- ◆ ship bell
- ◆ class set of the novel and one for yourself of *Island Book One: Shipwreck*, by Gordon Korman
- ◆ flip chart with paper (8 pieces of paper)
- ◆ marker (8 markers)
- ◆ one photocopy of the Chapter 4-6 handout (see appendix) for each student
- ◆ a theme scribbler for each student
- ◆ eight photocopies of the character sketch template

Skills and Strategies:

This lesson helps students practice:

- ◆ listening and comprehension during read aloud
- ◆ making observations during read aloud
- ◆ participating in a discussion
- ◆ working on character sketches
- ◆ practicing the writing process (rough draft and final draft)

Adapting This Lesson:

This lesson can be adapted for students with special needs in your class:

- ◆ Students with visual impairments will enjoy that the story is being read aloud to all of the class and not just to them. The handout can be enlarged so the font is easier for them to read.
- ◆ Students with hearing difficulties can follow along with the reading while you read orally. Be sure to read loudly and clearly to help them understand and know where you are in the novel.
- ◆ Students with reading difficulties can listen to you read orally. Class discussion of the response questions will be less intimidating than trying to answer them in a scribbler.

Assessing Student's Learning:

Upon completion of this lesson it is important to assess students' learning. Possible assessment strategies include:

- ◆ careful observation of the class discussion - be sure to note mentally who is actively participating and who is not
- ◆ careful observation of how the groups work on their character sketch
- ◆ collect their rough drafts and final drafts of their character sketch to observe the process they went through

Extending the Lesson

These lessons can be extended. Possible extension activities include:

- ◆ **Science:** Discuss flotation with the students. How does such a heavy ship, such as the Phoenix, stay afloat?
- ◆ **Geography:** Discuss with the students what islands are, what the characteristics of an island are, and how the island of Guam differs from Prince Edward Island.
- ◆ **Drama:** Have the students act out a scene as to why one of the six youths were forced to come on the boat. For example, dramatize the court sentence that Luke went through.

Appendix A: Discussion Questions for Chapters 1-3

1. Why are these six youths involved in the Charting a New Course (CNC) program?
2. What do you think will happen between Will and his sister, Lyssa, while they are aboard the *Phoenix*?
3. What is your first impression of Mr. Radford?
4. Who is your favorite character so far? Why?

Appendix B: Discussion Questions for Chapters 4-6

1. What problems are the passengers facing on board the *Phoenix*?
2. What kinds of work are the passengers responsible for?
3. What are the passengers learning while on board the *Phoenix*?
4. What clues about storms were found in these chapters? How does the Captain's method of predicting storms differ from the one we came up with?

Appendix C: Character Sketch Template