

Baby in a Basket

Book by Ted and Gloria Rand

Unit study by Celia Hartmann and Ami Brainerd

Social Studies

Geography -- Alaska

Alaska, which once belonged to Russia, is America's largest state. America bought it in 1867 at 2 cents an acre. Alaska is a peninsula Northwest of the main land of the United States. To the north of Alaska is the Arctic Ocean. To the South is the Gulf of Alaska and Pacific Ocean. To the west is the Bering Sea. Alaska's land borders Canada to the east and south. You may also want to point out the Arctic Circle, Beaufort Sea, and the Chukchi Sea. The highest point in the US is located in Alaska - Mount McKinley. The capital of Alaska is Juneau.

Near the ocean, the climate is milder, but inland, the summers are short and winters are very long and cold. The coldest temperature ever recorded in Alaska was -80 degrees F on January 23, 1971, at Prospect Creek. Alaska is known as the "Land of the Midnight Sun." In the North when the sun rises on May 10th, it doesn't set for nearly 3 months. When it sets on November 18th, it does not rise again for about two months. In Anchorage the snow starts to fall in early October and it stays till April.

Get the book, *Benny's Flag* by Phyllis Kasilovsky, and find a website to learn more about Benny Benson, the 7th grade boy who designed the flag of Alaska.

If you want continue studying Alaska, try searching for info on Gold in Alaska, the Iditarod, Balto, life cycle of the salmon, auroras, glaciers, etc.

Language Arts: Non-fiction

Non-fiction is a work that draws its information from history or fact, rather than the imagination. Make a chart with FICTION and NON-FICTION at the top. Discuss some stories you have studied recently. Which ones were fiction? How do you know? Which ones were non-fiction? Why?

Language Arts: Allusion

Allusion is found in literature and is a brief reference to a person, event, or place, real or fictitious, or to a work of art. It is a literary device that stimulates ideas, associations, and extra information in the reader's mind. Before you complete the Bible lesson, ask your student if the title of this book is an allusion to a famous Bible story? Which one? Just as God kept baby Moses safe in a basket, He also kept this dear baby safe in a basket.

Language Arts: Dialect in Dialogue

If your student is mature enough in his studies, explain that when writers allow characters to talk, they want to let the readers hear their true voices. Dialogue is one of those things that doesn't always have to be grammatically correct. For instance, in *Baby in a Basket*, Rand has the trappers speak in their authentic voices. "We was crossin' the river on downstream aways, when we saw this little ol' basket sailin' along top of the ice." Go back through the book and read some of what the trappers say. Use an accent and make it fun! Now, go back and change the words of the trappers to make them proper. "We were crossing the river downstream when we saw this little basket sailing along top of the ice." What changes? What does the reader lose? Add authentic dialogue to your Writer's Options notebook.

Language Arts: Vocabulary

planks- wide heavy thick boards

collapsed- to cave or fall in or give way

stunned- to overcome with astonishment or disbelief

"sharp eyes" - someone who has good eye sight or is able to spot hidden things

canvas- a strong cloth of hemp, flax, or cotton used for clothing (in the past it has been used for tents and sails)

thermos- a container (as a bottle) with a vacuum between an inner and an outer wall used to keep material (as liquids) hot or cold

game- animals hunted for sport

Math/Language Arts: Fifteen Days

The journey from Alaska to Washington State was fifteen days (see author's note). Make a list with your student of everything he would need to pack if he were going on a ten-day journey in the cold winter (but had limited space). After you make the list together, you may want to write some story problems based on your items.

For example,

If you packed 10 bags of sunflower seeds and ate two bags each day, what day would you run out?

If you started your journey on Monday, what day would you make it to Washington? Think of other questions to use as story problems.

Art -- Splatter Paint Snow

Provide your student with a dark-colored piece of construction paper (the medium or dark blue or black works well). Have the student draw (chalk or Gel-Fx crayons work great on construction paper) an outdoor snow scene, such as a snowman or landscape.

You might want the student to put on some old clothes for the next part! Have the child dip an old toothbrush into white paint (prior to this part add water to the paint so that it is thinner). Then by running the fingers over the bristles or running the bristles over an old comb overtop the picture, a snow scene is created.

Depending how long your child splatters, he can create anywhere from a soft snowfall effect to a blizzard-like condition over the scene the he drew!

Science

Dark Days of Winter

They left the "dark days of winter in the far north" and when "the days were lighter, they would return." During the winter, Alaska's day has little daytime hours -- most of the time it dark outside.

First let's discuss *seasons*. The different seasons (spring, summer, fall, and winter) are caused by the angle of tilt of the Earth's axis. Depending on where the Earth is at in its orbit, either the Southern or the Northern hemisphere is tilted toward the sun. During the winter, when the Northern hemisphere is titled away from the sun.

Because Alaska is so far north that means it is even more tilted away from the sun and therefore receives very little light. (The opposite is true as well: during the summer, Alaska is tilted more toward the sun and so it has long days and short nights.)

Camouflage

Did your student notice that the fox, snowy owl, and snowshoe rabbit are all white? You may want to take some time to explain that when something blends in with its background, it's camouflaged (or disguised like when your student dresses up in a costume). Camouflage can be a certain color (like in our story) or a pattern of colors, or even a shape that fools the eye. There are two reasons that God designed animals with this special feature. 1. Helps animals hide from enemies 2. Helps a hunter sneak up on its prey.

Arctic Animals

Arctic Fox

Anatomy:

- fur of the Arctic fox is white during the winter and gray-brown in the summer
- 20 inches long plus a 12 inch long tail
- long, bushy tail (sometimes called a sweep), helps the fox change direction quickly and keeps the fox's feet and nose warm when it curls up to sleep
- sharp, curved claws
- sharp teeth
- thick, insulating fur
- small ears

Diet:

- carnivores (meat eaters)
- diet consists of small mammals, eggs, birds, insects, fish, and carrion (dead animals)

Arctic Hare

Anatomy:

- about 21 inches long with a 2 inch tail
- weighs about 12 pounds
- powerful hind legs and huge hind feet (helping them leap on the snow)
- short ears
- where the snow melts, their coats turn gray-brown in summer

Diet:

- herbivores (plant eaters)

-diet consists of willow leaves, bark, shoots, other tree leaves, grasses, and herbs

Snowy Owl

Anatomy:

- 20-27 inches long
- weighs about 3.5-4.5 pounds
- black bill
- round head
- lots of feathers on legs
- white with peppered dark spots; the male has more white than the female
- yellow eyes and very good eyesight
- fluffy feathers give silent flight making it easy to sneak up on prey

Diet:

- carnivores
- excellent hunters
- diet consists of small rodents (lemmings and voles), hares, rabbits, ptarmigans, ducks, and geese

Weather – Fog

In the book they encountered various types of weather including sleet, falling snow, and fog. Is your student familiar with fog?

Fog is described as droplets of water vapor suspended in the air near the ground; it creates an atmosphere in which visibility is reduced because of the cloudiness caused by the gathering of the droplets.

Health & Safety – Cold / Water

When the mother, Marie, was making preparations for the journey she made sure each child was warmly dressed and that she took along extra blankets. She also took along warm milk in a container that would keep it warm. Why is it important to be warm when we are outside during the winter?

Three-year-old Betty was trapped under the ice and by the time Mr. McNutt pulled her from the water, she was blue with cold and choking. Later the searchers' clothing became damp and then frozen.

When a person falls into cold water, or their clothing becomes wet and frozen, or if

they are not well-dressed, or if they are simply out in the cold too long, the person's body cannot make enough heat to keep the body warm. Thus the person's lips, or fingers, or toes may turn blue in color...which means the blood is not getting to those areas. If the body gets *too* cold, then a person can die.

Also a person can die if they are under water too long. We need air to breathe, and we cannot breathe air under the water. When little Betty was brought out of the water she was choking because water (instead of air) had gotten into the lungs.

To protect health and safety in extreme cold, adults and children should wear:

Hat or other head covering

Scarf or knit mask to cover face and mouth

Sleeves that are snug at the wrist

Mittens (they're warmer than gloves)

Several layers of loose-fitting clothing

Water-resistant coat

Water-resistant shoes

Also, when out in the cold, you shouldn't ignore shivering. It's an important first sign that the body is losing heat. Persistent shivering is a sign that you need to return indoors.

Music--Fiddle and the Irish Jig: Have you ever heard the expression, "I was so happy, I danced a jig"? Listen to some Irish fiddlin' and dance a jig!

Bible / Character Development

Making Preparations

"Marie had prepared carefully for this journey."

The mother in this story had to be wise in what she decided to pack for the trip. She also dressed her girls in red mittens and red wool leggings. Why do you think she did this? She thought ahead and made smart decisions. The Bible tells us to consider the ant (discuss this with your student) and think ahead as well. What are some times that we could/should think ahead? (If you garden and freeze or can, this would be a good discussion as to why you do it. How does planning ahead save money? In what other ways do we plan ahead? Education? Memorizing scripture to be ready to fight temptation?). You may want to memorize some verses about the ant. Proverbs 6:6-11, Proverbs 30:34-35,

Preparation of the heart: We must prepare our own hearts for Jesus. 1 Samuel 7:3 If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts....and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you... Do we prepare our hearts each Sunday before gathering together to worship?

Baby in a Basket: Can your student think of another baby in a basket? Read the story of Moses (Ex 2:1-10). How did God care for baby Moses?

Cooking

Some foods mentioned in the book are dried fruit pie and bean soup. Here are some recipes to make your own meal like the one in the book.

Dried Apple Pie

enough dough for 2 pie crusts or 2 frozen crusts

3/4 lb. dried apples

4 cups Apple cider

1/4 cups and 1 tbsp. sugar

3 tbsp. cornstarch

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

2 tbsp. cold unsalted butter-cut into bits

1 tbsp. cold milk

Divide the dough into 2 slightly unequal portions, roll the larger portion into a round 1/8 inch thick, and fit it into a 9 inch pie plate. Roll the remaining dough into a round 1/8 thick and transfer it to a foil-lined baking sheet. Chill the pastry. In a kettle combine the apples and cider, adding water if necessary to just cover the apples, bring the cider to a boil, and simmer the apples, covered partially, stirring occasionally, for 20 to 30 minutes, or until they are softened but not mushy. Drain the apples, reserving 1/4 cup of the cider, and let them cool.

Into a bowl sift together 1/4 cup of the sugar, cornstarch, cinnamon, and nutmeg, add the apples and toss the mixture. Add the reserved cider and toss the mixture until it is combined well. Spoon the apple mixture in the shell and dot it with the butter. Lay the remaining pastry loosely over the filling and crimp the edges together decoratively. Brush the pastry lightly with the milk, sprinkle it with the remaining 1 Tbsp. sugar, and cut several long steam vents in the crust. Bake the pie on a baking sheet in the lower third of a preheated 425F oven for 15 minutes,

reduce the heat to 400F and bake the pie for 30 minutes more. Serve the pie warm with ice cream or sharp Cheddar as an accompaniment.

Bacon and Bean Soup

Ingredients

1 lb. beans dried and soaked -- see note

1/2 lb. bacon, ends and pieces -- chopped fine

4 medium onions -- chopped

4 stalks celery -- chopped

4 lg. carrots -- peel and diced

1 lb. plum tomatoes -- diced

1 gallon stock or water

1 ham hock smoked

1 bay leaf

1 tsp. thyme, leaf

salt and pepper -- to taste

Preparation

Check the beans for stones. Pour boiling water over beans and let stand 1 hour or soak overnight and drain. Scarlet Runner beans were chosen for this recipe because they cook up nice and big and meaty, but any dried beans will do, with Great Northern beans being the most popular. Be sure to use soft water or the beans will be tough.

Finely chop the bacon ends and pieces, or fat saved from a smoked ham, and cook it on a medium fire in a big pot to render the fat. Be sure the crumbs of fat are nicely browned, like crisp bacon.

Add the cut up veggies (you can change the amounts to suit yourself, and add others too, ad lib) and sauté in the fat. Add a few cloves of mashed garlic if you like it. Drain the beans and rinse them. Add the water or stock, beans and ham hock and herbs and spices.

Bring to the boil, simmer for 1 1/2 to 2 hours, maybe even more depending on

beans, until they are very tender. New crop, (this years) beans will get tender faster and taste best. Cut the fat and skin from the ham hock and dice it and return to the soup. Season with salt and pepper. You can skim the fat, but in the cold winter, it tastes good. The colder it is, the better you will like fatty soups. If you cook it long enough, the beans and everything will break down and puree, combining with the fat to make a "creamy" consistency, that is very good.

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