LESSON 13 TEACHER’S GUIDE

Explorer of the Gobi
by Ted Chilembwe

Fountas-Pinnell Level X

Biography

Selection Summary
Roy Chapman Andrews, explorer, archeologist, and author, is best known for his expeditions in the Gobi Desert and discovery of dinosaur eggs there in the 1920s. Survivor of ten near-death experiences, some of which are recounted in this book, Andrews may have been the inspiration for Indiana Jones in Raiders of the Lost Ark.

Characteristics of the Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Biography</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text Structure</td>
<td>Three chapters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Third-person narrator, several quotes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Andrews’s life and accomplishments, including dinosaur discoveries</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facts about the Gobi Desert and archaeological digs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes and Ideas</td>
<td>Have the courage to pursue your dream.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Success requires goals, preparation, hard work, and persistence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language and Literary Features</td>
<td>Clear exposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptive details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Complexity</td>
<td>Complex sentences, some with embedded clauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short declarative sentences emphasize generalities/conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Words associated with science and archaeology: dinosaur, archaeologist, fossils, mammalogy, Fahrenheit, mastodons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geographical terms: Gobi Desert, Mongolia, East Indies, Peking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>Multisyllable words, most of them familiar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compounds; inflected endings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations</td>
<td>Photographs aid visualization and support the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book and Print Features</td>
<td>Map showing location of the Gobi Desert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fifteen pages of text; table of contents; index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subheads; bulleted list; sidebars</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Explorer of the Gobi**  by Ted Chilembwe

**Build Background**

Use a question such as the following to create interest in the selection: *What do you know about the movie Indiana Jones and Raiders of the Lost Ark? Some say that Indiana Jones was based on a real person, a fearless explorer named Roy Chapman Andrews. This book tells about his life.* Read the title and author and talk about the cover photograph of the edge of the Gobi Desert. Explain that this book is a biography, an account of Roy Chapman Andrews’s life, as told by Ted Chilembwe.

**Introduce the Text**

Guide students through the text, noting important ideas and helping with unfamiliar language and vocabulary so they can read the text successfully. Here are some suggestions:

**Page 2:** Point out that the book is divided into three main chapters. Explain that each of these is further divided by subheadings. Have students turn to the index on page 18. **Ask:** *What is the difference between the book’s index and its table of contents?*

**Page 3:** Have students read the headings and first paragraph. **Ask:** *What does the photograph show? What objects might be dinosaur eggs?* Have students read the sentence with the bulleted list. **Suggested language:** *What would you like to find out about those adventures?*

**Page 5:** Call attention to the sidebar. Explain that sidebars give extra fascinating facts about the book’s subject. Have students locate the word *taxidermy.*

**Ask:** *What words explain what taxidermy means?*

**Pages 6–7:** Point out the connection between the subhead, “A Door Opens,” and the photograph of the door of the museum. Explain that after college, Andrews was determined to work at the museum. **Suggested language:** *The museum had no jobs, but through his spunk, his enthusiastic spirit, Andrews created a job for himself. What kind of job do you think that was?*

**Pages 10–11:** Have students locate the Gobi Desert on the map. Talk about the photograph: *Here is the great Gobi Desert. What would it be like to be marooned, or stranded here?*

*Now go back to the beginning and read to find out about why Roy Chapman Andrews wanted to explore one of the most dangerous deserts in the world.*

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**Expand Your Vocabulary**

- **mammalogy** – the branch of zoology that deals with mammals, p. 7
- **scorching** – burning, searing with heat, p. 12
- **taxidermy** – the art of preparing, stuffing, and mounting animal skins for exhibition, p. 5
- **spunk** – spirit, pluckiness, p. 6
- **marooned** – abandoned or isolated, p. 4
- **typhoons** – tropical cyclones, p. 3
Read
Have students read silently while you listen to individual students read aloud. Support their understanding of the text as needed.

Remind students to use the Monitor/Clarify Strategy as they read. Tell students that if they come to a part that doesn’t make sense to them, they should pause and try to find a way to figure it out.

Discuss and Revisit the Text
Personal Response
Invite students to share their personal responses to the selection.
Suggested language: Which of Andrews’s adventures did you find most interesting or exciting? If Andrews were alive today and you were to meet him, what would you ask him?

Ways of Thinking
As you discuss the text, help students understand these points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking Within the Text</th>
<th>Thinking Beyond the Text</th>
<th>Thinking About the Text</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Roy Chapman Andrews is best known for his discovery of dinosaur eggs.</td>
<td>• Andrews’s determination opened the door at the AMNH.</td>
<td>• The index is a quick guide to important details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Andrews was an explorer, archaeologist, and author.</td>
<td>• Andrews demonstrated his quick thinking when he charged armed desert bandits in his car.</td>
<td>• The map illustrates the location and size of the Gobi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In the 1920s, Andrews led fossil-hunting expeditions into the great Gobi Desert of Mongolia and China.</td>
<td>• Andrews must have craved excitement because he chose to go on dangerous adventures.</td>
<td>• Chapter divisions separate biographical information from information about the Gobi Desert.</td>
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Choices for Further Support
• Fluency Invite students to chorally read a passage from the text to demonstrate phrased fluent reading. Remind them to link words together in meaningful phrases. Point out that phrasing involves pausing at punctuation as well as at places in the text that do not have punctuation. Encourage students to read at a louder volume to emphasize sections of the text that are particularly exciting, such as the account of his earliest brush with death on page 7.

• Comprehension Based on your observations of the students’ reading and discussion, revisit parts of the text to clarify or extend comprehension. Remind students to go back to the text to support their ideas.

• Phonics/Word Work Have students locate autobiography (page 7, paragraph 1). Tell them that the prefix auto- comes from a Greek word meaning “self.” Have students distinguish between a biography and autobiography. Have them explain the meanings of other words that begin with auto- (automobile, autograph, automatic).
Writing about Reading

Critical Thinking
Have students complete the Critical Thinking questions on BLM 13.9.

Responding
Have students complete the activities at the back of the book, using their Reader's Notebook. Use the instruction below as needed to reinforce or extend understanding of the comprehension skill.

Target Comprehension Skill
Main Ideas and Details Remind students that a paragraph or section of a text is based on a main idea and its supporting details. Model how to add details to the Graphic Organizer, using a “Think Aloud” like the one below:

Think Aloud
What details support the idea that Andrews was an adventurer? Andrews led expeditions to the East Indies, Korea, and Alaska. He explored a jungle in Southeast Asia. He led expeditions to Tibet, China, and Burma. He led five expeditions into the Gobi Desert. Add those details to the chart.

Practice the Skill
Encourage students to share another book they have read in which the subject or main character loved adventure.

Writing Prompt: Thinking Beyond the Text
Have students write a response to the prompt on page 6. Remind them that when they think beyond the text, they use their personal knowledge to reach new understandings.

Assessment Prompts
• How does the author organize the information at the end of the book?
• What are two sentences in Chapter One that support the idea that Andrews was adventurous?
• The first paragraph on page 11 is mainly about
**Critical Thinking**

Read and answer the questions. Possible responses shown.

1. **Think within the text.** What movie character is thought to be based on Andrews?
   - Indiana Jones from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*

2. **Think within the text.** What did Andrews find in the Gobi Desert?
   - Dinosaur bones and eggs

3. **Think beyond the text.** List two details that support the main idea that the Gobi’s weather was harsh. Why might the Gobi’s weather make it a good place to search for bones?
   - Winter temperatures can drop to –40 degrees. Summers can get as hot as 113 degrees. These harsh conditions prevented many explorers from exploring before Andrews and his team explored the desert.

4. **Think about the text.** Andrews says his friend’s death made him appreciate the value of his own life. Why might it take a tragedy like this to cause this realization?
   - Life is precious and can be taken away at any point. Since life is short, Andrews realized that he needed to chase his dreams.

5. **Making Connections.** The author says Andrews sacrificed having a family in order to achieve his dream of exploring the desert and working in a museum. Which would be more important to you, having a family or achieving a dream? Explain your answer.
   - Write your answer in your Reader’s Notebook.

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**Reading Support**
Pair advanced and intermediate readers to read the selection softly, or have students listen to the audio or online recordings. Remind students that this text tells about the adventures and discoveries of Roy Chapman Andrews, including his discovery of a dinosaur egg.

**Idioms**
The text contains some idiomatic expressions that might be unfamiliar. Explain the meaning of *opportunity came knocking at the door* (page 5), *brushes with death* (page 7), *looking for a needle in a haystack* (page 9), and *shed new light* (page 16).

**Oral Language Development**
Check student comprehension, using a dialogue that best matches your students’ English proficiency level. **Speaker 1** is the teacher, **Speaker 2** is the student.

**Beginning/Early Intermediate**

**Speaker 1:** Where did Andrews find dinosaur eggs?

**Speaker 2:** the Gobi Desert

**Speaker 1:** What crawled into Andrews’s tents at night?

**Speaker 2:** poisonous snakes

**Speaker 1:** What was Andrews’s first job at the natural history museum?

**Speaker 2:** a janitor

**Speaker 1:** Where is the Gobi Desert and how large is it?

**Speaker 2:** The Gobi Desert lies between Mongolia and China and is about twice as big as Texas.

**Intermediate**

**Speaker 1:** Where is the Gobi Desert and how large is it?

**Speaker 2:** The Gobi Desert lies between Mongolia and China and is about twice as big as Texas.

**Speaker 1:** What careers did Andrews pursue, and why is he famous?

**Speaker 2:** Andrews was an explorer, archaeologist, and author who is famous for finding dinosaur eggs in the Gobi Desert.

**Early Advanced/Advanced**

**Speaker 1:** What mystery did Andrews solve by finding dinosaur eggs in the Gobi Desert?

**Speaker 2:** Andrews solved the mystery of whether dinosaurs laid eggs or bore live young.

**Speaker 1:** What human threats did Andrews face in the Gobi?

**Speaker 2:** Warring desert groups, as well as bandits, were threats to Andrews in the Gobi.
Thinking Beyond the Text

Think about the questions below. Then write your answer in two or three paragraphs.

Remember that when you think beyond the text you use your personal knowledge to reach new understandings.

What do you think it would have been like to be Andrews on the day he discovered dinosaur eggs in the Gobi Desert? Think about what happened, what he might have observed, thought, felt, and experienced. Then write his diary entry for that day. Include details about what happened as well as descriptive details about what he saw, heard, touched, and even tasted or smelled. Base the details of the diary entry on information in the text.

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Critical Thinking

Read and answer the questions.

1. Think within the text  What movie character is thought to be based on Andrews?

2. Think within the text  What did Andrews find in the Gobi Desert?

3. Think beyond the text  List two details that support the main idea that the Gobi’s weather was harsh. Why might the Gobi’s weather make it a good place to search for bones?

4. Think about the text  Andrews says his friend’s death made him appreciate the value of his own life. Why might it take a tragedy like this to cause this realization?

Making Connections  The author says Andrews sacrificed having a family in order to achieve his dream of exploring the desert and working in a museum. Which would be more important to you, having a family or achieving a dream? Explain your answer.

Write your answer in your Reader’s Notebook.
Explorer of the Gobi • LEVEL X

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>page</th>
<th>Selection Text</th>
<th>Errors</th>
<th>Self-Corrections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>One of his earliest brushes with death was in a jungle in Southeast Asia. Andrews was walking down a trail when a team member pulled him back, warning him of a snake. Overhead was a giant python, quietly waiting to drop onto an innocent victim. The snake measured 20 feet long and seemed fully capable of having Andrews for dinner. By 1916, Andrews was made chief of the museum’s division of Asiatic exploration. He led expeditions to Tibet, China, and Burma.</td>
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Comments:

Accuracy Rate
(\# words read correctly/81 \times 100) %

Total Self-Corrections

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<table>
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