BUFFALO HUNT

by Jay Carter

Fountas-Pinnell Level S

Historical Fiction

Selection Summary
Sean Nesbitt and his father leave New York City and join the crew building the Union Pacific Railroad. They travel to Nebraska and Sean meets a Pawnee named Sharp Eyes. Sharp Eyes teaches Sean many important lessons.

Characteristics of the Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Historical fiction</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text Structure</td>
<td>Third-person limited narration in eight short chapters</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter headings signal important events</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Afterword describes 1850s mass slaughter of buffaloes on the Great Plains and their preservation today</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>The Union Pacific Railroad</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pawnee Indians</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Slaughter and near extinction of the buffalo; protection of buffalo today</td>
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<tr>
<td>Themes and Ideas</td>
<td>People can learn important lessons from others.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Progress does not mean ignoring the ways of the past.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>People from different backgrounds can have things in common.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language and Literary Features</td>
<td>Characters revealed by what they say, think, and do and what others say and think about them.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Description with use of figurative language: the ocean sounds like the prairie with water instead of grass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sentence Complexity</td>
<td>Longer complex sentence structures, italics, dialogue and embedded clauses and phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sentences with nouns in series divided by comma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>New vocabulary words readers must derive from context (envy, astonished, reasoned)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Words with connotative meanings essential to understanding the text: rottig, cruelly,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>Many multisyllable words, such as immediately, delicacy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Words with affixes: purposefully, needlessly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations</td>
<td>Illustrations of frontier settings and subjects; photograph of present-day buffalo preserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book and Print Features</td>
<td>Seventeen pages of text with an afterword</td>
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</table>

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Build Background
Help students use their knowledge about the western frontier to visualize the text. Build interest by asking a question such as the following: What do you know about the buffalo of the Great Plains and the building of the transcontinental railroad? Read the title and author and talk about the cover illustration. Tell students that the story is historical fiction. Thus, it is based on real events in history, but the characters are not real.

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: Explain that this is a story about two boys who become friends—one a Pawnee teenager and the other the son of a man who has moved from New York to work on building the railroad.
Suggested language: Turn to page 2. Sean is hunting with a new friend. His friend is a Pawnee named Sharp Eyes. Why do you think his name is Sharp Eyes?

Page 3: The text says Sean felt envy for his friend's hunting skills. Ask: What does Sean want?

Page 5: Have students look at the illustration. Suggested Language: It seems to Sean that the hopes and desires of the Pawnee he's got to know are not so different from those of the people he knew back in New York. What kinds of hopes and dreams might he be talking about?

Page 8: Explain that Sean is going to ask Sharp Eyes if he can go on a buffalo hunt with the Pawnee. Direct students to read the second sentence: As the conversation lulled, he got up his nerve. Ask: Why does Sean need his nerve to ask Sharp Eyes his question?

Now turn back to the beginning and read to find out what happens to Sean and what he learns from Sharp Eyes.

Target Vocabulary

astonished – to be surprised and shocked, p. 4
banish – to drive out, p. 6
bared – to have revealed or removed the covering of something, p. 9
deserted – left behind or abandoned, p. 8
envy – a feeling of jealousy, p. 3
margins – edges or borders, p. 9
nerve – courage, p. 8
reasoned – to have thought through an idea logically, p. 11
spared – to have shown someone mercy or consideration, p. 14
upright – in a standing or vertical position, p. 8
Read
Have students read silently while you listen to individual students read aloud. Support their problem solving and fluency as needed.

Remind students to use the Infer/Predict Strategy as they read. Tell them to look for clues that might help them predict what will happen next in the story.

Discuss and Revisit the Text
Personal Response
Invite students to share their personal responses to the text.
Suggested language: Have you ever met someone from a different place, as Sean met Sharp Eyes? What lessons does Sean learn from Sharp Eyes?

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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Sharp Eyes teaches Sean to hunt and shares with him how his people live.</td>
<td>• It is important to learn from different cultures and value the lessons that those cultures can teach.</td>
<td>• The author includes many descriptions to help readers visualize the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sharp Eyes is upset when he discovers the slaughter of the buffalo.</td>
<td>• The slaughtering of the buffalo herds ended a way of life for many Native Americans.</td>
<td>• The chapter titles give clues to what the chapter is about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sharp Eyes takes Sean on a buffalo hunt to show him the importance of not wasting anything. He asks Sean to share this lesson with others.</td>
<td>• Killing animals needlessly is wasteful.</td>
<td>• The Afterword explains the historical facts and the effects of the buffalo slaughter on Native Americans.</td>
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Choices for Further Support
• Fluency Invite students to work in partners and choose a scene from the text to act out. Remind students to pause after punctuation by taking short breaths after commas and stopping after periods and question marks.

• 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 Provide practice as needed with words and word parts, using examples from the text. Have students define the word immigrated based on its use on page 6. Ask students if they can name the word that shares a root with immigrate (migrate).
Writing about Reading

Critical Thinking
Have students complete the Critical Thinking questions on BLM 22.8.

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

Theme
Remind students that the theme of a story is the main message. Explain that analyzing characters' qualities, actions, and reasons for doing things help in identifying the theme. Model how to add details to the Graphic Organizer, using a “Think Aloud” like the one below:

Think Aloud

On page 11, Sharp Eyes says, “‘Why would anyone do this? Take lives for nothing?’” This detail indicates that Sharp Eyes did not understand why the white man wasted the buffalo. This detail supports the theme that wasting resources is a terrible thing.

Practice the Skill
Encourage students to share their examples of other stories in which the theme involves learning and conservation.

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

- The selection is mainly about ________________________________.
- What is the meaning of the word delicacy as it appears on page 17?
- Sharp Eyes takes Sean on the hunt to show that ________________________________.
Responding

**Theme**
What do Sean's and Sharp Eyes's thoughts and actions tell you about the theme of the story? What text details support your conclusion? Copy and complete the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detail 1</th>
<th>Detail 2</th>
<th>Detail 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
<td>People from different cultures often have much to learn from each other.</td>
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**Text to Text**
Think of a story you have read about two friends like Sean and Sharp Eyes who come from different cultures. Write a few paragraphs comparing and contrasting Sean and Sharp Eyes with the characters you have chosen.

Critical Thinking

1. **Think within the text**: What do Sharp Eyes and Sean eat for their meal at the beginning of the selection?
   - They eat the rabbit killed by Sharp Eyes.

2. **Think within the text**: What favor does Sean ask of Sharp Eyes?
   - He wants to hunt buffalo with Sharp Eyes' people.

3. **Think beyond the text**: When Sean goes hunting with Sharp Eyes, he learns that the Pawnee hunt buffalo for food rather than for fun. How can this message about wastefulness be applied to today's world?
   - People throw away and waste a lot of food that could be used to feed the hungry.
   - People shouldn't kill animals for fun, and people should protect animals from becoming extinct.

4. **Think about the text**: What do you think is the theme of the story?
   - People from different cultures often have much to learn from each other.

Making Connections
Do you agree with Sharp Eyes that killing animals, such as buffalo or deer, just for sport is wrong? Explain why or why not.

Write your answer in your Reader's Notebook.
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.

Sharp Eyes wants Sean to teach his people that it is not good to kill animals needlessly. On page 16, Sean says, “If I set a good example, it may help them see.” What actions might Sean take to teach his people the lesson? Do you think Sean will be successful? Why or why not?

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Critical Thinking

Read and answer the questions.

1. Think within the text  What do Sharp Eyes and Sean eat for their meal at the beginning of the selection?
   _______________________________________________________

2. Think within the text  What favor does Sean ask of Sharp Eyes?
   _______________________________________________________

3. Think beyond the text  When Sean goes hunting with Sharp Eyes, he learns that the Pawnee hunt buffalo for food rather than for fun. How can this message about wastefulness be applied to today’s world?
   _______________________________________________________

4. Think about the text  What do you think is the theme of the story?
   _______________________________________________________

Making Connections  Do you agree with Sharp Eyes that killing animals, such as buffalo or deer, just for sport is wrong? Explain why or why not.

Write your answer in your Reader’s Notebook.
Buffalo Hunt • LEVEL S

Page 6

Selection Text

Sean's family had immigrated to America from Ireland. Mr. Nesbitt had had difficulty finding work in New York City, so he had taken a job cooking for the crews building the railroad that would span the continent. Sean's mother and sister had stayed behind in the care of Mr. Nesbitt's older brother and his family. But Mr. Nesbitt had asked Sean to come with him. Sean would be a big help, and he thought the boy could do with a bit of adventure.

Sharp Eyes wanted to find out everything he could about Sean and his world. He quizzed him about Ireland.

Comments:

Accuracy Rate

Total Self-Corrections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read word correctly</td>
<td>✓ cat</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated word, sentence, or phrase</td>
<td>© cat</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td>cat</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
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