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| **Unit 4/Week 1** | **Text** *The Houdini Box* |
| **Grade 4** | **subject:**   ELA  SS  SCI  Math |

Preparation

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| **content objectives:**   * Students will be able to read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it, using specific evidence when writing and speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.   *\*Teachers can write or adjust content objectives to meet the needs of their students.* | **language objectives:**   * Through discussion and writing students will demonstrate an understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meaning.   *\*Teachers should review the text dependent questions in order to specifically identify which language features being addressed. Those language features should be inserted into the objective.*   * Students will engage in a range of collaborative discussions and build on others’ talk in conversation by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges.   *\*Collaborative discussion includes one-on-one partnerships with students and/or adults, small groups, and the whole class.*  *\*Teachers should identify and incorporate those language features necessary for students to effectively communicate their ideas to one another.* |
| **accommodations (IEP/504):** Use appropriate accommodations as designated by students’ IEPs and in response to students’ needs. | **materials**   * Planning Template * Student Anthology |
| **ela**/**literacy standards:** RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.3, RL.4.4, RL 4.10, W.4.2, W.4.4, SL.4.1, SL.4.2, L.4.1, L.4.2, L.4.3, L.4.4, L.4.5 | **content area standards:** N/A |
| **instructions:** First Reading: During the first reading students will read to understand the purpose of the text. On level students will read the text independently. Below level readers will read the text with the teacher, a partner or using the listening center. Rereading (2 lessons): During the next days or class periods, students will reread and discuss important sections of the text to examine the author’s choice of vocabulary, syntax, and literary elements through text dependent questions. Students will cite evidence from the text to gain deeper meaning. During these lessons students may be asked to record their ideas in writing. Culminating Writing Task: Students are challenged to organize their thinking and cite evidence to explain the big ideas of the text. | |

Building Academic Vocabulary

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| **embedded instruction** (Tier 3 & Tier 2)  Identify vocabulary words that require some attention in order for students to comprehend the text. Define these words quickly in context, using a student friendly definition. | **extended instruction** (Tier 2)  Identify vocabulary words that build academic language and are essential to comprehending the text. These words may be defined quickly in context, but will be revisited for students to integrate into their vocabulary. |
| bolt (pg 398) – a moveable bar or rod that when slid into a socket fastens a door, gate, etc.  delighted (pg 398) – happy  vanish (pg 398) – disappear  crate (pg 399) – a wooden or plastic box or framework for packing, shopping, or storing fruit, furniture, glassware, etc.  bustling (pg 400) – busy  slightly (pg 401) – a little  engraved (pg 404) – to cut or carve (letters, designs, etc.) on a hard surface such as metal, stone, or the end grain of wood  attic (pg 408) – the part of a building, especially of a house, directly under the roof | magic (not in the text but connected to magician and pertinent to the story) – the power of apparently influencing the course of events by using mysterious or supernatural forces.  unexplainable (pg 398) – can’t be explained or understood  wonderstruck (pg 398) – struck or affected with wonder |

Teacher overview

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| **big ideas and key understandings:** It takes perseverance to reach one’s dream. | **synopsis:** Victor is a 10-year-old boy who is fascinated with Harry Houdini’s magic tricks. Victor is forever trying to perform Houdini’s astonishing magic tricks without success. Victor is saddened by the death of Houdini. Victor inherits a box with the initials E.W. As an adult, Victor realizes that E.W. was Houdini. Victor rediscovers his love of magic. |

Guide

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| **introduction**/**opening: “**Today we are going to be reading a historical fiction text titled, *The Houdini Box.* All good readers think, ask questions and predict as they read. As we read today, I want you to be thinking about the text and its meaning.” | | |
| **text dependent questions**   * Begin with a “winnable” question that will help orient students to the text. * The sequence of questions should build a gradual understanding of the key meanings.   Questions should focus on a word/phrase, sentence or paragraph. | **responses**   * Answers that reference the text. * Multiple responses may be provided using different pieces of evidence * Inferences must be grounded logically in the text | Teacher Notes:  *On page 401, point out the multiple meanings of tied you up.* |
| Page 398  According to the text, what are some of the “unexplainable things” that Harry Houdini is famous for? | Pulling rabbits from hats, making elephants disappear, performing a thousand card tricks, opening locks, escaping from ropes, chains, etc. |
| Page 400 (after reading paragraph 1)  Victor wants to be a magician too. What evidence from the text supports that statement? | Victor locked himself in his grandmother’s trunk and tried to escape. Victor tried to hold his breath for five thousand seconds. Victor tried to walk through a wall. |
| Page 401 (After reading “I want to be one”, said Victor)  Identify how Victor reacted when he met Harry Houdini. | Broke free from his mothers’ hand, ran straight to Houdini. Took a deep breath. Asked question after question without stopping (students should respond with the specific questions that Victor asks). |
| Page 401  Describe Houdini’s reaction to meeting Victor. | Houdini smiles at Victor and says that no one has ever asked him so many questions. He remains silent for several moments after Victor says he wants to be a magician. He looks between Victor and his wife and then tells him to give him his address so he can write him a letter. It is obvious that he likes him because he leans down and whispers, “you want me to tell you things I can’t talk about in the middle of a busy train station, son.” |
| Page 402 (after reading paragraph 3)  How did meeting Harry Houdini affect Victor? | Victor was so excited to meet him he kept on trying his tricks even more at Aunt Harriet’s house. Houdini’s letter was all Victor thought and dreamed about. It was hard for him to be patient for the letter. He wished he could make it appear from thin air! |
| Pages 402-404 (after reading paragraph 4)  On pages 402-404, what do the words and illustrations tell us about the mood? | Some of the words and phrases are “Vanished”, “Dark place”, “Mysterious room”, “Heavy sigh, sad”, “Whispers Houdini died today”. In the illustration, woman is depicted with a sad expression and then it says she began to cry. Victor is depicted with a sad expression. The clues listed above should lead the students to a conclusion that the mood is somber and sad. |
| Page 405 (after reading paragraph 1)  Why does Victor promise to never think about Houdini again or try to do any of his tricks? | Victor saw the initials E.W. and did not think the box belonged to Houdini. He was so disappointed that he decided to never think about the magician again. |
| Page 407-408  What did Victor discover while he was out playing ball with his son?    How does he respond to his discovery? | Harry Houdini’s real name was Ehrich Weiss. Ehrich Wise has the initials E.W. E.W. were the initials on the box that Houdini’s wife gave to Victor.    He gets very excited. His “head spun, and he laughed out loud.” He rushes home, carrying his son, running through the graveyard, baseball field, and into his house. “He was out of breath and crazy with excitement.”    The initials on his box from Houdini are E.W. so he is excited to open the box finally and see what is inside. He realizes that all along he had a box from Houdini. |
| Page 409  Victor runs home and finds the box. He opens the box. Then Victor locks himself in his grandmother’s trunk and escapes in under twenty seconds. How was Victor able to escape from the locked trunk? | Students are expected to make the following inferences: inside the box were Houdini’s secrets, referred to in the letter on page 402. After reading the secrets, Victor was able to perform the magic tricks. |
| **culminating question:**  Describe how Victor’s feelings toward magic and Harry Houdini change over time. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your ideas. | | |
| **closing:** Highlight key skills and strategies students used while making meaning of the text. *For example: I like the way Bryce cited evidence from the text. I noticed Joe was inferring meaning when he recognized that Jessie was feeling guilty.* | | |
| **assessment:** observation checklist, written response | | |