

Lesson Plan for
ElsBeth and the Freedom Fighters

Traditional learning through story adapted for today's student

Objectives:

Increase **Vocabulary** and **Language Arts**
Stimulate **Critical Thinking**
Observe and explore the **Natural Sciences**
Highlight aspects of **Geography**
Identify practical uses of **Math**
Introduce concepts of **Art**

Assignments:

Read **Chapter 1**

Why do whales sometimes swim onto the beach?

Why is Boston, Massachusetts also known as Beantown? Do you think it has anything to do with Boston baked beans?

How far is Boston from where you live? How far is Cape Cod from where you live?

What is a quotient? Is there another word for quotient?

Read **Chapter 2**

What is the New World? What is the Old World?

What is a custard?

How is maple syrup made?

Read **Chapter 3**

What is slate? Where is it found? What characteristics make this rock useful as a blackboard?

What is chalk?

How do words come from other languages into English? What does the word quotient mean? Do you think that quotient is a good word to give you the idea of "how many times" when you are dividing one number into another? Can you think

of a practical example of how you might want to divide one number into another to find how many times it goes in?

How do division and multiplication relate to each other? Take 100 and divide it by 5? Take 5 and multiply it by 20? Explain how they are related.

Who was Einstein? What kind of mathematics did he invent?

How do bats fit into the web of life? Is eating mosquitoes helpful to people?

Read **Chapter 4**

Why do stars appear to twinkle?

What is reflection? Why do you think the silver bat on Elsbeth's bookmark reflected the sunlight in her room?

Read **Chapter 5**

What does the word "emporium" mean? Do you think "emporium" sounds more interesting than "large store"? Can you think of some fancy words that sound interesting but mean the same as a simple word?

Did Robert Hillman-Jones guess correctly the the word "equivocate" means "uncertain"?

Is "feline" another word for "cat"? Which word sounds better to you?

Read **Chapter 6**

Professor Badinoff and Bartholomew the frog eat bugs. Can you name other creatures that eat bugs? Do people ever eat bugs as food?

Why do you think people have chores? Do adults have chores? Do you have chores?

Read **Chapter 7**

How are cultures different from each other? Is a culture the same as a country? Can you have different cultures in the same country? Explain some characteristics of cultures you are familiar with or have read about.

Read **Chapter 8**

We know that there are coyotes, owls, squirrels, chipmunks and marsh birds, including cranes, living on Cape Cod near Elsbeth's home near the marsh. What other animals and birds live near a marsh? What animal and birds live near where you live?

Read **Chapter 9** and **Chapter 10**

What are fossil fuels? How can fossil fuels hurt the environment?

What is a salt marsh? Is this different from a freshwater marsh? How is it similar to a freshwater marsh?

What is a cranberry bog? Do cranberries only grow on Cape Cod? Are cranberries native to North America? Are they healthy to eat?

What is a scrub pine? Do you think the the small, twisted type of pine trees on Cape Cod are due to sandy soil, which doesn't have a lot of nutrients? Do you think lots of wind might have something to do with their twisted form?

Are plants affected a lot by the soil and weather?

Do swans live on Cape Cod? Do they live in other places?

Is it unusual for a manatee to be found on Cape Cod? Where are they usually found? What do they eat? What kind of water temperatures are good for manatees?

What is a Brahmin? If a Brahmin is the highest social level in India, why do you think the teacher was called a "Boston Brahmin"?

Read **Chapter 11**

What is Benjamin Franklin famous for? Did Benjamin Franklin live in Boston?

How do types of plants and animals become extinct? Is this extinction sometimes caused by what people do to the land? Have you noticed a difference between the plants that grow in wild areas the the plants around people's houses?

Where are diamonds found in the world?

What is taxation without representation? Why was Samuel Adams upset about this? Was this one of the major causes of the Revolutionary War?

What does the city of Boston have to do with the creation of the United States of America? What was the price paid by the colonists for the freedoms they wanted? If there had not been a Revolutionary War would the land still be governed by England?

What was Paul Revere famous for?

Read **Chapter 12** and **Chapter 13**

Where is the Arab Emirates? Why is it a place of great wealth?

Read **Chapter 14** and **Chapter 15**

What kind of a sword is a cutlas? What other kinds of swords were used throughout history? How is a sword made? When were swords or knives first made? What were the raw materials? What were the methods?

Read **Chapter 16**

Why do ships use signal flags?

What is the difference between a **harbor** and a **bay** and the open **ocean**? Look at some maps and find as many of each as you can.

How does a rudder work in steering a ship?

Extra assignment: make a rudder and see how it affects a flow of water. Is there a similar structure on a plane that steers it in a flow of air?

What is momentum?

How does gravity work? When you throw something in the air why does it go up for a while, then come down?

Frankie didn't fall over into the water because he had a low center of gravity. Give an example of low center of gravity versus high center of gravity.

What types of fishing nets are used? How can fishing nets be dangerous to dolphins and whales?

Where is Nova Scotia compared to Boston and Cape Cod? Find them all on a map.

Do you prefer to be asked to do things politely or ordered around and criticized? Which method of working with people do you feel is more effective and why?

Read **Chapter 17** and **Chapter 18**

What is a gale-force wind? Compare that to a breeze and a hurricane? What jobs and activities are affected by the wind? What causes wind? What is the strongest wind you have ever felt?

What is a regatta?

What is a dandy? Have you met anyone you would consider a dandy? Do you think it sounds better to say "dandy" or "a man who likes to dress in fancy clothes"?

Read **Chapter 19**

The pirate lectures Robert Hillman-Jones about caring for something more than himself. What do you think people care about more than themselves? Who or what do you care about more than yourself?

What are the seven seas?

In the parrots song he insults Sylvanas the magical cat. He calls him a "gnat." How is that an insult? He also calls Sylvanas a "pawn." Does Sylvanas act like a pawn? Why does the parrot use the word "spat" instead of "fight" in his song?

Do you like rhyming in songs? What is the difference between a rhyme and plain talk? What is the difference between a song and sound? Why do you think these are art?

We know what "spit" is, but what is a "spit of land"? How many words can you think of that have more than one meaning?

What does a meteorologist do? Why is knowing what the weather will be like important to people? Would weather be especially important if you were in a ship?

ElsBeth realized she was prejudiced against seagulls since she'd heard bad things about them, but she'd never actually met one. What did ElsBeth discover when she spoke directly to Silas the seagull? Have you ever heard bad things about someone you didn't know? Do you think it would be good to find out for yourself and make your own judgement?

How big can a whale get? Compare the size of a whale to your own body and then to your classroom and then to your school building? Can you use multiplication and division to figure out how many times your body height is to a whale's length?

Read **Chapter 20**

What are some of the challenges of steering a boat? If you can't see the bottom of the water, how can you tell if you are going into a shallow area? How do you think charts of waters near the shore were figured out?

Read **Chapter 21, to the end**

What kind of a body of water is a sound? Look at the map of Nantucket and where it is in relation to Cape Cod. Does the concept of a "sound" make more sense when you see it on a map?

Why is plastic pollution in the world's oceans a problem? How does the plastic get in the ocean? Is plastic made from fossil fuels?

Why do you think pollution is a problem? What kind of pollution is there in the world? What kind of waste is created in your home? What happens to it? Are some things recycled? How does that work? What do you think can be done about the problem? What can you personally do about the problem?

Did you learn some interesting things reading *ElsBeth and the Freedom Fighters*? Is there anything you want to learn more about from reading this book?