

American Stories

“Love of Life,” Part Two, by Jack London

Lesson Plan

This lesson plan is to accompany Part Two of the American Stories series episode “Love of Life” by Jack London.

A transcript of the story is included at the end of this lesson to print so students can read as they listen. Teachers who cannot play the audio from the website can read the story aloud or have students read it.

American Stories lesson plans are based on the CALLA approach. See the end of each lesson for more information and resources on teaching with the CALLA approach.

CALLA has five lesson elements:

Prepare: Engage students in the topic and identify objectives for the lesson. Find out what students already know about it and motivate them to learn more. Teach new vocabulary.

Present: Present new information. Explain the target learning strategy for the lesson. Model what the students are asked to do. Discuss connections to students’ prior knowledge.

Practice: Give students an authentic, active task that they can do in a small group or in pairs. Remind students to use the target learning strategy.

Self-Evaluate: Question students so they will reflect on their own learning. Ask students to evaluate their own learning rather than wait for the teacher to assess them. Find out if using the learning strategy helped students’ understanding.

Expand: Guide students on how to apply what they learned to their own

lives. Point out other contexts where the learning strategy may help. Make connections between content and language or to the student's first language. When appropriate, request that parents contribute to learning.

And now for today's lesson:

Prepare

Begin, "Today, we will read Part Two of 'Love of Life,' by Jack London. But first, let's try to remember what happened in Part One." Write the following words on the board: blanket, stomach, muskeg berries, caribou, blood, cache and matches.

Ask students to take a moment to discuss what they remember about these things in the story. If most students do not remember most of the words, ask volunteers to use gestures to remind the class of the meanings beforehand. After the students have had a chance to discuss the role of these words, ask several volunteers to share their responses with the class. For example, say, "Who can tell me what the story says about a blanket?" et cetera.

Next, say, "Do you remember a story you read or a TV show or movie you watched where a character was hungry and cold and maybe even lost? Think for a moment about the details from that story."

Allow students a little time to think. Then, ask them to stand up and find one person in class that they don't often speak to. It doesn't matter where they are standing, as long as they find a partner. Next, ask them to share the story with this partner.

After they have shared, ask them to sit down next to their partner in whatever seats they are near. Then, ask a few volunteers to report on the stories their partners told them.

Then say, "You may not have realized it but, when you listened to your partner tell their story, you were using selective attention by listening for the part when the character was cold and hungry. When you use selective attention, you focus on specific information. Today, we will practice the learning strategy *Use Selective Attention* to help us focus on and remember specific details in the story. But first, let's learn the new vocabulary."

Teach the vocabulary that can be found on the page following the transcript and hand out copies of vocabulary list. If you have multimedia capability, show the images of the wolf and bear on a shared screen. These images can be found on the pages following the vocabulary. If there is time and you think students will enjoy it, try gesturing some of the new words or have volunteers gesture the words while the rest of the class guesses which word they are acting out. Students can work in pairs to guess the words being acted out.

Present

Introduce the task to students: "As we listen to the story today, we will use selective attention to focus on and remember specific details in the story."

Hand out copies of the transcript.

Say, "We are going to listen to the first three paragraphs of the story. As we listen, underline all of the words that mention these things: body parts, animals and plants. Be sure to also notice how these words are used in the story."

Play the first three paragraphs of the story.

Then say, "With one person sitting next to you, talk about all of the words you found."

Give students a few minutes to discuss this. Then, ask them to share what they found with the class. Say, "Let's start with the first paragraph. Tell me

one word you found?" Ask them to raise their hands instead of calling out answers.

Each volunteer should only share one word. As they share the words they found, write them on the board or a shared screen. Then, ask them to turn over their transcripts so that they can't see the text. Next, choose a few words on the board and ask students to tell you what the story said about those words. For example, ask, "Who remembers what this part of the story says about moose-skin?" (Answer: The man's bag is made from moose-skin.) And "Who can tell me what it says about trees and bushes?" (Answer: When he looked around, he saw no trees or bushes in the area.) Et cetera.

Below is a list of all references to body parts, animals and plants from the first three paragraphs, in case students overlook any of them.

First paragraph: feet

Second paragraph: trees, bushes, plants, rocks, streams, sticks

Third paragraph: moose, skin, moose-skin, feet, back

Say, "When you listen for specific information, you notice more details about that information than you would otherwise. And, it helps you to remember the importance of the information. Today, you will practice the strategy *Use Selective Attention* to find and remember important details in the story."

Have students pick up their materials (transcript, vocabulary and pen or pencil) and move to sit with a different partner.

Say, "Let's listen to some more of the story. Again, we will listen for mentions of body parts, animals and plants. Underline all of those words. And, as you listen, try to pay attention to how the words are used in the story. Don't worry if you can't catch every word or its usage. The important thing is to practice focusing your attention on specific things."

Play or read aloud to the "END OF SECTION 1" note.

Then say, "With your partner, first tell each other all of the words you found. Then, talk about what these things mean in the story."

Give students time to discuss this. Then, ask students to raise their hands to share the words they found. (They don't need to share the context yet, just the words.) Be sure to go paragraph by paragraph so that the whole class can focus on one section of the text at a time.

As they say the words, write them on the board or a shared screen. After you have gone through all of the paragraphs for this section of the text, pick out a handful or more words from the board and ask students to tell you their meaning in the story. For example, ask "Who can tell me what this part of the story says about muskeg berries?" Continue asking about the other handful of words you selected.

Briefly answer any questions students have before moving to the next step.

Now, ask two pairs to sit together to make groups of four people each.

Then, say again, "Let's listen to some more of the story. Again, we will listen for mentions of body parts, animals and plants. Underline all of those words. And, as you listen, try to notice how these words are used in the story. Remember not to worry if you can't catch every word or its usage."

Play or read aloud to the "END OF SECTION 2" note.

Proceed with the activity exactly as you did previously (except that the groups now consist of four people). Then, tell students they will listen again for the same details.

Play or read aloud to the "END OF SECTION 3" note.

Proceed with the activity exactly as you did previously. Tell students they will now listen to the rest of the story.

Play or read aloud to the end of the story.

Then ask the class, "So, now that we have read Part Two of the story, what do we know or what can we guess about the main character? Talk to the people in your group."

Give students a minute or two to discuss this. Then, ask one student from each group to share one thing they learned about the main character.

Possible responses may include: he makes a living by searching for gold; he is lost in the wilderness in Canada; he is hopeful; he is determined to survive; he is creative; he is very hungry and cold; he is beginning to get sick from hunger.

Self-Evaluate

Ask, "What do you think of the strategy *Use Selective Attention*? Did it help you focus on and understand important details from the story? Tell the person sitting next to you what you think."

Give students a minute to discuss this, then ask volunteers to share their responses with the class.

Expand

Wrap up the lesson by asking students to think of other times they can use the learning strategy *Use Selective Attention*. Give students a chance to respond. Then say, "This strategy is helpful in any school subject. It helps you to pick out the important details. It also helps you to and remember the people and events that we hear or read about. Try using this strategy tonight when you do your homework, or in your next class. Let me know how it goes!"

"Love of Life," Part Two

by Jack London

The man **cursed** and threw the empty gun on the ground. He uttered a cry of pain as he started to drag himself to his feet. It was a slow task. When he finally stood on his feet, he needed another minute or two to straighten himself, so that he could stand as a man should stand.

He climbed a small hill and looked about. There were no trees, no **bushes**. There was nothing but grassy gray plants and some gray rocks and gray streams. The sky was gray. There was no sun or promise of sun. He had no idea of where north was, and he had forgotten how he had come to this spot the night before. But he was not lost. He knew that. Soon he would come to the land of the little sticks. He felt that it lay to the left somewhere, not far. Possibly it was over the next low hill.

He returned to prepare his pack for traveling. He assured himself of the existence of his three separate portions of matches, although he did not stop to count them. But he did **pause**, trying to decide what to do about a bag made from **moose** skin. It was not large. It could be covered by his two hands. But he knew that it weighed 15 pounds—as much as all the rest of the pack. This worried him. He finally set it to one side and proceeded to roll the pack. He paused again to gaze at the moose-skin bag. He picked it up quickly with a quick **glance** around him. It was as if he thought the cruel wasteland was trying to steal it. When he rose to his feet, the bag was included in the pack on his back.

He started walking to the left, stopping now and again to eat muskeg berries. His ankle had **stiffened**, but the pain of it was nothing compared with the pain of his stomach. His hunger was so great he could not keep his mind steady on the course he had to follow to arrive at the land of the little sticks.

The berries did not help his hunger. Their bitter taste only made his tongue and mouth sore.

He came to a valley where some birds rose from the rocky places. "Ker-ker-ker" was the sound of their cry. He threw stones at them but could not hit them. He placed his pack on the ground and followed them as a cat advances on a bird. The sharp rocks cut through his **trousers** until his knees left a trail of blood. But the hurt was lost in the pain of his hunger. He moved his body through the wet plants, becoming wet and cold in the process. But he did not notice this, so great was his desire for food.

Always the birds rose before him. Their cry of "Ker-ker-ker" sounded as if they were laughing at him. He cursed them and cried aloud at them with their own cry.

Once he came upon one that must have been asleep. He did not see it until it flew up in his face from behind some rocks. He grasped the air as suddenly as the rise of the bird, and there remained in his hand three tail feathers. As he watched its flight he hated it. He felt that it had done him some great wrong. Then he returned to where he had left his pack and lifted it again to his back.

As the day continued, he came into valleys where game was more plentiful. Twenty or more caribou passed by, within easy shooting distance of a gun. He felt a wild desire to run after them, certain that he could catch them. A small black animal came toward him, carrying a bird in its mouth. The man shouted. It was a fearful cry, but the animal, leaping away in fright, did not drop the bird.

Late in the afternoon he followed a stream which flowed through some thick grass. He grasped these grasses firmly near the root and pulled up what looked like a vegetable. It was round and white. Eagerly he sank his teeth into it. It was tender on the outside and gave the promise of food. But its inside was hard and stringy, and, like the berries, it had no food value. Nevertheless, he threw off his pack and went among the grasses on his hands and knees, eating the grass like a cow.

He was very tired and often wished to rest—to lie down and sleep. But he was led on, not so much by his desire to find the land of the little sticks as by his hunger.

He looked into every pool of water, searching without success for things to eat. Then, as the night darkened, he discovered a single small fish in one of these pools. He plunged his whole arm in, but the fish escaped his grasp. He reached for it with both hands and stirred the **mud** at the bottom of the pool. During his excitement he fell in, getting wet as high as his shoulders. Then the water was too cloudy with mud to allow him to see the fish. He was forced to wait until the mud had again settled to the bottom.

Then he tried again, until the water was again filled with mud. But he could not wait. He took a tin container from his pack and began to empty the water from the pool. He threw it out wildly at first, and so short a distance that it flowed into the pool again. He worked more carefully, trying to be calm, but his heart was pounding and his hands were trembling. At the

end of half an hour the pool was nearly dry. Not a cupful of water remained. And there was no fish.

Then he discovered a narrow opening among the stones through which it had escaped into a larger pool—a pool which he could not empty in a night and a day. If he had known of the opening, he could have closed it with a rock before he began and the fish would have been his. [END OF SECTION 2]

Thus he thought, and he sank down upon the wet earth. At first he cried softly to himself. Then he cried loudly to the uncaring wasteland around him.

He built a fire and warmed himself by drinking hot water. Then he built a camp on the rocks as he had done the night before. The last things he did were to be certain that his matches were dry and to wind his watch. The blankets were wet. His ankle pained him. But he knew only that he was hungry. Through his restless sleep he dreamed of **feasts** and of food served in all imaginable manners.

When he awakened he was cold and sick. There was no sun. The gray of earth and sky had become deeper. A cold wind was blowing and snow was whitening the hilltops. The air about him grew white with snow while he made a fire and boiled more water. It was wet snow, half rain. At first it melted as soon as it hit the earth. But it continued falling, covering the ground and destroying his fire.

This was a signal for him to put his pack on his back and struggle forward, he knew not where. He was not concerned with the land of little sticks, nor with Bill and the cache under the upturned boat by the river Dease. He was mad because of hunger. He did not notice the course he followed, except that it led him through the bottoms of the valleys. He felt his way through the wet snow to the watery muskeg berries, and was guided by touch as he pulled up the grass by the roots. But it had no taste and did not satisfy his hunger.

He had no fire that night, nor hot water. He pulled his blanket around him to sleep the broken sleep of hunger. The snow became a cold rain. He awakened many times to feel it falling on his upturned face.

Day came. It was a gray day with no sun. It had ceased raining. The sharpness of his hunger had departed. There was a dull pain in his stomach, but it did not trouble him so much. He was more in control of himself. And once again he was interested in the land of little sticks and the cache by the river Dease.

He cut the remains of one of his blankets into strips and bound his bleeding feet. He used one of the strips on his swelled ankle and prepared himself for a day of travel. When he was ready to pick up his pack, he paused long before deciding to keep the moose-skin bag, but when he departed, it went with him.

The snow had melted under the rain, and only the hilltops showed white. The sun appeared and he succeeded in locating the way he had been traveling. But now he knew that he was lost. Perhaps he had wandered too far to the left. He now turned to the right to return to his true course.

Although the hunger pains were not as great as they had been, he realized that he was weak. He was forced to pause for frequent rests. At those times he ate the muskeg berries and grasses. His tongue felt dry and large and it tasted bitter in his mouth. His heart troubled him very much. When he had traveled a few minutes, it would begin pounding. Then it would leap in a series of beats that made him feel faint.

In the middle of the day he found two small fish in a large pool. It was impossible to empty it. But he was calmer now and he managed to catch them. They were no bigger than his little finger, but now he was not particularly hungry. The dull pain in his stomach had been growing duller. It almost seemed that his stomach was asleep. He ate the fish with great care. The eating was an act of pure reason. Although he had no desire to eat, he knew that he must eat to live. [END OF SECTION 3]

In the evening he caught three more small fish, eating two and saving the third for breakfast. The sun had dried the wet plants and he was able to build a fire. He had not traveled more than ten miles that day. The next day, traveling whenever his heart permitted, he went no more than five miles. But his stomach did not give him any pain. It seemed to be sleeping. He was now in a strange country, too, and the caribou were becoming more plentiful. There were **wolves** also. Their howls could be heard across the land, and once he saw three of them crossing his path.

Another night passed. And in the morning, being more reasonable, he untied the leather string that held the moose-skin bag. From its open mouth poured a yellow stream of gold dust. He divided the gold into two equal parts. One half, wrapped in a piece of a blanket, he hid among a large formation of rocks. The other half he returned to the bag. He also began to use strips of the one remaining blanket for his feet. He still kept his gun, because there were cartridges in that cache by the river Dease.

This was a cloudy day, and this day hunger waked in him again. He was very weak. It was no uncommon thing now for him to fall. Once he fell into a bird's **nest**. There were four tiny birds, a day or so old, no more than a mouthful. He ate them greedily, putting them alive into his mouth and crushing them like **eggshells** between his teeth. The mother bird flew about him with cries of anger. He used his gun as a club with which to hit her, but she flew beyond his reach. He threw stones at her and by chance, one broke a **wing**. Then she ran away, dragging the broken wing, with him following her.

The little birds had not satisfied his hunger. He jumped along on his painful ankle, throwing stones and screaming loudly at times. At other times, he struggled along silently, picking himself up patiently when he fell, or rubbing his eyes with his hand when faintness threatened to overpower him.

The bird led him across some wet ground in the bottom of the valley. He discovered footprints in the wet grasses. They were not his own. He could see that. They must be Bill's. But he could not stop, because the mother bird was running ahead. He would catch her first. Then he would return and examine the footprints.

He tired the mother bird; but he tired himself also. She lay on her side breathing heavily. He lay on his side, a dozen feet away, unable to move toward her. And as he recovered, she recovered. She flew beyond reach as his hungry hand stretched out to catch her. The hunt started again. Night darkened and she escaped. He fell because of weakness, cutting his face. He did not move for a long time; then he rolled on his side. He wound his watch and lay there until morning.

It was another gray day. Half of his last blanket had been used for foot-wrappings. He failed to find Bill's trail again. It was not important. His hunger drove him on. He wondered if Bill, too, were lost. By the middle of the day, the weight of his pack became too great. Again he divided the gold, this time merely pouring half of it on the ground. In the afternoon he threw away the rest of it. There remained now only the half of the blanket, the tin container, and the gun.

A **hallucination** began to trouble him. He felt certain that one cartridge remained. It was in his gun and he had not seen it. However, he knew all the time that the gun was empty. But the hallucination continued. He fought it for hours. Then, he opened his gun eagerly, only to find nothing inside.

He struggled ahead for half an hour, when the hallucination arose again. Again he fought it, and still it continued. To give himself relief, he again opened the gun and found it empty.

At times his mind wandered even further. But these moments away from reality were brief, because always the pains of hunger forced him to return. Once, as his mind was wandering, he was returned to reality by a sight that almost caused him to faint. Before him stood a horse. A horse! He could not believe his eyes. A thick cloud was in his eyes, flashing with points of light. He rubbed his eyes fiercely to clear his sight. Then he saw before him not a horse, but a great brown **bear**. The animal was studying him with curiosity.

New Vocabulary

curse - *v.* to use offensive words when you speak

bush - *n.* a plant that has stems of wood and is smaller than a tree

moose - *n.* a large animal with very large, flat antlers that lives in forests in the northern part of America, Europe, and Asia

glance - *v.* to look at someone or something very quickly

stiffen - *v.* to become difficult to bend or move

trousers - *n.* pants

mud - *n.* soft, wet dirt

feast - *n.* a special meal with large amounts of food and drink

pause - *v.* to stop doing something for a short time before doing it again

wolf - *n.* a large wild animal that is similar to a dog and that often hunts in groups (plural: **wolves**)

nest - *n.* the place where a bird lays its eggs and takes care of its young

eggshell - *n.* the hard outside part of an egg

wing - *n.* a part of an animal's body that is used for flying

hallucination - *n.* an image, sound or smell that seems real but does not really exist

bear - *n.* any one of a group of large and heavy animals that have thick hair and sharp claws and that can stand on two legs like a person



Figure 1: Wolf



Figure 2: Bear

About the CALLA Approach

This lesson is based on the CALLA approach. The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) is an instructional model for second and foreign language learners based on cognitive theory and research.

CALLA integrates instruction in priority topics from the content curriculum, development of the language skills needed for learning in school, and explicit instruction in using learning strategies for academic tasks.

The goals of CALLA are for students to learn essential academic content and language and to become independent and self-regulated learners through their increasing command over a variety of strategies for learning in school. CALLA can be used in ESL, EFL, bilingual, foreign language, and general education classrooms.

A list of CALLA learning strategies follows. These strategies were researched by J. Michael O'Malley and Anna Uhl Chamot.

See a list of language learning strategies below.

METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES

Plan / Organize

Before beginning a task:

Set goals.

Plan the task or content sequence.

Plan how to accomplish the task (choose strategies).

Preview a text.

Monitor / Identify Problems

While working on a task:

Check your progress on the task.

Check your comprehension as you use the language. Do you understand? If not, what is the problem?

Check your production as you use the language. Are you making sense? If not, what is the problem?

Evaluate

After completing a task:

Assess how well you have accomplished the learning task.

Assess how well you have used learning strategies.

Decide how effective the strategies were.

Identify changes you will make the next time you have a similar task to do.

Manage Your Own Learning

Determine how you learn best.

Arrange conditions that help you learn.

Look for Ways to Practice.

Focus your attention on the task.

TASK-BASED STRATEGIES - USE WHAT YOU KNOW

Use Background Knowledge

Think about and use what you already know to help you do the task.

Make associations between new information and your prior knowledge.

Use new information to clarify or modify your prior knowledge.

Make Inferences

Use context and what you know to figure out meaning.

Read and listen between the lines.

Go beyond the text to understand its meaning.

Make Predictions

Anticipate information to come.

Make logical guesses about what will happen in a written or oral text.

Make an estimate (math).

Make a hypothesis (science).

Personalize

Relate new concepts to your own life, to your experiences, knowledge, beliefs and feelings.

Transfer / Use Cognates

Apply your linguistic knowledge of other languages (including your native language) to the target language.

Recognize cognates.

Substitute / Paraphrase

Use a synonym or descriptive phrase for unknown words or expressions.

TASK-BASED STRATEGIES - USE YOUR SENSES

Use Images

Use or create an actual or mental image to understand and/or represent information.

Use or draw a picture or diagram.

Use Sounds

Say or read aloud a word, sentence, or paragraph to help your understanding.

Sound out/vocalize.

Use your "mental tape recorder" to remember sounds, words, phrases, and/or conversations.

Use Your Kinesthetic Sense

Act out a role, for example, in Readers' Theater, or imagine yourself in different roles in the target language.

Use real objects to help you remember words, sentences, or content information.

TASK-BASED STRATEGIES - USE YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Find/Apply Patterns

Apply a rule.

Make a rule.

Recognize and apply letter/sound, grammar, discourse, or register rules.

Identify patterns in literature (genre).

Identify patterns in math, science, and social studies.

Classify/Sequence

Categorize words or ideas according to attributes.

Classify living things; identify natural cycles.

Identify order and sequences in math, science, and social studies.

Sequence events in history.

Take Notes

Write down important words and ideas while listening or reading.

List ideas or words to include in speaking or writing.

Use Graphic Organizers

Use or create visual representations (such as Venn diagrams, time lines, webs, and charts) of important relationships between concepts.

Summarize

Create a mental, oral, or written summary of information.

Use Selective Attention

Focus on specific information, structures, key words, phrases, or ideas.

TASK-BASED STRATEGIES - USE A VARIETY OF RESOURCES

Access Information Sources

Use the dictionary, the internet, and other reference materials.

Seek out and use sources of information.

Follow a model

Ask questions

Cooperate

Work with others to complete tasks, build confidence, and give and receive feedback.

Talk Yourself Through It (Self-Talk)

Use your inner resources. Reduce your anxiety by reminding yourself of your progress, the resources you have available, and your goals.