

Lesson Plan #8

Name of Lesson: Fossey’s Family Flourishes

Lesson overview: Class will revisit the home of the gorillas eleven years after Fossey’s death through the eyes of a journalist. This lesson then provides students with more vocabulary practice and introduces them to the use of idioms in writing. Although not developed here, this lesson might also provide a good medium for work with some other kinds of figurative language such as alliteration and the use of the possessive form.

Objectives:

Language Learning	Concept	Strategies
Possessives Figurative language Idioms Imperatives Reading skills	Giving advice Learning to use new information	Using context clues Identifying purposes of a language task Seeking practice opportunities Fluency activity Using patterns or formats

Materials: Adapted article “Fossey’s Family Flourishes” for each student
Text and vocabulary questions
Poster paper for idiom work

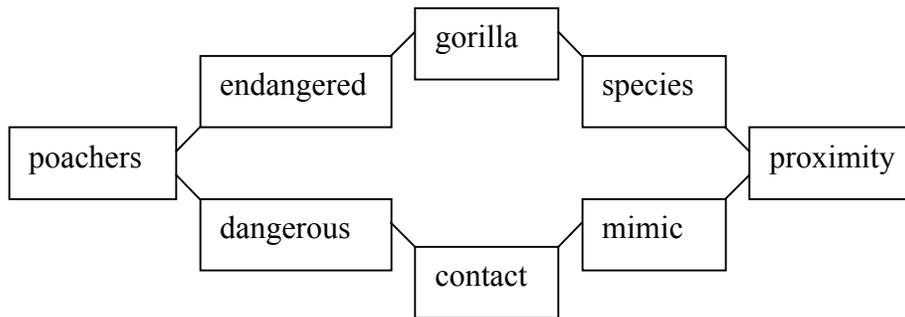
Activities: Vocabulary review in the form of word cycles
Reading about Fisher’s visit back to Rwanda
Partner work in going through questions and figuring out idioms presented
Considering imperatives
Final activity would include creating their own idiom with an explanation and picture on poster paper.

Teaching Phase:

Part 1: Warm up

- Review book and film vocabulary with a guided (modified) word cycle activity (could use semantic web instead).
- Work through one example together and then provide a different circle for each group.

Word Cycle Sample



Example sentences: The gorilla is a species of primate with a close proximity to 'Man' and who can sometimes mimic humans if there is a great deal of contact with them. However, humans have proved dangerous to gorillas partly because poachers have killed so many gorillas that they are now endangered.

- Provide each group with a word cycle (you may use several different ones or just two or three different cycles).
- Have each group create their own sentence or group of sentences to share with the class.

Part 2: Teaching new language, concepts, and strategies

- Tell students that in 1996 a journalist with the Calgary Sun revisited the African country where Dian Fossey worked and was murdered to check up on how gorillas were faring. Add the information that he is able to find one of only a few troops left in the country and that this troop is led by a silverback named Gohunda. It might be worthwhile to have students repeat this word a few times to 'get' the pronunciation.
- Hand out the rewritten article.
- This might be an excellent opportunity to help students increase their reading fluency (at the same time as they are engaged with the article's content) using the following strategy:
 1. The teacher reads the first paragraph.
 2. A student will then re-read the first paragraph and the next one as well.
 3. A third student reads the second paragraph over and then adds the third and so on.
- Following the reading, you may want to ask if there were any new words or groups of words that they noticed (prodigious and 'in a pickle' will probably come up).
- Proceed with a short discussion of any new vocabulary and a lesson about idioms.

- Have students work with a partner to complete the questions that follow the reading.
- Talk to students about the imperative form. Ask students to tell you, again (could also consider poetry work from lesson 7 here), some of the things they would or would not do if they met a gorilla. Have them change this to a command that they might give to someone else.

(Examples: Don't point at gorillas!

Don't make eye contact with a gorilla!

“What do you do if a gorilla grabs you?”

Stay calm!

Part 3: Practice/reinforcement and extension of new learning

- Students will be asked to find idioms of their own – hopefully through prior knowledge and experiences.
- For those who struggle with this, some further examples are offered here:
 - Don't cry over spilled milk
 - Up a creek without a paddle
 - Beat around the bush
 - Open a can of worms
 - Put your foot in your mouth
- Students will be asked to use some imperatives in new situations

Part 4: Closure

- Have students individually complete, on poster paper or colored 8.5x14in. paper, an explanation and picture or diagram for one 'found' idiom .

What Happens In the Wild

Fossey's Family Flourishes

Adapted and rewritten by D. Abraham

Mathew Fisher, journalist for the **Calgary Sun** was recently in Rwanda to look in on Dian Fossey's gorillas. He found it easy to track them as they left a mess wherever they traveled. Trees were stripped of their bark just like beavers would do. Young bamboo shoots had been uprooted everywhere and the juices from their lower stems devoured. As well, many prodigious droppings, much like humans' littered the travel path of the gorillas.

Fisher was on top of the world when he found the troop led by a magnificent 26-year-old silverback named Gohunda who led a family of eleven members, called the Sabyingo group. This troop included his four mates, three juveniles, one baby, and two smaller silverbacks. Gohunda was thought to be the oldest, biggest, and mightiest of the 300 or 400 gorillas still roaming Rwanda's mountainous terrain. The troop



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seemed to be on a constant quest for food, giving their observers the cold shoulder, as they moved nimbly across the ground on all fours with most of their weight placed on their knuckles.

Fisher found the gorillas to be quiet, peaceful and for the most part totally uninterested in the three humans that had appeared to observe them. His Tutsi guides were very excited with the good fortune of finding the gorillas as it had been at least seventeen years since they had spent an entire day outside of Rwanda's Volcano National Park, traveling cross-country in the open.

Troop Protection

Even though the gorillas seemed unconcerned, Gohunda made sure that he and his brood were never more than twenty meters from the protection of the jungle. Because the gorillas are protected by government, all visitors must first register with the Rwandan national tourist office. Only four visitors a day are allowed into the Sabyingo group's stomping ground and these visitors must pay \$126US each and another \$200US for a four-wheel drive vehicle. No flash or whirring video cameras are allowed, and only sixty minutes can be spent with the animals. If grabbed by one of the gorillas, visitors were to

stay calm and relax their bodies. Any other action could be fatal as gorillas are able to tear a human arm off in a flash if they sense danger. This was a tip given to visitors. Another tip to help them avoid getting into a pickle was to be careful not to point anything at a gorilla. They were also warned not to touch the baby gorillas as the dominant male would then attack for sure.

Gorillas are able to tear a human arm off in a flash!

Continuing Danger

There is a great deal of competition here between man and animal for nature's resources. Fisher's guides did not want to talk about any problems with humans encroaching on the gorillas' habitat. They also would not talk about Dian Fossey's murder in 1986 or about the poaching of gorillas for their hands or feet. However, they did admit, grudgingly, that some male gorillas had died in the past so that their babies could be lured away with bananas, captured, and sold to zoos.

Original information from 'Fossey's famous primates flourish despite Rwanda's horror'; The Calgary Sun; Dec. 8/96.

Thinking About What You've Read

What is the total cost for one day of gorilla watching?

_____ for _____

_____ for _____

Total cost: _____

Why do poachers kill gorillas?

Name one other reason that some gorillas might be killed.

There is competition between man and gorilla for food. What does this tell you about the human population?

How many different words are used to mean the same thing as gorilla **'family'** in this article? Find them and write them here.

Read each of the following sentences. Do **not** look in your dictionary. Decide from reading the sentence what the word in bold print means and write the definition in your notebook.

- a.) The gorillas were completely **uninterested** in the humans who came to look at them.
- b.) Humans are **encroaching** on the gorilla habitat so gorillas must move higher into the mountains.
- c.) The gorillas seemed to be on a constant **quest** for food, spending most of their day looking for plants they liked to eat.
- d.) The guides **grudgingly** admitted that baby gorillas were sometimes still stolen from their families for shipment to zoos.
- e.) Young bamboo shoots had been uprooted everywhere and the juices from their lower stems **devoured**.

The reading *'Fossey's Family Flourishes'* contains three idioms. These idioms are groups of words that have a special meaning and really do not mean what

they say. Sometimes what they actually do mean can even be quite silly but if someone does not know the special meaning then the idiom can be quite confusing. Idioms can also be fun to play with and figure out. The three in 'Fossey's Family Flourishes' are:

- ❖ On top of the world
- ❖ Giving the cold shoulder
- ❖ In a pickle

Work with a partner to see if you can figure out, from re-reading the text, what the three idioms mean.

Below is a short list of some other popular idioms. See how many you you're your partner know or can figure out. Explain the meaning of each idiom.

- ❖ Don't count your chickens before they're hatched
- ❖ Don't look a gift horse in the mouth
- ❖ Bury your head in the sand
- ❖ Butterflies in the stomach
- ❖ To throw the book at

Go back to the earlier readings in this unit and see if you can find at least three other idioms or clichés (What **is** a cliché?) and write them down here.

On your own:

1. Talk to five other people (outside of this class) in the school (students, teachers, principal, counsellor, caretaker...) and ask them for one example each of an idiom or cliché. Ask them to also tell you what it means. Create a chart like the one below for this information.

Name of Person	Idiom/Cliché	Explanation
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

2. Choose **one** of the popular idioms or one that you wrote in your chart and present it on poster paper with its explanation. Also, include a picture or sketch to help classmates understand the idiom better. This work will be orally shared with your class.

3. On the back of the poster, write a short incident (5-8 sentences) in which you use the idiom that you have chosen.

What To Do?

You are with your friend who is walking her cute little dog in the park. Suddenly, a huge black dog appears on the other side of the park. It is not with its owner. It sees you and your friend's little dog and begins to bark. Then it starts to race across the park toward your little group! What words of advice would you give your friend? See if you can think of five imperative statements you might make to tell your friend what to do and/or not do.