Unit 5/Week 3

Title: Lou Gehrig: The Luckiest Man

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)


Teacher Instructions

Refer to the Introduction for further details.

Before Teaching

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis. Please do not read this to the students. This is a description for teachers, about the big ideas and key understanding that students should take away after completing this task.

   Big Ideas and Key Understandings
   Never give up no matter how difficult life becomes. It is important to always focus on the positive.

   Synopsis
   The students will learn about the life of Lou Gehrig who was an extraordinary baseball player. Lou Gehrig at the height of his career is diagnosed with a terminal illness. He demonstrates true courage while facing his illness. Even after he could no longer play baseball, he continued to see the bright side of life and be a positive role model in his community.

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1 This story is a “duplicate.” (It is found in other basals, as well.) This particular revision was completed by a teacher who uses a different basal, so the page numbers have been removed. This may require you to make some adjustments/add page numbers to some of the questions.
2. Read entire main selection text, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.

3. Re-read the main selection text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Vocabulary.

**During Teaching**

1. Students read the entire main selection text independently.

2. Teacher reads the main selection text aloud with students following along. (Depending on how complex the text is and the amount of support needed by students, the teacher may choose to reverse the order of steps 1 and 2.)

3. Students and teacher re-read the text while stopping to respond to and discuss the questions and returning to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and discussion (i.e.: whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.)

**Text Dependent Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Dependent Questions</th>
<th>Answers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explain the dream Lou Gehrig’s mom had for her son. When someone feels adamant, they</td>
<td>Lou Gehrig’s mom wanted him to go to college to become an accountant or</td>
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<tr>
<td>feel strongly about something. Why does his mother feel so adamant about Lou going to</td>
<td>engineer. Lou’s mom feels adamant about this because they were a poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>college?</td>
<td>immigrant family and education was very important to her. By becoming</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>educated, Lou would be able to have a successful future and make more</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>money than his parents could make.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do you know about Lou Gehrig’s childhood that helps you understand his</td>
<td>Lou never missed a day of grade school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>determination to never miss a game?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>As a young child, Lou loved the game of baseball, soccer and football. Which game did</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
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<tr>
<td>he play in high school?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Why did Lou Gehrig earn the nickname of “Iron Horse”?</td>
<td>Lou played despite being sore, having back pain, broken bones, but he</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>never missed a game.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
What do you know about Lou Gehrig's career?
He plays for the New York Yankees. He played his first game in 1925. For 14 years, he never missed a game.

What does the word modest mean? What statement helps to show Lou's modesty? Why?
Lou Gehrig would comment “That’s the way I am.” By watching him, fans knew he was a great baseball player.

What problem did Lou Gehrig have with his batting during the 1938 season? How did he deal with it?
He wasn’t able to hit. He took extra batting practice, exercised and ate healthful foods.

What does this tell us about Lou as a person?
Lou was a hardworking person who wanted to do the best for his team.

Based on the problems he was having while playing baseball, predict the cause of Lou’s batting problem. Find examples from the story to support your ideas.
Possible answers:
Lou could have problems with his eye sight, because the ball did not go anywhere after being hit.
Lou could have muscle problems due to having had a stroke because he would fall down in the clubhouse.

In 1927, Babe Ruth hit 60 homeruns, which were the most hits up to that time. However, Lou Gehrig was voted the Most Valuable Player. Using specific examples from the text, explain why the sport’s writers gave him this award.
Lou Gehrig never missed a game 14 years. He played 2,130 consecutive games. Nickname is the “Iron Horse.” He was shy and modest, despite these accomplishments, which shows he is a team player.

What does the word “respect” mean? Who was Joe McCarthy? How did he show respect for Lou Gehrig?
Joe McCarthy was the manager for the New York Yankees. Despite people wanting Gehrig removed from the lineup, McCarthy stated that “Gehrig plays as long as he wants to play.”

In 1939, doctors at the Mayo Clinic told Lou that he suffered from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. What part of the body does this disease affect and where in the text did you find the answer?
The disease affects his central nervous system. This is directly stated in the text.

Note to Teacher: Since it is unlikely that all students will understand what the central nervous system does, the teacher could use this moment to provide a quick overview so students...
Understand what is happening to Lou: “The nervous system is a highway along which your brain sends and receives information about what is happening in the body and around it.” The central nervous system is involved in sending the messages from the brain to different parts of the body, so you body knows when and how to raise your hand or move your legs when you want to walk. Find more information at http://www.cyh.com.

Reread the last few pages in the story. What examples does the author give to show that Lou Gehrig was courageous? Possible answers:
- He quit playing baseball, even though he loved the game and his manager told him he could play as long as he wanted.
- He never spoke of his illness and focused on the good things in life.
- Even though he knew he was dying, he never gave up.

In 1939, the fans and the New York Yankees honored Lou Gehrig. How? Use text to support your response. Possible answers:
- Lou Gehrig was given an Appreciation Day at the Yankee Stadium. At the ceremony, there was a marching band, many people gave speeches and they gave him gifts. Fans chanted, “We want Gehrig, we want Gehrig.” The band played “We love you Truly” Lou was voted in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

After leaving baseball, Lou Gehrig worked with former prisoners. How does this fit with what we already know about Lou? Lou Gehrig was employed by the New York City Parole Commission and worked with prisoners.

Find specific examples to show that Lou Gehrig was positive the last days of his life. Lou Gehrig never spoke about his illness or that he was dying to visitors. He said, “I’ll gradually get better.” When he sent cards to friends, he wrote, “We have much to be thankful for.”
# Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION</th>
<th>KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING</th>
<th>WORDS WORTH KNOWING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not enough contextual clues provided in the text</td>
<td>immigrant, accountant, engineer selected examined, specialist deeply prototype, consider, tower of strength inspire former, parole, visibly upset, gradually, fitting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>students figure out the meaning</td>
<td>modest respect</td>
<td>populated bonus, consecutive, despite, constant appreciation sportsmanship, chanted, praised, courageous tremendous</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Culminating Task**

- Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

Lou Gehrig never gave up no matter how difficult life became for him. He always remained positive. Design a trading card to illustrate how he dealt with his challenges and remained positive. Use the trading card provided. The front of the card details where and when he was born, as well as some details about his baseball career. On the back of the card, you should include the challenges he faced, his positive responses to those challenges, and the page numbers where you found this information.

Front of Card

![Lou Gehrig](image)

Lou Gehrig

Born in ________________

City of Birth_______________________

Professional Sport_____________________

Professional Team_____________________

Number of Consecutive Games Played_________________

Voted in the Hall of Fame ____________
### Additional Tasks

- Research another athlete that experienced challenges and design a Trading Card based upon the Lou Gehrig’s format.

### Note to Teacher

- In order for students to understand what is happening to Lou Gehrig and his nervous system, you may have to give a short synopsis of what the nervous system does. A synopsis is provided as an answer in the question sequence.