

KSRA Common Core Literacy Lessons

Book Title: *The Family Romanov: Murder, Rebellion, and the Fall of Imperial Russia*

Author: Candace Fleming

Publisher: Schwartz and Wade

Year of Publication: 2014

ISBN: 978-0375867828

Genre: Nonfiction

Age Range: 12 and up

Readability Level: 950 Lexile

Awards: Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction for Children, Keystone to Reading Book Award 2016

Book Summary: Fleming paints contrasting portraits of the extravagant lives of the Russian royal family at the turn of the 20th century and the lives of everyday peasants who struggled "outside the palace walls." The book also chronicles the people and circumstances which impacted Czar Nicholas' ability to lead his nation in times of war and revolt.

Cross Curricular Connections: This book is recommended for use in Humanities classes, history, and English classes. Any of the discussion questions suggested here, can be used as writing prompts following discussion. Historical question to consider: What makes a good/poor leader? ELA question to consider: Does the author's style engender empathy or disdain for the Romanovs?

Methods for improving class discussions: <http://www.weareteachers.com/blogs/post/2015/03/18/13-strategies-to-improve-student-classroom-discussions>

Beers and Probst checklist for assessing student talk: <http://kylenebeers.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Rigor-and-Talk-for-Nonfiction.jpg>

Focus: CC.1.5.8.A Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions, on grade-level topics, **texts**, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Before Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Consider using a word splash, anticipation guide, and/or open word sort to activate prior knowledge and determine what students already know about the content.2. Students will need to have an awareness and understanding of the family tree in order to navigate the text.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students what they notice about individuals on the family tree?• Discuss the author's note with students (how did the author choose to leave some parts of the family tree off?)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out that hemophilia is noted throughout the family tree (significance/importance). <p>3. Compare/contrast the map of eastern Europe from 1900 to today. (Discuss possible reasons for its change.)</p> <p>4. The table of contents serves as a teaching tool. Please use it to have students make predictions, ask questions, and hold discussions about the events that are to unfold. (Be sure to discuss storm metaphors, repetition of sections throughout the table of contents, <i>if</i> students don't highlight these features.)</p>
<p>Vocabulary CC.1.2.8.K Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade-level reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies and tools.</p>	<p>This book contains words that are derived from different languages. Consider previewing the roots before and/during the reading of the text. For example: <i>auto, mono, theo, arch, ocracy, demo, hemo</i></p>
<p>Teaching Strategies for Discussion and Critical Thinking: CC.1.5.8.A Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions, on grade-level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p>	<p>Socratic Circles/seminars: Provide a structure for deep evidence based discussion, equitable questioning and learning. The following sites offer examples: https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/using-socratic-seminars-in-classroom http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/socratic-seminars-30600.html</p> <p>Literature Circles: Students have various roles/responsibilities while reading and bring textual evidence into group discussion. Because this book is written using a narrative structure, it lends itself to a modified lit. circle. Suggested categories/roles include: leadership, government, influential relationships, powerful vocabulary, "Beyond the Palace Gates" connections, religion, and aristocracy.</p>
<p>Part I Before The Storm <i>During Reading Discussion</i> CC.1.2.8.B Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences, conclusions, and/or generalizations drawn from the text CC.1.2.8.F Analyze the influence of the words</p>	<p>The following questions can be used within Socratic Seminars or as small group discussions. Students should have these prior to and during independent reading, giving them concepts to take notice of and be prepared to discuss. The author opens the book with many ominous forebodings. What were they? Discuss the pros and cons of governmental controls. How did Alexander II and Alexander III differ? Why does the term, "scapegoat" apply to the imperial bureaucrats.</p>

<p>and phrases in a text including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings, and how they shape meaning and tone.</p>	<p>How do the differences between an autocracy and a constitutional democracy impact a country's citizens? How did the "imbalance of power" in Imperial Russia affect the people outside the palace gates? Good leaders must be able to make important decisions. What were the earliest hints that Nicholas would not be a good leader?</p>
<p>Part II Dark Clouds Gathering <i>During Reading</i> Discussion</p>	<p>Trace the factors that led to the "Dark Clouds" to come. Despite lack of access to news and literature, how did an increase in literate workers correlate to increased worker dissatisfaction? Locate evidence of spirituality throughout this section. Discuss the effects of spirituality on the Russian people and their feelings about the Tsar. What caused the shift in the people's' feelings toward the Tsar? Look for and discuss evidence of the Tsar's distance from the people. Compare to our current democracy. Discuss the persecution of Jews, described throughout Chapter 5.</p>
<p>Part III The Storm Breaks <i>During Reading</i> Discussion</p> <p>CC.1.2.8.B Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences, conclusions, and/or generalizations drawn from the text.</p>	<p>Why does a monarchy need loyalty to survive? Discuss the differences in living conditions between the elite and everyday man and how that fueled the need for revolution. How did Rasputin take advantage of Alexandra's insecurity, religious obsession, and paranoia? What is anarchy and how did it play a role in these events? Why did some Russians want to keep the tsar but with no power? What would have been the benefit? Reread the "Peasant Song." What is the meaning behind each stanza and how does it relate to the historical events at the time? Why did the author choose to include it as a part of the text?</p>
<p>Part IV The Final Days</p> <p>CC.1.2.8.B Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences, conclusions, and/or generalizations drawn from the text.</p> <p>CC.1.2.8.D Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how</p>	<p>What are the positives and negatives about having a fanatical faith in something as the Romanov's did? The author describes what the royal family chose to bring with them from Tsarskoe Selo. How do their chooses contribute to how they were feeling about the events at the time? Do you agree with Lenin's tactics of dealing with the elite? Discuss the murder of the Romanov family? Do you believe they deserved their fate? Discuss the similarities and differences of life under the Czar, Lenin, and Stalin. How do you think the author feels about the Ramonov family and the events surrounding them?</p>

<p>the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.</p>	<p>What contemporary events could be a parallel to the events that happened with the Romanov family?</p>
<p>Culminating writing CC.1.4.8.W Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.</p>	<p>Allow students to choose a preferred mode of writing:</p> <p>Argument: A literate society is essential to maintaining a free society. Locate quotes from historical leaders and use them to argue the importance of literacy in any society.</p> <p>Narrative: Research eulogies of various world leaders. Write one for Nicholas or Alexandra.</p> <p>Expository: Locate news articles pertaining to the continuing controversy surrounding the Romanov family’s murders and burials. Summarize into a news article.</p>
<p>Extensions</p>	<p>http://www.theclassroombookshelf.com/2014/09/the-family-romanov/</p> <p>http://www.teenreads.com/reviews/the-family-romanov-murder-rebellion-and-the-fall-of-imperial-russia#</p>