

Unit 1 /Week 4

Title: Dear Mrs. Parks

Suggested Time: 5 days (30 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RI.5.1, RI.5.2, RI.5.3, RI.5.4, RI.5.8; W.5.2, W.5.4, W.5.9; SL.5.1; SL.5.6; L.5.1, L.5.2, L.5.4, L.5.5

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

Rosa Parks, the “mother of the modern-day civil rights movement,” is often considered a role model for others. Role models provide examples of how to overcome difficult situations, how to set and achieve goals, or how to contribute to society, among many other things.

Synopsis

Mrs. Parks gives advice to students on a variety of issues by answering some of the letters she has received over her lifetime. She embeds her understandings of building character, making a difference in the lives of others, and developing personal character throughout these letters.

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

Text Dependent Questions	Answers
When people give you advice , they tell you what they think you should do in a specific situation. Rosa says, "You can never learn very much if you do not ask questions." What evidence does she give to explain this advice?	She says that questions are more important than answers and that one should not be afraid to admit when s/he doesn't know an answer to something because that means you are on the path to learning. "The right question and a steady mind to listen help us to grow and build confidence and character. Questions help you make better choices in life."
Confidence means belief in yourself and your abilities. Character means having the qualities of honesty, courage, and the like. What does Rosa say will help you to grow and build confidence and character?	She says that you learn more when you ask questions. Then you are on the path to learning and the questions and their answers will help you to make better choices in life.
Rosa says, on page 95, "No one knows everything." How do	We know Rosa believes that no one knows everything, because

<p>you know that Rosa believes that?</p>	<p>even though she is older, she is still learning new things. She is learning to “keep up with correspondence” (written communication, like letters or emails) online on the Internet. She is learning about things related to “cyberspace.”</p>
<p>Even though Rosa Parks is 83 years old, she says, “Age does not determine what we know.” Why does she answer Richard’s letter in this way?</p>	<p>Richard said that she must know everything now because she is 83 years old. She tells him that age doesn’t determine what we know and gives examples of things she is still learning. She says there are young geniuses in life. She also says that Richard’s dad knows quite a bit.</p>
<p>When someone makes fun of you, they ridicule you. Using evidence from the text, why does Shata think her peers, or other students her same age, will ridicule her? Also using evidence from the text, when Rosa says, “Each person in life has certain gifts or talents to give back to life,” what does she mean?</p>	<p>Shata thinks her peers will ridicule her because she gets good grades and she is worried about fitting in. Rosa reassures Shata that others feel just like her. When she tells her that everyone has certain gifts or talents to give back to life, she means that Shata should continue to work hard, not be discouraged, and do her best. She wants Shata to understand that “we are all leaders of something in life,” meaning that everyone has unique strengths and talents which others should pay attention to.</p>
<p>What is personal dignity? How did Rosa’s grandmother teach her the importance of personal dignity?</p>	<p>Someone who behaves with dignity is deserving of respect and has a sense of his/her own value or importance. Rosa learned the importance of treating others with respect because she watched her grandmother care for others. She learned the history of family and community.</p>
<p>Adrienne wonders what her great-grandmother’s stories have to do with her life. Rosa said, “She seeks to inspire you by sharing stories of the past, of good times and bad times.” Inspire means to make someone want to do something. What does Adrienne’s grandmother want to inspire her to understand?</p>	<p>Adrienne can learn about mistakes from the past and also, she can learn about human nature. The way people act, or human nature, does not change. Rosa says that the lessons she (the great-grandmother) learned still apply to life today. The stories Adrienne’s grandmother tells her are “preparing her (Adrienne) to take her place in the world of tomorrow.” Her grandmother tells her she can learn from the mistakes of others, which will keep her from making the same mistakes.</p>

<p>Who are Rosa Park's role models? What do they teach her?</p>	<p>One of Rosa Park's role models was her grandmother who taught her about personal dignity. "She was informed about her ancestors and those people who paved the way for the freedoms we now have."</p>
<p>She also considers her ancestors, or members of her family who lived before her, to be her role models. She says, "they paved the way for the freedoms we now have." What does this phrase mean?</p>	<p>Through the ancestors' courage, faith, and sacrifices – they made progress easier for those born later in her family.</p>
<p>What reasons does Rosa give for being proud to be an American?</p> <p>(Teacher may need to provide direct instruction on some of these phrases and what they mean.)</p>	<p>Rosa says that "America is a wonderful country." She says that slavery has been abolished and child labor laws established. Women have the right to vote and have taken positions in politics, the arts, sciences, and business. She goes on to say that America is a model for, "every other developing country in the world for achieving justice and equality for its citizens." In other words, Americans have worked hard to make life better for every person.</p>
<p>The author uses the word <i>herstory</i>. What does this mean? What words or phrases in the text help you to know this?</p>	<p>It means the history of women's accomplishments. It is used in the same sentence as the word <i>history</i>, and the previous sentence tells about women's accomplishments. It plays off of the word history – and the word "his."</p>
<p>In the last letter, from Larry, he asks how he can make a difference. What does Rosa encourage him to do? Why is this a fitting answer with which to end the story?</p>	<p>She encourages him to serve others. She tells him to consider his career, community, and church. She suggests working with young people and sharing his talents with others. Rosa ends with this letter and answer, as it helps to sum up what she has done throughout this "story." She has tried to serve others and help young people by helping them with their questions. In this way, she has shared her talents with others.</p>

Vocabulary

	KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING Words addressed with a question or task	WORDS WORTH KNOWING General teaching suggestions are provided in the Introduction
TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION not enough contextual clues provided in the text	advice confidence, character correspondence ridiculed ancestors history, herstory	modern-day, civil rights movement certain, steady determine, geniuses developments, developing, potential, values faith, freedoms, sacrifices, inspire abolished, established, humanity, constitution, equality, poor race relations, better society, obstacles (not worth knowing but fast map it) aerobics for granted
STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING sufficient context clues are provided in the text	respect, personal dignity	courage fascinated cyberspace peers discourage ancestors, future generations, human nature council, mentor, impact

Culminating Task

- Rosa encourages Larry, one of the students who wrote to her to **council** or advise others. In other words, she encouraged him to be a mentor. How is Rosa Parks a mentor or role model to the students who wrote her letters? Provide evidence from at least two letters from the text in your answer.

Answer: She is constantly learning and asking questions to make better choices in life; she believes that if “you” start leading, others will soon follow; she believes in treating others with respect; she says you can learn from the courage, faith, and sacrifices of your ancestors, etc.

Additional Tasks

- Do you think that Mrs. Parks provides good reasons for believing America is a wonderful country? Explain your answer.

Answer: Answers may vary.

- Why do you think this book was presented in the form of letters, rather than as a biography or an article?

Answer: She was able to share advice on a variety of topics besides what she is most famous for and with an audience (young children) that might not normally choose to pick up an autobiography or article.

- Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus in a time when she did not have the same “rights” as others. This showed great courage on her part. Why did she write the book, *Dear Mrs. Parks: A Dialogue With Today’s Youth*?

Answer: Over the years, she received many letters or correspondence from students seeking advice on different issues. The book represents a selection of the responses that she wrote back to students.

- Rosa Parks has overcome many obstacles in her life. She says, “This nation has always overcome the obstacles it has faced.” How is the United States of America a role model? Provide at least two examples from the text and use details from the text as you explain how each of the examples serves as a role model.

Dear Mrs. Parks/Rosa Parks with Gregory J. Reed/Created by Clark County District

Answer: The United States abolished slavery, established child labor laws, and gave women the right to work in various occupations. Our Constitution has lasted longer than any other in modern history and it serves as a model for achieving justice and equality for its citizens.

Note to Teacher

- Each letter from Mrs. Parks embodies advice that is reflective of important components of the civil rights movement: such as keeping an open mind, respecting others, reaching your highest potential, asking questions, personal dignity, knowing the history of your family and community, and correcting mistakes, among others. If a teacher is studying the civil rights movement, for example, in social studies, this text might dovetail nicely with the content.
- Teacher may need to provide direct instruction on some of the following phrases:
 - Slavery has been abolished, child labor laws established, women's right to vote and have taken positions in politics, arts, sciences and business
 - Achieving justice and equality for citizens, developing country