Researching Mushers

Developed by: Heidi Sloan, 2018 Teacher on the Trail™

Discipline / Subject: Language Arts

Topic: Reading and research comprehension, writing

Grade Level: 2nd – 12th

Resources / References / Materials Teacher Needs:
Iditarod.com, musher worksheets, print out of musher photos

Lesson Summary: the student will read about mushers, researching them to choose a musher to follow and cheer on during the Iditarod race

Standards Addressed: (Local, State, or National)
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI 5.3
Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI 5.7
Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

VA Standards English 5.6
The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction texts.
a) Use text organizers, such as type, headings, and graphics, to predict and categorize information in both print and digital texts.
b) Use prior knowledge and build additional background knowledge as context for new learning.
c) Skim materials to develop a general overview of content and to locate specific information.
d) Identify the main idea of nonfiction texts.
e) Summarize supporting details in nonfiction texts.

Learning objectives:	Assessment:
1. The student will read multiple musher biographies, recording notes and comprehending the information.	Student written musher biography is composed clearly with correct usage and mechanics.

| 2. The student will write a cohesive biography of his/her musher using correct usage/mechanics. | |

Procedural Activities

1. Have students work with a partner on computers to research mushers.

2. Pass out matrix with columns: musher, state/country musher is from, male or female, rookie or veteran, are you interested in following that musher and why.

3. Students go to Race Center on Iditarod.com and look in the Musher Profiles tab. Click on photos to read bios. They read about certain mushers, fill in info on the matrix, and indicate with a yes or no whether or not they are interested in following that one.

4. After partners have read and recorded at least 10 (or as many as time permits…a natural differentiation), they star their top five.   The teacher randomly selects students for the "Musher Pick." It's luck of the draw who gets which musher. Hopefully, each child will get one of his/her top five picks.

5. Each student then rereads the information about his/her musher and writes a teacher-assigned biography on the musher. This is a good time to teach about avoiding plagiarism: "Read the information, and then minimize the web page. That way, you write down the information in your own words."

6. Copy and paste photos of each musher chosen onto a Word document and then print at least two of each musher. (One can go in the sled each student makes.) Make a bulletin board of the mushers' biographies and staple the musher photos to the student work. As the race progresses, any musher who scratches or withdraws from the race is covered with a large red X, easily seen as students walk in the classroom that day. It brings on lots of good investigation and reading motivation to see if the class can learn why the musher had to end the race.

Materials Students Need:

Computer or other device to search the Internet on Iditarod.com

Musher matrix

Technology Utilized to Enhance Learning:
* Computer or other technology devices will allow the students to read the musher biographies on Iditarod.com

Additional information can be obtained by going to mushers' websites, often listed along with their biography on Iditarod.com.