



The Journal of a Twelve-Year-Old on the Erie Canal

3A

Note: Introducing the Read-Aloud may have activity options that exceed the time allocated for this part of the lesson. To remain within the time periods allocated for this portion of the lesson, you will need to make conscious choices about which activities to include based on the needs of your students.

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

What Have We Already Learned?

5 minutes

Show students each of the Flip Book images from the previous read-aloud, and have them retell, in a continuous narrative, the story of Robert Fulton's steamboat. Make sure students use Robert Fulton's name and identify him as the inventor of a superior steamboat. Also, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of steamboat travel during westward expansion.

Essential Background Information or Terms

5 minutes

Reread the following sentences from the previous read-aloud:

Steamboats needed rivers to travel on, and there were no rivers between some of the biggest cities. So, people still couldn't use steamboats to go everywhere they wanted.

Ask students if they think people were innovative and designed waterways between cities that did not have rivers. Students who participated in the Core Knowledge Language Arts program in Grade 1 may recall from the *Early American Civilizations* and *Early World Civilizations* domains that canals were dug in ancient times to move water from place to place.

Show students Image Card 7 (Erie Canal). Tell students that this is an image of a canal. Explain that a canal is a deep, wide ditch dug by people to allow water to move from a river or lake to another place. Explain that during the time of westward expansion in the United States, people were very innovative, and canals were

built to connect rivers to lakes or other rivers. By using canals, steamboats, and other types of boats, Americans were able to travel to more places. One very famous canal named the Erie Canal was built between Lake Erie (one of the five Great Lakes) and the Hudson River. Have students repeat the words *Erie Canal*. Show this location on a U.S. map.

Explain that soon other states, including Ohio and Pennsylvania, built canals, and by the 1830s there was an all-water route from New York to New Orleans. (Trace a route from New York to New Orleans on the map.) By the 1840s there were more than three thousand miles of canals in the United States. This time in the history of our country is known as the Canal Era. Have students repeat the words *Canal Era*. Explain that an era is a period of time, so the Canal Era was the period of time when canals greatly increased the westward movement of people.

Vocabulary Preview

5 minutes



Freight

← Show image 3A-2: Loading and unloading the flatboat cargo

1. In today's read-aloud, you will hear, "Because a flatboat floats on water, it's much easier to transport heavy *freight* like coal and wood."
2. Say the word *freight* with me three times.
3. Freight is goods that are moved from one place to another by ship, train, truck, wagon, or airplane.
4. It took the captain's crew an entire morning to unload the large amount of freight off his ship. [Invite students to point to the boxes of freight.]
5. What are different ways that freight is moved, or shipped?
(*train, airplane, ship, truck*)
What are some examples of freight? (*wood, building materials, steel, animals, food, cars, furniture, clothes*)



Mules

← **Show image 3A-3: Taking care of the mules**

1. In today's read-aloud you will see a flatboat pulled by *mules*.
2. Say the word *mules* with me three times.
3. Mules are the babies of a donkey and a horse. [Show images of a mule, a donkey, and a horse.]
4. During the time of westward expansion, people used mules to help pull their freight.
5. Mules are generally used as work animals. Tell your partner some jobs that you think mules would be used for. What are the mules doing in this drawing?

Purpose for Listening

Share the title of the read-aloud. Ask students if they know what a journal is. Explain that they will be listening to what a young boy has written about his adventures on the Erie Canal. Explain that the story in the next read-aloud is historical fiction based on the real experiences of people in our country who worked on the Erie Canal during the Canal Era.

Tell students to listen carefully to determine the main topic of the read-aloud and to learn what life was like living on the Erie Canal during westward expansion.



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← Show image 3A-1: Pa and son on flatboat¹

- 1 What is happening in the picture?
- 2 What is the Erie Canal? Albany and Buffalo are both cities in New York. Remember, the first voyage on Fulton's steamboat also took place in New York.
- 3 [Ask a student to point out the goods or products on the flatboat.]
- 4 What is the flatboat traveling up and down on?

Pa and I have been making our way along the Erie Canal from Albany to Buffalo today at a good, steady pace.² We're traveling on our brand new flatboat. A flatboat is a big, flat boat on which we carry goods and products along the Erie Canal.³

Well, to be honest, the flatboat isn't *quite* ours yet, but almost. Last night Pa told me, "When we reach Buffalo, we will have made the last payment on this flatboat. Then it's all ours at last."

You see, we made a deal with Mr. Franklin that every time we take the flatboat up and back for him, part of our pay goes toward buying the flatboat for ourselves.⁴ It has taken three years of hard work. We're really excited to actually own the flatboat, because then we will be able to keep all the money we earn on each trip we make.



← Show image 3A-2: Loading and unloading the flatboat cargo

- 5 Freight is goods, like crops from farmers, that are being moved.
- 6 A board is flat piece of wood, but *board* also means to go onto a boat. Why do they take more goods on board if it slows them down?

Ma and sis are waiting for us in Buffalo. I can't wait to see them again! I love being on the flatboat with Pa, but all the work we do makes us tired. The thing is, I don't know exactly how many more days it will take to get to Buffalo. It depends on how much of the **freight** we sell along the way.⁵ The more we sell, the less the flatboat will weigh, and the faster we will be able to travel. Sometimes, a store owner or manufacturer at some town or village asks us to add his products onto our flatboat. Every time we take more goods on board, it slows down our travel.⁶



← Show image 3A-3: Taking care of the mules⁷

- 7 [Point to the mules, towpath, and connecting ropes as you read the next paragraph.]
- 8 or pull it

My favorite part of helping Pa is that I get to care for the mules. We have such a big flatboat that it takes three mules to **tow** it.⁸ They walk on the towpath next to the canal and pull the ropes that are connected to the flatboat. Some smaller flatboats along the canal are one-mule flatboats, or sometimes horses or oxen do the pulling.



← **Show image 3A-4: Flatboat on the canal**

9 [Show the location of the Erie Canal again on the map. Explain that the Erie Canal made traveling through New York faster.]

10 or move from one place to another

11 Do you remember all the dangers the family in the first story encountered with their covered wagon? [Point to the image.] Families like this one had less difficult journeys on flatboats when the weather was good.

Before folks built the **Erie Canal**, it took longer to move things from the East westward.⁹ Because a flatboat floats on water, it's much easier to **transport**¹⁰ heavy freight like coal and wood. Plus, you don't need to worry about a wagon wheel breaking on the trail.¹¹

Not only that, it costs less money to travel on the canals than over land. Pa says that for every dollar it used to cost to travel on land, it now costs only about a dime to travel on the canal's water.

Because the canal made it so much easier and faster to head westward, many people moved west to farm or build new cities. See, Pa explained to me that moving out to the West seemed like a good idea once the people there knew they could sell whatever they grew or made to folks back in the East, as well as to people in the West. It's amazing how much the Erie Canal changed things here. It's hard to imagine a time without it!



← **Show image 3A-5: Traveling through a fierce snowstorm**

12 Hold your hand out in front of you. Imagine that it's snowing so hard that you can only see snow and not your hand.

Lucky for us, today was a really great day for traveling up the canal. In nice weather, we can travel a lot of miles. When it's stormy, though, like it was a couple of weeks ago, it is not so pleasant. It was snowing so much, we nearly had to stop right where we were. The snow was coming down so heavily you couldn't see your hand if you held it out right in front of you.¹² Fortunately, our mules are always able to stay on the path, even in a snowstorm, so I just let them lead the way, and they bring us safely to the next town.



← **Show image 3A-6: Boy writing in his journal**

13 What kind of flatboat adventures do you think this twelve-year-old boy will have on the Erie Canal tomorrow?

Anyway, I think that's about it for now. I'm pretty tired after all the work today. I think it is time for me to get some sleep so I'm ready to work on the flatboat tomorrow.¹³

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

If students have difficulty responding to questions, reread pertinent lines of the read-aloud and/or refer to specific images. If students give one-word answers and/or fail to use read-aloud or domain vocabulary in their responses, acknowledge correct responses by expanding students' responses using richer and more complex language. Ask students to answer in complete sentences by having them restate the question in their responses.

1. *Evaluative* What was the main topic of the read-aloud? (the Erie Canal)
2. *Literal* Who wrote the journal entry that you just heard? (a twelve-year-old boy)
3. *Inferential* What is the setting for this story? (a flatboat on the Erie Canal) [Ask a student to point to the location of the Erie Canal on the map.]
4. *Inferential* Why were canals built in the United States in the 1800s? (so that boats could travel to cities where there were no rivers, to transport goods faster)
5. *Literal* The boy and his father were not traveling on the Erie Canal because they wanted to move to the West like the family in the first read-aloud. They traveled back and forth because of their work. What kind of work did they do? (They transported freight on the Erie Canal.)



← **Show image 3A-3: Taking care of the mules**

6. *Literal* How were mules and other animals important on the Erie Canal? (They towed the flatboats.)
7. *Inferential* What problems did boats on the canal face? (bad weather, moving slowly because of the amount of freight, etc.)
8. *Inferential* How did canals like the Erie Canal increase westward expansion? (Boats on the canal transported freight and people faster and farther west; it cost less to travel on the canals than over land.)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

9. *Evaluative Think Pair Share*: Would you like to have worked on a flatboat on the Erie Canal? Why or why not? (Answers may vary.)
10. After hearing today’s read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

Word Work: Transport

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “Because a flatboat floats on water, it’s much easier to *transport* heavy goods like coal and wood.”
2. Say the word *transport* with me.
3. *Transport* means to carry or move from one place to another.
4. The farmer will use his truck to transport his produce to the farmers’ market.
5. What do you and your family use to transport things? What do you transport? Try to use the word *transport* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase students’ responses: “My family uses a _____ to transport _____.”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about? What part of speech is the word *transport*?

Use a *Word to World* activity for follow-up. Directions: I am going to ask a question about how you would transport certain things. Answer each question with a complete sentence, telling how you would transport the things I ask about. For example, if I ask, “How would you transport goods across a river?” you could answer, “I would transport goods across a river on a flatboat.” (Answers may vary.)

1. How would you transport children to school?
I would transport children to school on a bus.
2. How would you transport people to another continent?
I would transport people to another continent on a plane.
3. How would you transport horses to a farm?
I would transport horses to a farm in a horse trailer.
4. How would you transport a dog to a veterinarian's office?
I would transport a dog to the veterinarian's office in a car.
5. How would you transport games to a friend's house?
I would transport games to a friend's house in my backpack.

Note: Explain to students that the words *transport*, *transported*, *transporting*, and *transportation* are all from the same root word, *transport*.



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



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3_B

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Extensions

20 minutes

↔ Multiple Meaning Word Activity

5 minutes

Multiple Choice: Board

Note: You may choose to have students hold up one, two, or three fingers to indicate which image shows the meaning being described, or have a student walk up to the poster and point to the image being described.

1. [Show Poster 2M (Board).] In the read-aloud you heard, “Every time we take more goods on *board*, it slows down our travel.” Which picture of *board* matches the way *board* is used in the lesson?
2. *Board* can also mean other things, like a long, thin, flat piece of wood. Which picture matches this description of *board*?
3. In addition, *board* can mean a flat piece of material that is used for a special purpose, like a chalkboard or whiteboard. Which picture matches this description of *board*?
4. Now with your partner, quiz each other on the different meanings of the word *board*. Remember to be as descriptive as possible and use complete sentences. For example, you could say, “We could see the people on the floor below us through a crack between the boards.” And your partner should respond, “That’s ‘2.’”

Syntactic Awareness Activity

5 minutes

Prefix: Trans—

Note: The purpose of these syntactic activities is to help students understand the direct connection between grammatical structures and the meaning of text. These syntactic activities should be used in conjunction with the complex text presented in the read-alouds. There may be variations in the sentences created by your class. Allow for these variations and restate students' sentences so that they are grammatically correct.

| Teacher Reference Chart | | |
|---|--|---|
| trans- = across; on or to the other side of | | |
| Word | Definition | Example |
| transfer | to pass or cause to pass from one person or place to another | Move an object from one student's cubby to another's. |
| transform | to change in appearance or structure | action figures, such as Superman and Batman; a solid changing to a liquid, such as ice to water |
| translate | to change from one language or set of symbols to another | Give examples of translated words the students may be familiar with (e.g., good-bye=adiós, friend=amigo). |
| transplant | to remove from one place, and settle or put elsewhere | transplanting a plant or flower from one location to another |
| transatlantic | across the Atlantic Ocean | Show or ask a volunteer to show the span of one side of the Atlantic ocean to the other on a world map. |
| transnational | across a nation or country | Show or ask a volunteer to show the span of one side of the United States to the other on a U.S. map. |
| transcontinental | across a continent | Show or ask a volunteer to show the span of one side of any continent to the other on a world map. |

1. In today’s read-aloud, you heard, “Because a flatboat floats on water, it’s much easier to *transport* heavy freight like coal and wood.”
2. Say the word *transport* with me.
3. The word *transport* begins with the prefix *trans-*.
4. A prefix is a word part added to the beginning of a word to give it a new meaning.
The prefix *trans-* means across, or to the other side of.
5. *Transport* means to carry or move from one place to another.
6. [Choose two to three words on the chart. Say the words, putting emphasis on *trans-*, and have students guess what the meaning of the word might be. Tell students the definition. Then provide an example of the word.]
7. With your partner, make a sentence using a word that has the prefix *trans-*.
[If time allows, you may wish to have students act out the word.]

↔ Vocabulary Instructional Activity

5 minutes

Word Work: Tow

1. In today’s read-aloud, you heard, “We have such a big flatboat that it takes three mules to *tow* it.”
2. Say the word *tow* with me three times.
3. *Tow* means to haul or pull behind someone or something.
4. We had to tow my uncle’s car to a service station when it broke down on the highway.
5. Tell your partner about a time that you or your family towed something (behind a bike, scooter, car or in a wagon). Use the word *tow* when you tell about it.
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about? What part of speech is *tow*?

Use a *Word to World* activity for follow-up.

Directions: I will name something that can be towed. In a complete sentence, tell me what would tow the thing that I name. For example, if I say, “a flatboat,” you would say, “Mules tow a flatboat.”

1. a broken down car
A tow truck tows a broken down car.
2. a water skier
A speedboat tows a water skier.
3. a freight car
A locomotive tows a freight car.
4. a barge, or freight across the water
A tugboat tows a barge or freight across the water.
5. a camper
A truck or car tows a camper.

Westward Expansion Timeline

5 minutes

Briefly review what was placed on the class Westward Expansion Timeline in the previous lessons. Show students Image Card 7 (Erie Canal). Explain that the Erie Canal was first used in 1825, which was almost twenty years after the first voyage of Robert Fulton’s steamboat. Ask students where the Image Card should be placed on the Timeline, and then place it to the right of the image of Fulton’s steamboat. (Refer to the answer sheet for Instructional Master 1A-1.) Save the Timeline for use in later lessons.

Have students add the Erie Canal to their individual Timelines. Students should include the year (1825) and a depiction of the event in writing and/or pictures.

Transportation Brainstorm

5 minutes

Revisit the class Transportation Brainstorm poster. Ask students if they thought of a flatboat as a form of transportation. Add *flatboat* along with its image to the poster if it is not already there.



Song: “The Erie Canal” (Instructional Master 3B-1)

15 minutes

← **Show image 3A-3: Taking care of the mules**

Have students retell what is happening in the illustration. Explain that in 1905, a songwriter named Thomas Allen wrote a song about working on the Erie Canal—the most famous of canals during the Canal Era—about eighty years after the canal was built. Tell students to listen carefully to find out how the experience described in the song is similar to and/or different from the experience written about in the boy’s journal.

Find and play a version of “The Erie Canal.” See the Recommended Resources list at the front of this Anthology for suggestions.

The Erie Canal

by Thomas Allen

I’ve got a mule; her name is Sal,

Fifteen miles on the Erie Canal,

She’s a good old worker and a good old pal,

Fifteen miles on the Erie Canal.

We’ve hauled some barges in our day.

Filled with lumber, coal, and hay,

And we know ev’ry inch of the way

From Albany to Buffalo.

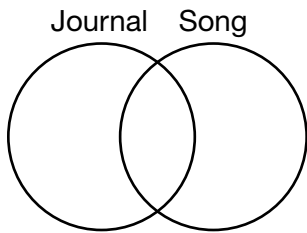
Low bridge! Ev’rybody down,

Low bridge! ’Cause we’re coming to a town

And you’ll always know your neighbor,

You’ll always know your pal,

If you’ve ever navigated on the Erie Canal.



Ask students to share how the experience shared in the song is similar to the journal entry. (Both talked of mules towing boats; both were about traveling on the Erie Canal; both talked about transporting freight; both mentioned traveling from Albany to Buffalo; etc.)

Ask students to share differences between the story in the song and that in the journal. (One mule was mentioned in the song rather than three; the song talked of people needing to duck as they went under a bridge; etc.)

Ask students what they notice about how the story is told in the song compared to how it is told in the read-aloud. Tell students that although many songs do rhyme, they do not all use rhyme as a technique. Explain that some songwriters use repetition of sounds or of words and phrases to emphasize certain things or feelings, such as Mr. Allen did in this song. Ask students what words and phrases are repeated in this song for emphasis.

You may need to read each verse or play the song multiple times. The music and lyrics may be found on Instructional Master 3B-1.

Use the echo technique to teach the song to students.

Note: If your school has a music teacher, you may want to collaborate with him/her to teach this song to students.

Westward Expansion Quilt (Instructional Master 3B-2) 15 minutes

Note: Write the main topic of the read-aloud (Erie Canal), and ask students to tell you important details about it. Write accurate student responses on the board for students to refer to as they complete their quilt squares. Some details you may wish to list are *flatboat*, *freight*, *coal*, *wood*, *tow*, *transport goods*, *mules*, *1830s-1840s*, *travel west*. Include any available images (or drawings) that help explain the information. If needed, model writing a sentence about the main topic using one or two of the words on the board.

Tell students that they are going to make another quilt square for their quilts. Have students recall important details from the read-aloud. You may prompt discussion with the following questions:

- What is the Erie Canal?
- Why were canals like the Erie Canal built?
- What type of animal often pulled the flatboats that traveled on the Erie Canal?
- Did steamboats also travel the Erie Canal?
- How were the Erie Canal and other canals helpful to settlers who had moved farther west?
- What was the Canal Era?

Remind students that first they should cut out the quilt square. Next, they should draw a picture representing the main topic of the read-aloud in the center diamond. (the Erie Canal) Then, they should write a word or short phrase in each corner, relating to facts they learned about the Erie Canal. Next, ask students to write a sentence on the back of the quilt square, using one or more of the words they've written. Finally, students should share their drawings and writing with a partner.

Save these quilt squares for making the complete quilts at a later time.