Title: Summer of the Swans Level: U ISBN: 978-0-14-240114-9 Publisher: Puffin Books

Day 1: Chapters 1-3 (pgs. 1-14)

Before Reading: (5-7 min.)

\*Summarize plot (M) \*Discuss pictures (M)

\*Unfamiliar book language/character names (S) \*Draw upon students’ experiences (M)

Book Introduction: (See back of the book) Sara’s life has always flowed smoothly, like the swans that glide on the lake near her home. But some reason, this summer is different. All she wants to do is run away from everything-- everything, that is, except her little brother, Charlie. Then, when Charlie runs away, instead, Sara is forced to see her life-- and everyone around her—in a whole new way.

Help students identify the setting of the story as West Virginia during the late 1960’s. In this first section, we will meet Sara, Wanda, Charlie, and Aunt Willie. Let’s read to find out what things in life matter the most to Sara.

Words/Text Layout:

\*New or important words (V)

**kaleidoscope** (pg. 6) a tube-shaped toy that contains loose bits of colored glass or plastic. A viewer looks in one end and sees colors forming different, ever changing patterns.

**emphatically** (pg 12) forcefully; showing determination

\*Unusual aspect of text layout (V)

Suggested Teaching Point (Behaviors to Notice and Support) or focus on a Comprehension Strategy:

***connections, questions, inferences, visualizing, summarizing, synthesizing, determining importance***

Good readers use text to understand and interpret characters’ thoughts and feelings. In these first chapters, the author tells us many things about Sara. As you read today, try to understand what kind of person Sara is. In your reading notebook, create a character web. List each main character and add important character traits/attributes.

During Reading: (10-15 min.)

Students silently read the text. You may choose to listen to a few students whisper read the text, if reading fluency is a concern. While students are silently reading, you can start another group or conference with students who are independently reading.

After Reading: (8-10 min.)

\*Discuss the story

-clarify confusion, revisiting parts of the text that posed problems for readers

-acknowledge partially correct responses, seeking to understand students’ perspectives

\*Connect discussion to the teaching point and/or a comprehension strategy (see above)

Share character webs. Discuss information and share why students listed these particular traits. If inferred, did students support their thinking with evidence from the text? Follow-up with the following questions.

1. How would you describe Sara? What evidence do you have?
2. How would you describe Sara’s relationship with Charlie? Why
3. What is the relationship between Sara and her sister, Wanda?
4. What do we know about Aunt Willie so far?
5. Why is Sara struggling this summer?

Assignment:

In your reading notebook, write about your overall impression of Sara. Be sure to include evidence of your thinking. In the first chapter, Sara says, “This has been the worst summer of my life.” Write a paragraph explaining your opinions about why the summer is so awful for Sara. Support your opinion with details from the text.

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Day 2: Chapters 4-6 (pgs. 15-29)

Before Reading: (5-7 min.)

\*Summarize plot (M) \*Discuss pictures (M)

\*Unfamiliar book language/character names (S) \*Draw upon students’ experiences (M)

Sara is feeling uneasy about herself. In fact, she is feeling awkward in her own skin. Aunt Willie attempts to have a conversation with Sara to reassure her how pretty she really is, but Sara just doesn’t believe it. In this section, Charlie and Sara take a walk to see the swans that have arrived at the lake. We meet Wanda’s boyfriend, and she convinces Aunt Willie to let her take a motor scooter ride with him. We continue to learn more about the relationship Sara has with her little brother, Charlie.

Words/Text Layout:

\*New or important words (V)

**indignation** (pg. 16) anger that is caused by an unfair situation or statement

**spigot** (pg 18) a water faucet

\*Unusual aspect of text layout (V)

Suggested Teaching Point (Behaviors to Notice and Support) or focus on a Comprehension Strategy:

***connections, questions, inferences, visualizing, summarizing, synthesizing, determining importance***

Good readers use text to understand and interpret characters’ thoughts and feelings. As we read we think about the characters. On Day 1, we identified some of the main characters and we started a character web in our notebook. Today we will continue to add information to our character web as we read. Be sure to support your thinking with text.

During Reading: (10-15 min.)

Students silently read the text. You may choose to listen to a few students whisper read the text, if reading fluency is a concern. While students are silently reading, you can start another group or conference with students who are independently reading.

After Reading: (8-10 min.)

\*Discuss the story

-clarify confusion, revisiting parts of the text that posed problems for readers

-acknowledge partially correct responses, seeking to understand students’ perspectives

\*Connect discussion to the teaching point and/or a comprehension strategy (see above)

Share character webs. Discuss information and share why students listed these particular traits. If inferred, did students support their thinking with evidence from the text? Follow-up with the following questions.

1. Why does Sara feel so bad about herself this summer? Who does she want to look like? Why?
2. What happened to Charlie when he was three? What was the result?
3. What new information did you infer about Sara? Charlie? Aunt Willie?

Assignment:

How would you describe Aunt Willie? What is she like? What does the motorscooter ride suggest about her? Would you want her as a parent? Why or Why not? As you write in your notebook, be sure to support your ideas with information from the text.

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Day 3: Chapters 7-9 (pgs. 30-48)

Before Reading: (5-7 min.)

\*Summarize plot (M) \*Discuss pictures (M)

\*Unfamiliar book language/character names (S) \*Draw upon students’ experiences (M)

Sara takes Charlie to see the swans at the lake. Sara and Charlie feed them bread, and when Sara wants to go, Charlie shakes his head no. Charlie seems simply captivated by the swans. Eventually, Sara convinces Charlie that it is time to go home. Later that night, Sra confides in Wanda about her unhappiness this summer. Wanda, like Aunt Willie, tries to help Sara understand how she is feeling. Wanda tries to tell her that she is perfectly beautiful, but Sara only sees herself in a negative light. Meanwhile, Charlie is having trouble falling asleep. He thinks he sees the beautiful white swan outside his bedroom window. He decides to follow the swan, which is really the neighbor’s white cat in the bushes, and wanders down the street in the moonlight by himself.

Words/Text Layout:

\*New or important words (V)

**irritating** (pg. 34) annoying

**feverish** (pg 48) restless; with great emotion

\*Unusual aspect of text layout (V)

Note that this book is told from the third person viewpoint. Sometimes, the narrator focuses on Sara’s thoughts and feelings and at other times on Charlie’s. The viewpoint often changes with a new chapter.

Suggested Teaching Point (Behaviors to Notice and Support) or focus on a Comprehension Strategy:

***connections, questions, inferences, visualizing, summarizing, synthesizing, determining importance***

Readers take notice of conflict (problems that arise within the story). Conflicts can be external or internal. External conflicts occur when the character struggles with an outside force, such as another character. Internal conflicts occur when the character is caught up in a psychological struggle, such as a struggle with one’s own emotions or thoughts. Both types of conflicts require the character to make decisions. As you read today, write down some of the conflicts that the characters are experiencing. Try to decide if they are external or internal. What is causing the struggle? How is the character responding to the conflict?

During Reading: (10-15 min.)

Students silently read the text. You may choose to listen to a few students whisper read the text, if reading fluency is a concern. While students are silently reading, you can start another group or conference with students who are independently reading.

After Reading: (8-10 min.)

\*Discuss the story

-clarify confusion, revisiting parts of the text that posed problems for readers

-acknowledge partially correct responses, seeking to understand students’ perspectives

\*Connect discussion to the teaching point and/or a comprehension strategy (see above)

Share thoughts about the conflicts that are arising in the text. What seems to be causing these conflicts? Are they external or internal? How are these conflicts being handled? Are these conflicts shaping the character? Follow-up with the following questions.

1. Why didn’t Sara want to stay at the lake? How did Charlie react when Sara wanted to leave? Why?
2. Why can’t Charlie get anyone’s attention when he discovers the button missing from his pajamas? What can you infer about Charlie from this? What can you infer about the family?
3. Why does Charlie leave the house? What do you predict will happen next? What would you do if you were Sara?

Assignment:

Write about Sara’s conflicts. Can you make connections with how Sara is feeling? How would you handle these conflicts? Why do you think Sara is feeling this way? What would you do differently?

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Day 4: Chapters 10-12 (pgs. 49-69)

Before Reading: (5-7 min.)

\*Summarize plot (M) \*Discuss pictures (M)

\*Unfamiliar book language/character names (S) \*Draw upon students’ experiences (M)

Charlie went to bed, but he did not go to sleep. Rather, he restlessly tossed in his bed thinking about the swans he had seen earlier at the lake. Suddenly, he thought he saw a swan outside his bedroom window, and he decided to go outside and find it. As he walked further away from his house, he became more and more frightened and lost. Dogs barked and strange night noises frightened him. He began running wildly, cutting his arms, legs, and chest on the overgrown bushes and weeds. He begins to cry and even his ticking watch doesn’t comfort him. Meanwhile, morning arrives and Sara realizes that Charlie is missing from his room. She believes he might have gone to the lake to see the swans, so she goes to look for him. Aunt Wanda waits impatiently for Sara to return with Charlie. After realizing Charlie is not at the lake, Sara returns home and Aunt Wanda calls the police to report Charlie missing.

Words/Text Layout:

\*New or important words (V)

**thrashed** (pg. 49) to move about wildly or violently

**briers** (pg 49) thorns; burrs

\*Unusual aspect of text layout (V)

Suggested Teaching Point (Behaviors to Notice and Support) or focus on a Comprehension Strategy:

***connections, questions, inferences, visualizing, summarizing, synthesizing, determining importance***

Good readers take notice of the plot. The plot is the sequence of events in the story. As the story progresses, we notice a rise in the action. This is where the conflicts that each character might be experiencing get complicated. As good readers, we should be asking ourselves, “What will happen next? How will it all work out?” As you read today, write about the rise in action. What is becoming complicated for Sara and Charlie? What questions are you asking yourself? What do you think will happen? Support your ideas with text.

During Reading: (10-15 min.)

Students silently read the text. You may choose to listen to a few students whisper read the text, if reading fluency is a concern. While students are silently reading, you can start another group or conference with students who are independently reading.

After Reading: (8-10 min.)

\*Discuss the story

-clarify confusion, revisiting parts of the text that posed problems for readers

-acknowledge partially correct responses, seeking to understand students’ perspectives

\*Connect discussion to the teaching point and/or a comprehension strategy (see above)

What questions were you asking yourself as you read today? Share. How have the conflicts become more complicated as the story progressed? What do you think will happen next? How will Sara get out of this? How will Charlie get out of his conflict? Why do you think Aunt Willie is so hard on herself when she realizes Charlie is missing?

Assignment:

In your guided notebook, pick one of the characters to write about. What is their conflict? How is the conflict becoming complicated? What would you do? Can you make connections with the character, if so, how did you connect? How is the character responding to the rise in action? How do you think they will get out of their conflicts?

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Day 5: Chapters 13-15 (pgs. 70-86)

Before Reading: (5-7 min.)

\*Summarize plot (M) \*Discuss pictures (M)

\*Unfamiliar book language/character names (S) \*Draw upon students’ experiences (M)

Charlie is missing, and Aunt Wanda has called the police to make a report. Aunt Wanda is also calling Charlie’s dad, who works in a coal mine in Ohio. Sara doesn’t really believe that her father will come, even if Charlie is missing. He has been an absent father most of their lives, ever since Sara’s mother died. Father says he will want to start for home until later in the day. Meanwhile, Sara and her friend, Mary, decide to go look for Charlie on their own. Along the way they meet Joe Melby. Sara doesn’t like Joe, as she thinks he had stolen a watch from Charlie. Joe insists that he didn’t take Charlie’s watch, and he really wants to help Sara look for Charlie. Mary finally explains to Sara that she knows, for a fact, that Joe had not taken Charlie’s watch. Sara had hated Joe for something he had never done. Sara’s feelings towards Joe begin to slowly change.

Words/Text Layout:

\*New or important words (V)

**sympathy** (pg. 82) to feel sorry for

**transitor radio** (pg 86) a radio that runs on batteries

\*Unusual aspect of text layout (V)

Suggested Teaching Point (Behaviors to Notice and Support) or focus on a Comprehension Strategy:

***connections, questions, inferences, visualizing, summarizing, synthesizing, determining importance***

Good readers take notice of the plot. The plot is the sequence of events in the story. As the story progresses, we notice a rise in the action. This is where the conflicts that each character might be experiencing get complicated. As good readers, we should be asking ourselves, “What will happen next? How will it all work out?” As you read today, write about the rise in action. What is becoming complicated for Sara and Charlie? What questions are you asking yourself? What do you think will happen? Support your ideas with text.

During Reading: (10-15 min.)

Students silently read the text. You may choose to listen to a few students whisper read the text, if reading fluency is a concern. While students are silently reading, you can start another group or conference with students who are independently reading.

After Reading: (8-10 min.)

\*Discuss the story

-clarify confusion, revisiting parts of the text that posed problems for readers

-acknowledge partially correct responses, seeking to understand students’ perspectives

\*Connect discussion to the teaching point and/or a comprehension strategy (see above)

What questions were you asking yourself as you read today? Share. How have the conflicts become more complicated as the story progressed? What do you think will happen next? How will Sara get out of this? How will Charlie get out of his conflict? How is Sara’s conflict changing? She used to hate Joe Melby. Now, after learning that he really was trying to help Charlie get his watch back, how does Sara feel about Joe?

Assignment:

Sara realizes that she has been hard on Joe for no reason. He really had not taken the watch from Charlie. How does this affect how Sara feels about Joe? Have you ever been mistaken about someone before? How did you handle the issue? How do you think Sara will treat Joe now that she knows the truth? Write about this in your guided notebook.

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Day 6: Chapters 16-18 (pgs. 87-105)

Before Reading: (5-7 min.)

\*Summarize plot (M) \*Discuss pictures (M)

\*Unfamiliar book language/character names (S) \*Draw upon students’ experiences (M)

Sara and Mary continue to look in the woods near the lake for Charlie. Mary tells Sara about being invited to a party later that day. She is concerned about getting home in time to get her hair done and get dressed for the party that Sara was not invited to. Sara is annoyed. As they search, Sara tells Mary that she knows she can find Charlie because she really understands how he thinks. Meanwhile, Joe Melby joins the search with the girls, and reveals a brown slipper that he found in the woods. It is Charlie’s slipper. Eventually, Mary goes home and Joe and Sara are left to search together. Sara apologizes for treating Joe so badly, and she explains why she thought Joe had stolen the watch. Joe accepts her apology, and they continue searching.

Words/Text Layout:

\*New or important words (V)

**posse** (pg. 89) a search party

**impetuously** (pg 96) without preplanning or forethought; reckless

\*Unusual aspect of text layout (V)

Suggested Teaching Point (Behaviors to Notice and Support) or focus on a Comprehension Strategy:

***connections, questions, inferences, visualizing, summarizing, synthesizing, determining importance***

Good readers think about characters as they read. Often, characters change throughout the story due to the conflicts they encounter. In this section, Sara’s attitude towards Joe changes drastically. As you read, think about why those changes are happening. How do you think this change will affect the overall story? On a post it note, write down how Sara is changing. Be sure to include evidence of your thinking.

During Reading: (10-15 min.)

Students silently read the text. You may choose to listen to a few students whisper read the text, if reading fluency is a concern. While students are silently reading, you can start another group or conference with students who are independently reading.

After Reading: (8-10 min.)

\*Discuss the story

-clarify confusion, revisiting parts of the text that posed problems for readers

-acknowledge partially correct responses, seeking to understand students’ perspectives

\*Connect discussion to the teaching point and/or a comprehension strategy (see above)

What changes do you think Sara is experiencing? Discuss ideas. What caused her to change? How will this affect her?

1. How does Sara feel about the party Mary is invited to? What evidence makes you believe that?
2. Why is it so hard for Sara to say she is sorry? Did you make any connections?
3. How do you think Sara felt when Joe showed her the brown slipper?

Assignment:

Sara’s character has undergone some changes since the beginning. Has your opinion of Sara changed since the beginning of the novel? Explain your thinking using evidence from the text to support your thoughts.

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Day 6: Chapters 16-18 (pgs. 87-105)

Before Reading: (5-7 min.)

\*Summarize plot (M) \*Discuss pictures (M)

\*Unfamiliar book language/character names (S) \*Draw upon students’ experiences (M)

Sara and Mary continue to look in the woods near the lake for Charlie. Mary tells Sara about being invited to a party later that day. She is concerned about getting home in time to get her hair done and get dressed for the party that Sara was not invited to. Sara is annoyed. As they search, Sara tells Mary that she knows she can find Charlie because she really understands how he thinks. Meanwhile, Joe Melby joins the search with the girls, and reveals a brown slipper that he found in the woods. It is Charlie’s slipper. Eventually, Mary goes home and Joe and Sara are left to search together. Sara apologizes for treating Joe so badly, and she explains why she thought Joe had stolen the watch. Joe accepts her apology, and they continue searching.

Words/Text Layout:

\*New or important words (V)

**posse** (pg. 89) a search party

**impetuously** (pg 96) without preplanning or forethought; reckless

\*Unusual aspect of text layout (V)

Suggested Teaching Point (Behaviors to Notice and Support) or focus on a Comprehension Strategy:

***connections, questions, inferences, visualizing, summarizing, synthesizing, determining importance***

Good readers think about characters as they read. Often, characters change throughout the story due to the conflicts they encounter. In this section, Sara’s attitude towards Joe changes drastically. As you read, think about why those changes are happening. How do you think this change will affect the overall story? On a post it note, write down how Sara is changing. Be sure to include evidence of your thinking.

During Reading: (10-15 min.)

Students silently read the text. You may choose to listen to a few students whisper read the text, if reading fluency is a concern. While students are silently reading, you can start another group or conference with students who are independently reading.

After Reading: (8-10 min.)

\*Discuss the story

-clarify confusion, revisiting parts of the text that posed problems for readers

-acknowledge partially correct responses, seeking to understand students’ perspectives

\*Connect discussion to the teaching point and/or a comprehension strategy (see above)

What changes do you think Sara is experiencing? Discuss ideas. What caused her to change? How will this affect her?

1. How does Sara feel about the party Mary is invited to? What evidence makes you believe that?
2. Why is it so hard for Sara to say she is sorry? Did you make any connections?
3. How do you think Sara felt when Joe showed her the brown slipper?

Assignment:

Sara’s character has undergone some changes since the beginning. Has your opinion of Sara changed since the beginning of the novel? Explain your thinking using evidence from the text to support your thoughts.