

A Reading Guide for ***Trails Across Time: History of an Alaska Mountain Corridor***

By Dan Walker

This guide will provide activities for teachers and students to support the use of this book as a learning resource. Each chapter and the introduction are provided with guiding activities and recommendations for follow-up activities. The guide is presented with activities to be used before reading, during reading, and after reading. Many of the activities provided are interchangeable depending on the teacher and students' interests and abilities.

Creating Questions for Close Analytic Reading

1. Think about what you consider the most important learning to be drawn from the text. Note this as raw material for the culminating assignment and the focus point for other activities to build toward.
2. Determine the key ideas of the text. Create a series of questions structured to bring the reader to an understanding of these key ideas.
3. Locate the most powerful academic words in the text, write questions, and use discussions that explore the role of this vocabulary in the set of questions in #2.
4. Consider if there are any other academic words that students would profit from focusing on. Build discussion planning or additional questions to focus attention on them.
5. Find the sections of the text that will present the greatest difficulty and craft questions that support students in mastering these sections. These could be sections with difficult syntax, particularly dense information, and tricky transitions or places that offer a variety of possible inferences.
6. Develop a culminating activity around the idea or learning identified in #1. The task should involve writing and be structured so students can work independently.

Suggested On-going Projects and Activities

- **Make a map:** Each chapter in the book has a section called “Glimpses of the Past” which identifies landmarks in the KMTA Corridor. Make a wall mounted map of the region or have students draw or trace their own. With each chapter, place landmarks on the map with numbers and an index.
- **Create a timeline** on section of the classroom wall that carries US history dates. Add events from the reading in *Trails Across Time*. Students can research and write paragraphs to add as well as photos and drawings.
- **Have students keep a journal.** This could include their notes from reading the text and research. Reflective essays about their learning, family or life in the KMTA Corridor, as well as maps, illustrations and ideas.
- **Historical inquiry.** Early in the class or unit, have the students select an historical inquiry topic to pursue during the class rather than all at once at class end. Provide a timeline with small assigns due throughout the study period.
- **Vocabulary work.** For each chapter develop a list of 5-10 vocabulary words that might be new or challenging to students. Review and use the words with students prior to reading.

Introduction

Before Reading

Teacher: Guide students to survey the book including looking over the table of contents and discussing what the book might be about. Verify that students know the word, “corridor”.

Student: Look through the book and the Table of Contents. Study questions below.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the historic theme of the Corridor?
2. What are some geological forces that shaped this land?
3. What is the purpose of the book, *Trails Across Time*?
4. How are the Chapters organized?
5. In one specific sentence, where is the Kenai Mountain-Turnagain Arm Corridor?

During Reading

Teacher: Monitor and support student reading, insure that they are pausing the answer questions.

Student: As you read, look for the answers to the study questions and write the correct responses as you find them.

After Reading

Teacher: Lead the class or small groups to compare and verify answers to the questions.

Student: Work with your classmates to compare answers and come to an agreement about the correct answer.

Follow-up Activities

- Students write reflective essays about how living here in the corridor makes life unique.
- Draw maps of the Kenai Peninsula and draw outline the boundaries of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm Corridor.

Chapter One: A Silent Land Speaks

Before Reading

Teacher: Train students in the structure of the book. Make sure they understand text elements like headings and insets. Support students as they survey the chapter.

Student: Prepare a note sheet for the chapter with the title. Then copy the headings from the chapter with room below each to write notes.

During Reading

Teacher: Monitor students and support note-taking.

Student: As you read, write three or four ideas or facts from each section.

After Reading

Teacher: Guide class in a review of the big ideas of the chapter. On chart paper or Smartboard build a set of class notes from students notes.

Student: Share your ideas with class and compare your notes with others.

Follow-up Activities

- Write a geography report about some physical feature in the KMTA Corridor. Use the format attached.
- Organize a field trip to examine the geology of area around the school.

The Geographic Report

-----TOPIC -----	
<p>What is it?</p> <p><i>Define and describe the feature.</i></p>	<p>Where is it?</p> <p><i>Explain specifically where the feature is located.</i></p>
<p>Why is it there?</p> <p><i>How is it formed, shaped, etc. and why in that location?</i></p>	<p>How is it important?</p> <p><i>How is it important to people? How do we use it or how does it affect our lives?</i></p>
<p>Sample: Portage Lake</p>	
<p>What is it?</p> <p><i>Portage Lake is a glacial Lake at the terminus of the Portage Glacier. This lake is about three miles long and less than a mile wide and up to 600 feet deep .</i></p>	<p>Where is it?</p> <p><i>Portage Glacier is located at the East end of Turnagain Arm on the Road to Whittier, Alaska at 60°46'27" N 148°49'0"W. The lake lies in a glacial valley at the base of Portage Glacier.</i></p>
<p>Why is it there?</p> <p><i>Portage Lake was created behind the terminal moraine of Portage Glacier as it began receding. For decades the lake would fill with ice calving from Portage Glacier. The Lake receives water from streams, melting snow and many other glaciers in the watershed.</i></p>	<p>How is it important?</p> <p><i>Portage Lake is a popular tourist destination and is located beside the Begich-Boggs Visitor Center, which provides information about the area and glaciers specifically. In the summer, tour boats use the lake to take sightseeing tours to the far shore. In winter the lake is popular for skiing.</i></p>

Chapter two: Early People of the Corridor

Before Reading

Teacher: Lead a brainstorming/sharing session with students telling what they know about first Americans in this region. List students' statements on a poster or Smartboard. Review vocabulary: habitat, resources, culture, artifact.

Student: Participate in class brainstorming of what you know about first Americans in the region. Copy the note-taking grid below. Make it big enough to add notes.

During Reading

Teacher: Monitor student work. Model reading by completing the note-taking grid.

Student: As you read, add data to the note-taking grid.

Culture	Paleo Arctic	Ocean Bay	Kachemak	Chugach Sugpiag	Dena'ina
Habitat/ range					
Resources					
Artifacts					
Time period					
Contact w/ western culture					

After Reading

Teacher: Lead a discussion of the role of Alaska natives in the region today.

Student: Find something in the chapter that is interesting, read more about it and report to the class.

Follow-up Activities

- Compare modern kayaks to traditional ones.
- Write about whites and natives relations 100 years ago and now.
- Interview or host in class an elder from an Alaskan Native group.

Chapter Three: In Search of the Northwest Passage

Before Reading

Teacher: Get the students talking about the Northwest Passage and on a world map show the advantage that such a route would offer.

Student: Look at a world map to estimate the distance between Asia and Europe by going around South American versus the Northwest Passage.

During Reading

Teacher: Assign students pairs and encourage them to stop and discuss the reading periodically.

Student: With a partner read, aloud or silently, stopping at the end of every page to summarize or respond to what you read.

After Reading

Teacher: Lead a discussion in class to evaluate the benefits of the search for the Northwest Passage. Perhaps use a T chart to list the positives and negatives.

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>

Student: With your partner write a one-paragraph summary of Cook's importance to Alaska history and do the same for Vancouver.

Follow-up Activities

- Create a PowerPoint about one of the explorers who visited Alaska.
- Read and report on the Northwest Passage in the 21st century.
- Make of list of place names in the KMTA Corridor and research the origin of the names.

Chapter Four: Russian America

Before Reading

Teacher: Copy and distribute **Anticipation Guide** to students or present on overhead and have them record their answers in their journals.

Student: Complete the Anticipation Guide about Russian America.

During Reading

Teacher: Monitor students and support their reading.

Student: As you read, look for the correct answers to the anticipation guide questions. Correct as needed.

After Reading

Teacher: Organize students in groups of 3-4 and have them construct a set of data about Russian America: Important people, places and events. Clarify with students when and why the US bought Alaska and why Russian sold it.

Student: Work a group to review the reading and construct a set of data about Russian America: Important people, places and events.

Follow-up Activities

- Use data from the after reading activity to create a quiz, a poster, or PowerPoint.
- Write a poem or shorts story about Alaska Natives and Russians.
- Illustrate a scene from your reading that inspired you.
- Write a letter to the past telling people in 1867 why buying Alaska was a good or bad idea.

Chapter Four: Russian America Anticipation Guide

In response to each statement response with **AGREE** or **DISAGREE**

1. The Russians came to Alaska seeking Gold.
2. George Stellar was a German naturalist traveling with Vitus Bering.
3. The promyshlenniki were priests of the Russian Orthodox Church.
4. The Stellar sea cow became extinct because of pollution.
5. The Russians bought the Phoenix from Captain Cook.
6. The Russians enslaved some of the Alaska natives.
7. Sea otter fur is not valuable.
8. The Russian Orthodox Church is still present in Alaska.
9. Manifest Destiny made it illegal for the US government to buy land.
10. William Seward was the Secretary of State during the Civil War.

Chapter Five: Gold Strike

Before Reading

Teacher: Plan a gold panning demonstration for the class with a local miner. Watch a video or read aloud from a journal of a gold seeker. Have students write questions as below. You may want to read this chapter section by section and have students share questions before the reading.

Student: Look through the Chapter and rewrite each **bold-faced** heading as a question. For example, for “Alaska’s Wild West”, one might write, How was this area like the wild west? Or, Where was Alaska’s wild west?

During Reading

Teacher: Copy the map on page 62 for students. (*Or find it online with the full Trails Across Time curriculum*) Have them keep notes and highlight place and routes found in the text. Use color pencils or fine markers.

Student: Keep notes on the map as you read, tracing routes and highlight place names. After reading each section write an answer to your question or a comment related to it.

After Reading

Teacher: Guide students to pursue further study of the area and the gold rush sites.

Student: Learn more about one place, person, or event from the chapter and report to the class. Perhaps look at modern issues related to gold mining. For example, what are the regulations regarding gold-panning on public lands in the local area?

Follow-up Activities

- Make a field trip to mining areas, old trails or sites. Schools within the Corridor could conduct a one-day driving tour of the sites.
- Make a brochure for drivers telling the history of trails and sites along the Seward highway.
- Evaluate the impact of the gold rush on the land the people and the history.

Chapter Six: Rails Across the Land

Before Reading

Teacher: Talk about how the railroads were built across the US then guide students to think about railroads in Alaska.

Student: What do you know about the railroad in Alaska? List the places connected by rail in Alaska; what is transported on the railroad?

During Reading

Teacher: Put students in pairs to read and discuss this chapter about the railroad. They should take turns reading aloud and then summarizing what was read.

Student: *Read, pair, share* with a partner. Take turns reading a column or page then discuss what was important to remember. Take notes.

After Reading

Teacher: Guide the students to reflect on the cost and benefits of the railroad and evaluate its value and impact.

Student: Discuss with your classmates the benefits of the Alaska railroad in the past and present. Perhaps you will need more information.

Follow-up Activities

- **Try a RAFT writing:** Students produce a creative writing about the topic. (See attached.)
- Visit the nearest railroad to your school and learn about the Alaska Railroad today. Or do some research online.
- Write a profile of one historic figure associated with the railroad.

RAFT Writing

RAFT assignments encourage students to uncover their own voices and formats for presenting their ideas about content information they are studying. Students learn to respond to writing prompts that require them to think about various perspectives:

- **Role of the Writer:** Who are you as the writer? A movie star? The President? A plant?
- **Audience:** To whom are you writing? A senator? Yourself? A company?
- **Format:** In what format are you writing? A diary entry? A newspaper? A love letter?
- **Topic:** What are you writing about?

Give students a writing prompt for which you have already chosen the role, audience, format, and topic and have students react to the prompt either individually or in small groups.

Offer students a chance to read their **RAFT** aloud. Have a class discussion about how each student created their own version of the **RAFT** while using the same role, audience, format, and topic.

As students become comfortable in reacting to **RAFT** prompts, give students a list of options for each component and let them choose their role, audience, format, and topic.

Eventually, students may choose a role, audience, format, and topic entirely on their own. Varied prompts allow students to compare and contrast multiple perspectives, deepening their understanding of the content when shared.

Example:

- **Role of the Writer:** Railroad worker
- **Audience:** Family in Lower 48
- **Format:** Personal Letter
- **Topic:** About railroad building and it's challenges

Chapter Seven: Byways and Highways

Before Reading

Teacher: Read over the chapter and collect 15-20 key words. Produce this list on the attached activity sheet.

Student: Use the chapter handout to sort words you will find in the reading. Work with a partner or share your sort when finished.

During Reading

Teacher: Monitor students and remind them to watch for the important words.

Student: Keep track of key words and mark their location on the activity sheet.

After Reading

Teacher: Guide students to edit their word groups and then share with the class or make a master class sort and /or write a paragraph.

Student: Edit your word groups then use one word group to write a paragraph about what you learned in the chapter.

Suggested words for the activity: corridor, avalanche, roadhouse, outfitter, intrepid, corduroy, transportation, byway, highway, trail, sled road, wagon road.

Follow-up Activities

- Make a timeline of transportation for the Kenai Peninsula
- In a current map of the Kenai Peninsula, label the following: Iditarod Trail, Johnson Pass Military Road, Route 55, Moose Pass Military Road,
- Make a tour map of the National Historic Places in the Corridor (pages 86-95).

Chapter Seven: Byways and Highways: Word Sort

Important words from chapter seven

Word	Page & column		Word	Page and column

BEFORE READING: Sort the words above into at least three groups and make a note describing each group. Some words you may have to find a definition for. As you read the chapter keep an eye out for these words and mark the page and column above.

AFTER READING, Edit your word groups then select one word group to write a paragraph about what you learned in the chapter.

Chapter Eight: Communities Along the Corridor

Before Reading

Teacher: Have students list from memory all the communities in the KMTA Corridor.

Student: Try to list from memory all the communities in the KMTA Corridor.

During Reading

Teacher: Monitor students so they are stopping and writing as they read.

Student: As you read, write three important ideas about each community. For each inset, write one sentence stating this person's connection to the area.

After Reading

Teacher: Put the community chart (see below) on the board or white board and guide the class to complete it.

Community	Location	Population	Features	Historic Fact

Student: Work with your peers to compare the communities.

Follow-up Activities

- Create the rough draft of a poster or brochure about one of the communities.
- Compare and contrast two communities in an essay.
- Write a travel article about or visit one community.