Teacher's "Cheat Sheet" for "MISSISSIPPI'S TEDDY BEAR"

Following are answers to questions from the "Mississippi's Teddy Bear" story, as well as discussion and extension ideas.

Reading Comprehension: Answer these questions about the story on a separate piece of paper.

1. *Where does the story take place?* **Little Sunflower River, Mississippi**
2. *Why are bears rare in 1902?* **"People from the East, North, and South moved to Mississippi and cut the trees and drained the swamps, leaving no habitat for bears." They had nowhere to live! At the same time, bear hunting became popular and many, many bears were killed.**
3. *Who found the bear?* **The dogs, and Holt Collier, the bear hunting guide.** *What evidence from the text supports your answer?* **"Suddenly, the dogs howled loudly. They had found the scent of a bear!" ""Finally, the dogs saw the bear. It was old and hurt. Holt Collier blew his bugle to call the men."**
4. *Pretend you are President Roosevelt, what would you do next? How do you feel?*
5. *What would YOU have done?*

Additional Comprehension questions:

1. Why were the dogs there? Make an inference. **To help the people find the bear and to chase the bear towards the people. They can hear and smell the scent of a bear very well.**
2. What is the main idea of the story? **Excessive bear hunting combined with habitat loss led to a severe reduction in bear population. There were not many bears left in Mississippi by the early 1900s. The name "teddy" bear came from a bear hunt in Mississippi where President Teddy Roosevelt refused to shoot an injured bear.**

Other potential discussion questions for teachers to lead:

1. Are the factors that caused black bears to become rare in 1902 still an issue in the 21st century? **Absolutely. Habitat destruction is the number one issue causing species to become extinct. People still cut trees for lumber and drain swamps for houses, businesses or roads. People also continue to struggle to balance an appropriate level of hunting. However, more and more people want to learn to find a balance. Biologists study animal populations and help hunters understand how to be responsible hunters and not kill more animals that the population can handle. Governments are beginning to protect key habitat for animals.**

for more information go to www.msbear.org

Biologists research to find ways for people to minimize their impact on animals and their habitats.

   Extension Idea: Research the history and current status of other large predators in the US: gray wolves, grizzly bears, mountain lions. In other countries: lions, tigers, cheetahs, polar bears.

2. What are the components of wildlife habitat? **An animal's habitat includes where it finds food, water and shelter. Bear food includes acorns, berries, nuts, grasses, and leaves. Bears get water from lakes, rivers, and streams as well as from their food. Bears find shelter in trees, brush, and wooded areas.**

Vocabulary words

1. *predator-* **animals that eat other animals**
2. *rare-* **not common**
3. *habitat-* **where an animal lives. includes its food, water, shelter**
4. *journey-* **a trip, especially over a long distance**
5. *refuse-* **to say or show you are not willing to do something**
6. *capture-* **to take someone or something as prisoner, or to take into your possession**
7. *shout-* **to say something in a loud voice**
8. *avoid-* **to stay away from someone or something**

Extension Ideas

- Pair two photos or drawings, one of Teddy/Holt hunting and one of a modern hunter. Ask students to compare and contrast. An online image search for "holt collier" and "dog hunter" or "hunter" will give you many options for pictures to use.
- Include a photo or drawing and ask students to look at the photo, what can you tell about the photo? Again, many images available online.
- Look at the Clifford Berryman cartoon that appeared in newspapers across the country, available at www.msbear.org. Discuss the cartoon. What does it make you think of President Teddy Roosevelt? Does it tell the story well? Why do newspapers have cartoons? Look at cartoons in newspapers available in your area (or online). Do they tell stories?
- Pair the story with another non-fiction story. There are several on the AR list.
- Research the history and current status of other large predators in the US: gray wolves, grizzly bears, mountain lions. In other countries: lions, tigers, cheetahs, polar bears.
- Check out www.msbear.org for more information and bear education ideas!