



**ELA Common Core Content Standards:**

Reading Standards for Literature 7  
Reading Standards: Foundational Skills 3  
Writing Standards 4, 6  
Speaking and Listening Standards 1, 2, 4  
Language Standards 1, 2, 4

*Estimated:*

*1 ½ hours for Language Arts  
and 1 hour for Art*

**Goal:** Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the importance of identifying where they come from, and how that knowledge applies to understanding themselves, respecting themselves, and respecting others, and respecting the environment from which they come.

**Teacher Background:** Identifying where one comes from is a vital component to recognizing the connections made in life. In many traditional cultures people identify themselves, and where they come from before engaging in meaningful dialogue. It is important to know and understand where someone comes from, in order to make a connection with them.

It is also crucial for students to develop a sense of connection with their environment, which allows them the ability to take ownership and pride in where they live, where they come from, and possibly instill some insight into where they may want to go/be.

The environment is critical to the survival and development of a culture and society. The existence of a people is dependent on the environment. The environment includes the life of our brothers and sisters of creation – animals, birds, bugs, fish, plants, rocks, and all the other beings surrounding us.

**Theme/Big Idea:** Who are we? Where are we? How did we get here?

**Vocabulary:** belong, refer, judge, qualities, curious, imaginary, actual, desire

**Materials:**

“Special Item” such as a feather, a plant, rock, stick, etc. to pass around during discussion circle

**Local heroes article—Fast Pace, Intensity** featuring Karuk Tribal Member Phil Albers (included)

Poem *Home*

“*I Am*” poem template

Second grade worksheets (included)

**Preparation:** Write the following sentence on the board: I am curious where this path leads

Do the “**I am**” poem template exercise ahead of time for yourself. Do this so that you can help students understand the importance of tying thoughts together to make for good writing. Writing a poem from this template is not easy if the object is to produce a cohesive piece of writing. Perhaps you can offer examples of non sequitur statements that would make reading this poem more difficult or less pleasurable. Be prepared to have students do a “first write” and then examine how a writer might tie ideas to the first ideas they came up with, especially as this first line reoccurs throughout the poem.

**Discussion Circle:** Introduce the lesson to students by saying that as a group we are going to talk about the importance of knowing who we are and where we came from. Display the **Local Heroes** news article about Phil Albers on a document reader, read and discuss the concept of local heroes. Ask students for examples in their lives.

After students have an opportunity to talk, teacher shares his/her thoughts about the article. Teacher shares information about his/herself, starting with your full name and the names of your parents (giving your mother’s maiden name). At this time give the definition of what maiden name means. Explain to children that many women nowadays do not change their maiden names to their husband’s last name when they marry; some couples do not get married officially. Explain that families are made up many different ways—some families have two parents in the home, one parent, grandparents, foster parents, step-siblings, etc. Then you might discuss where you were born and where you grew up. Share a childhood memory that connects you and your family to where you grew up.

Explain to students why knowing who we are and where we came from is important. Our family history, and heritage can be traced back hundreds of years. It can tell us who we might be related to in the community. Tell students that if they agree that this is important say, “*nani’araaras*”<sup>1</sup> (my people) (then students will call out “*nani’araaras!*”).

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<sup>1</sup> Pronounced something like nah-nee-AH-rah-rah, whereby the “r’s” are lightly rolled. See Karuk Pronunciation Guide (included in binder).

Now hold up the special item you've chosen and explain to students that you are going to hand the special item to a student and ask them to say their name, their parents/caregivers first and last name (if they know), where they live now and whether they have always lived there. After the student has shared their information, have them pass the special item to the student on the right; students will continue passing the special item until everyone has had a turn.

**Daily Language Practice:** Have children correct the following sentence: I am curious ware this path leads

**Developing Story Vocabulary:** Display **Vocabulary Black Line Master** (included in this lesson) on the document reader and read the first sentence aloud. Ask students what the action word *belong* means. Clarify meaning. Repeat for the rest of the sentences. Model how to figure out what the vocabulary words mean, based on context clues. Ask children to use what they know to figure out the meaning of each key vocabulary word. Have children explain how they figured out each meaning.

***belong*** – to be suitable, appropriate or the property of someone or something

***refer*** – to direct for information

***judge*** – to form an opinion about something or someone

***qualities*** - special characteristics of someone or something

***curious*** – wanting to find out

***imaginary*** – existing in the imagination

***actual*** – existing now, in fact, real

***desire*** – to wish or long for; crave; want

**Preparing to Read:** Tell students that active listeners should always think about how they are *reacting* to what they are hearing, and *why* they are reacting that way. Tell them that they can evaluate a story or poem in many different ways:

\*How well the author writes

\*What the story or poem is about

\*Their reaction to the story/poem

**Read Aloud:** Read poem "***Home,***" by Phil Albers.

**Strategy- - Evaluate:** Ask students the following questions:

Do you think the poem is interesting? Why or why not?

Is the writing clear and easy to understand?

Did the author write in a way that helped you create pictures in your mind?

Did you like the poem?

**Writing Skills:** Tell students that now they will write a poem about themselves. Assign "***I am***" poem template worksheet (included this lesson) and display on the document reader. Explain line by line how the poem should be written. Students use the template on the worksheet to write their poem.

Display **Vocabulary Black Line Master**, included in this lesson, on document reader. Read the first sentence for children. Point to the underlined word and have them read it aloud with you. Ask what they think it means. Clarify definition. Follow a similar procedure for remaining sentences.

**Speaking and Listening:** Ask for volunteers to stand up and read their poem out loud. Praise volunteers for being brave/having courage.

**Activities:** Assign students ***Consonant Sounds*** worksheet. Assign student "**Home**" **Poem Letter Choice** worksheet. Assign students ***Writing Words You Know*** worksheet during small group time.

**Art: Family Color Worksheet**

*Vocabulary Black Line Master*

## Vocabulary

1. Smoked salmon belongs in the pantry.
2. Refer to an elder if you want good advice.
3. I judge acorns by the color of their faces.
4. Pepperwood leaves have many good qualities.
5. I am curious about how to catch eels.
6. I have an imaginary tiger.
7. I have an actual bunny that I need to feed.
8. Sweets are what he desires.

## Home

*by Phil Albers*

I want to go down river  
To my land  
where I belong  
where I fit in  
where I can be "I"

I don't have to be "me," or "myself," just "I"  
The "I" that I refer to when I say "I feel like..."  
"I want to," "I don't want to"

Not me who some judge  
not myself who I judge  
just I  
who I am

Down River

To the place where my grandparents grew up  
where my parents grew up  
where I grew up  
and those after me will grow up

To learn the things I've learned  
not the same  
but not different

About the land  
the trees  
the leaves  
the plants  
the insects  
the birds  
the bears  
and even the waters

To feel the voice of the mountains  
the taste of the creek  
the sound of the breeze  
the smell of the moisture  
and the strength of the river

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*"I am" worksheet*

### "I Am" Poem

I am \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

I wonder \_\_\_\_\_.

I see \_\_\_\_\_.

I want \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_.

I pretend \_\_\_\_\_.

I feel \_\_\_\_\_.

I touch \_\_\_\_\_.

I worry \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_.

I understand \_\_\_\_\_.

I dream \_\_\_\_\_.

I try \_\_\_\_\_.

I hope \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_.

## **"I Am" Poem** (Template)

1. I am (two special qualities about you)
2. I wonder (something you are actually curious about)
3. I see (an imaginary sight)
4. I want (an actual desire)
5. I am (the first line of the poem repeated)
6. I pretend (something you actually pretend to do or be)
7. I feel (a feeling about something you care about)
8. I touch (an imaginary touch)
9. I worry (something that really bothers you)
10. I am (the first line of the poem repeated)
11. I understand (something you know is true)
12. I dream (something you actually dream about)
13. I try (something you really make an effort about)
14. I hope (something you actually hope for)
15. I am (the first line of the poem repeated)



Name \_\_\_\_\_

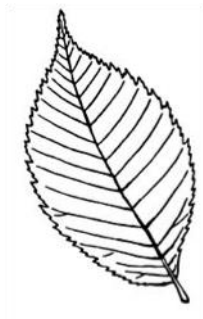
Choose the letter that completes the name of each noun from the Home poem. Write the letter on the line at the beginning of each word.

### “Home” Poem Letter Choice

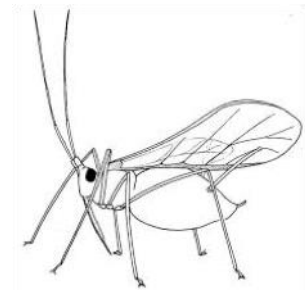
r            l            t            i            b            m



\_\_ree



\_\_eaf



\_\_nsect



\_\_ird



\_\_iver



\_\_ountain

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Write three words that remind you of home on the lines below.

### Writing Words You Know

Complete each sentence using words from the boxes.

#### person

aunt      dad      brother      grandpa  
mom      uncle      sister      grandma

#### place

river      school      Brush  
Dance  
store      home      mountains

#### event

gathering      hunting      camping  
swimming      fishing      dancing

#### adjective

funny      sad      scary  
strange      crazy      exciting

1. My \_\_\_\_\_ and I went to the \_\_\_\_\_.  
personplace
  
2. We saw a \_\_\_\_\_ person \_\_\_\_\_.  
adjectiveevent
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ likes to go to the \_\_\_\_\_.  
personplace
  
4. My \_\_\_\_\_ is going \_\_\_\_\_.  
personplace
  
5. It is very \_\_\_\_\_ when I go \_\_\_\_\_.  
adjectiveevent
  
6. My family is \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_.  
eventplace

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Family Coloring Worksheet*



## Fast Pace, High Intensity

By Lisa Morehead-Hillman, *Two Rivers Tribune* Contributing Writer

Late afternoon sunlight show toys scattered on the grass, and children's voices and laughter are heard. The face of Phil Albers, Jr., a young Karuk man, lights up with the joyful sound.

"When I first start teaching a new language class, I put it to the students straight: It's going to be tough and will want you to use the Karuk language - this might make you uncomfortable at times." Phil sits down carefully on the front steps of his Orleans home.

"I tell them, 'If you truly want to learn this language, you have a duty to yourselves and to your people to give it your all. If you're not ready for this, just sign out now.'"

Phil's mother is Rhonda (her maiden name is Plummer) and his father is Philip Albers, Sr. Phil grew up in Yreka with his family until leaving for college at Southern Oregon. Always passionate about sports, Phil got a degree in Athletic Training and a certificate in Native American Studies.

A turning point in his life was in meeting Violet Super, a Karuk Tribal Elder and highly respected teacher of the Karuk language before she passed away in 2006. "Although I had heard a lot of the language as a child from my grandmother, Lucille Albers, I really became interested in learning and teaching it through Violet."

Phil Albers first taught language in Happy Camp with the Karuk Language Program, later teaching at Hoopa High School. He is also a fighter.

Between 2007 and 2010, his team, Pikship, held eight championship titles. Pikship is the Karuk

word that stands for the shadow that one notices out of the corner of the eye.

"I actually don't like to fight," he confesses. What interests him is the process: "It's not about who is the fastest or the strongest. Just one or two abilities aren't going to carry you through. You need to put it all together."



For his three children, Gavyn, Ihaan and Sasi, Phil desires the best: "I want them to have security in who they are, in their home, and in having each other. They are my first priority."

Now wet with the light rain of a Sunday afternoon, Phil reaches over to pick up a forgotten candy bar from behind the toy box. His light brown skin glows as he admits sheepishly, "For being a health major, I've also got quite the sweet tooth."

*This article was originally published in the Two Rivers Tribune and adapted for this lesson plan. Permission to reprint was obtained. See more at: <http://www.tworiverstribune.com/2012/12/fast-pace-high-intensity/#sthash.y2LOWcHI.dpuf>*