

Close Reading Guide: *My Librarian Is a Camel*, Pages 18–19

(For Teacher Reference)

Time: 25 minutes

Directions and Questions	Teaching Notes
1. Describe the climate in Kenya.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pair up students. Throughout this close read, students will work in pairs to discuss answers to the questions you ask and to annotate their texts. Use different strategies to have them respond, such as cold calling, selecting volunteers, or responding chorally as a group. Read pages 18–19 once aloud for the whole group. Tell students to read along silently in their heads. Direct students' attention to the research question on their Close Read Note-catcher: <i>My Librarian Is a Camel</i>, Pages 18–19. Select a volunteer to read it aloud. Tell students that this is their purpose for reading today and that by the end of the close read, they should be able to answer this question. Point out the source on their note-catchers. Remind students that the source is the title of the text where the information is coming from. Ask: <i>“What is the source for our research today? What is the title of the text?” (My Librarian Is a Camel)</i> Invite students to write this in the appropriate spot on their note-catchers. Tell them that they should also record the specific page numbers from the text, pages 18–19. Review the text features used on this page by using a total participation technique and inviting responses from the group: <i>“What do you notice about these pages of the text? What is different about the way they look?”</i> <i>(Responses will vary; students should point out specific text features, such as headings or photographs with captions, but will likely not know the correct names of these features.)</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind students that text features are signals that authors of informational texts include to help the reader understand and find information in the text. Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group: <i>“What country do these pages focus on? What text features make you think so?” (Kenya; the title, the map and captions in the box in the upper right corner of page 19)</i> Invite students to write “Kenya” in the top box on their note-catcher and explain that these pages focus on how some people in part of Kenya overcome learning challenges. Direct students’ attention to the box in the upper right corner of page 19. Tell them that the author included a box like this for every country featured in the book. Invite students to skim the information in the box with a partner. Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group: <i>“What information did the author include in this box?” (a map of Kenya, Kenya’s flag, and basic facts about Kenya, such as its capital and population)</i> <i>“What does this help the reader to understand about the text?” (It helps the reader understand where Kenya is, how big it is, and what the climate is like.)</i> <i>“Reread the paragraph in the box that begins with ‘Kenya is a country....’ Put your finger on the part of the map that shows the coast of Kenya. Put your finger on the part of the map that shows inland Kenya. Put your finger on the part of the map that shows northern Kenya.”</i> Ask Question 1. (It is different in different parts of Kenya. Parts of Kenya are hot and humid, other parts are temperate, and the northern part is dry.)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite students to complete the Geographical Features box on their note-catchers. (Kenya is in East Africa; the northern part of Kenya is a desert.) • Ask: <i>“How do you think the climate of Kenya might impact how people living there get books?” (Responses will vary; students may not have a good understanding of the impact of climate or geography at this point and will build this throughout the close read.)</i>
<p>2. What learning challenge do some people living in Bulla Iftin face? Why is this a challenge?</p> <p>3. How do librarians traveling to Bulla Iftin overcome this challenge?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite students to reread the first paragraph on page 18 with a partner. • Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group: <i>“Where is Bulla Iftin?” (northeastern Kenya)</i> <i>“What is the climate like in Bulla Iftin? What words in this paragraph make you think so?” (dry; “desert sand”)</i> <i>“Skim the paragraph in the box on page 19. What words or phrases support your thinking about the climate in Bulla Iftin? How?” (“... the northern part of the country is dry”; the text says it is dry in the north part of Kenya, and that Bulla Iftin is in northeastern Kenya)</i> <i>“Put your finger under the word impassable. What familiar word do you see in this word?” (pass)</i> <i>“The prefix im- means not, and the suffix -able means capable to do something. What do you think impassable means?” (not able to pass)</i> <i>“Reread the first sentence. What is impassable? Why are they impassable?”</i> <i>(the roads to Bulla Iftin; because of the desert sand)</i> <i>“Think about these details. How does the climate of this part of Kenya impact people living there?”</i> <i>(The roads are covered with sand, making it hard for cars to drive on them.)</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite students to put their finger on the second sentence in the paragraph and to read it aloud. • Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Who is hungry for books?” (young people living in nomadic villages)</i> <i>“What do young people in nomadic villages want?” (books)</i> <i>“In your own words, tell your partner what the phrase ‘hungry for books’ means.” (really want books)</i> <i>“The author uses the terms ‘grateful,’ ‘hungry for books,’ and ‘eagerly await’ to describe the children. Whose perspective is it that the children really want books?” (the author’s)</i> <i>“Use a dictionary to find the word nomad. Read the definition to yourself.”</i> <i>“A nomad is someone who doesn’t have a fixed home and moves from place to place. Why might children who are nomads not have many books?”</i> <i>(Because they move from place to place, they might not have many belongings and only keep things they need with them when they travel.)</i> • Invite students to add <i>nomad</i> and its definition to their vocabulary logs. • Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Think about these details. What does this sentence help you to understand about young people living in this part of Kenya’s access to books?”</i> <i>(Some children in nomadic tribes really want books but have trouble getting them because of the nomadic villages where they live.)</i> • Ask and invite students to write the answer in the appropriate spot on their note-catcher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Who is facing the challenge?” (young people living in nomadic tribes)</i> • Point out that this is not a challenge that all children face in Kenya, or even all children living in northeastern Kenya.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Question 2 and invite students to place a sticky note on the sentence that explains why it is a challenge. (access to books; “The roads to Bulla Iftin, two hundred miles northeast of Nairobi, are impassable because of the desert sand, even for cars with four-wheel drive.”) • Invite students to add this to the Challenge box on their note-catchers. • Ask Question 3 and invite students to record how librarians overcome the challenge in the appropriate spot on their note-catchers. (They use camels for transportation.)
4. What do the photographs help you to understand about the text?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite students to reread the second paragraph on page 18 with a partner. • Invite students to form groups of four and act out how the driver, librarian, and camels carry books through the desert. • Select volunteers to share with the group. As volunteers share, invite the rest of the class to identify sentences from the second paragraph that support the group’s actions. • Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group: <i>“The last sentence of the first paragraph said camels are the most economical means of transportation. Economical means inexpensive and efficient. What evidence does the author give that proves camels are an economical way to travel in the desert?”</i> <i>(Camels are inexpensive because librarians only need two camels to carry the books and the supplies; camels are efficient because they can carry heavy loads and don’t need a lot of water in the desert.)</i> • Invite students to add this to the How the Challenge Is Overcome box on their note-catchers. • Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group:

	<p><i>“Look at the photographs on pages 18–19. Put your finger on a photograph that shows exactly what the text describes in the second paragraph. Find a sentence in the second paragraph that could also be used to caption the photograph. Put a sticky note under the sentence.”</i></p> <p><i>(the photograph on the bottom right corner of page 18 or on the bottom left corner of page 19; “A driver and a librarian divide the books into two boxes. They saddle them on the camel’s back, which is covered with a grass mat for protection. A second camel carries a tent that serves as the library roof.”)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Question 4. (They show what the camels look like when they are carrying the books and supplies for the library.)
<p>5. Is the library important to the children of Bulla Iftin? What in the text makes you think so?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite students to reread page 19 with a partner. • Select a volunteer to act out what the librarian does when the library caravan reaches the village. As the volunteer shares, invite the rest of the class to identify sentences from page 19 that support his or her actions. • Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group: <p><i>“What is the author’s perspective about how the students of Bulla Iftin feel when the library camels reach the village? Listen again as I read the passage aloud. Without using sound, show how the children feel with your faces and bodies.”</i></p> <p><i>Reread the paragraph on page 19, pausing to allow students to show their reactions.</i></p> <p><i>(They feel happy.)</i></p> <p><i>“What words and phrases in the text helped you figure out how the children felt?”</i></p> <p><i>(“eagerly await”; “...the children watch as the librarian pitches the tent and displays the books...”; “...treasure their new books ...”)</i></p> • Ask Question 5. (Yes; the children are hungry for books and treasure the new books the library caravan brings.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite students to add this to the Importance of the Library box on their note-catchers. • Invite students to reread the notes they wrote in the Geographical Features box on their note-catchers. Ask: <i>“After closely rereading pages 18–19, which geographical feature of Kenya has the biggest impact on the children living in Bulla Iftin? Circle it on your note-catcher.”</i> <i>(the desert in the northern part of Kenya)</i>
Culminating Task 6. With a partner, orally summarize pages 18–19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite students to reread pages 18–19 and review the notes on their note-catcher. • Ask Question 6. (Responses will vary; example summary: Children in Bulla Iftin, a village in the desert of northern Kenya, have a difficult time accessing books because of sand-covered roads. So, librarians travel on camels that carry books and library supplies to the villages. The camels can easily walk in the sand and do not need much water on their journey. They can carry heavy loads like the books and the tent for the library roof. The librarian and camels come every two weeks so the children can trade their books for new ones. The children overcame their challenge with the help of a librarian and a camel.)