

“The Hidden Teacher: A Story of Malik Dinar”
An English Language Lesson Plan by Mary Brooks



Unit/Theme: hurrying instead of listening

Proficiency Level: novice to intermediate low (ACTFL Guidelines)

Timing: two to three hours with writing assignment

Content Objectives

For students to:

- understand the situation and the conflict
- be able to describe the situation
- be able to retell the story

Language Objectives

For students to:

- use new vocabulary
- use discourse markers for the sequence of the story
- find meaningful metaphors
- determine the meaning of new words using context clues
- integrate listening, reading, speaking, and writing
- retell the story
- relate the story to a personal experience, first orally, and then in writing

Learning Strategies

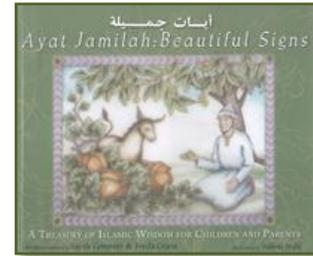
For students to:

- understand the story sequence by building a context
- use discussion skills to consider the lesson of the story as a pre-reading strategy
- use the new words as they discuss the story
- describe what the characters said when the reading is divided into time segments, and then retell the story using discourse markers
- use the reading as a context for writing

Key Vocabulary: philosophy, wisdom, on foot, enthusiasm, dervish, puzzling way, mimicked, guffawed, backtracked, sullen, halted, skeptical eye, excavation, obstacles, retrace, grinned, cursed, mumbled, herb, stuck, interconnected, haste, climbed aboard, wallowing in these confusing questions, flopping, plucked, coughed out, from its belly, remarkable opportunity, flawless, stomped around the room, misery, constant companion, boulder

Materials

- *Ayat Jamilah: Beautiful Signs: A Treasury of Islamic Wisdom for Children and Parents*, collected and adapted by Sarah Conover and Freda Crane. Boston: Skinner House (2010). Available at www.uuabookstore.org or 800-215-9076 and wherever books are sold.
- mp3 player/recorder



Context Building

Ask the students:

- Have you ever studied something very carefully in a class and then decided to try it out? How did the real experience go? (For example, studying calligraphy and then actually trying it, or reading about another country and then actually going there.) Was the “real experience” different from the study of the experience? Do you learn more effectively in a class or outside the classroom?

Presentation (Teachers)

1. Now that the students have some background for the moral of the story, play the whole story for an overview, without stopping.
2. Play the recorded story again.
3. Play the recorded story a third time and pause at the following parts in order to emphasize their importance:
 - why Malik Dinar went out into the world
 - why Dinar wanted to travel with the old dervish Fatih
 - the lesson at the date palm tree
 - the honey found by the group of men
 - the talking ants and the group of men at the pile of dirt and gold coins
 - the ferryman at the river, the fish who needed help, and the flawless diamond

- why Dinar felt as if a great boulder rolled right through his soul
 - when the dervish joined a new group of travelers
4. Read the moral out loud: “Now, brother, perhaps you will not be in such a hurry. You will finally be able to learn from experience: that is the true meaning of the inner, hidden teacher.”

Practice/Application

1. Retell the story with the students. Start a story chain. Use the new vocabulary in the retelling.

Use sequence markers, for example:

first of all, second, third
in the first place, for one thing, then, next
before, now, after, while
into, until, last, during
since, always, later, earlier, in the end, finally

2. Help the students use descriptive adjectives and interesting verbs.
3. Make sure the lesson of the story is clear.

Assessment

Use a dictation to give the students assessment questions. The dictation sequence is: listen, listen and repeat, listen and write, listen and check.

They can write the answers individually and then share with a partner.

1. What is the meaning of the name Fatih?
2. Why did Dinar want to travel with the old dervish Fatih?
3. What was the first lesson?
4. What was the lesson with the boatman?
5. Why did Dinar say that he was better off before?
6. What did Dinar mean when he said he felt as if a great boulder rolled right through his soul?
7. What was the difference between Dinar and all the other characters in the story?
8. What was Dinar looking for?
9. What was his lesson in the end?
10. What did the dervish Fatih want to show Dinar?
11. Do you think this was an effective lesson?
12. Have you ever done something too quickly and missed the reason for the action?

13. What does finding your “inner, hidden teacher” mean?

Extension

Reading into Writing

1. Ask the students:

- What is the best way for you to learn? Is it in a classroom or in the “real world”? For example, if you want to learn a new game on an app, do you read the instructions or figure it out yourself? Do you ask for help, or do you learn by your mistakes?
- Think of a time when you tried to do something, and you learned by making mistakes. What was the process exactly? What did you decide to do? What was your first step, and the next, and the one after? And finally? What did you learn from this experience?

2. Tell the students:

- Think about your own story and brainstorm with a partner about an event where you learned by making mistakes and then carefully understood what you had done.
- Tell your partner what happened.
- Record this story.

3. Tell the students:

Use this practice storytelling and your recording to write your story. Divide the story in this way:

- Describe something you wanted to learn on your own.
- Describe what happened. What mistakes did you make?
- Describe how you learned from your mistakes.
- Describe your learning process.

4. Follow standard writing process to guide the students into editing and redrafting their stories.