



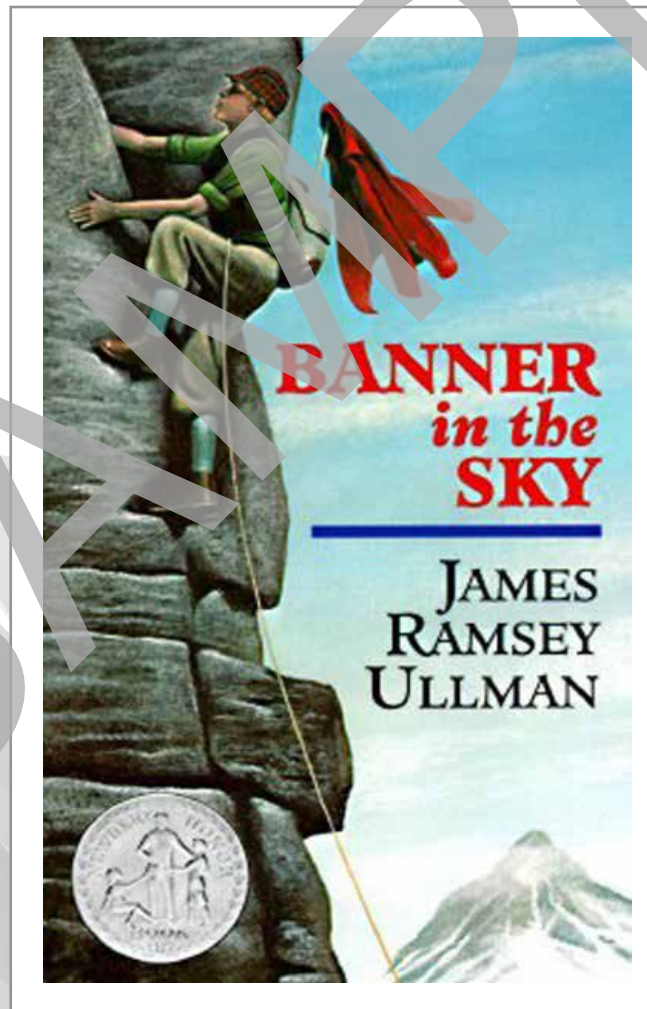
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Banner in the Sky

James Ramsey Ullman



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Banner in the Sky

James Ramsey Ullman

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Brainstorming, classifying and categorizing, evaluating, analyzing details, comparing and contrasting, synthesizing ideas

Literary Elements

Character, setting, plot development, conflict, suspense, theme

Writing

Advertisements, narrative, letter, news story

Vocabulary

Synonyms/antonyms, root words, prefixes/suffixes, context clues

Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing, cause/effect, inference

Listening/Speaking

Participation in discussion and cooperative groups, character monologue, interviews

Summary of Banner in the Sky:

Rudi dreams of climbing the Citadel, the mountain on which his father died. Rudi's mother and uncle have other plans for him. They want him to find his place in a safe hotel career. However, Rudi has two friends, Teo and Captain Winter, who understand and share his dreams.

Rudi joins a climb with Saxo, from a rival community, his Uncle Franz and Captain Winter. After harrowing adventure and courage, Rudi chooses to help Saxo down the mountain. Rudi's choice to help Saxo allows Winter and his uncle to be the first to reach the Citadel. Winter and Franz fly Rudi's symbol of triumph, a red flannel shirt on the mountain top. Winter and Franz explain that they see Rudi as the real conqueror of the Citadel.

Previewing the Book:

Have students examine the cover. Ask: How old does the boy appear to be? What sort of expression does he have on his face? What is he carrying on his back? What is red and flying in the air? Do you know what the silver circle showing the three figures means? (The book is a Newbery Honor Book.)

Look at the back cover of the book. What information do you find for a story diagram? For example: Boy—dead father—mountain—goal to climb.

Prereading Discussion:

Learning New Skills: Have you ever been faced with an unusual problem which required you to learn new skills? Have you ever been refused a chance to do something because you lacked experience? How do you get experience?

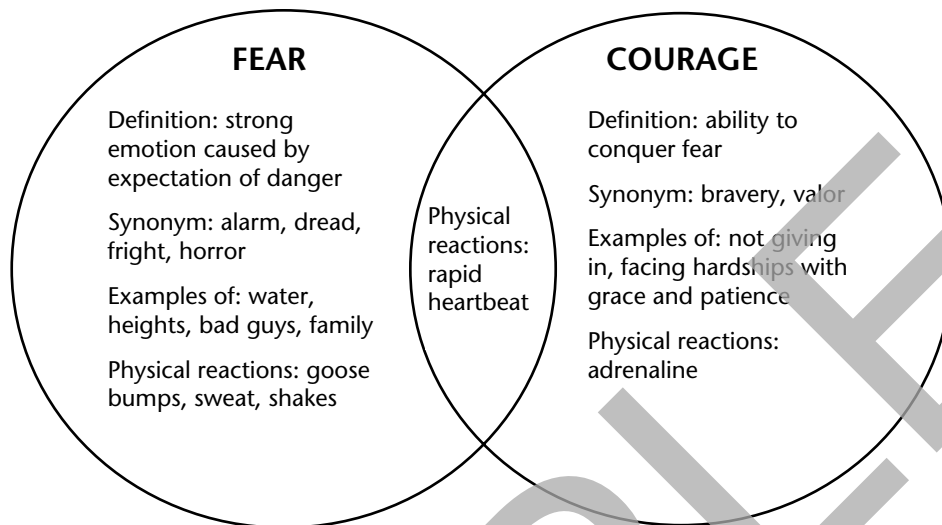
Facing a Frightening Situation: What makes you afraid? Heights? Diving in deep water? Electrical storms? What do you think about when you are afraid? How do you overcome your fear?

Obedying Parents: When can you not do what your parents want? How can you overcome over-protective parents?

Prereading Activities:

1. Make Venn diagrams with the students for the ideas of fear and courage. What do these two concepts have in common?

Begin by writing the word "fear" or "courage" on the center of a large piece of paper. Ask students to quickly tell what "fear" makes them think of. On "wheelspoke-lines" from the central word "fear" list student ideas. Encourage students to elaborate on particular ideas and show them how responses can be put in categories. Can you have courage without fear? Can you have fear without courage? Is one a coward if he feels fear?



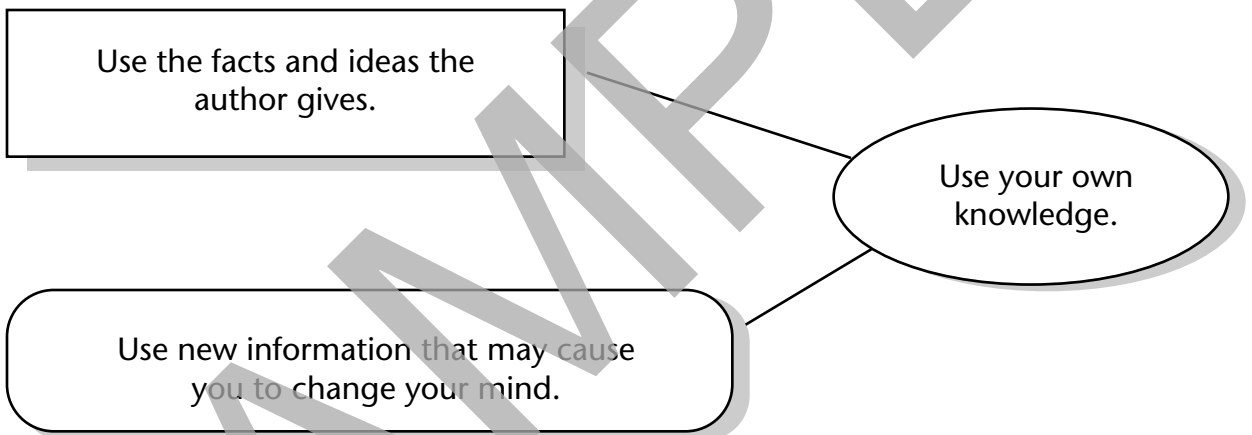
2. Research mountain climbing, training of climbing guides or instructors, equipment of mountain climbers and rewards of mountain climbers.
3. Write the name of the novel, *Banner in the Sky*, along with the term “historical fiction.” Explain that *Banner in the Sky* is an example of historical fiction. Then have students define “historical” and “fiction.” Explain that in historical fiction, the main characters are usually creations of the writer’s imagination (although real people may appear or be mentioned in the story). The setting is real—usually a time and place which had historical importance. Help students fill in the chart below, comparing and contrasting historical fiction with history.
4. Bulletin Board or Activity Sheet: A major theme of the story is how Rudi learns to cope with fear. Have students graph the degree of Rudi’s fear after each chapter in the story. (See the chart on page 6 of this guide.)

	Historical Fiction	History (Factual)
Setting:	Our world	Our world
Characters:	May or may not be people who really lived	People who really lived
Action:	Could have happened but not entirely true story	True story
Problem:	Could have belonged to someone living at the time of the story	Real problem
Examples:	<i>Johnny Tremain</i> (Forbes)	<i>Hiroshima</i> (Hersey)

Using Predictions in the Novel Unit Approach

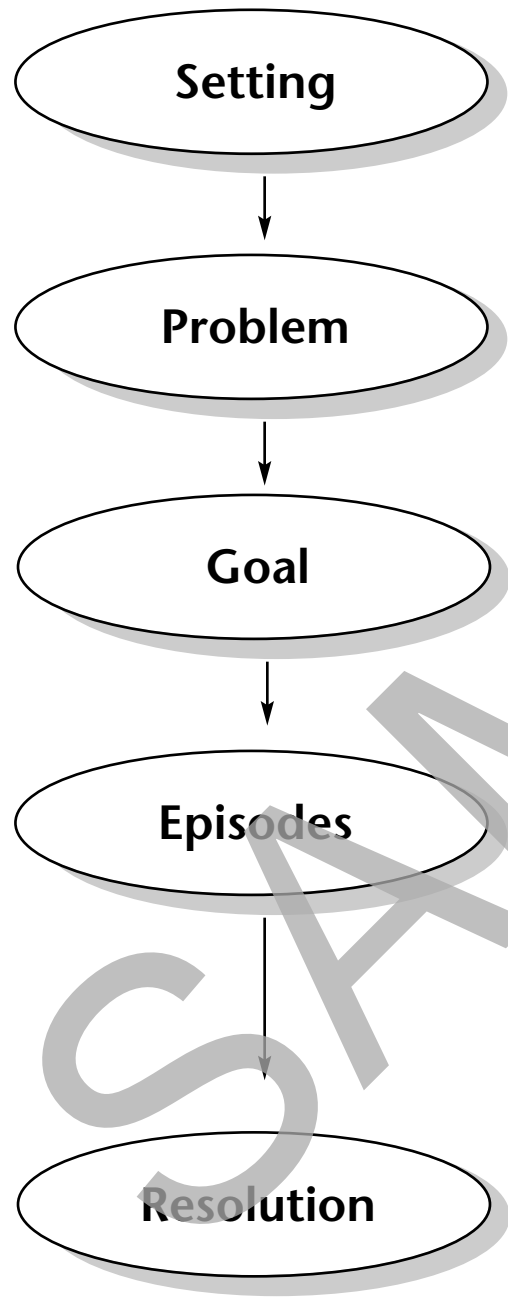
We all make predictions as we read—little guesses about what will happen next, how the conflict will be resolved, which details given by the author will be important to the plot, which details will help to fill in our sense of a character. Students should be encouraged to predict, to make sensible guesses. As students work on predictions, these discussion questions can be used to guide them: What are some of the ways to predict? What is the process of a sophisticated reader’s thinking and predicting? What clues does an author give us to help us in making our predictions? Why are some predictions more likely than others?

A predicting chart is for students to record their predictions. As each subsequent chapter is discussed, you can review and correct previous predictions. This procedure serves to focus on predictions and to review the stories.



Predictions:

Story Map



Characters _____

Time and Place _____

Beginning → Development → Outcome

Chapter Eight: "White Fury"—Pages 99-114

Vocabulary:

ramparts 99	exultantly 99	converging 100
clambered 100	marshal 102	decrepit 103
reconnoitre 105	slag 105	gradient 108
arduous 108	slithered 108	paid it out 109
labyrinth 110	seracs 110	terrain 112
lee 112	shroud 112	

Vocabulary Activity:

Place the words for the day in categories as shown below.

Descriptions Mountain Words Feelings Actions Things

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. What is a lie? Brainstorm.

Synonym

Antonym

LIE

Why people tell lies

Types

Little white ones Defensive
Exaggeration Big ones

2. Do you agree or disagree with Rudi: "I am wicked. I am evil. But I cannot help it." (page 104)
3. What conditions did Captain Winter lay down for Rudi on the climb? (Page 107, "There will not be any experiments, any individual climbing, any route-finding on your own. You will be an apprentice porter...you will do exactly as Emil and I tell you to.")
4. What did Captain Winter mean when he said, "It's not a good time of day for steep snow..."? What danger was there? (an avalanche) What causes an avalanche?
5. What does the chapter title, "White Fury" refer to? (the avalanche)

Prediction:

Will the climbers survive?

Chapter Nine: “The Challenge”—Pages 115-125

Vocabulary:

excursions 115
swill 123

defiance 119

relentlessly 123

Vocabulary Activity:

For each of the vocabulary words write a sentence that makes sense. Omit the vocabulary word. Make an answer key on the back of the paper. Share your sentences with a classmate.

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. What did the guides think of Saxo? (*pages 117-118, bad one, proud, treacherous, boaster, best of guides in Broli*)
2. How did the men learn that Rudi was climbing with Saxo and Captain Winter? (*Teo said he saw three climbers when he used the telescope. When Franz heard this he told the group that the third one must be Rudi.*)
3. Why did Teo make a toast to Rudi? (*page 122*) What do you think he meant by “...the only true mountaineer in Kurtal”?
4. Why did Franz stand beside Teo after he had toasted Rudi? What did this say about Franz’s character? Why did the group accept Teo? (*Teo, the cripple, had proven his courage in the mountains.*)
5. Why did Franz and the guides propose starting for the Citadel? (*page 124, to find the three climbers, bring down his nephew and talk Captain Winter out of his foolishness*)

Chapter Ten: “Three to Make Ready—” —Pages 126-138

Vocabulary:

ruefully 129
bivouac 136

provincial 134
marmot 137

taboos 135

Vocabulary Activity:

Each student or cooperative group will make a poster, banner, or sign to advertise their word or words. The ad must show what the word means and how to pronounce it. The words will be displayed and should be signed by the artist(s).