

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance, Day 1



Key Paragraph, p. 7

“Cloyd knew now—he’d known for a long time—that he should have told what he saw. He should have told how the bear really died. This man would have lost his outfitting license, would have had to pay a huge fine, and maybe would have gone to jail for killing an animal that was endangered. But no one else had been there. It would have been his word against Rusty’s. Would they have believed him, an Indian kid from Utah who didn’t have a father or a mother? Now we would never really know if they would have believed him or not” (p. 7).

Writing Prompt

Cloyd is mad at himself that he didn’t speak up sooner and tell the truth about what happened. Explain why it takes courage to tell the truth? Why do you think Cloyd hesitated? Provide three reasons. Have you ever been in a situation like Cloyd’s?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance, Day 2



Key Paragraph, p. 24

“‘Live in a good way,’ his grandmother liked to say. ‘Give something back’” (p. 24).

Writing Prompt

This quote prompted Cloyd to give Walter his bearstone when Walter was hurt. What do you think about Cloyd’s grandmother’s quote? Do you think this quote is just about giving *things* to people? What about giving back to the environment? What might that mean? What did Cloyd *really* give besides the physical object? Have you ever given something to someone that meant a lot to you? **In an explanatory paragraph, describe a time when you helped someone or gave someone a gift. Develop the sequence of events. Conclude your paragraph with a reflection on how it felt to help another or to give something away. Reference the background information provided to support your reflection.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance, Day 3



Key Paragraph, p. 26

“Cloyd steered them west up the next drainage, up the steep trail that led into the Rincon La Osa. At last they broke out into the meadow he remembered so well. They Made camp, can then he led the old man to the spot along the Rincon stream where he’d fished the big cutthroat out with his bare hands. All winter he’d thought about what had happened next” (p. 26).

Writing Prompt

Pretend you are Cloyd and write a journal entry to describe what is going through your mind as you visit the Corner of the Bear site for the 2nd time? Freeze that moment in time and explain what you are thinking and feeling in relevant details. How did you make sense of Walter’s response: “You can’t unscramble eggs.” ?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance, Day 4



Key Paragraph, p. 40

"It began to rain every day, by two in the afternoon at the latest. Sometimes they were both back in camp, and through the fold in the door of the sheepherder tent, they would watch the hail dance. Other times the weather would catch them away from camp, and they would wait it out before returning. The temperature would drop thirty degrees in less than thirty minutes, but Cloyd was ready for it. His cold-weather clothing and his rain gear were so much better than what he'd had the year before...later in the afternoon the sun would come back out, and they would dry their wet things on the big boulder, knee-high and flat like a table, out in the meadow half-way to the creek" (p. 40).

Writing Prompt

Cloyd seems at ease in nature and certainly having the right gear helps. If you had the right gear, would you like to live outside for an extended period of time? Why or why not? **Begin your paragraph with a strong topic sentence explaining your position. Describe three advantages or disadvantages? Conclude your paragraph by resetting your position.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance, Day 5



Key Paragraph, p. 53

“Grizzlies will bluff you into giving them the space they feel they need. The scary part is, their bluffs don’t look like bluffs in the least. It’s the scariest thing in your life. If the bear not only stands up, but woofs several times...if you hear a popping sound of the jaws, and the bear lays its ears back—look out” (p. 53).

Writing Prompt

In what way does Ursa have courage? She talks about growing up close to grizzlies as well as how her tribe related to bears. **Explain how she and her tribe embody the expression: “courage is risk for a reason.” Provide reasons why Ursa gets so close to bears? Is it for the thrill or is it responsible? Conclude your paragraph with a reflection on courage.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance, Day 6



Key Paragraph, p. 83

“Helplessly, Cloyd saw it happen. In a moment the grizzly’s life was snuffed out, and the life of her gray-black cub as well” (p. 83).

Writing Prompt

Life is fragile and sometimes accidents happen. In what way can we apply that philosophy to our lives? **Explain what it means to live fully and responsibly every day because you do not know when your life will end? Provide three examples of how you can live more fully and responsibly.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance, Day 7



Key Paragraph, p. 89

“‘Why doesn’t he care?’ Ursa was asking Simpson. The man scratched his chin, and then he bit his lip, but finally he decided to speak.

‘Please don’t quote me on any of this,’ he said.

‘You can talk to Tom until you’re blue in the face. Before he was with the Division he worked fifteen years as a government trapper. Rifle, trap, and poison are where he’s coming from’” (p. 89).

Writing Prompt

Using print and digital sources, research *game warden* and *government trapper*. Based on your research, describe the irony that Haverford was a government trapper and now is a game warden? What are the conflicting points of view around what should be done with bears? Conclude your paragraph with a reflection on what you think should be done with the bears.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance, Day 8



Key Paragraph, p. 107

"In the morning, the old man and the grizzly woman heard him out. He would return to the Roell Creek Basin, and he would try to feed the cubs for a little while. He could leave fish around for them. He had no doubt he could accomplish this" (p. 107).

Writing Prompt

Reread the entire definition of Courage Requires Fortitude: Courage is risk for a reason, not risk for a thrill; courage requires I moderate my impulses and emotions. Courage leads me to consider the heroic journey in which people live for purposes bigger than themselves and their wants and needs. **Pretend you are Cloyd writing in your journal. In a 2-3 paragraph journal entry describe the journey you are beginning to embark. What is the larger purpose? How does your mission require courage? What are the risks? Conclude your entry with a personal reflection.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance, Day 9



Key Paragraph, p. 116

“He would use the biggest of the aluminum pots and mash the brains until they became a paste. Her brains would make just the right amount for tanning her hide. His grandmother had said that it was an example of the fittingness of things: a mouse’s brain was just the right amount for tanning a mouse, the same went for a ship or a goat. Or a bear, Cloyd thought” (p. 116).

Writing Prompt

Research ways to survive in the wilderness. Compare and contrast a Cloyd’s fictional portrayal of a surviving in the wilderness with your research. **In an explanatory paragraph, provide evidence that Cloyd’s experience is similar or different to true experience of living in the wilderness.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Beardance, Day 10



Key Paragraph, p. 127

“He recalled his grandmother’s words from when he was little. In the very earliest time, she’d said, a person could become an animal if he wanted to and animal could become a person. Sometimes they were animals and sometimes people, and it made no difference” (p. 127)

Writing Prompt

Cloyd believes that animals and humans should be treated relatively equally. What is your opinion? In an explanatory paragraph, describe whether or not humans deserve to have more rights than animals? Begin your paragraph with a strong topic sentence stating your position. Provide three reasons to support your position. Conclude your paragraph by reflecting on your personal experience and restating your position.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance, Day 11



Key Paragraph, p. 142

“When I was young I killed too many bears,’ Sixto said. ‘I was a tonto, a stupid. Everyone was young and stupid back then, even the old people’” (p. 142).

Writing Prompt

If Sixto had had ‘courage that required moderation’, he would not have killed the bears when he was younger. **Describe a time when you took a risk for the sake of a thrill and done something you wished you had not done? Explain how your experience corresponds to Sixto’s. Conclude your paragraph on what you could have done instead to be more courageous?**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance , Day 12



Key Paragraph, p. 151-152

“His fright had a smell to it, an ominous sour smell suddenly coming out of his skin. He turned and fled...he told himself it was okay to give up...no matter which way he turned it over in his mind, he just couldn't. He couldn't leave the bears behind... He told himself to stay calm. The beam would hold for a while. He was going to keep going. Nothing could stop them now unless he was buried with rock” (p. 151-152).

Writing Prompt

What do you think Cloyd was thinking as he faced his fears about going further into the mine? **In an explanatory paragraph, use sensory language to capture the relevant thoughts, emotions, sights, and sounds Cloyd was experiencing. What would you have done? In what way is he showing his courage and continuing on his heroic journey?**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Beardance, Day 13



Key Paragraph, p. 166

“Then all was still. He knew he hadn’t ended up on the surface. It felt like he was encased in concrete. He was breathing, he knew that, and he was spitting out the snow that had been imbedded in his mouth. He was buried alive” (p. 166).

Writing Prompt

Pretend you are Cloyd and write a journal entry to describe what is going through your mind when you thought you were going to die? Name 2-3 events in your life flashed before your eyes? Conclude your entry by describing how you will live differently after this life-threatening experience.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Beardance, Day 14



Key Paragraph, p. 178

“Late the third day the work was done. The den extended fourteen feet into the mountain. Strong roots in the ceiling convinced Cloyd he’d made a den that couldn’t collapse on the cubs. The sleeping chamber was round, six feet across and four feet high” (p. 178).

Writing Prompt

In an explanatory paragraph, describe the ways in which Cloyd’s love and respect for the bears, as well as his courage, influence his actions and behaviors. Provide three examples.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Beardance, Day 15



Key Paragraph, p. 197

They were going to grow wild and large and powerful, and go about their ancient ways. If he ever came across them again, they might stand and pause and wonder. But then they would turn and go. They had known him in a bear's dream, and he had known them in his" (p. 197).

Writing Prompt

Using print and digital sources, research bear activity around humans. Draw evidence from your research and determine whether or not it is possible to have a human and bear relationship similar to Cloyd and the bear cubs. Is this reasonable. Support your position with three facts from your internet research.

