

ELA: Grade 4, Lesson 16, “The Legend of Keesh” adapted from B.P. Skinner from Jack London

**Lesson Focus:** Determine how to draw inferences about a character’s motivations, drawing on character words and actions. Describe detail of the characters, setting, and plot.

**Practice Focus:** Write a summary paragraph which included about why the character, Keesh, decided to speak at the council meeting.

**Objective:** Students will infer using evidence from the text to determine what motivated the main character, Keesh. Then, students will write a summary of the selection using the co-created chart.

**Academic Vocabulary:** humble, legend, council, jeered, elders, chief, neglect, unprecedented

**TN Standards:** 4.RL.KID.1, 4.RL.KID.2, 4.RL.KID.3, 4.W.TTP.2

**Teacher Materials:**

- The Teacher Packet for ELA, Grade 4, Lesson 16
- Paper charts OR digitally display images from the PPT (will need to be in a format for filming)
- Charts of legend definition: (Note: you may reuse the chart from “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” lesson set or you could use image L16-A)
  - A legend usually:
    - Focuses on heroic individuals or fantastic creatures
    - Describes an exciting adventure.
    - May have some basis in historical fact
    - Includes some supernatural events
- Globe, if available. If not, use image L16-B.
- Chart:

The Legend of Keesh		
Setting	Characters	Events

- **Chart or slide L16-D:** “The Legend of Keesh” is about a thirteen year old boy named Keesh who lives in a village on the rim of the Polar Sea. When he and his mother were neglected by the village after his father’s death, Keesh spoke to the village council. As he spoke the elders and onlookers jeered at Keesh. Keesh had chosen to speak to the council because \_\_\_\_\_. [Note: write so it can be revealed one sentence at a time.]
- **Chart or slide L16-E:**
  - **Task:** Write a summary paragraph explaining the opening section of the Skinner’s adaptation of “The Legend of Keesh”. As you write, think about how to incorporate the details from the chart. Also, be sure to include why Keesh chose to speak to the council, specific examples from the text, an introduction, and conclusion. Finally, be sure to think about how you will link your thoughts together.
  - **Creative assignment:** Draw Keesh speaking to the council in the chief’s big igloo. Use details from the story to guide your illustration.

**Student Materials:**

- Two pieces of paper, pencil, surface to write on

**PBS Lesson Series**

- The Student Packet for ELA, Grade 4, Lesson 16 which can be found at [www.tn.gov/education](http://www.tn.gov/education)

Teacher Do	Students Do
<p><b>Opening</b> (1 min)  <b>Hello! Welcome to Tennessee’s At Home Learning Series for literacy! Today’s lesson is for all our fourth graders out there, though all children are welcome to tune in. This lesson is the first in this week’s series.</b></p> <p><b>My name is ____ and I’m a ____ grade teacher in Tennessee schools. I’m so excited to be your teacher for this lesson! Welcome to my virtual classroom!</b></p> <p><b>If you didn’t see our previous lessons, you can find them at <a href="http://www.tn.gov/education">www.tn.gov/education</a>. You can still tune in to today’s lesson if you haven’t seen any of our others.</b></p> <p><b>Today, we will begin a close read of the text, “The Legend of Keesh”, adapted from Jack London’s writings by B. P. Skinner. This means B.P. Skinner rewrote the legend in his own words.</b></p> <p><b>Before we get started, to participate fully in our lesson today, you will need:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Two pieces of paper, pencil, surface to write on</b></li> <li>• <b>The Student Packet for ELA, Grade 4, Lesson 16 which can be found at <a href="http://www.tn.gov/education">www.tn.gov/education</a></b></li> </ul> <p><b>Ok, let’s begin!</b></p>	<p>Students gather materials for the lesson and prepare to engage with the lesson’s content – “The Legend of Keesh”.</p>
<p><b>Intro</b> (4 min)  <b>If you joined me for lessons 11 -15 in the series, you know we spent five lessons studying a poem called “The Echoing Green.” Today starts a new set of five lessons based on one text. By focusing on one text for several lessons, we have time to think deeply about the text and complete several close reads. This means that we are able to read it many times for different purposes.</b></p> <p><b>“The Legend of Keesh” ... ooh, if you have joined me in previous lessons, you should recognize a word in title – legend. Remember, we read “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” in lessons 6-10. Do you remember what a legend is – either from those lessons or from what you already know? [Pause.] [Show legend chart or L16-A.] A legend usually focuses on heroic individuals or fantastic creatures and describes an exciting adventure. It may have some basis in historical fact, something that actually happened, and includes some</b></p>	<p>Students follow along and think and act as instructed, gradually gaining confidence and competence to complete the summary paragraph on their own and answer the question about Keesh’s motivation.</p> <p>Student connects to past lessons, recalling the meaning of a legend.</p>

<p>supernatural events, like ghosts! If you remember, <i>The Legend of Sleepy Hollow</i> is often told as a ghost story because of the ghost of the headless horseman.</p> <p>The setting of the “The Legend of Keesh” is in a village near the Polar Sea. Where is that? [Pause.] There is definitely a clue word in the title. I know that polar means cold. So, it has to be somewhere cold. Do you remember studying the Arctic Ocean in school? [Pause.] The Arctic Ocean is the ocean at the North Pole. Can you visual its location in your head? [Pause.] Think about a globe you have in your classroom. It is at the top of the globe. [If you have a globe, use the globe. If not, show image L16-B. ] Here is the North Pole, Arctic Ocean, Alaska, and Russia. [Point on map or globe.]</p> <p>During our first read of the legend today, we are going to mainly focus on summarizing the story using details about the characters, setting, and events, and I want us to be thinking about one question – Why did Keesh speak up in the council meeting? As we talk through the text, I will explain the words and details further and help you think about what is happening. Then, there will be time for you to practice thinking about what happened and Keesh’s action as we write together. Finally, I will assign you independent work that you can complete after the video ends. This is the same structure we have followed for all of our lessons together.</p> <p>Also, just like we have done in all our lessons, we will capture notes and details about the text as we go. Go ahead and create a chart for the setting, characters, and events on a piece of paper. In the character section, we will capture notes not only about all the characters, but will also capture notes about why Keesh spoke during the council meeting. [Show chart. Pause for writing on paper.] We will use our chart as we read the text. If you have a copy of the text, you can use it as we read together; if not, you can listen as I read aloud.</p> <p>Also, don’t forget to take your own notes as we read.</p>	<p>Students recall location of the Polar Sea.</p> <p>Students hear expectations of lesson –summarizing the text and writing about Keesh’s motivation.</p> <p>Students create note taking chart.</p>
<p><b>Teacher Model/Read-Aloud</b> (16 min)  <b>Are you ready? Let’s begin!</b>  <i>“The Legend of Keesh” adapted by B.P. Skinner from Jack London’s story, “The Story of Keesh”</i></p> <p><i>How does a person who began in humble circumstance become a legend? Along the rim of the Polar Sea, Keesh lived and died. From father to son, from brother to sister, from</i></p>	<p>Student listens to the first read of the text, connecting to previous learning of characters, setting, and events – while also thinking about Keesh’s motivation</p>

*summer when the sun does not set, until winter when the sun does not shine, Keesh's story is still told over and over again.*

- Lots to unpack here in these few sentences! Let me reread the first sentence again - *How does a person who began in humble circumstance become a legend?*
- First, let's talk about the word – *humble*. Have you heard the word before? [Pause.] Humble – It can have different meanings, but the way it is used here *humble circumstance* means that he was low in rank in the village. I think that is important to know about Keesh. Let's start our chart together. I am going to write Keesh – humble (low in rank) on my chart. [Add to chart in character column.]
- I think the word *legend* is worth us talking about, too. The sentence read: *How does a person who began in humble circumstance become a legend?*
  - We have talked about a legend as a type of story, here it has a related, but slightly different meaning. Have you ever referred to someone as a legend or heard someone called a legend? [Pause.] If so, you know it means that they have become famous. Interesting... so Keesh becomes famous for something. I wonder what? Let's add *a legend* under Keesh's name in our character column. [Add to character column.]
- We received some clues as to the setting. The second sentence started with *At the rim of the Polar Sea*. Where is the Polar Sea? [Pause.] Yes, it is at the North Pole. I know rim means edge, so Keesh lives at the edge of the Polar Sea. We need to add that to the setting – rim of Polar Sea (Arctic Ocean/North Pole). [Add to setting column.]
- The second sentence ended with: *Keesh lived and died*. What does that tell us about Keesh? [Pause.] Yes, it means he lived there his whole life – from when he was born to when he died. That is another good details to add about Keesh – lived by Polar Sea whole life. [Add to character chart.]
- What does this section tell us about the setting? *From father to son, from brother to sister, from summer when the sun does not set, until winter when the sun does not shine, Keesh's story is still told over and over again*. Interesting description of the setting – what does that mean... *summer when the sun does not set, until winter when the sun does not shine?*

Students use details to describe the setting and characters and add to chart.

[Pause.] Perhaps you remember studying about the parts of the earth that have almost 24 hours of daylight and 24 hours of darkness during parts of the year. That is what is being described here. Listen again: *summer when the sun does not set, until winter when the sun does not shine*. Let's add to our chart. [Add to setting – long periods of day and night.]

- **Wow! Lots of information in those few short sentences. The author is helping us learn about Keesh and the setting. Here is a picture of the setting.** [Show L16-C.] I notice the drawing includes igloos. We haven't read about igloos, yet, but I bet we will. [Point to igloos.]

As we read this next few sentences, be thinking about the question – who is the council and what is their role in the village?

*When Keesh's father was killed while hunting to save the village from starvation, the villagers soon forgot him. They neglected Keesh and his widowed mother, Ikeega, who shared a small igloo together. This all changed when Keesh turned thirteen. Because his father's blood ran in his veins, Keesh was bright, healthy, and strong. When the village council met in the big igloo of Chief Klash-Kwan, Keesh, despite his youth, spoke up.*

- **What did we learn about Keesh's father?** [Pause.] Yes, he was killed while hunting to save the village from starving. We weren't given his name so I am going to write skip down and leave some space to write more about Keesh: **Keesh's father – killed while hunting**. [Add to character column. Note: be sure to leave space to add more details about Keesh.]
- **We also were given details about his mother. What did you hear?** [Pause.] I heard that his mother is widowed – which would make sense because widowed means your husband or wife has died. I also caught that her name is Ikeega. [Add to chart – *Ikeega = Keesh's mother.*]
- **I also heard that igloos are part of the setting.** [Add igloos to setting.]
- **We got more information about Keesh. I heard that he was 13.** [Add to character column under Keesh's name.]
- **Do you know what the word neglect means? I think we can figure it out by the way it is used: *the villagers soon forgot him. They neglected Keesh and***

Students use details to describe the setting and characters in the second paragraph and add to chart.

*his widowed mother. What are your thoughts?*  
[Pause.] Neglect means to not take care of. After Keesh's father died (he was the family's food provider), the village did not take care of Keesh and his mother.

- This is an interesting line: *Because his father's blood ran in his veins, Keesh was bright, healthy, and strong.* What does that mean? [Pause.] I think the author is telling us about both Keesh and his father. "*Because his father's blood ran in his veins*" is a way of saying Keesh is like his father. Then, the author describes Keesh as bright, healthy, and strong. In this way, the author is telling us that these three adjectives describe Keesh and his father. I am going to add the words to both characters. [Add bright, healthy, and strong to Keesh and his father.]
- The last line of the paragraph read: *When the village council met in the big igloo of Chief Klash-Kwan, Keesh, despite his youth, spoke up.*
  - Let me tell you a little about a village council. It is a group that leads the village. The chief is the head of the council – kind of like a mayor is the head of a city. These are additional characters in our story – Chief Klash-Kwan and the council. [Add to characters column.]
  - What does- *When the village council met in the big igloo of Chief Klash-Kwan* tell you about the chief? [Pause.] I think it tells me he probably has some wealth, too, since his igloo is big. Beside the chief's name, I am going to write, *big igloo/wealth.* [Add to chief in character column.]
  - I think we learn more about Keesh, too: *Keesh, despite his youth, spoke up.* Despite means even though. We could read this – Keesh, even though he was young, spoke up. What does that tell you about Keesh? [Pause.] I think it might tell me he is brave because he was only 13 and willing to talk in front of the council who are adults, but I don't have enough details just yet. Although, this does feel like our first event. I will add to events: *Keesh spoke to council.* [Add to events column.]

Keesh is about to start speaking to the council. This might help us decide if he is brave. It will also help answering the questions I asked you to be considering so far:

- Why does Keesh speak up at the council meeting?
- Who is the council and what is their role in the village?

**“When my father hunted, he brought home more meat than any of the two best hunters combined,” Keesh explained, “With his own hands he divided the meat, and with his own eyes he saw to it that the neediest of the village received their fair share.”**

**The elders and onlookers jeered at the young boy; how dare one so young speak out in the council? Despite them, Keesh continued, “You speak for your wives and mothers. So, I speak for my mother, Ikeega, who should have her fair share of meat. All we get is gristly meat that’s full of bones.”**

- **Great! We learn about Keesh’s father from Keesh’s dialogue, or his speaking. What did Keesh say about his father? Take a minute and jot your notes under Keesh’s father on the chart. [Pause.] I heard Keesh describe him as a great hunter. [Add to chart.]**
- **By inferring (or using what I know with what the text says), I can also learn about Keesh’s father. Can you think of a word to describe Keesh’s father by inferring from these lines: “*With his own hands he divided the meat, and with his own eyes he saw to it that the neediest of the village received their fair share.*” [Pause.] I think I would describe him as generous because the text says he made sure everyone in the tribe had enough food – even the neediest. I am going to add that to Keesh’s father – generous, made sure everyone had food. [Add to character column.]**
- **From this sentence: *The elders and onlookers jeered at the young boy; how dare one so young speak out in the council?* How does the council react to Keesh’s words? [Pause.] It might help if I tell you that jeer means to make loud and rude comments. The elders of the tribe are the older people in the tribe who are usually respected and asked for advice. They might be part of the council. Does that help you think about what is happening? How does the council react to Keesh’s words? [Pause.] I think they do not like it because they are jeering – or making rude comments.**
- **The second part of the sentence gives us some insight into how the council is thinking - *how dare one so young speak out in the council?* [Pause.] What does**

Students use details to describe the setting and characters in the second paragraph, along with the first event. Students add to chart.

that mean? [Pause.] They can't believe that Keesh would speak out... especially since he is so young! I think this becomes a detail about the event. Under Keesh speaking to the council, I am going to write *elders and onlookers jeered*. [Add to events column.]

- Why do Keesh and his mother get gristly meat that's full of bones? [Pause.] They are given the worst meat. Remember the text said they are neglected.

We pick back up in our story after Keesh is finished speaking. *The anger of the men boiled. Keesh was ordered to leave the council with no dinner and was promised a beating. Keesh's blood pounded in his head and his eyes flashed. "Take this, you men, as my last word. My father, Bok, was a great hunter. When he was alive, he made certain that no widow or child ever cried at night because there was no meat. Today, many go hungry while you, the strong men of the village, stuff yourselves with the best meat."*

- We have more reactions from the council and from Keesh. Let's start with the council. How did they react? [Pause.] The first line says it all - *The anger of the men boiled*. They were very upset about Keesh speaking to the council. We can add that to the description of the event – council angry. [Add to events column under Keesh spoke to council.]
- How else did the council react? [Pause.] YES! They said Keesh could have not food, AND they said they were going to beat him! WOW! We have more details about his event. I am going to write – Keesh's punishment = no food and beating. [Add to events column under Keesh spoke to council.]
- Let's get into Keesh's reaction now: *Keesh's blood pounded in his head and his eyes flashed. "Take this, you men, as my last word. My father, Bok, was a great hunter. When he was alive, he made certain that no widow or child ever cried at night because there was no meat. Today, many go hungry while you, the strong men of the village, stuff yourselves with the best meat."*
- I get how Keesh is feeling... do you? Write how he is feeling on your chart. [Pause.] YES! HE IS ANGRY! Have you ever been so angry that you can feel your blood pumping in your head – it isn't a good feeling, and he is THAT angry! Why is he angry? [Pause.] Keesh knows that many are going hungry and crying at night. We need to add to the event: *Keesh angered*. [Add to chart under Keesh spoke to council.]

Students use details to describe the setting, characters, and events in the fourth section, while adding to their chart.



- **Who is getting the best meat?** [Pause.] **Yes, the council. This line says it all: *Today, many go hungry while you, the strong men of the village, stuff yourselves with the best meat.* The council is stuffing themselves with the best meat!**

**We also have more reaction to the council by Keesh in the last segment we are going to read for today's lesson:**

***The next day, Keesh was seen leaving the village with his father's enormous hunting-spear and bow, and an ample supply of bone-barbed arrows. The villagers whispered to one another—it was unprecedented that a young boy should go hunting alone!***

- **How did Keesh react?** [Pause.] **You got it! He decided to go hunting with his father's spear and bow. Both are tools for hunting. He also took ample arrows with him – which meant enough.**
- **How did the villagers react?** [Pause.] **They didn't think it was right for a boy to go hunting alone. I know this because they were whispering about it. Also, the word unprecedented means that it has never happened before. No boy as young as Keesh had gone hunting along before him.**
- **Let's add *Keesh goes hunting alone* as a new event.** [Add to chart.]

**Now that we have finished the selection of the text we are going to read today, let's think of what happened and answer some bigger picture questions.**

- **The council plays a very important role in the story. Who is the council and what is their role? Jot some notes about the council under characters.** [Pause.] **I think I would describe the council as the group of people in charge of the village. They decide who gets food and makes decisions for the village. On my chart by council, I am writing – in charge of village, decides who gets food, and makes decisions.** [Add to character column.]
- **Why do you think Keesh spoke up during the council meeting? Use details from the text to support your answer. Jot your answers on your paper. I think there are several reasons.** [Pause.] **I think he spoke up for many reasons! I am going to jot these at the bottom of my chart.** [Record on chart in characters.]  
**Reasons Keesh spoke:**
  - **He and his mom were neglected by the tribe after his father died.** [Record as *neglected*.]

Students use details to describe the Keesh and his reaction to the council. Students add to chart.

Students use the entirety of the text to reflecting on the council's role and Keesh's decision to speak at the council.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>They were going hungry by getting the worst of the meat.</b> [Record as <i>getting worst meat.</i>]</li> <li>○ <b>The council was getting the best meat.</b> [Record as <i>council getting best meat.</i>]</li> <li>○ <b>I think he decides to speak up for the good of the people in the village who can't take care of themselves.</b> [Record as speaking up for others.]</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Guided Practice</b> (4 min)</p> <p><b>Just like in previous lessons, we are going to take what we learned during the lesson and write about it. Today's section of the story was really kind of just the set up for the rest of the story. By summarizing what happened, it will help us remember when we read more in our next lesson. The chart we created will help us as we summarize because we have captured information about the setting, characters, and events that have happened so far. Also, at the end of the summary, I will be asking you to write about why Keesh decided to speak at the council meeting. We are going to start writing together, then, I will give you part to finish on your own.</b></p> <p><b>OK... let's begin. If you have joined me for the previous lessons, we always start with our introduction. We probably need to start with something general about the story. Take a minute and try to write an introduction on your own.</b></p> <p>[Pause.]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>"The Legend of Keesh" is about a thirteen year old boy named Keesh who lives in a village on the rim of the Polar Sea.</b> [Reveal sentence on chart or use image L16-D.]</li> <li>● <b>Notice how I took details about the setting (rim of the Polar Sea) and the main character (he is 13) and put them in my introduction.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>I think the event column of the story can be our framework of the summary. Our main event for the section we read was Keesh speaks to the council. Our next sentence should be about that. Jot your ideas for your sentence on your paper.</b></p> <p>[Pause.] <b>Let's see what I wrote. When he and his mother were neglected by the village after his father's death, Keesh spoke to the village council.</b> [Reveal sentence on chart or use image L16-D.]</p> <p><b>Now, we need to think about what happened as Keesh spoke. Hmm... the elders and onlookers jeered. Let's turn that into a good sentence. You try. [Pause.] I wrote: As he</b></p>	<p>Student uses notes with help of teacher to write a summary paragraph about the first section of "The Legend of Keesh".</p>

<p><b>spoke the elders and onlookers jeered at Keesh.</b> [Reveal sentence on chart or use image L16-D.]</p> <p><b>On your own, I want you to add here why Keesh decided to speak to the council. Here is a sentence starter if you need it: Keesh had chosen to speak to the council because _____.</b> [Reveal sentence on chart or use image L16-D.]</p> <p><b>Some of the reasons I mentioned earlier were:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>He and his mom were neglected by the tribe after his father died.</b></li> <li>• <b>They were going hungry by getting the worst of the meat.</b></li> <li>• <b>The council was getting the best meat.</b></li> <li>• <b>He decides to speak up for the good of the people in the village who can't take care of themselves.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Then, you get to finish out the summary by thinking about how the council reacted to Keesh's speech. Remember as you write that the council punished Keesh by sending him away with no food and threatening a beating.</b> [Point to chart.] <b>Then, be sure to write about how Keesh reacted; he decided he would go on a hunting trip alone!</b></p>	
<p><b><u>Independent Work</u></b> (1 min)</p> <p><b>Here is your task:</b> [Show chart L16-E.] <b>Write a summary paragraph explaining the opening section of the Skinner's adaptation of "The Legend of Keesh". As you write, think about how to incorporate the details from the chart. Also, be sure to include why Keesh chose to speak to the council, specific examples from the text, an introduction, and conclusion. Finally, be sure to think about how you will link your thoughts together.</b></p> <p><b>For your creative assignment today... draw Keesh speaking to council in the chief's big igloo. Use details from the story to guide your illustration.</b></p>	<p>Students finish paragraph about "The Legend of Keesh".</p>
<p><b><u>Closing</u></b> (1 min)</p> <p><b>I enjoyed reading the first section of "The Legend of Keesh" with you today! Thank you for inviting me into your home. Tomorrow we will find out what happens when Keesh goes on the hunt - alone! I look forward to seeing you in our next lesson in Tennessee's At Home Learning Series! Bye!</b></p>	