

LESSON PLANS

Sophia Sprite and the Sasquatch Secret

*Five standards-aligned lessons with
student handouts, grades 5 to 9*



BOOK 1 OF THE SOPHIA
SPRITE SERIES

AUTHOR

Brian Young

FORMAT

Teacher plans with reproducible student handouts

LESSONS

Five, 45 to 60 minutes each

STANDARDS

CCSS ELA grades 5 to 8, NGSS MS-LS2, media literacy

AGES

10 and up

Free to copy and share for classroom
and library use.

BRIANYOUNGAUTHOR.COM · HELLO@BRIANYOUNGAUTHOR.COM

How to Use This Pack

This pack holds five complete lessons for *Sophia Sprite and the Sasquatch Secret*, written for grades 5 to 8 and easy to stretch for grade 9. Each runs 45 to 60 minutes and stands on its own, so you can teach all five as a unit or pull one into a week that needs it. The lessons go where students most want to argue: a villain with a real grievance and a monstrous answer, a town that has spent fifty years trying to prove one thing, a whistle with rules and a price, and a girl carrying grief in her pocket.

Every lesson has the same shape: a header with grade band, time, and standards; objectives, materials, and prep; a step-by-step procedure whose times add up to the stated length; an assessment with a three-level success criteria table; differentiation; an exit ticket; and student handouts that start on their own page, ready to photocopy. Quotations are short and cited by chapter, so students can find them in any edition. For section summaries, discussion questions, and vocabulary, use the companion *Classroom Discussion Guide*.

Pacing: Where Each Lesson Fits

Lessons 1, 3, and 4 discuss the ending. The table shows the earliest point to teach each one.

LESSON	FINISHED THROUGH	WHY THEN	EARLIER PREVIEW
1. Who Decides Who's a Monster?	Chapter 26	Speeches in Ch. 18 to 25; replies in Ch. 25 and 26	None
2. Absence of Proof	Chapter 22	Uses Ch. 4, 21, and 22	Hook and ladder after Ch. 5
3. The Rules of the Whistle	Chapter 26	The cost comes due in Ch. 26	Start the chart after Ch. 10
4. The Weight Doesn't Get Lighter	Chapter 29	Traces the whole book	None
5. Bridges	Chapter 20	Kragorth's claim is in Ch. 20	Works as a mid-book research break

For a three-week unit, teach Lesson 2 after Chapter 22, Lessons 1 and 3 after Chapter 26, and Lessons 4 and 5 after the last chapter.

Sensitive Content

Parents' deaths. Sophia's parents die in a rockslide in Chapter 1. Over the middle chapters she learns it was no accident, and in Chapter 22 Kragorth admits it and calls her father "collateral damage."

Bullying. Grace Wilson leaves cruel notes. The one in Chapter 14 says Sophia's parents may have died on purpose to get away from her (hard for a student who has lost someone to suicide). **A villain who argues for eliminating humanity.** Kragorth plans to drive humans to destroy themselves, and the book uses the word *genocide*. Declan recounts a massacre without gore; two guards die in Chapter 26.

Standards and Content Notes

Standards Matrix

Codes use grade 6 as the anchor; the same-numbered standard at grades 5, 7, and 8 names the same skill at rising complexity. Strong fits at other grades: RL.7.6 for Lesson 1; RI.5.8, RI.7.8, and RI.8.8 for Lesson 2; W.7.3 and W.8.3 for Lesson 3; RL.7.3 for Lesson 4; 5-ESS3-1 for grade 5 in Lesson 5.

LESSON	READING	WRITING	SPEAKING, LISTENING, LANGUAGE	SCIENCE AND MEDIA
1. Who Decides Who's a Monster?	RL.6.1, RL.6.6, RI.6.8	W.6.1	SL.6.1	Media literacy: faulty reasoning
2. Absence of Proof	RL.6.1, RI.6.8	W.6.1	SL.6.1, SL.6.2	NGSS practice 7 (argument from evidence); media literacy: a viral claim
3. The Rules of the Whistle	RL.6.3, RL.6.5	W.6.3	L.6.5	None
4. The Weight Doesn't Get Lighter	RL.6.2, RL.6.3, RL.6.4	W.6.9	SL.6.1	None
5. Bridges	RL.6.1	W.6.7, W.6.8	SL.6.4	NGSS MS-LS2-4 (ecosystem change), MS-ESS3- 3 (human impact); source credibility

How Each Lesson Handles Sensitive Content

AT A GLANCE

- **Lesson 1** maps and refutes Kragorth's argument; it is never an open debate, and no one argues his side.
- **Lesson 2** weighs Marsha's recording (Chapter 21) as evidence rather than reading it aloud.
- **Lesson 3** treats Sophia's ringing ear as a story choice about consequences; be thoughtful if a student is deaf or hard of hearing.
- **Lesson 4** has a private heads-up, an opt-out, a non-personal writing choice, and no requirement to share.
- **Lesson 5** answers environmental worry with a documented story of repair.

Lesson 1: Who Decides Who's a Monster?

GRADE BAND

Grades 5 to 8 (usable in 9).
Students have finished Chapter 26.

TIME

55 minutes

STANDARDS

RL.6.1, RL.6.6, RI.6.8, W.6.1, SL.6.1

Kragorth is a villain with a real grievance and a monstrous answer. Students take his argument apart (claim, evidence, reasoning, conclusion), find exactly where it breaks, and answer it in writing. The novel supplies two model rebuttals: Sophia's "Tell me again how you're different from us" (Chapter 25) and Drenna's "Humans and Northborn are family. We always have been" (Chapter 26).

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- identify the claim, evidence, reasoning, and conclusion in a character's argument and cite the text for each;
- name three reasoning failures (false dilemma, hasty generalization, ends justify the means) and locate each in Kragorth's speeches;
- write a one-paragraph rebuttal that states the opposing claim fairly and answers it with evidence.

MATERIALS

Copies of the novel; Handout 1; a projected four-box map; sticky notes.

BEFORE CLASS

Flag Kragorth's speeches in Chapters 18, 20, 22, and 25. State the norm: we describe his concern fairly and never defend his conclusion.

Procedure

STEP 1

Hook **5 MIN** Write *monster* on the board. Students list characters who call someone a monster or treat someone as less than a person. Does *monster* describe what someone is, or what someone chooses?

STEP 2

Mini-lesson **12 MIN** Define *claim*, *evidence*, *reasoning*, and *conclusion*. Model with Chapter 20, told from Kragorth's own point of view. Claim: "They are incapable of learning." Evidence: his hologram of the Earth, then and now. Reasoning: "Their lives are simply too short." Conclusion: "But grief does not change what must be done." Then teach three breaks. *False dilemma*: "Hope or survival. Love or logic" (Chapter 18). *Hasty generalization*: "I've never seen them change" (Chapter 18). *Ends justify the means*: Kragorth begins "The ends justify" and Rothgar cuts him off, "Don't say it again" (Chapter 26).

STEP 3

Guided practice **12 MIN** Pairs map the Chapter 22 cavern speech with you. Claim: “Your species is a cancer.” Conclusion: “The only solution is removal.” His device “won’t put anything in your heads that wasn’t already there,” yet Torvak says it makes people “see threats that don’t exist.” Kragorth would manufacture his own proof: a rigged test. What does he leave out? Marsha, and the child whose drawing he kept, whose descendant became an environmental scientist (Chapter 20).

STEP 4

Independent work **18 MIN** Students map the Chapter 25 Council speech on Handout 1, then read Sophia (“You’ll commit genocide to prevent genocide,” Chapter 25) and Drenna (“I’m proof that your whole philosophy is garbage,” Chapter 26). Sophia shows he fails his own standard; Drenna is living counterevidence. Students draft a rebuttal.

STEP 5

Share and close **8 MIN** Volunteers read rebuttals and the class names each move. Return to the hook with Chapter 14, where Sophia sees Grace running on Kragorth’s logic: “The belief that some people were worth less.” Who decides who’s a monster?

ASSESSMENT

Collect Handout 1 and score it with the table.

CRITERION	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	SECURE
Mapping	Some boxes filled; claim and evidence confused	All four boxes; one vague or unsupported	All four boxes with accurate, cited quotations
Finding the flaw	Calls the argument “wrong” without saying why	Names a flaw, loosely tied to the text	Names a flaw, quotes the line, explains the failure
Rebuttal	Disagrees without evidence	States the claim; answers with one piece of evidence	States the claim fairly; shows why the evidence outweighs his

DIFFERENTIATION

- *Multilingual learners.* Pre-teach the four parts and *dilemma* with a picture for each; allow mapping in the home language.
- *IEPs and 504 plans.* Give the passages on one page, a partly completed map, and the option to dictate.
- *Extension.* Analyze Aytha (Chapter 20), who agrees humans have harmed the planet but says, “I don’t believe any cause justifies that kind of evil.”

EXIT TICKET

Kragorth says the choice is “Hope or survival. Love or logic.” Name one character who chooses both, and explain in two sentences how that makes his choice a false dilemma.

HANDOUT 1: WHO DECIDES WHO'S A MONSTER?

Argument Map and Rebuttal Frame

Name: _____ Date: _____

The speech I am mapping (circle one): Chapter 20, his chamber · Chapter 22, the cavern · Chapter 25, the Council

On the left, write what Kragorth says, with a short quotation and chapter. On the right, explain where it breaks. Flaws to look for: *false dilemma* (only two choices offered), *hasty generalization* (judging everyone from part of the evidence), *ends justify the means*, *rigged test*, *ignores counterevidence*.

1. Claim: what he wants us to believe

Where it breaks

2. Evidence: what he offers as proof

Where it breaks

3. Reasoning: why the evidence proves it

Where it breaks

4. Conclusion: what he says must happen

Where it breaks

TWO REPLIES FROM THE BOOK

Sophia: "Tell me again how you're different from us." (Chapter 25) · Drenna: "Humans and Northborn are family. We always have been." (Chapter 26)

MY REBUTTAL

Use this frame or your own words: Kragorth claims that _____. He supports this with _____. His reasoning breaks because _____. For example, in Chapter, __. **This matters because** _____.

Lesson 2: Absence of Proof

GRADE BAND

Grades 5 to 8 (usable in 9).
Students have finished Chapter 22.

TIME

50 minutes

STANDARDS

RI.6.8, RL.6.1, SL.6.2, NGSS practice 7 (argument from evidence)

Elwha is a town built on a claim nobody can prove. Richard has pinned blurry photographs to a corkboard for fifty years, and outside Bernard Fox's research center, Bernard's grandson Lucas puts the family creed into words: "Absence of proof isn't proof of absence" (Chapter 4). Later the Council will not act without what Kivara calls "incontrovertible proof" (Chapter 21), and in the facility, when Olivia asks what matters most, Sophia answers, "Documentation. If we don't have proof," and Olivia finishes, "Then none of this matters" (Chapter 22). Students build a ladder for weighing evidence and use it on the book and on a viral claim.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- rank types of evidence and explain what makes evidence stronger (checkability, independence, other explanations);
- evaluate a claim with a rubric, giving a cited reason for each judgment;
- explain the difference between a claim that is unproven and a claim that is false.

MATERIALS

Copies of the novel; Handout 2; a projected copy of the ladder; optional: a short, school-appropriate viral post about a cryptid to use as Claim D.

BEFORE CLASS

Choose Claim D (the handout includes a made-up example) and preview it. Flag Chapter 4 (the thermal footage and the walk home), Chapter 16 (the seismic readings), Chapter 21, and Chapter 22.

Procedure

STEP 1

Hook **7 MIN** Post two statements: "Nobody has ever found a Bigfoot body, so Bigfoot isn't real" and "Absence of proof isn't proof of absence." Students stand by the one they find more convincing. Then read the Chapter 4 exchange. Sophia: "That doesn't make it true." Lucas: "But it doesn't make it false, either." Can both be right?

STEP 2

Mini-lesson **10 MIN** Walk through the six rungs of the evidence ladder and three questions that move evidence up it: *Can someone else check it? Does it come from more than one independent source? What else could explain it?* Model with Chapter 4. Bernard calls his thermal footage "Fifteen seconds of footage that proves, or at least suggests, that something lives in these forests." What separates *proves* from *suggests*? Then read how Sophia records the footprints: from "multiple angles, with her hand in frame for scale," with the spot marked on her GPS app. Which rung does each reach?

- STEP 3** **Guided practice** **13 MIN** Groups of three place the nine pieces of evidence (A to I) on the ladder. Press on hard cases. Olivia’s dad’s readings are real data with more than one possible explanation (Chapter 16). The Council takes Marsha’s recording seriously because members know the voice: “You know that voice as well as I do” (Chapter 21). Declan is powerful, but as Kivara notes, “He is the only witness.”
- STEP 4** **Group work** **15 MIN** Groups score Claims A to D on the rubric, writing a short reason with a chapter or source detail for each score. Point out that Claim D gets the same questions the Council asked.
- STEP 5** **Share and close** **5 MIN** Groups report on Claims C and D. Close with Kivara’s ruling: “The evidence is compelling but incomplete” (Chapter 21). She did not call Sophia wrong; she said the proof was not yet enough to act on. When is “unproven” different from “false”?

ASSESSMENT

Collect Handout 2: a ladder sort that follows the three questions, scores backed by reasons, and a final answer that keeps *unproven* and *false* separate.

CRITERION	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	SECURE
Ranking evidence	Ranks by how exciting it is	Most items placed sensibly; reasons general	Ranks by checkability and independence; explains hard cases
Evaluating claims	Scores without reasons	Reasons for most scores; some uncited	A specific, cited reason for every score, including Claim D
Unproven versus false	Treats them as the same	Explains the difference in general	Explains the difference and applies it to the book

DIFFERENTIATION

- *Multilingual learners.* Pre-teach *evidence*, *proof*, *witness*, *verify*, and *claim*. Add an icon to each rung. Let groups score first and write reasons second.
- *IEPs and 504 plans.* Reduce the sort to six items and the rubric to Claims A and D. Allow oral reasons recorded by a partner.
- *Extension.* Design the evidence that would lift Claim B to the top rung: what would Olivia measure, and who would check it?

EXIT TICKET

Richard was right for fifty years and still could not prove it. Was the town wrong not to believe him? Answer in three sentences using the word *evidence*.

HANDOUT 2: ABSENCE OF PROOF

Evidence Ladder and Claim Rubric

Name: _____ Date: _____

THE EVIDENCE LADDER: WRITE EACH LETTER ON ITS RUNG

RUNG	TYPE OF EVIDENCE	LETTERS
6	Verified by independent experts, or repeatable by others	
5	Documented physical evidence with context (scale, place, time)	
4	A recording or photograph	
3	Several independent eyewitnesses who agree	
2	One eyewitness	
1	A rumor or secondhand story	

- A. Richard's blurred memory of 1976 (Ch. 2)
- B. Bernard's 2008 thermal footage (Ch. 4)
- C. Hair "of unknown primate origin" (Ch. 4)
- D. Sophia's footprint photos (Ch. 4)
- E. Olivia's dad's seismic readings (Ch. 16)

- F. Marsha's recording of Kragorth (Ch. 21)
- G. Declan's testimony about Ireland (Ch. 21)
- H. Photos and data logs from the facility (Ch. 22)
- I. Kragorth's broadcast words (Ch. 25, 26)

CLAIM RUBRIC

Score each claim from 1 (weak) to 4 (strong) on each question. **A.** Bernard: his footage shows something lives in these forests (Ch. 4). **B.** Olivia: her dad's readings mean something big moves underground (Ch. 16). **C.** Sophia: Kragorth ordered her mother's death (Ch. 21). **D.** A viral video shows a tall, hairy figure crossing a logging road: "Bigfoot caught on camera in Washington!" The account sells Bigfoot T-shirts.

QUESTION	A	B	C	D
Who is the source, and what do they want?				
Can someone else check it?				
Is there independent support?				
What else could explain it? (4 = nothing likely)				

Pick one claim that is unproven but not false. Explain the difference.

Lesson 3: The Rules of the Whistle

GRADE BAND

Grades 5 to 8 (usable in 9).
Students have finished Chapter 26.

TIME

55 minutes

STANDARDS

RL.6.3, RL.6.5, W.6.3, L.6.5

Declan explains the whistle in Chapter 6: “Volume equals range, intent equals precision.” The novel keeps that rule for twenty chapters, and when Sophia finally blows as hard as she can at one target, the rule holds and the cost arrives: a ringing in her left ear that “might fade in time. Or might not” (Chapter 29). Students catalog the rules and costs of the book’s magic and technology, then design an object and write the scene where its price comes due.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- identify the rules, limits, and costs of the novel’s magical objects and technology, citing chapters;
- explain how clear rules and real costs shape a character’s choices in one scene;
- design an object with three rules and one cost, and write a scene in which the cost comes due.

MATERIALS

Copies of the novel; Handouts 3A and 3B; chart paper for each group.

BEFORE CLASS

Flag the chapters listed on Handout 3A for each group. Prepare a model object of your own, such as a lantern that always shows the way home but goes dark for a day after each use.

Procedure

STEP 1

Hook **5 MIN** Ask: if a character can do anything with magic, why is that boring? Then read Declan’s warning from Chapter 6: “always know who you’re calling before you call. Otherwise you might not like who answers.” A rule plus a danger makes a choice, and a choice makes a story.

STEP 2

Mini-lesson **10 MIN** Define a *rule* (what the object does and how), a *limit* (what it cannot do, or who it does not work on), and a *cost* (what using it takes from the user). Model with the whistle. Humans cannot hear it (Chapter 6). “The whistle responds to what you put into it” (Chapter 6). In Chapter 26 she aims it at Kragorth alone and blows with everything she has. The rule pays off, and the cost lands at once: “It hurt me too.” Kragorth explains why it worked: it is a tool “that requires mental discipline most Northborn never master.”

- STEP 3** **Guided practice** **15 MIN** Each group takes one item from Handout 3A (the cloak, the portal key, the HARE, the weaponized HARE, the nullifiers, or Drenna's immunity), finds a rule and a cost or limit with chapters, and posts it. Gallery-walk for two minutes while everyone fills in the chart. Note the trap: the key that kept returning (Chapter 7) was Declan all along (Chapter 17). Why plant a false rule?
- STEP 4** **Independent work** **20 MIN** Share your model object in a minute. Students complete Handout 3B and draft the scene where the cost comes due. Remind them of Chapter 26: the cost lands at the moment the object succeeds, and it changes the character afterward.
- STEP 5** **Share and close** **5 MIN** Partners swap and answer one question: could I predict how your object would work in a new situation? Close with Chapter 29, where Sophia's ear rings "in quiet harmony" with the whistle, "a reminder that power always extracted its price." What would the book lose if the whistle had been free?

ASSESSMENT

Collect both handouts and the draft, and score them with the table.

CRITERION	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	SECURE
Rules and costs in the book	What objects do, without costs or chapters	Rules and some costs; some chapters missing	Rules, limits, and costs for most items, each with a chapter
Original design	Vague rules; the object can do anything	Three rules and a cost; one rule unclear	Three clear, testable rules and a cost that matters
The scene	Cost mentioned but changes nothing	Cost arrives; character unchanged by it	Cost arrives at the moment of success and changes what the character does next

DIFFERENTIATION

- *Multilingual learners.* Pre-teach *rule*, *limit*, *cost*, *price*, *precision*, and *intent* with everyday examples (a phone battery has a limit). Allow a captioned comic strip instead of a written scene.
- *IEPs and 504 plans.* Give each group a half-page excerpt instead of chapter references, a three-box scene template, and the option to dictate.
- *Extension.* Write the scene twice, with and without the cost, and explain which is stronger. Or design a nullifier for your own object.

EXIT TICKET

Write a rule for something you use every day (a phone, a bike, a backpack) in the style of "Volume equals range, intent equals precision," and name its cost.

HANDOUT 3A: THE RULES OF THE WHISTLE

Rules and Costs in the Book

Name: _____ Date: _____

A *rule* says what an object does. A *limit* says what it cannot do or who it does not work on. A *cost* is what using it takes from the user. The whistle is done for you.

The whistle (Ch. 5, 6, 26, 29)

Rule: Volume equals range, intent equals precision. Humans cannot hear it.

Cost or limit: A hard, focused blast hurt Sophia too. Her left ear still rings.

The cloak (Ch. 5, 11, 28)

Rule:

Cost or limit:

The portal key (Ch. 10)

Rule:

Cost or limit:

The HARE (Ch. 9, 13, 16)

Rule:

Cost or limit:

The weaponized HARE (Ch. 22, 26)

Rule:

Cost or limit:

The nullifiers (Ch. 26)

Rule:

Cost or limit:

Drenna's immunity (Ch. 13, 26)

Rule:

Cost or limit:

The key that kept coming back (Ch. 7, 17)

What it seemed to be:

What it really was:

THINK ABOUT IT

Pick one item. Describe a moment where knowing its rule let you predict what would happen, or where its cost forced a character into a hard choice.

HANDOUT 3B: THE RULES OF THE WHISTLE

Design Your Object

Name: _____ Date: _____

Name of the object: _____ Who owned it first?

What it looks, feels, sounds, or smells like:

Rule 1 (what it does):

Rule 2 (how you use it, or what changes how well it works):

Rule 3 (a limit: what it cannot do, or who it does not work on):

The cost (what using it takes from the user):

Who would want to misuse it, and why?

PLAN THE SCENE WHERE THE COST COMES DUE

Before

What does my character need, and why is the object the only way?

The moment

The object works, and the cost arrives. What happens?

After

How is my character different now?

MY OPENING LINES

Lesson 4: The Weight Doesn't Get Lighter

GRADE BAND

Grades 5 to 8 (usable in 9).
Students have finished the book.

TIME

55 minutes

STANDARDS

RL.6.2, RL.6.3, RL.6.4, W.6.9

Sophia arrives in Elwha with a music box that “still smelled like home” (Chapter 1). Students trace her change through five objects (the music box, the whistle, the cloak, the pink room, and the necklace key) and two lines about grief and courage. Richard: “The weight doesn’t get lighter, you get stronger” (Chapter 12). Marsha, remembered: “Being brave means being afraid and doing it anyway” (Chapter 18).

BEFORE YOU TEACH: STUDENTS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED LOSS

A few days ahead, tell students you know have lost someone close (and their families or counselor, if appropriate) what the lesson covers. Offer an opt-out with no explanation needed: the student writes to Prompt 2, the literary analysis, or works in another space. No one shares personal writing, the reflection page has a privacy line, and no prompt asks students to describe a loss. If writing raises a concern about a student’s well-being, follow your school’s procedures and involve the counselor.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- trace how the meaning of an object changes across a novel, citing at least two chapters;
- explain how objects reveal a character’s change and connect it to a theme;
- write a reflective response grounded in textual evidence.

MATERIALS

Copies of the novel; Handouts 4A and 4B; a quiet space for students who opt out.

BEFORE CLASS

Send the private heads-up. Flag the music box (Ch. 1, 2, 5, 18, 28), whistle (Ch. 5, 26, 29), cloak (Ch. 5, 9, 28, 29), pink room (Ch. 2, 28), and necklace key (Ch. 18). Write Richard’s and Marsha’s lines on the board.

Procedure

STEP 1

Hook **5 MIN** Read the end of Chapter 2: “She had never felt more completely, utterly lost.” What does the music box mean to her now?

- STEP 2** **Mini-lesson** **10 MIN** A symbol gathers meaning as a story goes on. Model the music box. Chapter 1: “Hold onto this for me, Soph. I’ve been meaning to put it somewhere safe.” Chapter 5: a hidden key inside. Chapter 18: a second keyhole, opened by the necklace, holds Marsha’s evidence and her letter, “I love you. I always loved you, just the way you are.” Chapter 28: it sits on the nightstand, “the music box that had started everything.” The box never changed; Sophia’s understanding did.
- STEP 3** **Guided practice** **20 MIN** Groups take one of the other four objects, fill in their row of Handout 4A, and report while others fill in their charts. Then discuss the board: how is Richard’s idea different from “time heals”? Where else does Marsha’s idea appear (Lucas in Chapter 16, Aytha in Chapter 23)?
- STEP 4** **Independent work** **15 MIN** Students choose a prompt on Handout 4B and write. Every prompt can be answered from the book alone.
- STEP 5** **Share and close** **5 MIN** Volunteers share from their charts, never the reflection. Close with Chapter 28: “Pink wasn’t her color, but it was the color someone had chosen when they were trying to make her feel welcome.” What changed, the room or Sophia?

ASSESSMENT

Collect Handouts 4A and 4B. Grade the analysis, never what a student discloses.

CRITERION	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	SECURE
Tracking an object	Describes it without showing change	Shows change with one quotation	Shows change with quotations from two or more chapters
Connecting to theme	Retells events	Names a theme in general	Links the change to Richard’s or Marsha’s line
Reflective writing	Brief, no link to the text	Some textual support	Thoughtful, with evidence and significance

DIFFERENTIATION

- *Multilingual learners.* Add pictures to the chart; pre-teach *symbol* and *weight* in literal and figurative senses; allow the home language.
- *IEPs and 504 plans.* Assign one object with quotations provided; offer a shorter reflection or dictation. *Extension:* compare Sophia’s grief with Ashnaka’s (Chapters 8 and 26).

EXIT TICKET

Choose one of the five objects. In two sentences, explain what it meant to Sophia when she first had it and what it means at the end.

HANDOUT 4A: THE WEIGHT DOESN'T GET LIGHTER

Object Tracker

Name: _____ Date: _____

For each object, write what it means to Sophia early in the book and later, with a short quotation and chapter, then what changed. The music box is started for you.

The music box

Early: "the only thing she had
that still smelled like home" (Ch.
1)

Later:

What changed:

The whistle

Early:

Later:

What changed:

The cloak

Early:

Later:

What changed:

The pink room

Early:

Later:

What changed:

The necklace key

Early:

Later:

What changed:

TWO LINES TO THINK ABOUT

Richard: "The weight doesn't get lighter, you get stronger." (Chapter 12) · Marsha: "Being brave means being afraid and doing it anyway." (Chapter 18)

Which object best shows Sophia getting stronger while the weight stays? Explain.

Reflection

Lesson 5: Bridges: The Real Olympic Peninsula

GRADE BAND

Grades 5 to 8 (usable in 9).
Students have finished Chapter 20; best after the book.

TIME

60 minutes, or two 45-minute periods

STANDARDS

W.6.7, W.6.8, SL.6.4, NGSS MS-LS2-4, MS-ESS3-3

The novel’s Elwha is invented, a town of about three thousand under a billboard that reads “BIGFOOT CAPITAL OF WASHINGTON” (Chapter 2). The landscape is real: “the cold November air” and the Sasquatch crossing sign (Chapter 28), “the rough bark of a Douglas fir” (Chapter 29). The real Elwha River also has a story the book never mentions. Between 2011 and 2014, two dams on the Elwha were removed in what was then the largest dam removal in United States history, and salmon have been returning to stretches of river the dams had blocked. Students research the real peninsula, separate fact from legend, and test Kragorth’s claim that humans “are incapable of learning” (Chapter 20).

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- conduct a short research project with at least two sources and evaluate each source’s credibility;
- separate documented facts from legend or speculation about a real place;
- present a two-minute report that uses evidence to answer a question about a claim in the novel.

MATERIALS

Copies of the novel; Handouts 5A and 5B; devices or a printed source packet; a map of Washington State.

BEFORE CLASS

Build a source set: the National Park Service pages for Olympic National Park and Elwha River restoration, state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, a university or museum, a reputable news archive. Preview Bigfoot sources with care.

Group topics: (1) the Elwha dam removal and the salmon; (2) the Hoh Rain Forest; (3) the Quinault Rain Forest; (4) Olympic National Park; (5) the Sasquatch legend, including the Patterson film Lucas mentions in Chapter 19; (6) whose homeland the Elwha runs through, and that Tribal nation’s role in restoring it.

Procedure

STEP 1

Hook **5 MIN** Read from Chapter 20: “I remember when the great forests stretched unbroken,” then “They did not learn. They are incapable of learning.” Could we test this claim? Show the peninsula on a map: the town is invented; the river, strait, and forests are real.

- STEP 2** **Mini-lesson** **8 MIN** Connect to Lesson 2's ladder. A *documented fact* can be confirmed in more than one independent, reliable source. A *legend* is a story people pass on; the history of a legend can be documented even when its subject cannot. *Speculation* is a guess presented as possible. Walk through the five source checks on Handout 5A.
- STEP 3** **Guided practice** **7 MIN** Run the five checks together on one source about the dam removal, then on a Bigfoot website, sorting statements into fact, legend, or speculation.
- STEP 4** **Group work** **22 MIN** Groups research with Handout 5A, logging two sources and sorting what they find. In the last eight minutes, they plan a two-minute report on Handout 5B. Every report ends with the bridge question: does what we learned support or undercut Kragorth's claim?
- STEP 5** **Share and close** **18 MIN** Each group presents for two minutes while classmates note one fact and its source. Tally the answers to the bridge question. What would Sophia say? Point to her last idea in Chapter 29: "the answer is bridges."

ASSESSMENT

Collect both handouts and score the presentation with the table.

CRITERION	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	SECURE
Sources and credibility	One source, or checks blank	Two sources, some checks done	Two independent sources, fully checked, with a reason one is stronger
Fact versus legend	Facts and claims mixed	Mostly separated; one item misplaced	Fact, legend, and speculation separated, with a hard case explained
Bridge answer	Facts with no answer	Answers with one piece of evidence	Weights evidence on both sides and cites sources aloud

DIFFERENTIATION

- *Multilingual learners.* Provide a glossary (*dam, salmon, rainforest, restoration, legend, source*) and sources with images. Allow a labeled visual with shorter spoken parts.
- *IEPs and 504 plans.* Provide two preselected sources, defined roles, and the option to record.
- *Extension.* Propose a way to monitor another human impact on the peninsula (MS-ESS3-3).

EXIT TICKET

Write one documented fact you learned today, name its source, and explain in one sentence whether it supports or undercuts Kragorth's claim.

HANDOUT 5A: BRIDGES

Research Organizer

Name: _____ Date: _____

Our topic:

Our research question:

SOURCE CHECKS

Answer each check for both sources. A strong source passes most of them.

Source 1

Title and website or author:

Who made it, and when?

Does it show where its information came from?

Does a second, independent source agree?

What does it want me to do or believe?

Source 2

Title and website or author:

Who made it, and when?

Does it show where its information came from?

Does a second, independent source agree?

What does it want me to do or believe?

FACT OR LEGEND?

Sort what you find. Put the source number after each item.

Documented fact

Which source is stronger, and why?

Legend or speculation

HANDOUT 5B: BRIDGES

Presentation Planner

Names: _____ Date: _____

You have two minutes. Plan who says what, and say your sources out loud.

Opening (15 seconds). What is real here, and where is it? Speaker: _____

Fact 1 and its source (25 seconds). Speaker: _____

Fact 2 and its source (25 seconds). Speaker: _____

One legend or misconception, and how we know it is not documented fact (20 seconds). Speaker:

THE BRIDGE QUESTION (25 SECONDS)

In Chapter 20, Kragorth says humans “are incapable of learning.” Does what we learned support or undercut his claim? Circle one: **supports** **undercuts**. Then give your evidence. Speaker:

Closing line (10 seconds). Connect back to the book. Speaker: _____

BEFORE WE PRESENT

_____ We named at least two sources. _____ We kept fact and legend separate. _____ Everyone has a part. _____ We practiced with a timer.

Resources and Contact



Listen to Chapter 1 free

About fifteen minutes of the audiobook, read by Audie Award winner Bahni Turpin. No sign-up. A good way to open a unit or model fluent reading. brianyoungauthor.com



Get the book

Paperback from any bookstore or library wholesaler (Ingram), paperback and hardcover on Amazon. The ebook releases November 23, 2026. books2read.com/SophiaSprite1

Ordering for schools and libraries

- **Paperback ISBN:** 978-1-7341794-1-5. Available through Ingram, so any bookstore or library wholesaler can order it.
- **Ebook:** Available to libraries through OverDrive and Hoopla beginning November 23, 2026.
- **Audiobook:** Narrated by Bahni Turpin. Release details at brianyoungauthor.com.

Author visits

Brian offers free virtual visits (about 20 to 30 minutes) for classrooms, libraries, and book clubs as his schedule allows: a short reading, how the book came to be, and plenty of time for questions. Write to hello@brianyoungauthor.com with your dates, grade level, and group size. Classes that write letters get letters back.

More free materials

A **Classroom Discussion Guide** (section summaries, discussion questions, vocabulary, writing prompts, and a folklore and geography sidebar) and a **Book Club Kit** (icebreakers, a three-meeting plan, a clan quiz, and trivia) are free to download at brianyoungauthor.com.

THANK YOU

Thank you for teaching this book. If your students write rebuttals to Kragorth, design whistles of their own, or find out something about the real Elwha that I should know, send them my way. Brian Young, hello@brianyoungauthor.com

Sophia Sprite and the Sasquatch Secret, copyright Brian Young. These lesson plans and handouts may be reproduced for educational and library use. Cover art may not be altered.