



Jan at Camp

Guided Reading Level: G

DRA Level: 12

Lexile Level: 340L

written by Sandra Samatte and illustrated by Julian Grafenauer

Overview: Join Jan and her dad as they have a fun day at the Culture Camp! In *Jan at Camp*, young readers will practice reading words with the short /a/ vowel sound as Jan and her dad spend the day at the Culture Camp with Elder Fran.

About the Book

Drumbeat Decodable Series:

Each book contains a word list, high-frequency words, short vowel words, and fun activities for extended learning. *Jan at Camp* is part of the Drumbeat Decodable Book Collection, a groundbreaking beginning reader series designed to strengthen and advance phonics and reading skills (www.leeandlow.com/books/drumbeat-decodable-book-collection).

The series was written by Sandra Samatte, Anishinaabe, member of Ne-biimiskonaan (Skownan) First Nation, Treaty 2 Territory, and illustrated by Julian Grafenauer, Anishinaabe, member of Ditibineya - ziiibiing (Rolling River) First Nation, Treaty 4 Territory.

Reviews

"Simple text with clear and specific targeted practice for emergent readers reinforce foundational skills like segmenting and blending CVC words. . . Wonderful resources for parents to read together with children. The illustrations are breathtaking and lend themselves to lots of rich conversation." - *School Library Journal*, starred review

Page number: 15, **Word Count:** 211

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Focus: Concepts of Print and Reading Strategies

- blend letter sounds to read phonetically regular words
- use high frequency words
- read varied sentences fluently, with expression and stamina

Supportive Text Features:

- illustrations support some text details
- text depicts a series of simple, related ideas
- text includes some repetitive language

High-frequency/Sight words: at, gets, up, has, an, and, a, to, go, the, puts, it, in, her, his, are, on, near, sees, lives, with, for, how, from, be

Note: words based on Dolch Sight Word List and Fry's Instant Words lists

Phonics:

- decode words with short /a/ vowel sound

Lesson plan designed to support foundational language skills and comprehension skills, K-2:

- Common Core Standards
- Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)



Getting Ready to Read

1. For the first reading, focus on decoding the text. Many students might not know the meaning of the words *sap* or *culture*. Teachers can observe a student's ability to decode/sound out without depending on their prior knowledge or relying on the pictures to guess the word. In later re-readings, students can study the story features of the book, the vocabulary, and work on comprehension skills.

2. Remind students of the strategies they know and can use with unfamiliar words:

Encourage students to sound out each letter if the word can be phonetically sounded out. Point out any consonant blends, digraphs, word families, and vowel sounds they may know.

3. In subsequent readings, the focus can shift to comprehension practice and vocabulary development. Introduce unfamiliar words and their meanings. Talk about the vocabulary words and ask students what they might mean.

- dawn = early morning when the sun rises
- Culture Camp = are places in Canada for community members to connect to the Land, share and engage in First Nations traditional knowledge, skills, and cultural teachings led by Indigenous Educators, Knowledge Keepers, Language Keepers, skilled Community Members, and Elders. Culture camps operate throughout Canada. Learn more here: <https://parks.canada.ca/lhn-nhs/nt/saoyuehdacho/decouvrir-discover/culture-camp-culturel>.
- Sand Lake = name of where the Culture Camp is located in the book

- Elder <name> = respected older individual, not necessarily a senior citizen or grandparent. Learn more at The Canadian Encyclopedia article, "Indigenous Elders in Canada": <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/indigenous-elders-in-canada>.
- tap a tree = collecting sap from a tree
- sap = the blood of the tree, gives nutrients to the tree, is sticky and clear liquid, located inside the tree

4. Be aware of the following text features:

- The book contains familiar words, some of the most common words in English that students learn to read on sight without sounding them out: *at, gets, up, has, an, and, a, to, go, the, puts, it, in, her, his, are, on, near, sees, lives, with, for, how, from, be*.
- The story is filled with many words with the short /a/ vowel sound, at least three examples per page. Short /a/ vowel words: *at, has, taps, tap, Dad, pat, , Jan, nap, tan, cat, jam, mat, van, hat, ham, sap, an, fat, wants, Sand, and, Camp, grabs, Land, Fran, glad, plan*.
- Multisyllable words: *culture, backpack, apple, teaches, story, Elder, breakfast*.
- Content-specific vocabulary words and phrases include: *Camp Culture, Elder, breakfast, yawns, dawn, Sand Lake, tap a tree for sap*.

Reading the Book

1. Set a purpose by telling students to read the book to find and practice decoding words with the short /a/ vowel sound. Additional purpose



for future re-readings: Learn how Jan and her dad spend their day. What does Jan do at Culture Camp?

2. Have students read quietly, but out loud.

Each student should be reading at their own pace. Students should not read in chorus. Listen to students as they read by leaning in close or bending down beside each student.

3. Look for these reading behaviors during the first reading:

- Do they rely less on the pictures and more on print when reading?
- Do they sound out an unfamiliar new word correctly even if they do not know what it means?
- Do they have a growing sight vocabulary?
- Do they use beginning, middle, and ending sounds to read unknown words?
- Do they easily move from one line of text to the next when making a return sweep?
- Do they use punctuation appropriately and to gain meaning?

4. As students read, suggest reading strategies if they are struggling:

Encourage students to sound out each letter if the word can be phonetically decoded. Point out any consonant blends, digraphs, word families, and vowel sounds they may know.

After the First Reading

1. Possible teaching points to address based on your observations:

- Call attention to all the high-frequency words

students have learned and used. Refer to the Word Lists on the last page of the book.

- Practice sounding out the multisyllable words.
- Be aware of the irregular or more challenging words: *yawns, learn, how, puts, dawn, Culture, backpack, apple, teaches, story, Elder, breakfast, drive, time.*
- Pick one of the short /a/ vowel words and have students find that word throughout the story.

2. Make a photocopy of or put an overhead projector film sheet over the Read and Review and Fill in the Blanks sections you can find at the end of the book.

Using a whiteboard marker on the film sheet, students can follow the directions for both activities focused on words with the short /a/ vowel sound.

Second Reading for Meaning and Comprehension

1. Have students reread the book in a whisper voice or to a partner.

2. Have students confirm their predictions and talk about what Jan did at Camp.

3. Ask students to retell what happened in the story. Encourage them to share something they found funny, sad, or unexpected.

4. Ask a combination of literal and higher thinking questions, including the following:

- Where does Jan go? Whom does she go with?
- Why do you think Dad wants to take Jan to



Culture Camp?

- What is a Culture Camp?
- Who is Fran? Why do Jan and her dad refer to her as Elder? (Answer: Elder Fran is Knowledge Keeper and Language Keeper at the Culture Camp.)
- What does Jan learn how to do at Culture Camp?
- Why is it important to Dad and Jan that she learn stories at Culture Camp and how to tap a tree for sap?
- What do you think they might do with the sap they collect?
- After playing with the cat, what does Jan do next?
- What does Jan learn about spending time on the Land?
- Describe how Jan spends her day. Tell what she does first and then what came next and so on.
- Do you think Jan had a good time? How do you know?
- What responsibilities do you have when you are in nature?
- Do you think Jan was respectful to nature in the story? Why or why not?
- What special place does your family like you to be connected to? Why?
- What are some ways you and your family enjoy adventures together? Share a time you had a special day with someone. What did you do? Where did you go? What did you eat?
- Has anything similar in one of the story's scenes ever happened to you?

5. This is a time for assessment. While students are reading, watch what they do and what they use from the teaching time. Alternatively, you might take a running record on one student as an assessment of the student's reading behavior.

Cross-Curricular Activities

Language: Make a photocopy of and place in sheet protectors or put an overhead projector film sheet over the Read and Review and Fill in the Blanks sections of the book. Using a whiteboard marker on the film sheet, students can follow the directions for both activities focused on short /a/ words.

List and practice reading multisyllable words and names from the book. Talk about how to divide each word into syllables and how that helps them read the words. Talk about open vs. closed syllables.

Encourage students to make a list of other short /a/ words they know.

Ask students to think of other words that *rhyme with cat, pat, mat*. Students can illustrate several of the other words they thought of.

Looking at the text, ask students to look for short /i/ words: *it, is, in, his, with*. Ask students to find long /a/ words: *a, take, takes, Lake, shares, play*. Ask students to find for long /e/ words: *be, tree, sees, near*.

Write out and cut up the words, *Jan, at, and Camp*. Encourage students to work in small groups to rearrange only these letters to make new words. How many words can they make? Encourage students to write down their new words or assist them in making a list.



Reading: Read the story, *All My Relations* (<https://goodminds.com/products/all-my-relations-hc-pre-order-for-aug-30-25>), written by Nikki Soliman and illustrated by Julian Grafenauer. In a First Nations, Inuit, and Métis context, this story will help children learn about our connections to each other and the world around us, including: The Winged Ones, The Swimmers, The Crawlers, The Four-Legged, The Two-Legged, and All Our Relations.

Read other books featuring how communities rely on and value trees, including: *Seeds of Change: Planting a Path to Peace* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/seeds-of-change/>), *The Mangrove Tree: Planting Trees to Feed Families* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-mangrove-tree/>), *The Bee Tree* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-bee-tree/>), and *If I Were a Tree* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/if-i-were-a-tree/>). What are some ways we use trees? What makes trees special and important to people?

Read more contemporary Indigenous and Native American stories of kids having fun and being kids. See the Additional Resources suggestions at the end of this lesson plan for curated book recommendations.

Writing: Encourage students to write and sketch a special place outside they like to go to enjoy nature. With whom do they go? Why is this place meaningful to them?

Science: Watch a few videos of tapping a tree for its sap. Make a list of steps together you observe that one needs to follow to tap a tree for sap. *Jan at Camp* is set in a First Nations Culture Camp in Canada. Look for video examples of Indigenous and Native American ways of tapping a tree. Here's a video from CBC/Radio Canada: "Gathering maple

sugar the traditional Anishinaabe way:" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVuyoDmFFGM>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/anishinaabe-woodsman-online-outdoor-classes-1.5509934>

Math: Write and practice simple cat story problems, such as "I see two big cats and three small cats. How many cats do I see in all?"

Social Studies: Discuss the different types of jobs people can have working with trees. Make a list with students and show pictures of people with different jobs (farmer, plant nursery worker, horticulturist, tree trimmer, firefighter, forester, urban planner, scientist, tour guide, park ranger, landscape architect, groundskeeper/gardener, and so on).

Read more about Culture Camps, places in Canada for community members to connect to the Land, share and engage in First Nations traditional knowledge, skills, and cultural teachings led by Indigenous Educators, Knowledge Keepers, Language Keepers, skilled Community Members, and Elders. Culture camps operate throughout Canada. Learn more here: <https://parks.canada.ca/lhn-nhs/nt/saoyuehdacho/decouvrir-discover/culture-camp-culturel>.

Read additional contemporary Indigenous and Native American stories about showing thanks and gratitude toward Nature and being good stewards towards nature: including *When a Shadbush Blooms* (www.leeandlow.com/books/when-the-shadbush-blooms/), *Nibi's Water Song* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/nibis-water-song/>), *This Land is My Land* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/this-land-is-my-land/>), *What's the Most Beautiful Thing You Know About Horses?* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/whats-the->



[most-beautiful-thing-you-know-about-horses/](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/most-beautiful-thing-you-know-about-horses/)), *All Around Us* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/all-around-us/>), *Where Wonder Grows* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/where-wonder-grows/>), *Giving Thanks* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/giving-thanks/>), and *The People Shall Continue* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-people-shall-continue/>).

Reach out to your county or state government to connect with local Indigenous and Native American communities. Invite Indigenous/Native American Language Keepers, Knowledge Keepers, Elders, librarians, and storytellers to share their stories. A local university or public library may also be a good resource to learn more.

Investigate if local Indigenous and Native American communities in your area integrate trees or other plants into their cultures, daily lives, and stories. There may be tribal websites or videos of contemporary and traditional ways Indigenous and Native American communities utilize trees today in your state.

Help students understand the importance of Land to Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island (North America). Share a map of traditional territories. Talk about how different territory and geography influence culture, story, and language. Check out Native Land Digital <https://native-land.ca/> and “Coming Home to Indigenous Place Names in Canada” map from the University of Maine Canada-American Center: <https://umaine.edu/canam/coming-home-map/>.

Read more stories in the Drumbeat Decodable Book Collection: www.leeandlow.com/books/drumbeat-decodable-book-collection and the Canadian editions <https://goodminds.com/collections/indigenous-education-press/products/drumbeat-decodable-set-1-5-books>.

Multilingual Language Learners: Draw and label the parts of a tree. Include the following terms: *trunk, leaves, branch, roots, fruit, and canopy/crown*, and so on. Compare the parts of a tree to those of a human being or another plant, like a flower. Diagrams and descriptions can be found here: <https://www.nps.gov/choh/learn/kidseyouth/activity-2-parts-of-a-tree.htm>.

Consider consulting www.multilinguallearningtoolkit.org for more ideas on how to support Multilingual Learners.

Additional Resources: Seek out more First Nations, Inuit, Métis, Indigenous Peoples and Native American stories for the curriculum and classroom. From GoodMinds.com, Indigenous book distributor and publisher: “Indigenous stories have familiar connections for Indigenous healing, empowerment and resilience and enhance cultural understandings, mutual respect, empathy, and reconciliation through shared realities.” Check out:

<https://goodminds.com/>

<https://cynthialeitichsmith.com/>

<https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360>

<https://ailanet.org/>



To evaluate Indigenous Peoples and Native American children's literature, consider this worksheet from the National Museum of the American Indian: <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/pdf/Native-American-Literature-in-Your-Classroom-Worksheet.pdf>.

Helpful lesson plan from Native Knowledge 360, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian: "Native American Cultures and Clothing: Native American Is Not a Costume:" <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/resources/Native-American-Cultures-Clothing-Not-Costume>