



## **Oil King Courage**

Sigmund Brouwer

Reading level: 4.1

978-1-55469-197-5 PB

AR Quiz # 133962

### **Book Summary**

When the Edmonton Oil Kings discover that Reuben Reuben has a hockey game as unforgettable as his name and his Inuit heritage, life changes in a hurry for him and his best friend Gear. When a wealthy business man sponsors a three-on-three pond hockey tour across the western Arctic, Reuben and Gear soon find out the tournament is not what it seems. In order to have any future in hockey, they'll have to solve the mystery of the secrets that Reuben's family has kept hidden for more than half a century.

### **Prereading Ideas**

- What are some of your family's traditions? Where do they come from? Are they culturally based or faith-based or both?
- Are tools like Google Maps an invasion of privacy or a great resource?

**Connecting to the Text*****Theme***

One of the themes of *Oil King Courage* is the importance of tradition. What do Gear and Reuben learn about Inuit tradition, and how do they apply what they learn to their lives? Ask students to interview the oldest person in their family and write a brief paragraph about what they learned about family tradition.

***Setting***

The landscape is a major part of *Oil King Courage*. The author provides a lot of information about the Northwest Territories and moves his characters around a lot. Ask students to discuss the importance of setting in this book, and then get them to write a brief description of a place they think would make a great setting for a novel.

***Character***

Reuben and Gear meet with members of many First Nations as they travel around the NWT. Ask students to research the First Nations of the NWT and discuss how their communities have changed as more non-Native people come into the area.

***Creative Writing***

Grandma Nellie buries clues for Gear and Reuben in her letters. She uses a variation of a word puzzle called an acrostic. Have students research what an acrostic is, and then have them write an acrostic poem using the title of the book.

**Connecting to the Curriculum*****Geography***

- Have students draw a map of the NWT, showing all the details from the route Gear and Reuben follow.
- The Arctic has some very unusual geographic elements, such as pingos. Get students to write a brief description of how pingos are formed and what they are used for.

***Art***

A.Y. Jackson was a very famous Canadian painter who was part of the Group of Seven. Ask students to find out who the other members of the Group of Seven were and get them to write brief biographies and descriptions of their work.

***History***

*Oil King Courage* is full of the history of the NWT (Bern Will Brown, the Canol trail, the Franklin expedition, etc). Get students to choose one person, place or event and write a brief paragraph describing its importance in the North's history.

**Math**

Gear tries to figure out the percentage of population attending a hockey game. Find out the capacity of the largest venue in your community and then figure out what percentage of your community's population would be there if it was full.

**Science**

Grolar bears are a cross between a grizzly bear and a polar bear. How common are they? Are there other animals that have mixed their DNA to produce a new hybrid?

**Connecting to the Students—Discussion Questions**

1. What is the best way to help a friend with a phobia?
2. Is racism a problem in your school? If so, what should be done to deal with it?  
If not, what has been done to make your school a tolerant place?
3. What do small communities have to offer that big ones lack?

**Resources****Acrostics**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acrostic>  
[www.readwritethink.org/Materials/ACROSTIC](http://www.readwritethink.org/Materials/ACROSTIC)

**Grolar bears**

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/4766217.stm>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grizzly%E2%80%93polar\\_bear\\_hybrid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grizzly%E2%80%93polar_bear_hybrid)

**NWT**

[www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0005818](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0005818)  
[www.ece.gov.nt.ca/Divisions/kindergarten\\_g12/History\\_TimeLine/NWT\\_History/NWT\\_History.html](http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/Divisions/kindergarten_g12/History_TimeLine/NWT_History/NWT_History.html)

**Group of Seven**

[www.groupofsevenart.com](http://www.groupofsevenart.com)  
[www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0003476](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0003476)

**First Nations**

[www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0004040](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0004040)  
[www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/arp/ls/brt/ihc-eng.asp](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/arp/ls/brt/ihc-eng.asp)

**Author Biography**

**Sigmund Brouwer** is the bestselling author of many books for children and young adults. He has contributed to the Orca Currents, the Orca Sports and the Orca Echoes series. He lives in Red Deer, Alberta, and Eagleville, Tennessee.

**Author's Website**

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