

Japanese Short Stories

Target Group: 7th Grade Ancient World History

Objective: Students will practice their reading comprehension and gain exposure to new vocabulary while gain exposure to the Japanese culture through a short story.

Lesson Summary: Students will read the short story Magic and the Night River by Eve Bunting. This is a lesson for an English classroom or a social studies classroom. After reading students will receive some reading comprehension questions and vocabulary review.

Teacher Portion: This lesson will take 2 class periods to complete. The first day should be spent on the journal topic and the reading of the story as a class. The second day will be spent answering questions on the story revisiting how we treat older people.

1. Day One Put the following journal topic on the board. Do you think older people get the respect they deserve from people your age in a store or when driving?
2. Have the students report out on their journal answers.
3. Then as a class read the story out loud. The goal is to find the differences in personalities between the Grandfather, Kano, and Yoshi. Also have the point out the difference in ages and how that effects the characters behavior in the story. Finally, help the students understand the title refers to the Grandfather understanding of Nature that comes with age and experience. Once you get to this point stop for the day.
4. Day Two- From this point start with a retelling of the story by the students.
5. Allow students to complete the following questions about the story.
6. Then as a class go over the answers to the questions and then
7. As an exit ticket have students reflect on how we in this country treat older people compared to the people in Japan.

Japanese Short Stories- Magic and the Night River
Questions Activity Sheet

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

1. Kano says, “The old man has magic.” What is magic?
2. Compare and contrast how Grandfather and Kano treat their birds before they files?
3. How do the lines get tangled and when happen to the birds when they do?
4. Why do Yoshi and Grandfather release their birds and what happens when they do?
5. Explain what Yoshi means in the last paragraph. What is “another type of magic”?

Exit Ticket- Think about your journal from yesterday.

Do you think you can gain knowledge from their life experiences?

Do you feel that you have gain a new respect of older people?