



Lesson Extensions and Activities for *The Emperor and the Kite*

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Reading Is Fundamental

Google Voyager Folktales Unit

Book Description

In ancient China, an emperor is taken prisoner by evil men. Though her three sisters and four brothers are older and stronger, the emperor's tiniest daughter is his only hope! Will Djeow Seow be able to save the emperor and his kingdom? Find out in this beautifully illustrated book, which was a Caldecott Medal Honor Book for 1968.

Vocabulary

Ancient – very old.

Emperor – someone who rules an empire.

Rule – having power or authority over something.

Peace – freedom from disturbance; calm.

Evil – very bad.

Grain – wheat or another cereal crop that is used as food.

Monk – a member of a religious community.

Mounting – climbing up.

Plotting – secretly making plans.

Plain – a large area of flat land with little or no trees.

Sobbing – crying loudly.

Harsh – severe.

Twined – wound around something.

Steely – determined.

Grasped – held firmly.

Window sill – the ledge at the bottom part of a window.

Billowed – moved or flowed outward.

Loyalty – a strong feeling of support.

Prior to Reading

- Ask students if they have heard of China. On chart paper, create a Venn diagram and have students share what's similar about the U.S. and China and what's unique to each of the countries. Note students' answers even if they're incorrect as you will go back and discuss the answers after learning more about the country
- Walk students through the Google Voyager Story to panel 7: <https://g.co/earth/folktales>. Students will learn about the country where the story is set. Add additional notes to the Venn diagram as you walk through the experience.

While Reading

- Stop reading on the page that says, “Then they rode back to the palace and declared that the emperor was dead.” Ask the students to predict what will happen next.
- Stop reading on the page that says, “The evil men ruled with their cruel, harsh ways, and the people of the country were very sad.” Ask the students to predict how the story will end.
- Stop reading on the page that says, “And she understood.” Have the students flip back to the first prayer from the monk and have one student read it aloud. Then, have one of the students read the prayer on the page that ends, “And she understood.” Have the students discuss what the monk changed and what he is suggesting with this updated prayer.

Post Reading Activities

- Lead a discussion about the tale. Ask students such questions as:
 - What did Djeow Seow’s sisters and brothers do when they heard that the emperor was taken?
 - What did Djeow Seow do when she heard her father was taken?
 - Why was Djeow Seow able to help the emperor?
 - How did Djeow Seow help the emperor?
- Have students complete the Criss Cross, Memory Matching, and Word Search puzzles about *The Emperor and the Kite* on RIF’s Literacy Central (www.rif.org/Voyager-Stories-Folktales).

Lesson Extensions and Activities

Here are some ways to further explore the story:

Primary Standard for all activities: RL.K.10 (Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.)

- **Math** – Have students use paper representations of the foods mentioned in the book (e.g., rice, poppy seed cakes, water chestnuts, green tea, etc.) to solve word problems. Provide each student with a printed copy of the word problems and enough paper representations of the foods to solve each problem.
 - Example word problem: Today, Djeow Seow sent her father a basket of 5 poppy seed cakes, 3 water chestnuts, and 5 cups of green tea. Her father had 2 poppy seed cakes and 1 water chestnuts left over from her last basket, so he ate 6 poppy seed cakes and 2 water chestnuts, and he drank 3 cups of tea. What does he have left until Djeow Seow’s next basket?

Objective: Students will be able to use representations to solve addition and subtraction problems.

Standards: CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.OA.A.1 (Use addition and subtraction within 20 to solve word problems involving situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart, and comparing, with unknowns in all positions, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.)

Materials:

- Printouts with word problems related to *The Emperor and the Kite*
 - Paper cutouts of foods mentioned in *The Emperor and the Kite*
 - Pencils
- **Arts** – Have students research ancient Chinese art using their local library. Have each student present to the class about one particular aspect of this artistic style.

Objective: Students will learn more about a particular art style.

Standards: National Core Arts Standards, Anchor Standard #7 (Perceive and analyze artistic work.)

Materials:

- Markers
 - Backboards
 - Poster boards
 - Colored pencils
 - Construction paper
 - Pencils
 - Magazines with food images
 - Scissors
- **Science** – Teach students how to use wind energy to combat gravity by having them create and fly kites. TeachEngineering, the searchable digital library collection of standards-based engineering curricula for K-12 educators, offers this [helpful lesson plan](#) for designing and flying a kite.

Objective: Students will learn about lift and force, while also gaining insight into the engineering design process.

Standards: NSES Science as Inquiry Standards Levels K-4 (Abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry; Understanding about scientific inquiry.); NSES Science as Inquiry Standards Level K-4 (Position and motion of objects.)

Materials:

- 24-96 disposable straws
 - paper, plastic film or cloth
 - string, yarn or rope
 - paper and pencils
 - Computer with internet access for research
 - Kite string
 - Scissors
 - Glue or tape
 - Kite handle
- **Writing** – Introduce students to the idea of reviews by passing around examples from newspapers or magazines. Have students write “reviews” of *The Emperor and the Kite* and then have the students workshop their pieces by reading them aloud to the group and listening to their classmates’ suggestions and questions.

Objective: Students will practice creative writing.

Standards: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.1 (Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., *My favorite book is...*)); CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.5 (With guidance and support from adults, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed.)

Materials:

- Journals
 - Pens
- **Author Study/Compare and Contrast** – Have students read other ancient Chinese tales and look for similarities between the story told in *The Emperor and the Kite* and the stories told in other tales.

Objective: Students will search for themes in ancient Chinese folktales.

Standards: RL.K.9 (With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures or characters in familiar stories.)

Material List:

- Copies of other ancient Chinese folktales
- Venn Diagrams printed on paper
- Pencils