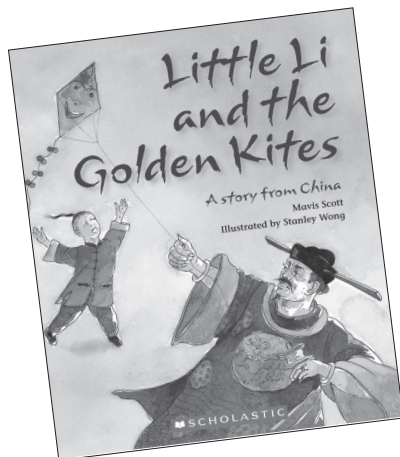


LITTLE LI AND THE GOLDEN KITES

A STORY FROM CHINA

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TEXT TYPE: Fiction: Narrative—Folktale
GUIDED READING LEVEL: M

SUMMARY: Little Li is taken by his parents to a kite competition at the Emperor's Palace Gardens. Little Li brings his own kite, which he boldly shares with the Emperor, against traditional etiquette. Luckily the incident reminds the Emperor of his own time spent flying kites as a child, long forgotten due to the demands of the Emperorship. Little Li and the Emperor decide to revisit that joy by flying their kite together every Sunday in the Emperor's private garden.

TEXT FEATURES

- ellipses
- dashes
- italics

VISUAL LITERACY

- illustrations

TEXT SUPPORTS

- traditional story structure
- few characters

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- unfamiliar words and some phrases from Chinese culture, e.g., 'marrows,' 'beancurd dumplings,' 'rice fields'
- names and ways of addressing characters, e.g., 'Little Li,' 'Lord Noble Horse,' 'Lord Emperor'

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- synthesizing

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- predicting

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Think-Pair-Share strategy
- discussing with a group
- dramatic oral reading of the story (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

WORKING WITH WORDS

- word solving and building: frequently uses meaning connections to solve a range of unfamiliar word and construct meanings, e.g., knowing 'polite' can help you word solve and understand the meaning of 'politeness' (page 13)
- word solving and building: using context clues and picture clues to construct word meaning

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student's ability to:

- make predictions from text and illustrations
- read carefully to glean support for predictions
- use context to identify unfamiliar words

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Synthesizing Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

BEFORE READING

ESL NOTE: Many countries around the world celebrate kite festivals. Ask students to share stories of watching kites fly. Bring in a kite and have students brainstorm what conditions are needed to make it win in a competition.

Predicting

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Have students carefully examine the front cover and read the back cover. Either on the chalkboard/white board or large chart paper near your guided reading group, make a two-column chart that can be referred to as the lesson progresses. Hand out books and ask students to discuss their predictions and share with the group. Ask, *How do you believe the story might unfold?* Ask them what has caused them to make the predictions they have made. Add these to the two-column chart.

Visual Literacy Features

Introduce supports and challenges

- As a group, quickly look at the pictures in the text. Ask, *Why are these pictures used in this story?* Explain to students the information contained in these pictures is as important as the information they will read in the story. Remind students to pay attention to pictures as they read. Thinking about the pictures in relationship to the text will help reinforce their understanding of the story.

Synthesizing

Set a purpose for reading

- As students read this book ask them to try to figure out what the author is saying about how adults view things and how kids see the world. Ask students, *What is the most noticeable message the author is trying to communicate in the book? What is the author saying about being a kid versus being a grown-up?*

Provide for early finishers

- Have early finishers review the chart of predictions and examine which of theirs were accurate. Were they surprised which predictions did not actually occur in the story? Why or why not?

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Have a student read a portion of the text aloud to you. Assist with word solving, vocabulary, and comprehension. Always provide a comprehension prompt that highlights the focus strategy (synthesizing), e.g., *What does the author think about how serious grown-ups can be? Invite students to evaluate what they have read as well by asking, *What do you think of the adults' angry reactions to Little Li's conversation with the Emperor?**

Synthesizing

- As difficult words are encountered, encourage students to use context and the book’s extensive illustrated support to acquire the meaning of what they have read. For example, if some students are unfamiliar with a ‘beancurd dumpling,’ highlight the context of a different culture’s food market and examine the pictorial support on page 5.

Observe

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Synthesizing Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 4 Literacy and Support Guide*.)
- Note any successful reading strategies you observe, e.g., students looking at the pictures to assist in understanding the text’s content.

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- The following may be used as a Think-Pair-Share activity (see Oral language Strategies in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support guide*). Ask students to look carefully at pages 13–20. What tone, or mood, is being created? How does it reflect what the author is trying to impart about the rigid formalities and traditions that adults feel compelled to follow? Also, ask students to pay attention to what the Emperor has to say about life as an adult as he also remembers his life as a child. Note the following examples of text and discuss how each one contributes to the message that the book communicates.

The crowd’s reaction to Little Li (pages 13–17):

- ‘The people gasped.’
- ‘How rude!’
- ‘What a dreadful child...’
- ‘I am so ashamed.’
- ‘A soldier standing near drew his sword.’

The Emperor’s discussion with Little Li (pages 17–20):

- ‘He could see two big tears running down the Emperor’s cheeks...’
- ‘...I had to grow up and be an Emperor and that was very, very hard to do.’
- ‘I used to think about... my happy days in the gardens. But then I began to forget...’

Check on outstanding challenges

- Review and discuss any challenges students experienced. The assessment tools used, along with students' comments, will help clarify what the significant challenges are. Have students identified the message or messages the author has given? Are unfamiliar words now better understood through the use of context and the word solving strategies discussed?

Note successful strategy use

- Point out a successful reading strategy you observed, e.g., *I think Whitley did a great job of using the context of the story, its setting, as well as the pictures to help her understand the meaning of the words 'beancurd dumplings' on page 5.*

FOCUSED REREADING

Three options are provided for focused rereading in the next Guided Reading lesson. Choose an activity that meets the needs of your students, or you might select a Reader Response activity from the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*.

Written

Inferring

- Perhaps Little Li's mother keeps a journal of activities the family takes part in. From her point of view, write a journal entry that might relate how she felt throughout the day of the Golden Kite competition.

Artistic

Predicting

- Little Li and the Emperor fly the Kite of Smiles together every Sunday. Suppose Little Li grows up and becomes one of the best kite builders in the future. What kind of a kite might he design for the Golden Kite competition after he grows up? Design what you think Little Li's kite might look like.

ESL NOTE:

Have students design their own kite for the Golden Kite competition using paper, colourful markers, straws, popsicle sticks, and string. Ask, *What would they say to the Emperor about their kite if they entered the contest?*

Oral/dramatic

Self-monitoring

- Ask students to reread the text to prepare for reading to younger children as a read-aloud book. Highlight three general tones and corresponding sections in the story, and ask students to practise using their voices and speech to reflect these moods and tones. From pages 3–12, there is excitement, happiness, expectations, and awe. From pages 13–17, there is crisis and a pending threat. From pages 19–24, tensions are eased, with text being explanatory as well.