

はなさかじいさん
Kamishibai Set:
Hanasaka-Jiisan
HANASAKA
Jiisan



How to Read Kamishibai

Kamishibai stories are read from the back of illustrated cards. However, you can also tell the story from memory or even improvise a little to add to the story.

Move the front card to the back after you finish one part of the story. The text now showing will be the story for the card that is at the front.

The text for the title image (card 1) goes on the back of the last card, so when showing the title image to the audience, you can read the corresponding text without turning the card around.

When you finish the story for card 1, move it to the back of the pack. The story for card 2 which is on the back of card 1 will now be at the back for you to read. Once you have told that part of the story, you move this card to the back and again the story for the card 3 will now be at the back for you. You continue this for each part of the story until the end.

Remember, the text on the back of a card does not correspond to the illustration on its front!

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Introduction

This is a story from Japan from long ago called Hanasaka Jiisan.

“Hana” means “flowers”, “Saka” means “bloom”, and “Jiisan” means “Old Man” or “Grandpa”.

In English this story is known as
The Old Man Who Made Flowers Bloom.

1.

*Mukashi mukashi**[Japanese]

Long long ago, in a village, there lived a poor but very kind old couple.

One day, the old woman went to the river to wash some clothes. While she was busily washing clothes, a white puppy came floating down the river on a piece of bark. She was very surprised and quickly picked the puppy up and took him home with her.

**Mukashi Mukashi means "Once upon a time" in Japanese.*

2.

The couple were overjoyed to have such a sweet puppy. They loved and cherished the dog very much and named him Shiro, which means “white”, and put a bright red collar on him.

The couple took very good care of Shiro and he grew bigger and bigger every day.

3.

One day, the old man took Shiro to a mountain to cut some wood. As he was chopping branches off a tree, suddenly, Shiro began to bark loudly.

“What have you found Shiro? Do you want me to help you dig?” asked the old man. He fetched a spade and began to dig with Shiro.

4.

“Oh, what can this be? Oh, how dazzling!” To the old man’s surprise, glittering gold coins burst out of the ground. The old man put all the coins in a bag and took them home.

5.

As the old man was showing the coins to his wife, a mean and greedy old man who lived next door came by.

“Wow, what a lot of coins! How did you get them?” asked the greedy old man. After hearing the kind old man’s story, the greedy old man asked if he could borrow Shiro for a while.

The good old man was too kind-hearted to refuse his neighbour, so he agreed to lend him Shiro on the condition that he was treated with extra special care.

6.

The greedy old man took Shiro to the mountain.

“Now, find me some gold, or I’ll beat you!” he ordered the dog.
Shiro began digging. The old man was very pleased to see this and he started digging in the same place.

But all he found in the hole were snakes, frogs and pebbles. There was not a single piece of gold.

“You bad dog! How dare you deceive me!”
Enraged, the old man hit Shiro with his spade and killed him on the spot.

7.

When Shiro was not brought back that day, the kind old couple began to feel very anxious. They went to their neighbour and asked him to give them back their dog.

Without hesitation, the wicked old man told them that he had killed Shiro because of his bad behaviour. "I planted a young pine tree to mark the place where I buried him," said the mean old man angrily. The old couple wept many sad and bitter tears when they heard this news.

The next morning the couple went to the place where Shiro was buried. To their surprise, they found that the young pine had grown into a big tree
in
just one night.

The old woman said, "Remember how Shiro used to love to eat rice-cakes? Let's cut down this tree and make a mortar. Then with the mortar we'll make some rice-cakes in memory of Shiro".

8.

So, the old man cut down the tree and made a mortar out of its trunk.

Then something very strange happened! As the old man pounded the rice into the mortar, it began to turn into gold coins.

The wife of the wicked old man, who was also mean and greedy, was passing by and saw what happened. Looking at the gold coins tumbling out of the mortar, she was filled with envy.

“Let me use this mortar for a little while.” she said, as she picked up the mortar and carried it away to her house.

9.

At home, the greedy old woman hurriedly cooked some rice and put it in the mortar, hoping she and her husband could pound it into gold.

But as they began pounding, the rice turned into rubbish which smelt terrible and splattered all over them. The mean old couple were both covered in rubbish from head to toe.

This made them so angry that they chopped the mortar up into small pieces and burned it in the stove.

10.

When the kind old man went to get his mortar back from his neighbour, the mean old man answered haughtily. "Are you here to ask for your mortar? I cut it to pieces and burnt it to ashes. You can take them if you want. It will save me cleaning the stove."

The kind old man was very sad because the mortar had reminded him of Shiro. So, he gathered some ashes from the stove and started to walk home with them.

11.

It was the middle of winter and all the trees were bare.

As he kind old man was walking home sadly, a sudden gust of wind scattered the ashes he was holding across the field. To his surprise, the field of dry, dead grass had suddenly turned into blossoming flowers wherever the ashes had landed.

The old man brightened up and said,
“How strange! I think I’ll try it again and make more flowers bloom.”

12.

He climbed up into the bare branches of a big cherry tree nearby and threw the ashes up into the empty branches saying,
“Bare tree, bare tree, let your flowers bloom!”

Almost more quickly than you can think, the tree was covered with the most beautiful blossoms the old man had ever seen.

Just then, a Lord came by on a horse back and saw what the old man was doing.

13.

“This is wonderful indeed!” The Lord was so pleased at the sight of the beautiful blossoms.

He rewarded the kind old man with silver, gold, and many other precious things.
He also honoured him with a new name Hanasaka-Jiisan, which means
‘old man who made flowers bloom’.

The wicked old neighbour who was spying from behind the hedges of his house
saw everything.

14.

“I shall go and be rewarded too,” he said, hurrying to his kitchen to collect the remaining ashes. Then he ran outside in front of the Lord.

“My Lord, I am the one who makes trees blossom more beautifully than anybody else.” As he said this, he climbed a tree, took a handful of ashes and threw them up into the branches.

15.

But the tree did not burst into flowers and, even worse, the ashes were blown into the Lord's eyes.

"How dare you! Look what you've done to the Lord!" said his guards.

The greedy old man was arrested and put into prison, and was punished for all his evil doings.

The good old man, however, became rich and prosperous and lived a long and happy life with his wife, beloved and respected by all.