

Storytelling with Japanese Kamishibai

Lesson 1: Experience Kamishibai

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Learning Objectives

- Develop knowledge about the Japanese storytelling technique, “kamishibai”
- Identify the elements of a story’s structure
- Apply these to a story we listen to.

Learning Outcomes

- Create a ‘Story Plate’ to demonstrate understanding of the story.

Scottish Curriculum for Excellence Links

First level:

- As I listen or watch, I can identify and discuss the purpose, key words and main ideas of the text, and use this information for a specific purpose (LIT 1-04a)

Second level:

- As I listen or watch, I can identify and discuss the purpose, main ideas and supporting detail contained within the text, and use this information for different purposes (LIT 2-04a).

Keywords

Kamishibai (Paper Stories), Momotaro (The Peach Boy), Oni (Monsters), Story Plate.
Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling action(denouement), Resolution

Resources

- [Experience Kamishibai](#), performance of Momotaro (The Peach Boy) with Mio & Fergus (Video)
- [How to Draw a Story Plate](#) with Fergus (Video) and Sample Story Plate (for teachers)
- Momotaro ([Digital Kamishibai](#)) and/or Momotaro ([printable Kamishibai](#)), or Momotaro (laminated colour Japan Society Loan Resource)
- White paper plates (avoid laminated plates)

Additional Resources

The following resources were created and provided by Fergus McNicol and Mio Shudo:

- How to Make Kamishibai
- Example Storyboard (Momotaro)
- Blank Storyboard Sequence (1-4)
- Part-Complete Storyboard Sequence (1-4)

Task 1: What is storytelling?

1. Ask the class why we tell stories and paint pictures?

2. Discuss and introduce the idea of folk tales – what is the history? Discuss the idea of pictures as a way of communicating similar thoughts and ideas.
3. Explain the key messages: –
 - Folk tales come from an oral tradition and were used as a way to educate, to pass on moral messages and, of course, to entertain.
 - Explain that the link between words and pictures goes back to cave paintings and carvings. (See this [article](#) for an example of such prehistoric carvings in Japan).

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

Task 2: Experience Kamishibai

1. Either: students watch a video performance of the traditional Japanese story, The Peach Boy (Momotaro) with Mio & Fergus.
Or: Teachers can use the Kamishibai resources to tell the story themselves.

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Task 3: Discussion

1. Ask the students to recall key locations, characters, and events in the story:
 - Who is the main character in the story? (The Peach Boy)
 - Where does the story begin? (Old Japan, a long time ago on a farm)
 - What other characters are involved in the story? (Old Man, Old Lady, Dog, Monkey, Bird, Oni (monsters))
 - Where do the characters travel to and why? (they travel to Oni Island to stop the Oni (monsters) from destroying the community; and to take the treasure back that the Oni (monsters) stole from the people (like Robin Hood))
 - Teacher gathers these ideas together on the board and starts to put them in an order. Discuss how stories are structured.
2. For Key Stage 2 (upper) you might want to identify the following key features, and ask students to attempt to apply this to the story they have heard. This can be done with the teacher's support or individually, depending on the students' ability:

- Background – setting and characters, conflict
- Rising Action – attempts to overcome a problem
- Climax – turning point, greatest suspense
- Falling action – finale, consequences of the climax
- Resolution – problem is solved and order is restored.

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Task 4: Let's Make a Story Plate

1. Tell students they are going to draw some of the most important elements of the story
2. Distribute one paper plate to each student
3. Show a demonstration of how to make a 'Story Plate' to test students' comprehension of the story, or show the video **How to draw a Story Plate with Fergus.**
4. Each student draws the characters, objects, buildings, landscape to make a 'Story Plate'
5. Share the plate and encourage them to talk in an unstructured way about what they have drawn, making comparisons between what they and their partners have drawn
6. Students should try to incorporate all of the different elements of the story onto their plate
7. Alternatively, for differentiation, students could work in groups of five and each person illustrates a different element of the story.

Estimated Time: 25-30 minutes (continue for homework or in next class)

Feedback

- Students should share their story plates with peers, retelling the story using the same structure as before.

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

Extension Activities

1. Read and make comparisons with other British hero characters/stories, e.g. Robin Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, for example.

2. For students at KS 1, or those who do not have time to pursue the whole Scheme of Work, you may want to simply make Kamishibai using the **Additional Resources** (see page one).