
The Tale of the Oki Islands: A Tale from Japan

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Overview

Tokoyo (toe-KOH-yo), a skilled diver, is devoted to her father. Her father has been banished by the emperor. She goes in search of him and in the process breaks an evil spell cast on the emperor. Themes: bravery, devotion

Before Reading

- Write the word **emperor** on the board. Ask: *Can you think of countries that have had emperors as rulers?* Examples: Japan, China, Roman Empire, Germany, India, Russia, France, Ethiopia, Turkey. Students may recall the story of *The Emperor's New Clothes*.
- Read the information about Japan on page 32 and locate Japan on a globe or world map. Ask students what they know about Japan.

During Reading

- Read through page 19. Ask: *What have you learned about Tokoyo that might help her?* (She is a good swimmer/diver). *What do you think is going to happen next?*
- Read through page 25. Ask: *What do you think is going to happen next?* Finish reading the story and confirm predictions.

After Reading

- Ask the questions on page 31. Then ask: *Do you think it is right to sacrifice one to save many as described on page 14? Why or why not?*
- Ask: *In the story, the writer said that you might hear this story if you visit the Oki Islands. Why do you think people retell it?* (People are proud; one of their own saved the Emperor, etc) *What stories might people hear if they visit your community?*

Word Work

Write the word **island** on the board, noting its silent letter **s**. Have students brainstorm other words with silent consonants, such as *aisle, answer, comb, ghost, gnaw, knee, knife, school*, etc.

ELL Tip

Have students read passages of the story aloud paying particular attention to the punctuation. Ask students to pause appropriately at commas, periods at the end of a sentence; use proper pauses and inflection at quotes and question marks.

Extension: The Arts

Discuss the use of shades of different colors and repeated swirls as found on page 19. Have students choose a set of pastel colors and create patterns similar to these. Encourage them to create flowing, loose lines. Then add contrasting touches, such as water bubbles in the illustration. Students may use watercolors or pastels. If possible, play soothing, flowing music while the students work at their art.

Worksheet Note

Answers may vary. If time allows, have students discuss their choices in pairs or small groups, comparing their reasons for their choices.

Common Core State Standards

ELA-Literacy: RL.2.1; RL.2.2; RL.2.3; RL.2.5; RL.2.6; RL.2.7

Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it's conveyed through key details in the text.

Name _____

RATING TOKOYO'S CHARACTER

Directions: Rate Tokoyo as a main character.

Look at the chart. Start where it says **independent** on the left and **dependent** on the right.

Place a check to show where Tokoyo is on the scale for each of the characteristics.



Characteristics	Very	Somewhat	Both	Somewhat	Very	Characteristics
independent						dependent
brave						cowardly
determined						unsure
wise						foolish
careful						careless
strong						weak

Which characteristics were most important in the story? _____

Why do you think so? _____
