



Telling Stories with Tangrams

Lesson Plan by: Joyce Suter, Pandora-Gilboa Elementary School, NCTA 2021 (The Ohio State University seminar)

Title: Telling Stories with Tangrams

Theme/Topic: Tangram Puzzles / Trickster Tales

Introduction: Students will listen to and read *Grandfather Tang's Story* by Ann Tompert. Students will learn about tangram puzzles as they read the story and manipulate the tangram pieces to create the pictures in the story. Students will plan their own trickster tale which will include at least three tangram puzzles.

Subject(s)/Grade level(s): 4th Grade English Language Arts and Mathematics

Duration of lesson: 45 minutes

Ohio Learning Standards:

RL.4.7 Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.

RI.4.7 Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

W.4.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

4.G.2 Classify two-dimensional figures based on the presence or absence of parallel or perpendicular lines or the presence or absence of angles of a specified size.

Essential Questions:

What are at least two reasons that cultures and individuals create narratives of their experiences which demonstrate life lessons?

What makes a story effective for its purpose?

How do pictures and puzzles “paint a thousand words?”



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Learning Objectives:

Students will read and make connections between the story, *Grandfather Tang's Story*, and the life lesson shared in the story.

Students will manipulate and create the ten animal tangram puzzles used in *Grandfather Tang's Story*.

Students will brainstorm a trickster tale using at least three tangram puzzles.

Materials Needed:

globe/map

student computers

Grandfather Tang's Story - by Ann Tompert (several copies, if possible)

tangrams for each student

index cards - one for each student

Pre-Assessment of Prior Knowledge:

Locate China on the globe and on GoogleEarth.

Review what a trickster tale is and what culture includes.

Lesson Activities and Resources:

1. Introduce vocabulary: sage, tangrams, rivalry - on cards
2. Read *Grandfather Tang's Story* orally. The following links are also available for students.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAVUi3q4USo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqoS8udbWn4>

3. Quizlet activity - Show the flashcards of the ten tangram animals used in the story. Students will have access to the Quizlet set through Google Classroom.

<https://quizlet.com/292803618/grandfather-tangs-story-flash-cards/>

Students will want to keep the Quizlet flashcards open to view and use while listening to the book a second time.

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4. Read the book a second time using the youtube link, pausing to create the animals with tangrams.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cxv1TuKUKl8>

5. Kahoot comprehension check. This can be done live or as an assignment.

<https://create.kahoot.it/details/7e1f5af2-a265-44c4-bd7f-65b30d5329c5>

Closing/Reflection Activity:

Discuss the following two questions:

What lesson did the fox fairies learn?

How is that a lesson for all of us no matter what culture we are from?

Have students write their thoughts on an index card to conclude the lesson.

Post-Assessment:

Use Quizizz as the post-assessment.

<https://quizizz.com/admin/quiz/611587e4f77662001b4aa6b1/grandfather-tang-s-story>

Extension Activities/Extending the Lesson/Cross-Curricular Connections:

1. NEXT LESSON - Brainstorm and then write a trickster tale using at least three tangram puzzles. Share the story with another class either in person or online.
 2. Visit [mathigon.org](https://mathigon.org/tangram) and complete three tangram puzzles of your choice.
 3. Read *A Sage's Journey: The Story of Tangrams!*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X5mc-dkYLfl&t=9s>
 4. Search for other tangram stories. Read another tangram puzzle story and share it with a classmate.
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