



## Lesson Extensions and Activities for *The Funny Little Woman*

**Age Range:** 2 - 5 years

**Reading Is Fundamental**

**Google Voyager Folktales Unit**

### Book Description

There was once a little woman who loved to laugh and make dumplings out of rice. One day, she follows a wayward dumpling on a journey where she meets wise Jizo and hungry and wicked *oni*. Will the little woman be able to escape, or will she become the *oni*'s personal dumpling cook?

### Vocabulary

- Dumpling – A small boiled or fried ball of savory dough.
- Earthen – Made of earth.
- Ungrateful – Not feeling gratitude.
- Scold – To rebuke angrily.
- Jizo – Guardian statues.
- Wicked – Evil.
- Oni – Supernatural ogre or troll in Japanese folklore.

### Prior to Reading

- Ask students if they have heard of Japan. On chart paper, create a Venn diagram and have students share what's similar about the U.S. and Japan and what's unique to each country. Note students' answers even if they're incorrect as you will go back and discuss the answers after learning more about Japan.
- Walk students through the Japan [Google Voyager Experience](#). Students will learn about the setting where the story takes place. Add additional notes to the Venn diagram as you walk through the experience.
- Share with students that this story is set in Japan. Ask if they've heard any other stories set in Japan and call on volunteers to share.

### While Reading

- Stop reading on the page that says, "But just then the earth gave way, and head over heels she tumbled and tumbled..." Ask students to guess where the little woman will end up.
- Stop reading after the line that says, "Yes, I saw your dumpling roll by three minutes ago, but you had better not follow it because the wicked *oni* live at the end of the road." Ask the students to guess who the "wicked *oni*" are.

- Stop reading on the page that says, “She looked to left and right — there were no *oni* to be seen.” Ask students to guess where the *oni* are.

## Post Reading Activities

- Lead a discussion about the tale. Ask students such questions as:
  - What adjectives would you use to describe the woman?
  - What adjectives would you use to describe the Jizo?
  - What adjectives would you use to describe the *oni*?
  - Why does the little woman laugh?
  - How does the little woman end up with the *oni*?
  - What chore does the *oni* make the little woman do?
  - If you received the warning that the Jizo give the little woman, would you listen to it or would you continue to chase your dumpling?
  - How does the little woman escape the *oni* in her boat?
- Have students complete the Criss Cross, Memory Matching, and Word Search puzzles about *The Funny Little Woman* on RIF’s Literacy Central (<https://www.rif.org/literacy-central>).

## Lesson Extensions and Activities

Here are some ways to further explore the story:

Primary Standard for all activities: RL.K.10 (Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.)

- **Math** – Have students complete word problems using paper representations of dumplings.
  - Example word problem: The little woman makes 15 dumplings for the *oni*’s dinner. They eat 10 and she saves the rest. The next day, she makes 25 more dumplings and serves them with the leftovers from the night before. How many dumplings does the little woman serve on the second night?

Objective: Students will be able to use representations to solve addition and subtraction problems.

Standards: CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.OA.A.1 (Use addition and subtraction within 20 to solve word problems involving situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart, and comparing, with unknowns in all positions, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.)

Materials:

- Printouts with word problems related to *The Funny Little Woman*
- Paper representations of dumplings
- Pencils
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- **Arts** – *Oni* are supernatural trolls or ogres in Japanese folklore. Oftentimes, they’re depicted as being big and having horns coming out of their heads. Have students create a visual representation of what they think *oni* look like based on this description.

Objective: Students will design and create artistic works based on a description.

Standards: National Core Arts Standards, Anchor Standard #3 (Refine and complete artistic work.)

Materials:

- Glue
  - Markers
  - Colored pencils
  - Construction paper
  - Pencils
  - Magazines that can be cut
  - Scissors
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- **Science** – Traditional Japanese dumplings do not include yeast as an ingredient, but dumplings from other cultures, like Germany and Poland, do include this ingredient. Have students explore the properties of this interesting ingredient by participating in [this education.com experiment](#).

Objective: Students will explore the properties of plants, animals and/or objects.

Standards: NSES Physical Science Standards Levels K-4 (Properties of objects and materials.)

Materials:

- 3 teaspoons of dry yeast
  - Magnifying glass
  - 3 plastic zip-top bags
  - ¼ cup of lukewarm water
  - 2 teaspoons of sugar
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- **Writing** – Her dumpling leads the little woman on a grand adventure! Write a journal article from the perspective of the little woman describing who she met and what happened to her along the way.

Objective: Students will recall details from a book to write from a character's perspective.

Standards: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.3 (Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.)

Materials:

- Journals
- Pens