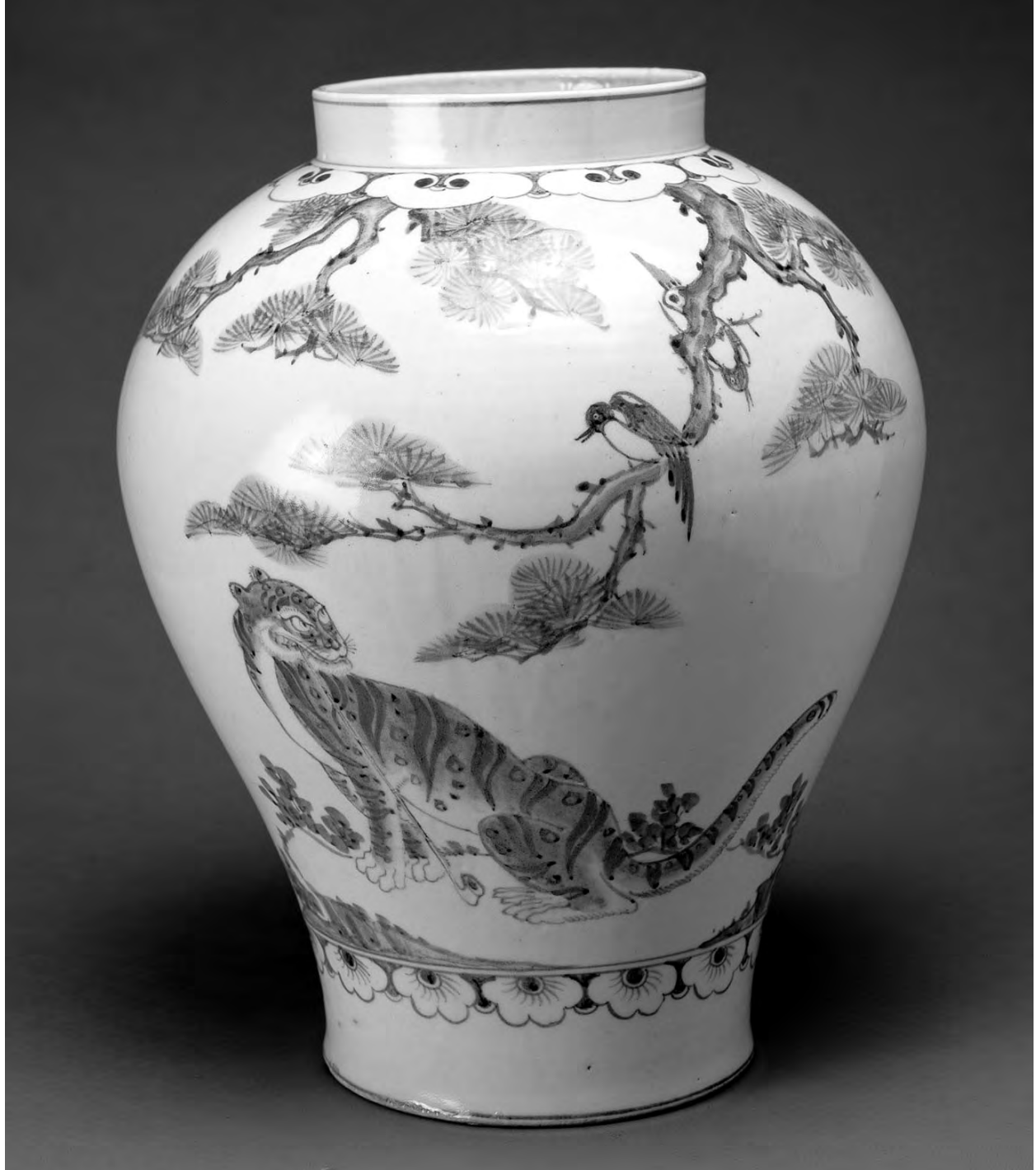


KOREAN MYTHS AND FOLKTALES



Jar with tiger and magpie, approx. 1800–1900. Korea. Joseon dynasty (1392–1910). Porcelain with underglaze cobalt decoration. *Gift of Mr. NamKoong Ryun, 2001.9.*

Asian Art Museum Storytelling Program

Dear Instructor,

Welcome to the Asian Art Museum's Storytelling Program. We look forward to your museum visit and presenting art distinctive to the culture and traditions of Korea. Stories will be told to help bridge the world that the students know with the world they are entering and to enhance the students' imagination so that they can better connect with what they see.

To ensure that your students gain the maximum advantage of participating in the storytelling program, the enclosed activities are suggested for before and after your visit. The storyteller's presentation will be narrower in concept; however, the information, stories and activities we have prepared will be helpful for developing context relative to your visit. We encourage you to use some of these activities before coming to the museum. In addition to these suggested activities, we have also included a list of resources for your classroom use.

Thank you for participating in our program. We look forward to meeting you and your students at the museum.

Asian Art Museum Storytelling Corps



Girl's birthday dress. The republic of Korea (South Korea). Silk with embroidered and pressed gold-sheet decoration. Gift of Charles and Susan Han, 1988.44.a-c.

Suggested Pre- and Post-visit Activities

Show students Korea on a world map.



Learn about the Korean Language

The Korean alphabet, known as hangeul was invented during the Joseon dynasty (1392-1910) under King Sejong in 1446. He wanted to increase literacy by developing a native writing system that was easy to learn and better captured Korean spoken language (before this time, Korean was written using only Chinese characters called hanja). Today, hangeul is the first writing system learned by children in Korea and is a source of great national pride.

Please note that the museum uses the revised romanization system adopted by the Korean government on July 4, 2000. As shown in the examples below, the new system avoids diacritical marks. Some roman letters have also been changed to better approximate actual Korean pronunciation.

GUIDE TO PRONUNCIATION OF KOREAN

Hangeul has ten vowels and fourteen consonants. To learn more about vowel combinations and the rules for consonants, see the fifth edition of Lonely Planet's Korea.

Vowels

a	as in are
ya	as in yard
eo	as in of
yeo	as in young
o	as in go
yo	as in yoke
u	as in flute
yu	as the word you
eu	as the oo in look
i	as the ee in feet

Vowel Combinations

ae	as in the a in hat
yae	as in the ya in yam
e	as in ten
ye	as in yes
wa	as in waffle
wae	as the wa in wax
oe	as in the wa in way
wo	as in won
wi	as in we
ui	as u plus i

Single Consonants

g/k
n
d/t
r/n
m
b
s/t
-/ng
j/t
ch/t
k
t
p
h/ng

LEARN SOME KOREAN WORDS FOR FUN

hello	an/nyeong ha/se/yo
good-by	an/nyeong hi ga/se/yo
yes	ye (short e sound)
no	a/ni/yo
thank you	gam/sa/ham/ni/da
mother	eo/meo/ni
father	a/beo/ji
house	jip
car	ja/ dong/ cha
school	hak/kyo
cooked rice	bap
tiger	ho/rang/yi

LEARN A FEW KOREAN BIRTHDAY CUSTOMS

Traditionally the first birthday and the sixty-first birthday are the most important birthdays in Korea. The first birthday is a fortunetelling party. This custom started in China and spread to Korea, Japan and Vietnam. The baby wears new clothes. A girl has a peach colored skirt and a yellow coat with wide sleeves decorated with bands of contrasting colors. A little boy has blue trousers, peach-colored coat with banded sleeves and a vest fastened with three red buttons.

The baby is formally introduced to family and friends with polite bowing and then he/she is brought to the table. There is food on the table and coins, lengths of thread, notebook and pencil and for a girl a sewing kit. Everybody watches to see what the baby picks up. The thread means long life and money. The pencil means the baby will read very well and have a very good future.

LEARN A FEW KOREAN PROVERBS.

How are they like what we say? How are they different?

The smaller pepper is hotter.

To catch the cub, one must enter the tiger's cave.

Where there is no tiger, the rabbit becomes king.

Starting, I am half done.

Someone else's rice cake looks bigger.

(From HOLT, Daniel, Soma Han Stickler, Lu Han Stickler. *Tigers, Frogs, and Rice Cakes: A Book of Korean Proverbs*. Fremont: Shen's Books, 1999.)

LEARN A FEW KOREAN SYMBOLS

Turtle is a symbol of a long life because it lives such long time. It is also considered to have the ability to tell the future and fortunetellers use the cracks on its shell to forecast the future.

Tiger is a symbol of courage, dignity and cruelty but is also considered to be a symbol of good luck and protection from disease.

Duck is a symbol of wealth, happiness, loyalty and many children. A pair of Mandarin ducks is also a symbol of a long and happy marriage.

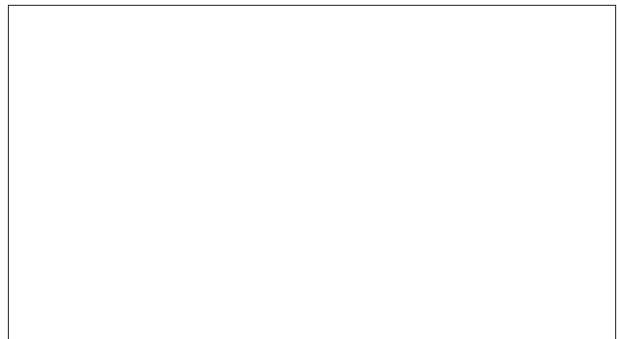
Korean Magpie is the symbol of good news.

Butterfly is a symbol of love and happiness.

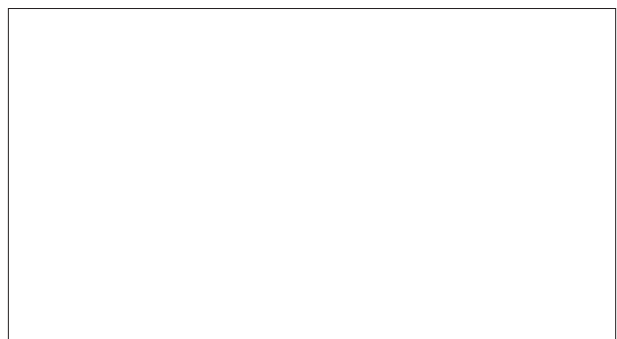
LEARN TO COUNT AND WRITE ONE TO TEN IN KOREAN

There are two number systems used in Korea—"pure Korean" that is used to express one's age and count objects; and "Sino Korean" that is used to count money, express dates, and phone numbers. In school, Korea children first learn "pure Korean" as indicated below.

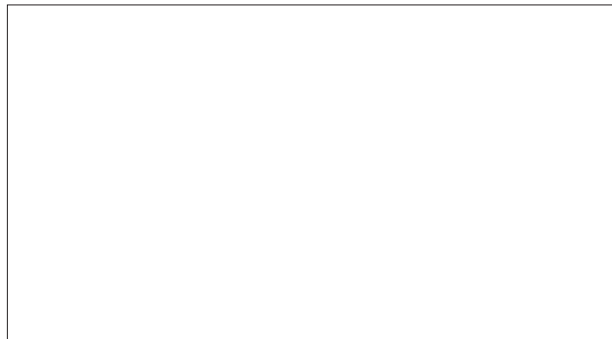
one *hana*



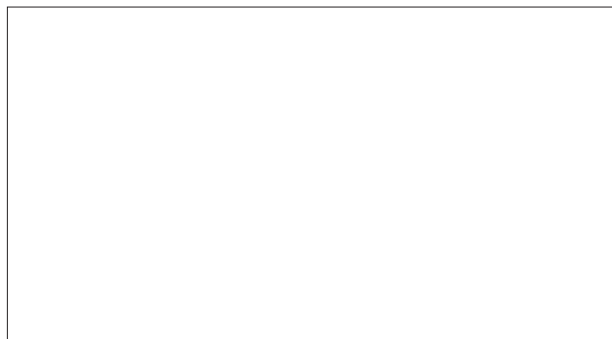
two *dul*



three *set*



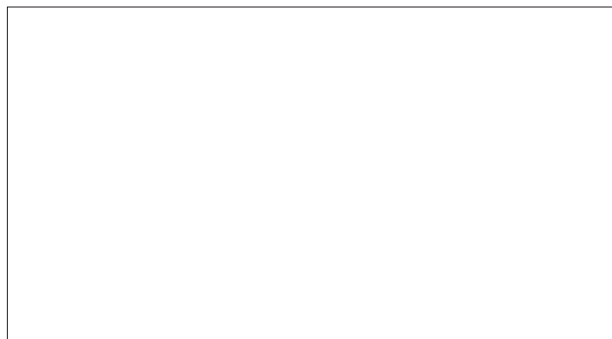
four *net*



five *daseot*



six *yeoseot*



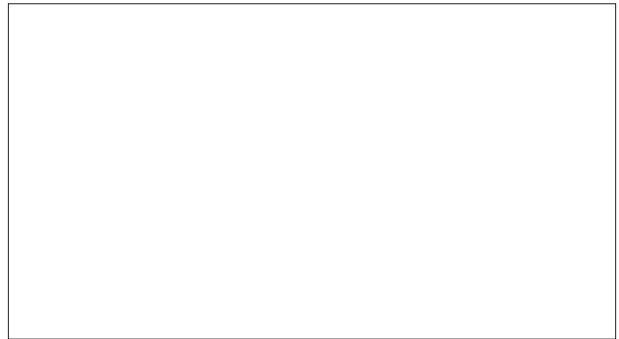
seven *ilgop*



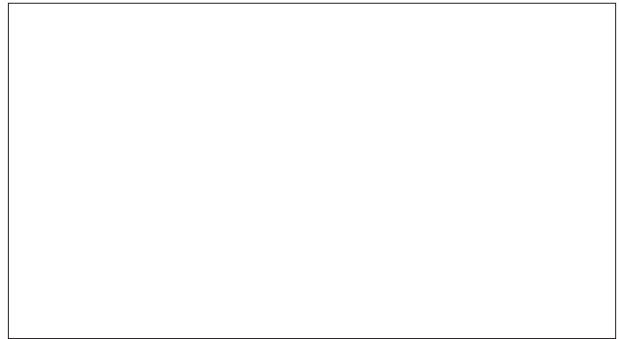
eight *yeodeol*



nine *ahop*



ten *yeol*



The Korean Cinderella

By Shirley Climo

Long ago in Korea, when magical creatures were as common as cabbages, there lived an old gentleman and his wife. For years they longed for a child to share their tile-roofed cottage. At last a daughter was born.

“Good fortune!” the old man exclaimed. “I’ll plant a pear tree in the courtyard to celebrate this day!”

“And Pear Blossom will be our daughter’s name,” the old woman added.

Both the tree and the child grew lovelier with each passing season. In spring white flowers frosted the tree, and Pear Blossom wore a white ribbon on her long, black braid. In summer, when the tree bent with ripening fruit, Pear Blossom’s mother wove a band of rosy gold into her hair. In the autumn, when leaves from the tree blew about the courtyard like scraps of sunshine, her mother dressed Pear Blossom in a yellow gown. But one winter day, when the branches on the pear tree were still bare sticks, the old woman died.

“*Aigo!*” wailed the old man. “Who will tend Pear Blossom now?”

He put on his tall horsehair hat and went to the village matchmaker. She knew of a widow with a daughter. The girl, named Peony, was just the age of Pear Blossom.

“Three in one!” promised the matchmaker. “A wife for you and a mother and a sister for Pear Blossom.”

So the old gentleman took the widow for his wife. Although Pear Blossom called the woman Omoni, or Mother, she was far from motherly. And Peony was worse than no sister at all.

Omoni found fault as soon as she stepped into the kitchen. “Too cold!” she grumbled. “The fire’s gone out. Fetch wood, Pear Blossom. Be quick!”

Pear Blossom gathered sticks and fed the stove until the lid on the kettle danced from steam.

“Too hot!” her stepmother scolded then. “The noodles are scorching. Get water, Pear Blossom. Be quick!”

Both Omoni and Peony were jealous of Pear Blossom, and the harder she worked the happier they were. Each day Pear Blossom was up before Hai, the sun. She cooked and cleaned until midnight, with only the crickets for company.

Each year was worse than the one before, for her father grew too feeble to pay attention to Pear Blossom’s troubles.

Omoni dressed Pear Blossom in rags and tied her shiny braid with a twist of rope. And now she and Peony addressed her only as Little Pig or Pigling.

“Pigling has a pigtail!” jeered Peony.

But nothing could hide Pear Blossom’s beauty. At night Omoni lay sleepless, searching for an excuse to get rid of her stepdaughter. One morning she told Pear Blossom, “The water jug by the door needs filling.”

“It leaks, Omoni,” Pear Blossom replied, “for it has a hole the size of an onion.”

Stubborn little pigs get tied up and taken to market!” warned her stepmother. “Fill that jar!”

Then Omoni and Peony marched through the courtyard gate, locking it behind them.

Pear Blossom leaned against the tall jar. “Will none in this world help me?” she asked.

“Jug-jug-jugful, rumbled a hoarse voice.

“A tokgabi!” Pear Blossom gasped. “A goblin!” What if a tokgabi goblin were hiding in the jar? Fearfully, she stood on tiptoe and peered inside.

A gigantic frog with bulging eyes stared back. “Jugful!” It croaked again, and squeezed itself like a stopper into the hole in the jar.

“As you wish,” agreed Pear Blossom, for, frog or goblin, it was best to do its bidding. She hurried to the well and drew a jugful of water. When she poured it into the jar, not a drop leaked out!

When Omoni and Peony returned, they found Pear Blossom resting beside the jar. “So!” Omoni shrilled. “Off to market, Little Pig!”

“But Omoni, the jar is full,” Pear Blossom protested. “A frog helped me.”

“Trickery!” snapped her stepmother, but she muttered to Peony, “A magic frog! Look inside the jar!”

Peony hung over the rim but saw only her own scowling face. All of a sudden the jar tipped. A flood of water soaked Peony from head to toes. “Pigling’s to blame!” she howled.

“Someday Little Pig will get what she deserves!” Omoni declared. She made Pear Blossom crawl through the puddles, licking up the water.

The next morning Omoni scattered a huge sack of rice around the courtyard.

“Hull this rice, Little Pig,” she ordered. “Polish every grain. Or else”—she shook the empty bag—“YOU’LL be put in this sack and sent to China!”

Then Omoni and Peony left for the village.

Rice covered the ground like sand beside the sea. Pear Blossom threw her arms around the pear tree and asked, “Will none in the world help me?”

Wings whirred overhead, and the flock of sparrows flew out of the tree. “Cheer! Cheer! Cheer!” the sparrows called to Pear Blossom. They pecked at the rice, separating husk from kernel. In a matter of minutes the sparrows had polished the rice and piled it in a corner.

When Omoni came back, she found Pear Blossom nodding beneath the tree. “Off to China!” her stepmother began, and then caught sight of the mound of rice. “How can this be?” she demanded.

Pear Blossom rubbed her eyes. “Sparrows flew out of the tree and polished the rice.”

“Birds don’t hull rice, scoffed Omoni. “They eat it!” But to Peony she whispered, “It’s magic that’s flying about! Catch some!” She pushed Peony beneath the pear tree.

At once the cloud of sparrows swooped down. “Cheat! Cheat! Cheat!” they chattered at Peony. They pecked at her, tearing her jacket. They perched on her head, pulling her hair.

“Pigling’s to blame!” Peony bawled.

“Someday Little Pig will get what she deserves!” Omoni threatened. She did not give Pear Blossom anything to eat, not that day or the next, not so much as a kernel of rice.

Pear Blossom had food to fix nevertheless. The village was having a festival, and she had to pack picnic hampers of dried fish and pickled cabbage for her stepmother. She also sewed a dress of pink silk for her stepsister. When festival day came, Peony mocked Pear Blossom, calling her “Dirty-Piglet-Stay-at-Home.”

“Pigling may go,” said Omoni in a voice as sweet as barley sugar, “after she weeds the rice paddies.” She handed Pear Blossom a basket of wilted turnip tops. “Here is Pigling’s picnic.”

“I am most grateful, Honorable Mother,” said Pear Blossom.

When she reached the fields, Pear Blossom dropped the basket in dismay.

Rice rippled before her like a great, green lake. Weeding it would take weeks. “Who could do such a task?” she asked.

Suddenly a whirlwind twisted through the fields, and a huge black ox reared up from a cloud of dust. “DO-O-O!” it bellowed, tossing its great horns.

The ox began to munch the weeds, moving through the rows of rice faster than the wind itself. Each mouthful brought it closer to Pear Blossom. Even though she hid her face in her hands, she heard the crunch of its teeth and felt the beast's warm breath on her neck.

At last she dared to peek between her fingers. Both ox and weeds were gone. Hoofprints big as cartwheels pocked the field, yet not a single blade of rice was trampled. And when Pear Blossom looked in her basket, she found fruit and honey candy instead of turnips!

She bowed, then cupped her hands and called, "A thousand thanks!"

Pear Blossom hastened to the village festival. The road, which followed a crooked stream, was rough with pebbles. Pear Blossom had just slipped off one straw sandal to shake out a stone when she heard a shout.

"Make way! Make way for the magistrate!"

Four bearers, a palanquin swaying on poles across their shoulders, jogged toward her. In the chair sat a young nobleman dressed in rich robes and wearing a jade jewel in his topknot. Flustered, Pear Blossom teetered on one leg like a crane, holding her straw sandal. Her cheeks grew hot as red peppers, and she hopped behind a willow tree that grew beside the stream. As she did, her sandal splashed into the water and bobbed like a small boat, just out of reach.

"Stop!" commanded the magistrate from his palanquin.

He was calling to his bearers. But Pear Blossom thought he was shouting at her and, frightened, she fled down the road.

The magistrate gazed after Pear Blossom, struck by her beauty. Then he ordered his men to fish her sandal from the stream and to carry him back to the village.

At the festival Pear Blossom forgot about her missing shoe. She watched the acrobats and tightrope walkers until she was dizzy. She listened to the flutes and drums until her basket was almost empty.

She was peeling the last orange when Omoni and Peony came upon her.

"Little Pig!" screamed her stepmother. "What are you doing here?"

"I am here because a great black ox ate all the weeds in the rice paddies," said Pear Blossom. "The same ox that gave me this orange."

"Black ox indeed!" Omoni snorted. "Oxen are brown. You stole that fruit—" She was interrupted by the magistrate's bearers.

"Hear this!" they shouted as they elbowed the palanquin through the crowd. "We seek the girl with one shoe."

"It's Pigling!" Peony pointed at her sister. "She's lost her shoe."

The bearers put the chair down beside Pear Blossom, and the nobleman held up the straw sandal.

"The magistrate has come to arrest you for stealing!" Omoni shook Pear Blossom. "NOW you'll get what you deserve!"

"Then she must deserve me as her husband," said the magistrate, "for this lucky shoe has led me to her."

"Another of Pigling's tricks!" hissed Omoni, pulling Peony to the palanquin. "My daughter will give you TWO shoes! That is twice as lucky!"

"The magistrate looked at Omoni as if she had lost her wits; then he turned to Pear Blossom and said, "I've luck enough if she who wears this one becomes my bride."

Pear Blossom slipped the sandal on her foot.

Omoni stood staring, stiff as a clay statue, but Peony ran straight to the rice fields to find the

magic ox. All she saw was a glimpse of its hooves as it galloped away.

When springtime came, the magistrate sent a go-between to Pear Blossom's old father to arrange a grand marriage. Pear Blossom's wedding slippers were of silk, and in the courtyard of her splendid new house, a dozen pear trees bloomed. "E-wha! E-wha!" chirped the sparrows in the branches. "E-WHA! Croaked the frog down below.

That is as it was long ago, and as it should be. For, in Korea, Ewha means "Pear Blossom."

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Many hundreds of Cinderella stories are told around the world. In Korea there are half a dozen versions. Although Pear Blossom is not always her name, the heroine is always a dutiful daughter and in the end prevails over her unkind stepmother and stepsister—or sisters. Most often she is rescued from her miserable life by an honorable official, although not necessarily by means of a shoe. In one version she escapes by dying and climbing to heaven on a rope.

Tokgabis, sometimes spelled *doggabbis*, often appear in Korean fairy tales. Sometimes kind-hearted, other times fearsome, these goblins help or trouble humans as they choose. Some people believe that they are the spirits of good people who have died. In this story the timely assistance of the frog, sparrows, and the black ox are the work of a tokgabi, perhaps the spirit of Pear Blossom's own mother.

This retelling is based on three variations of a tale that has been a favorite of Korean children for centuries.

The Korean Cinderella has been reprinted with permission by the author Shirley Climo in honor of Ruth Heller, the book's illustrator.

Suggested Pre-visit Art Activities

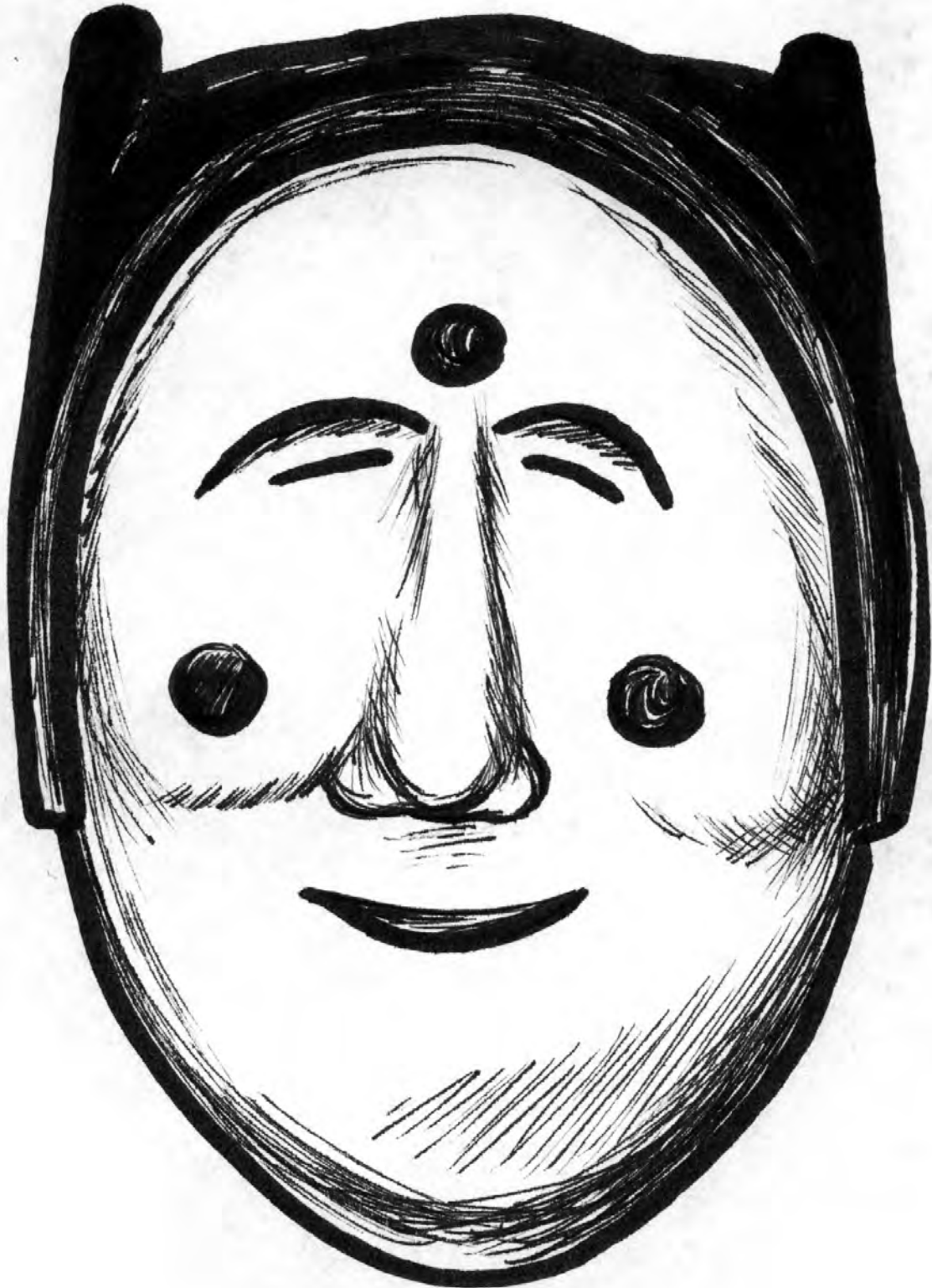
KOREAN MASK DRAMA

Masked dramas began hundreds of years ago. The drama provided a way for actors to poke fun at the different social classes while also breaking down tension between these groups using humor. An actor might make an ugly mask and pretend to be an eccentric nobleman or dimwitted scholar, a Buddhist monk who is not very religious, a greedy merchant, a quack witch doctor, a scolding housewife, etc. They dance and act out a funny story. This is still one of the most popular types of drama in Korea today.

Attached are three masks typical of these dramas. Color one of these masks. Pair off with a classmate and act out a short skit wearing your mask and showing how your character might act.



- a) **The Monk:** His eyes are narrow in the shape of crescent moons. He often wears a gray coat and string of beads around his neck. He is a corrupt monk who wanders and begs.



- b) **The Flirtatious Young Woman:** She wears heavy make-up including white face powder and rosy circles on her cheeks and in the center of her forehead. She smiles flirtatiously and may play the role of an entertainer.



- c) **The Nobleman Mask:** He dresses in white. When he looks up he appears to be cheerful and smiling, but when he looks down he appears to be angry. He moves slowly and considers himself better than other people.



Make a face that you think would look like a person that is a young woman, a monk (a very holy person who prays a lot), or a nobleman (a man who is from a wealthy and respected family).

Korean Wrapping Paper Art Project

In the Korean Gallery there is a display of wrapping cloths. These cloths were used to wrap gifts, because in Korea the wrapping of the gift is as important as the gift itself. The following art project offers the students the experience of having the wrapping of a gift a very thoughtful process as well as an opportunity for patterning with Korean motifs.

Supplies:

One piece of 18x24 blank news print
Colored felt pens, crayons, pencils or paint brushes

Directions:

Fold paper in half four or five times creating squares. Be careful to have corners touching for each folding. Four folds make 16 squares. Five folds make 32 squares. Six folds make 64 squares. The number of folds is up to the individual child's manual dexterity and patience.

Create a pattern by filling each square with the Korean numbers of one to five or one to any other number up to ten by repeating the sequence until all the squares are filled. Use different colored pens, crayons, pencils or paint and repeat the sequence of colors you have chosen. An example would be: one/red, two/ purple, three/yellow and four /green, repeat to end of the 32 or 64 squares. Or one to five/blue, one to five/ green, one to five/ yellow, repeat. If the Korean numbers are too difficult, any other pattern of your choosing such as numbers with some squares colored in with solid colors, or numbers with some squares with solid and some with flowers and/or trees. The design can be up to individual choice as long as there is a pattern.

This art project may take longer than a single art period to complete and is a perfect filler for free time in class, or to take home to complete.

Example:

하나	둘	셋	넷	다섯	여섯	일곱	여덟
아홉	열	하나	둘	셋	넷	다섯	여섯
일곱	여덟	아홉	열	하나	둘	셋	넷
다섯	여섯	일곱	여덟	아홉	열	하나	둘

Long, Long Ago When the Tiger Smoked the Pipe...

“Once upon a time, long, long ago, when the tiger smoked a pipe” is a familiar phrase at the beginning of Korean children’s stories. The tiger-and-magpie motif is popular in Korean folk painting, as Koreans once believed that tigers embodied the spirit of mountains and had the power to ward off evil and harm, and that magpies were harbingers of good news.



COLOR ME

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Further Teacher Resources

LITERATURE

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Souci, Daniel San. *In the Moonlight Mist: A Korean Tale*. Boyd Mills Press, 1999.

Stickler, John. *Land of the Morning Calm: Korean Culture Then and Now*. Shens Books, 2003.

Educator Packets

Arts of Korea: A Resource for Educators

Metropolitan Museum of Art

<http://www.metmuseum.org>

Email: education@metmuseum.org.

Tel: 212-570-3788

Arts of the Goryeo Dynasty

Asian Art Museum

www.asianart.org

Email: resourcecenter@asianart.org

Tel: 415-581-3663

Fax: 415-581-4706

Learning About Korea, One packet, Ten lessons K-6
Four folk stories in English and Korean edited by Edward B. Adams
Aekyung's Dream
Hungba Nolbu, Two Brothers and their Magic Gourds
Herdboy and Weaver
Woodcutter and Nymph
Schools Program at World Affairs Council Office
www.itsyourworld.org
Email: egreigg@wacsf.org
Tel. 415-293-4650
Fax. 415-293-4691

Internet Resources

The Arts of Korea
<http://www.metmuseum.org/explore/Korea/koreaonline/index.htm>

A Visit to Grandfather's House
<http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/Exhibit/Archive/grandfathershouse/>

Teaching Korea in K-12 School Projects

www.ias.berkeley.edu/orias
Finding the Korean voice in K-12 teaching