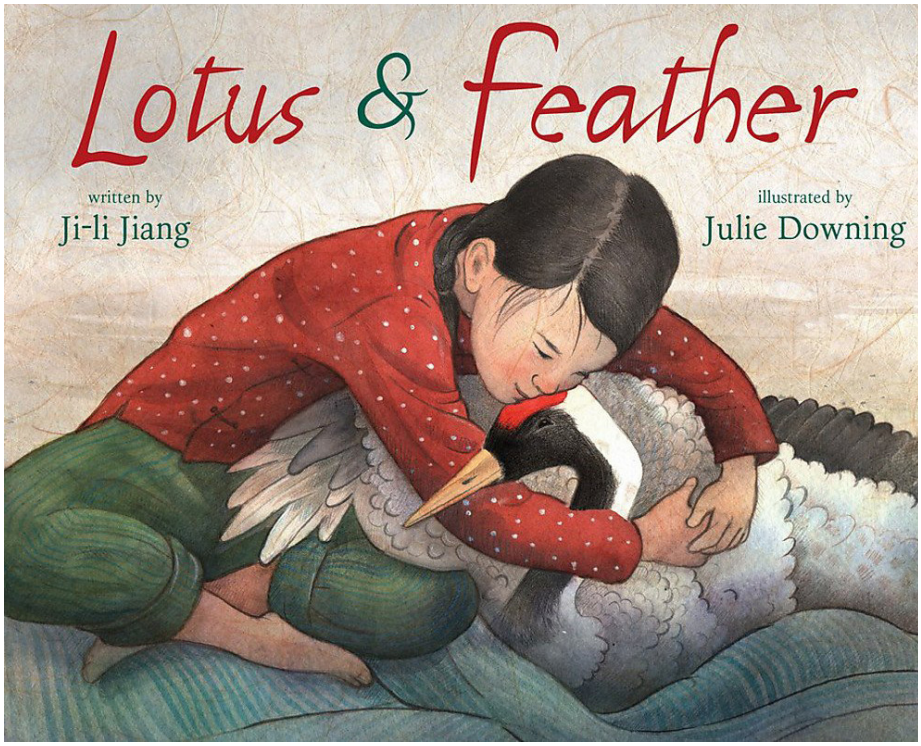
SAG-AFTRA FOUNDATION PRESENTS

Storyline Online®

A TEACHER'S GUIDE

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL: 2ND - 3RD



LOTUS & FEATHER

WRITTEN BY JI-LI JIANG
ILLUSTRATED BY JULIE DOWNING

Watch **Michelle Yeoh** read this story at storylineonline.net

ABOUT THIS STORY

SYNOPSIS

A winter illness left Lotus, a little girl, without a voice and without friends. A hunter's bullet left Feather, a crane, injured and unable to fly. As Lotus nurses Feather back to health, their bond grows. Soon Feather is following Lotus everywhere, even to school! The bird dances to the girl's reed whistle, much to the delight of the other children. One day, when the village floods, Feather helps raise the alarm as Lotus and her grandfather urge their neighbors to get to high ground. Feather is a true friend to Lotus, but the time comes when Lotus must be a true friend to him--by encouraging him to migrate with the rest of the cranes. The next spring, Feather miraculously returns, and that's not all . . . he has brought new life to the nearby lake. Inspired by the true story of a crane that rescued a Chinese village, and graced with sensitive watercolor illustrations, this lovely book about respecting nature offers deep emotion and delightful surprises.

THEMES IN THE STORY

Caregiving, Chinese culture, Animals

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READING AND WRITING

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ELA COMMON CORE STANDARD

Reading Literature: Students read and respond to works of literature with emphasis on comprehension, making connections among ideas and between texts with focus on textural evidence. *Standards listed below are for 2nd and 3rd grades but can be adapted to 1st grade standards.*

BEFORE VIEWING

Standards: CCSS.SL.2.1, CCSS.SL.3.1

Objective: Tap knowledge and build background to prepare for reading the story.

Procedure:

Step 1: Build background for students by discussing the following points:

- Chinese culture
- Endangered animals

Step 2: Have students share stories about finding injured animals and nursing them back to health. How did that make them feel?

Step 3: Show students the cover and read the title, *Lotus & Feather*. Ask:

- Based on the cover and title, is the story going to be fiction or non-fiction? How do you know?
- What will the story be about? Ask student to make predictions. Record predictions on a class list.

DURING VIEWING

Focus: Making predictions

Standards: CCSS.SL.2.2, CCSS.SL.3.2, CCSS.RL.2.1, CCSS.RL.3.1

Objective: Students will listen to story and make predictions.

Procedure:

Step 1: Partner the students and ask them to share their predictions about what the story will be about.

Step 2: During the read aloud, stop the video at appropriate parts for partners to make and adjust predictions about the story.

Step 3: After the story, discuss class predictions and how they changed as more information was gained during the reading.

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AFTER VIEWING

Standards: CCSS.RL.2.2, CCSS.RL.2.3, CCSS.RL.3.2, CCSS.RL.3.3

Objective: Students will explain the theme of the story by using key details.

Materials:
Chart paper or SmartBoard
Searching for a Theme Graphic Organizer (see page 9)
Anchor Chart – *Common Themes in Literature*
Question Chart to help find the theme

Teacher Prep: Anchor Chart for *Common Themes in Literature* – **Google It!** or use the information below to create your own chart.

Searching for a Theme student graphic organizer – **Google It!** or use the organizer attached on page 9.

ANCHOR CHART: **Theme is THE MEssage in a story**

Common Themes found in stories:

- Overcoming challenges
- Always tell the truth
- Always be kind
- Believe in yourself
- Accepting others' differences
- Use teamwork to solve a problem
- Friendship
- Be happy with what you have

QUESTION CHART: **Find the THE MEssage by Asking Good Questions:**

- How did the character react to a problem or obstacle?
- What important decisions did the character make?
- How did the character change from the beginning of the story?
- What did the character learn from his/her experience?

Procedure:

Step 1: Display the anchor chart: Theme is **THE ME**ssage in a story.

Step 2: Discuss the difference between theme and the main idea. *(Theme is a broad idea that can be applied to our life. The main idea is what the story is about.)*

Step 3: Read the Common Themes and discuss. Try to relate some of the themes listed to stories the class has read.

Step 4: Explain how to find the theme in a story. *(The theme comes from looking at the character and how the character grows and changes throughout the story.)*

Step 5: Post the question chart and discuss how to use the questions to help find the theme.

Step 6: Have students listen to the story again and complete the graphic organizer. (Independent/ Partners)

Step 7: Bring class together to discuss themes – make a list on chart paper.

Step 8: Make real life connections. Students will better understand the theme by relating it to their own lives. Have students share stories explaining how this theme can be applied to a life experience.

Teacher Note: Keep in mind that themes are subjective so you may get several different themes for this story.

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READING RESPONSE

Standards: CCSS.RL.2.1, CCSS.RL.3.1, CCSS.L.2.1, CCSS.L.3.1

Objective: Students will answer the prompt using at least two details from text to support the response.

Reading Prompt: How did the children's feelings about Lotus change from the beginning to the end of the story? Use at least two details from the story to support your response.

WRITING

Standards: CCSS.W.2.3, CCSS.W.3.3, CCSS.L.2.1, CCSS.L.3.1

Objective: Students will write a narrative piece using grade appropriate sentence structure and spelling.

Materials: Writing tools
Paper

Procedure:

Step 1: Ask students to choose one of the common themes from the chart.

Step 2: Tell students that they are going to write their own story that exhibits this theme. Remind them to use key details that support the theme.

Step 3: Allow time for students to share and discuss ideas.

Step 4: Use the Writing Process for students to complete the narrative according to the needs and abilities of your class.

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ACROSS THE CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

SOCIAL STUDIES – CHINESE NEW YEAR

Students will recognize that different groups of people celebrate holidays unique to them. Students understand tradition and identify traditional activities done for the New Year in China and the United States.

MATERIALS —

World map
Articles, books, videos on China, its customs, and the celebration of Chinese New Year
Student copy of Chinese zodiac chart (**Google It!**)
Venn Diagram
Teacher Prep: Gather information articles, books, or videos.

PROCEDURE —

Step 1: Show students where China is located on the map. Discuss the Chinese culture or share a video about China. (**Google It!**)

Step 2: Define the concept of tradition: the practice of handing down beliefs, legends, and customs from generation to generation. Give examples of family customs you practice and ask students to share some of their customs, eventually leading to the tradition of celebrating New Year's Day on January 1 in the United States.

Step 3: Briefly describe how the Chinese use a lunar calendar so the new year that they celebrate is at a different time than ours. Explain the years on a Chinese calendar are grouped into sets of twelve, with each year represented by a different animal. The animals are called zodiac signs. The Chinese believe that the characteristics of people were like those of the animal of the year they were born.

Step 4: Pass out the Zodiac chart and have students find the year they were born and identify the zodiac sign – Do you think this character accurately represents you? Why or why not?

Step 5: Present information on how the Chinese celebrate Chinese New Year (see teacher prep).

Step 6: Have students complete a Venn diagram comparing New Year's Day in the United States and China.

Step 7: Share and discuss the diagram with a partner.

EXTEND IT —

Plan and hold a Chinese New Year Celebration with the class. Incorporate **ART** by creating traditional decorations for the celebration. **Google It!:** Chinese New Year Art

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Students become aware of the five reasons animals become endangered or extinct. Students research endangered species of China and identify the reason for its endangerment.

MATERIALS —

Chart: *Causes of Extinction*
Worksheet: *Endangered Animals of China*
Computers with internet access
Teacher Prep:

- List of age appropriate sites for research
- Create the chart below:

  Causes of Animal Extinction:
  Habitat loss
  Introduced species
  Pollution
  Population growth
  Overconsumption

- Make a worksheet consisting of 5 – 10 endangered animals of China for students to research. Make sure to include at least one animal for each cause. (**Google It!:** Endangered species of China)

Worksheet Example:

Endangered Animal	Cause
Crane	Habitat Loss

PROCEDURE —

Step 1: Remind students that Feather was an endangered animal in the story. Ask students to think about why an animal my become in danger of becoming extinct, or an endangered species. Make a list of student responses.

Step 2: Show students the chart. Compare and contrast their answers with the chart.

Step 3: Explain each by giving an example and discuss each cause with the students.

Step 4: Point out how students can remember the 5 causes by using the acronym HIPPO.

Step 5: Read the excerpt from the story below and ask students to identify which of the reasons is the cause of the crane becoming endangered (habitat loss).

> ***A crane! Lotus shouted silently. She had heard many stories about the endangered cranes from Grandpa, but she had never seen one. They had stopped coming because the wetland was disappearing.***

Step 6: Pass out the worksheet and explain that all the animals are on the endangered species list of China. Instruct students to use the internet to research each animal and identify the cause of why it is becoming extinct.

Step 7: Post the list of approved sites for students to use and discuss.

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MATH – TANGRAMS

Students are introduced to Tangrams, name and classify Tangram shapes, and manipulate the pieces to create various shapes and designs.

MATERIALS —

Plastic tangrams or tangram template copied onto tag board (one for each student)
Tangram animal outlines (**Google It!**)
Construction paper
Smartboard and internet access
Teacher Prep: Use the internet to gather information to present to students about tangrams.

PROCEDURE —

Step 1: Explain to students that a tangram is an ancient Chinese puzzle. It is made up of seven geometric shapes that fit together to form a square. Project a tangram on the SmartBoard and have students identify each shape. Make sure students are aware that a tangram is made up of two big triangles, one medium triangle, two small triangles, one square, and one parallelogram.

Step 2: Pass out tangrams to students. (If using a template, have students color and cut pieces.)

Step 3: Have students place the tangram pieces on the desk. Ask students to sort the shapes by name. How else can the shapes be sorted (number of sides)?

Step 4: Guide the students in creating other shapes from tangram pieces. Students should create the shapes on a piece of paper, outline the shape, and label it. Students:

- Create a triangle using 2 shapes.
- Create a triangle using 4 shapes.
- Create a square using 2 shapes.
- Create a square using 4 shapes.
- Create a rectangle using 3 shapes.
- Put the tangram puzzle together by using all the shapes to create a large square.

Step 5: Show students how the shapes can be manipulated to form various animals. Give each student an outline of an animal. Explain to students that they should use their tangram pieces to recreate the animal. After completion of the picture, students should glue the pieces on a piece of construction paper. Students list the names of pieces used for their picture. (If using plastic tangrams, have students trace and color each shape used to create the design.)

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Name:_____

Lotus & Feather

Searching for a Theme

What is the theme of the story? Write it in the box. Choose key details from the story that helped you identify the theme. Add them to the organizer.

THEME: What life lesson did Lotus learn from the experience?

How did Lotus react to a problem or obstacle?	What important decisions did Lotus make?	How did Lotus change from her experiences?

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ABOUT US

ABOUT STORYLINE ONLINE

The SAG-AFTRA Foundation's Emmy® nominated children's literacy program ***Storyline Online®*** streams imaginatively produced videos featuring celebrated actors to help inspire a love of reading. Storyline Online® receives millions of views every month in hundreds of countries. Visit Storyline Online® at storylineonline.net.

ABOUT THE SAG-AFTRA FOUNDATION

The SAG-AFTRA Foundation provides vital assistance and educational programming to the professionals of SAG-AFTRA while serving the public at large through its signature children's literacy program. Founded in 1985, the Foundation is a national non-profit organization that relies solely on support from grants, corporate sponsorships, and individual contributions to fund our programs. Visit sagaftra.foundation.

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