



Roly-Poly Rice Ball— A Story from Japan

CURRICULUM IDEAS for parents and teachers

Math

- Graph different types of rice by size, length of cooking, and class preferences.
- Estimate the distance a ball will roll. Roll it and measure. Find the difference between your estimate and the actual difference. Try this with different balls.
- Figure out how many ants, jewels, coins, or scorpions could fit into boxes of two different sizes.

Reading

- Read other stories from Japan. Visit www.jinjapan.org/kidsweb/folk.html for translated stories with music and illustrations.

Writing

- What would you roll into the mouse's hole? What would he offer you? Write yourself into the story.
- Re-write the ending. If the greedy man had picked the small box, what would be inside? How would it affect him?
- Re-write this story in your neighborhood.

Science

- How old was the greedy man's rice ball? How long does it take for sticky rice to mold? Become slimy? Make sticky rice. Store some in a bag, some in a plastic resealable container, and some in the open air. Watch and record data.
- Do mice eat rice? Guess and test with different kinds of rice.

Geography

- Study the islands of Japan. Which would you like to live on, and why?

Music

- Listen to Japanese music.

Art

- Try your hand at origami.
- Make a Japanese folding screen. Use a piece of posterboard, accordion folded into four parts. Trace around the four rectangles with a black marker. Within each rectangle, put a picture of your family or friends at the top and paint the bottom with Japanese-style flowers, birds, or buildings.

Culture

- Visit www.jinjapan.org/kidsweb/virtual.html for information and ideas of what it's like to be a child in Japan.
- Play "Hana, Hana, Hana, Kuchi" (Nose, Nose, Nose, Mouth). The leader repeats these words and taps the body part named. Sometimes the leader will touch a different body part than what he or she says. Players must do what the leader says, not does.

Treasure Bearer

- Practice random acts of kindness. Do someone else's chores. Bake for a neighbor. Make a card for a parent or someone who has been helpful to you.
- Think of one specific person to be kind to. See how many kind things you can do for that person before they notice.