



Title: Grandfather's Journey

Author/Illustrator: Allen Say

Themes: Immigration

Vocabulary: Journey, bewildered, marveled

Hear the book read aloud here: [Grandfather's Journey](#)

I. INTRODUCTION (PREP QUESTIONS)

- Direct students' attention to the special gold seal. Tell them this book was awarded the Caldecott Medal which is an honor for the outstanding quality of the illustrations. Only one book is awarded the Caldecott Gold Medal each year, but several books can be awarded the silver Caldecott Honor each year.
- Ask students what they know about any of their grandparents' lives. Where did they grow up? Have you ever visited there?
- Ask students if they have ever felt homesick, and what that means. How would they would feel if they left America and moved to another country, and why. What is a journey?
- Tell students that this is a true story about the author's grandfather's journey to America from Japan. The author learned that he shared many of the same feelings with his grandfather and felt he understood his grandfather better afterwards. Remind students to listen for ways the author and his grandfather were the same.

II. INTEGRATIVE STRATEGIES

DURING READING

- Pp. 4-5: Read; ask students to share their opinions as to the time frame of the story, citing evidence from the illustrations. Ask why the grandfather traveled on a steamship (airline travel did not exist). Have students infer reasons as to why the Pacific Ocean astonished him. Help students understand that European clothes were similar to clothing worn in the United States back then because the majority of people living here immigrated from the continent of Europe.
- Pp. 6-7: Read; have students infer why he didn't see land for three weeks. Discuss the different modes of transportation and ask students which type is missing, and to infer why (cars). Help students understand that New World referred to America.
- Pp. 8-9: Read; point out the author's use of **figurative language** with the **simile** (a comparison of two things using **like** or **as**). Ask students what two things are being compared (*rocks/sculptures*). Have students infer why the deserts amazed him (he had never seen one in Japan before). Have students suggest similarities between the endless farm fields and the ocean.
- Pp. 10-11: Read; have students define **bewildered** using context clues. Point out the simile on p. 11 and ask students what two things are being compared (*rivers as clear as the sky*).
- Pp. 12-13: Read; have the students use context clues to determine the meaning of **longed**.
- Pp. 16-17: Read; have students infer the relationship between the girl and the author, and why (author's future mother). Have students discuss the change on p. 17 (grandfather is beginning to think back on his

childhood in Japan) and why (he now has a daughter and is reminded of his childhood). Ask students to predict what they think will happen next, and why. Have students share their observations about the clothing, doll, and stroller in the illustrations.

- Pp. 18-19: Read; ask students to decide what is happening (grandfather is homesick). Note the transportation, and why (no airline travel back then). Ask students to define homeland (place of birth). Have students share their homelands if different from the United States.
- Pp. 22-23: Read; have students infer why the village was not fit for a daughter from San Francisco using logic and illustration evidence.
- Pp. 24-25: Read; ask students why the grandfather is planning a trip to California (telling stories about California to his grandson are making him homesick to see it again).
- Pp. 26-27: Read; point out **simile** and ask students what two things are being compared (*scattered our lives like leaves in a storm*). Discuss what the **simile** helps the reader better understand.
- Pp. 28-29: Read; ask students to infer why the grandfather never kept another songbird. Have students again define the meaning of **longed** on p. 29 and infer why the grandfather never returned to visit California (he died before he could go).
- Pp. 30-31: Read; discuss similarities between the grandfather and the grandson (author).
- P. 32: discuss reasons why the author feels he knows his grandfather now (he feels many of the same feelings about things that his grandfather did).

III. INTEGRATIVE STRATEGIES

POST READING

- Ask students how the beginning of the story would have been different if it had happened today and why they think so (faster jet journey, family communication with computers, etc.).
- Why do you think the author wrote this story about his grandfather? Why do you think so? What was important to the grandfather? How do you know?