



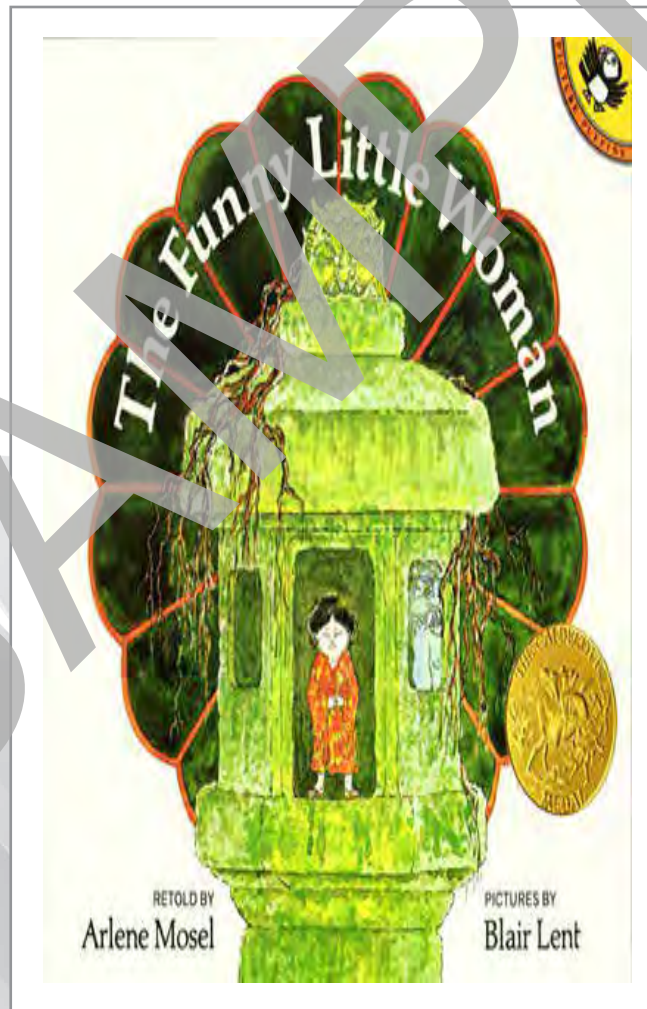
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES K-3

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Funny Little Woman

Arlene Mosel



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Funny Little Woman

Arlene Mosel

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Summary

The funny little woman, who likes to laugh, lived in Japan long ago. One day one of the rice dumplings that she is making falls to the floor, and rolls down a hole. The woman chases after the dumpling, and both fall through a crack in the earth. Taken home by a wicked *oni*, she is made to cook rice dumplings, using a magic paddle. Time passes, and the woman gets lonely for her little house, so she plans an escape while there are no *oni* about. Taking the magic paddle with her, she starts home in a boat on the river. The *oni* return, and, since they cannot swim, drink the water from the river. The little woman tries to flee in the mud and she becomes stuck. This causes the *oni* to laugh, and to release the river water. The woman escapes in the boat, and returns home. She becomes rich because of her ability to make rice dumplings with the magic paddle.

About the Author

Arlene Tichy Mosel was born August 27, 1921, in Cleveland, Ohio. She married Victor H. Mosel, a sales engineer, December 26, 1942. She is the mother of three children, Nancy, Joanne, and James.

Mosel attended Ohio Wesleyan University, receiving a B.A. degree in 1942. She also attended Western Reserve University, receiving an M.S.L.S. in 1959.

Her career included being the assistant in the children's department of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Maryland; the associate professor of library science at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio; and assistant coordinator of Children's Services at the Cuyahoga County Public Library. Of her career she has said, "As a librarian, my greatest pleasure came from telling stories and planning story-hour programs. My books have grown from these experiences. I am intrigued with stories that have a quiet, subtle humor—they are a challenge to the storyteller. Children are always eager for the unexpected and a chance to laugh."

Tikki Tikki Tembo was an American Library Association Notable Book in 1968. *The Funny Little Woman* was an honor book in Hans Christian Andersen International Children's Book Awards, 1974.

About the Illustrator

Blair Lent, (Ernest Small), was born January 22, 1930, in Boston, Massachusetts. He was educated at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts School of Art, and graduated with honors in 1953. He studied art in Switzerland and Italy, 1953-54.

He was the assistant art director for the Container Corporation of America from 1954-56, and a creative designer for the Bresnick Advertising Company from 1957-61. Later, he became a professional artist, author, and illustrator of children's books.

Using Predictions in the Novel Unit Approach

We all make predictions as we read—little guesses about what will happen next, how a conflict will be resolved, which details will be important to the plot, which details will help fill in our sense of a character. Students should be encouraged to predict, to make sensible guesses as they read the novel.

As students work on their predictions, these discussion questions can be used to guide them: What are some of the ways to predict? What is the process of a sophisticated reader's thinking and predicting? What clues does an author give to help us make predictions? Why are some predictions more likely to be accurate than others?

Create a chart for recording predictions. This could be either an individual or class activity. As each subsequent chapter is discussed, students can review and correct their previous predictions about plot and characters as necessary.

Use the facts and ideas the author gives.

Use your own prior knowledge.

Apply any new information (i.e., from class discussion) that may cause you to change your mind.

Predictions

Pages 1-10 From “Long ago, in Old Japan,” to “ ‘My dumpling! My dumpling! Has anybody seen my dumpling?’ ”

Vocabulary

dumplings 2
statues 10

earthen 4
laughed 10

ungrateful 6

unusual 8

Vocabulary Activity

How many words can you make from the letters in the word “ungrateful”? (Examples: *gun, fun, run, rat, fat, grate, late, fate, gate, rate, lug, tug, rug, gear, fear, tear, near.*)

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. What is the little woman making? (Page 1, *She is making rice dumplings.*) What are dumplings? Have you ever had any kind of dumplings? Did you like them? Tell us about the dumplings that you have eaten. (*dumpling: a small piece of dough, steamed or boiled*)
2. The dumpling falls off of the table and rolls where? (Page 4, *The dumpling rolls until it rolls down a hole.*) What kind of a hole do you think it is that the dumpling goes down? an animal hole? a crack in the surface of the earth? Have you seen holes and cracks in the earth near your home or school? What do you think caused that hole or crack?
3. What happens when the woman kneels and reaches for the dumpling? (Page 6, *The earth gives way, and she falls down into the earth.*) Where do you think that the little woman is going? Do you think that she is frightened? Would you be frightened if you were the little woman? Why? Why not?
4. Describe the place where the little woman finds herself.
5. Have children take the parts of the little woman and the statue Jizo Sama. Have children read page 10 aloud.
6. Make a prediction. Do you think that the woman will catch her dumpling?
7. Make an attribute web for the little woman. What words best describe her? (See pages 9-11 of this guide.)
8. Start a story map. Fill it in as the story continues. (See page 12 of this guide.)

Pages 11-21 From “Soon she came to another Jizo...” to “(For *oni* eat more rice than most people!)”

Vocabulary

politely 12

humankind 12

strange 16

paddle 19