



## Tsunami!

By Kimiko Kajikawa  
Illustrated by Ed Young  
(HC) 978-0-399-25006-4 • \$16.99  
Ages 3 up • Grades K up  
Philomel Books

*Something does not feel right."*

*Ojiisan, the oldest and wealthiest man in the village, watches the festive rice ceremony from his balcony. He feels something is coming — something he can't describe — and when he sees the monster wave pulling away from the beach, he knows what it means. Tsunami! But the villagers below can't see the danger they're in. How can Ojiisan save them?*

**Caldecott winner Ed Young and Kimiko Kajikawa** team up to create this beautiful and unforgettable story of one man's simple sacrifice that saved hundreds of lives. A celebration and reminder of the great power each of us holds within.

### Objectives

After completing the following lesson plans from *Tsunami!*, students will:

- Describe how a tsunami occurs
- Explain how and where tsunamis take place
- Identify where different tsunamis have taken place on a world map
- Create a time line of major tsunamis in history
- Discuss how to prepare for a tsunami
- Create an original piece of writing
- Participate in read aloud and inquiry-based research activities
- Explore various internet and print resources and share the discoveries of their research
- Practice listening and speaking skills
- Develop critical thinking skills

### Reading

Read *Tsunami!* to the class and ask students to listen for Japanese words. Note the following Japanese and English words from the book and discuss what they mean:

#### Japanese Vocabulary

##### •Ojiisan

*Definition:* Grandfather

*Context:* "The people in the village called him *Ojiisan*, which means 'grandfather.'"

##### •nobori

*Definition:* Banners, flags, or streamers.

*Context:* "*Nobori* banners and strings of paper lanterns decorated the houses."

##### •taimatsu

*Definition:* Pine torch.

*Context:* "Tada lit a *taimatsu* torch at once."

•**KAAN! KAAN! KAAN!**

*Definition:* Sound of an alarm bell.

*Context:* "A priest saw the burning fields and boomed the temple bell. *KAAN! KAAN! KAAN!*"

•**taihen da**

*Definition:* Terrible danger.

*Context:* "There is great danger — *taihen da!*"

•**kita**

*Definition:* North

*Context:* "*Kita!* Ojiisan shouted, pointing toward the sea."

## English Vocabulary

•**ancient**

*Definition:* Of great age; very old

*Context:* "Finally, the sea returned to its *ancient* bed — still raging as after a typhoon."

•**earthquake**

*Definition:* A series of vibrations at the earth's surface caused by movement of the earth's crust.

*Context:* "And presently an *earthquake* came — a long, slow, spongy motion."

•**tsunami**

*Definition:* A very large ocean wave caused by an underwater earthquake or volcanic eruption. The name '*tsunami*' comes from two Japanese words: '*tsu*' means *port*, and *nami* means *wave*.

*Context:* "'*Tsunami* — the monster wave,' he whispered." The first recorded use in English of the word '*tsunami*' was in 1897 in Lafcadio Hearn's, "*A Living God*," *Gleanings in Buddha-Fields*. ***Tsunami!*** is an adaptation of this story.

•**typhoon**

*Definition:* A tropical cyclone or hurricane forming in the northwestern Pacific Ocean.

*Context:* "Finally, the sea returned to its ancient bed — still raging as after a *typhoon*."

## Discussion Questions

- Who is Ojiisan?
- Why do the villagers call him Ojiisan?
- Describe where Ojiisan lives.
- What are the villagers celebrating?
- Compare and contrast what is happening to the villagers during the celebration and what is happening to Ojiisan on the mountain.
- What happens to the sea during the celebration?
- How do the villagers react to the changing sea?
- How does Ojiisan react?
- What does Ojiisan do to get the villagers to move to safety?
- What do the villagers think when Ojiisan burns his rice fields?
- Why did Ojiisan burn his rice fields?
- Describe what happens before, during, and after the tsunami (sounds, sights, and feelings).
- How did the villagers show their thanks to Ojiisan?
- What is most important to Ojiisan?

## Connecting/Comparing

- Tell students to think of a grandparent or special elderly person in their lives. Have students discuss what makes that person special and compare him or her to Ojiisan.
- Ask students to think about the town where they live. Discuss population, geography, and housing. Have them discuss the similarities and differences of their town to Ojiisan's village.

### Japanese Art

Discuss the following traditional Japanese story:

*A Japanese artist was hired by an American to do a painting. The painting's lower corner had a bird perched upon a branch of a cherry tree. The rest of the painting was bare. Unhappy, the American asked the artist to paint more. The Japanese artist refused. "If I fill up the painting," he said, "there will be no space for the bird to fly."*

Introduce students to Ed Young's first and last illustrations in the book, ***Tsunami!*** Have the students pay attention to the simplicity of the bird and sky in the pictures. Discuss how these illustrations relate to simplicity in traditional Japanese art (great resources are the web image search at Fine Art Museums of San Francisco and the book, *Discovering the Arts of Japan: A Historical Overview*, by Tsuneko S. Sadao). After sharing these images, have students paint or draw their own Japanese-style illustrations.

### The Real Ojiisan

The character of Ojiisan is based on a real person, Hamaguchi Goryou, who guided his villagers to safety by lighting rice-straw fires. To learn more about this great man, have the students visit the website of the Japanese museum dedicated to him:

[http://www.town.hirogawa.wakayama.jp/inamuranohi/english/siryu\\_goryo.html](http://www.town.hirogawa.wakayama.jp/inamuranohi/english/siryu_goryo.html).

Discuss the contributions that Hamaguchi made to help the people in his village during and after the tsunami. Ask each student to write a letter of appreciation to the special person they spoke about in the Connecting/Comparing activity and then present their letter to the class.

### Tsunami Preparation

Discuss with students what tsunamis are and what causes them. Then, visit the Red Cross and National Geographic websites for information on tsunami preparation — before, during, and after. Have each student choose a tsunami safety tip and make a sign to display in class.

*Red Cross Tsunami Preparation:* [http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0\\_592\\_,00.html](http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0_592_,00.html)

*National Geographic Tsunami Safety Tips:* <http://science.nationalgeographic.com/science/earth/natural-disasters/tsunami-safety-tips.html>

### Tsunami Timeline and Map

Display a map of the world. Describe to students how and where tsunamis take place and the regions that are most affected. Then, direct students to the Tsunami Institute website: <http://www.tsunami-alarm-system.com/en/phenomenon-tsunami/phenomenon-tsunami-occurrences.html>. This website has a world map of tsunami occurrences, timelines, and overviews of tsunamis worldwide from 1628 BC to 2006. Assign students to work in pairs and give each pair an index card noting a major tsunami. Have each pair research their assigned tsunami using print and online resources (see suggested internet links). Instruct each pair to collect 8-10 facts about their major tsunami. Ask them to present their research and locate their assigned tsunami on the world map for the class.

### How To Help Tsunami Survivors

Have students fundraise for tsunami victims. These two links from CNN and NPR list international aid organizations that accept donations to help tsunami survivors.

<http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/asiapcf/12/27/quake.aidsites/>

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4248155>

### Tsunami Internet Links

*Tsunami Links for Teachers: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration:* [www.tsunami.noaa.gov/teacher-resources.html](http://www.tsunami.noaa.gov/teacher-resources.html)

Global resources for teachers including education kits, lesson plans, and tsunami sites.

*Tsunami Links for Kids: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration:*

[www.tsunami.noaa.gov/kids2.html](http://www.tsunami.noaa.gov/kids2.html)

Fun activities for students that include a tsunami trivia game, coloring book, board game, word search, and free 12 page downloadable tsunami brochure.

*Pacific Tsunami Museum:*

[www.tsunami.org/students.html](http://www.tsunami.org/students.html)

Student guide to everything tsunami which includes numerous links to facts and information, a trivia quiz, crossword puzzle, matching games, photographs, videos, survival, glossary, art, warning signs, reference books, etc.

*Japan Resources:*

[web-japan.org/kidsweb/explore/index.html](http://web-japan.org/kidsweb/explore/index.html)

Here you will find information about Japan from basic facts to descriptions of Japanese lifestyle, culture, and traditions.

*Origins of the Word: 'Tsunami' — New York Times:*

[www.nytimes.com/2005/01/16/magazine/](http://www.nytimes.com/2005/01/16/magazine/16ONLANGUAGE.html)

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*Collage Illustration:*

[www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Collage](http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Collage)

Use this website as a guide to teach students how to make a collage. Then, assign each student a page from *Tsunami!* to illustrate with their own collage materials and patterns.

### **Suggested Readings**

*Big Wave* by Pearl S. Buck (ages 9-12). The famous story of a Japanese boy who must face life after escaping the tsunami destruction of his family and village. As Jiya struggles to overcome his sorrow, he understands it is in the presence of danger that one learns to be brave and to appreciate how wonderful life can be.

*Tsunami: Helping Each Other* by Ann Morris (ages 7-12). Profusely illustrated account of the experiences of two brothers, Chaiya and Chaipeak, ages 8 and 12, in their Thai village during and after the December 2004 tsunami.

*The Tsunami Quilt: Grandfather's Story* by Anthony D. Fredericks (ages 4-8). The story of a boy and his family and how they were touched by a tsunami that hit Hawaii in 1946. A blend of fact and fiction (tsunami facts at the end of the story) that hooks kids on non-fiction through reading a touching tale.

*Tsunamis and Other Natural Disasters* by Mary Pope Osborne (ages 9-12). What are the warning signs that a tsunami is on the way? Can scientists predict earthquakes? Find out the answers to these questions and more in this Magic Tree House Research Guide to geological disasters.

### **Evaluation**

Using the appropriate elements, apply the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during these lessons:

**Three points:** Students were highly engaged in class discussions; fulfilled all requirements of assignment; project carefully prepared; reflected in-depth and thorough research; presentation well organized.

**Two points:** Students participated in class discussions; fulfilled most requirements of assignment; project satisfactorily prepared; reflected adequate research; presentation satisfactory.

**One point:** Students participated minimally in class discussions; fulfilled few requirements of assignment; reflected inadequate research; project carelessly prepared; presentation disorganized.

## **Standards**

These lesson plans may be used to address the academic standards listed below:

**Subject area:** Language Arts

**Standard:** Gathers and uses information for research purposes.

**Benchmarks:** Uses a variety of sources to gather information.

**Subject area:** Language Arts

**Standard:** Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process.

**Benchmarks:** Uses writing and other methods to describe familiar persons, places, objects, or experiences. Uses strategies to edit and publish written work.

**Subject area:** Language Arts

**Standard:** Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process.

**Benchmarks:** Understands that print conveys meaning (i.e., knows that printed letters and words represent spoken language)

**Subject area:** Language Arts

**Standard:** Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools for learning.

**Benchmarks:** Listens and responds to a variety of listening forms, such as stories, poems, rhymes, and songs.

**Subject area:** Geography

**Standard:** Understands how human actions modify the physical environment.

**Benchmarks:** Knows ways in which people depend on the physical environment (e.g., food, clean air, water, mineral resources).

**Subject area:** Geography

**Standard:** Understands the characteristics and uses of maps, globes, and other geographic tools and technologies.

**Benchmarks:** Knows the basic elements of maps and globes.

**Subject area:** Visual Arts

**Standard:** Understanding and applying different media techniques and processes.

**Benchmarks:** Describe how different materials and techniques can cause different outcomes or responses.

**Subject area:** Visual Arts

**Standard:** Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and culture.

**Benchmarks:** Know that visual arts have a history of specific relationships to different cultures. Be able to identify specific works of art as belonging to a particular culture, time, or place.

**Subject area:** Science

**Standard:** Understands motion and the principles that explain it.

**Benchmarks:** Knows that things move in many different ways.

**Subject area:** Science

**Standard:** Understands basic features of the Earth.

**Benchmarks:** Knows that short-term weather conditions can change daily, and weather patterns change over the seasons.

Guide written by Kimiko Kajikawa

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