

A Thai folk story

Primary Lesson Plan



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Source

[Many Flowers](#), Brewer, W. (compiler), ISBN 1 86366 252 9

Learning area

English

Level

Lower primary

Description

Students listen to the Thai folk story *Ta-in and Ta-na* and discuss it before making a class display.

Purpose

To introduce students to folk stories from an Asian tradition and help them to develop an understanding of the *moral* of a story.

Duration

About one hour

Possible outcomes

In relation to *English — a curriculum profile for Australian schools*, this lesson can contribute to the achievement of outcomes in all strands.

Materials required

A class set of the handout *Ta-in and Ta-na* (from below)

Procedure

1. Introduction

Explain that you are going to read a folk story from Thailand to the class. Use a large map to ensure that students know the location of Thailand relative to Australia.

Explain that Thailand is in Asia and is a tropical country. Point out the long coastline and ask the class what Thai people might like to eat. Establish that people living near the sea are probably able to catch and eat fish.

2. **The story**

Read *Ta-in and Ta-na* to the class, pausing as necessary to ensure that students understand the story. The concept of an *elder* will probably require explanation.

3. **Discussion**

Ask students what Ta-in and Ta-na learned from their experience. Establish that the story tells us that they learned that it is better to cooperate and share. Students may be able to suggest comparable examples from their daily lives. Introduce the concept of a *moral* as something we can learn from a story.

4. **Making a class display**

Ask each student to choose an event from the story, draw a picture of it and make a statement about it. Encourage different drawings of events covering the whole story. Then assist students to write their statements below each drawing. Arrange the drawings in *story order* and display the work in the classroom. Alternatively, bind the pages together into a book. In either case, arrange for the moral of the story to appear at the end.

Extension activity

Discuss the role played by Ta-yoo, the elder in the story. He is a *compromiser* or conflict resolver. Ask students what might have happened if Ta-yoo had not arrived. Also ask why Ta-in and Ta-na accepted his judgement. Then ask students to think of other examples of the compromiser role. (Obvious ones include parents and teachers but some students also play the role.) Discuss what makes the judgement of the compromiser acceptable.

Acknowledgements

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Related resource

Access Asia: Primary Teaching and Learning Units 1996, Curriculum Corporation, Carlton, Vic.

Handout

Ta-in and Ta-na

Once upon a time there were two men who lived in the same coastal village in Thailand. One was named Ta-in and the other was named Ta-na. They became good friends and liked to do things together. Ta-in and Ta-na were very good fishermen so they decided to fish together in the bay. They built a small boat and caught lots of fish in the following days. They shared their catches and cooked them for their evening meal. After many months, their luck changed, and they caught fewer and fewer fish.

One day the two men had tried every place they knew to find fish but had no luck. Finally, Ta-in caught one fish, which they brought home. Since Ta-na had not caught a fish, Ta-in said that he would take the head and middle part of the fish and Ta-na could have the tail part. Ta-na did not like this: he also wanted the head and middle of the fish. But Ta-in shouted that it was not fair as he was the real owner of the fish since he caught it. He deserved the head and middle, and Ta-na should be happy to take the tail. They could not agree. In fact, they became angrier and angrier and finally started to fight with each other. Their swinging blows at one another and their loud shouts brought the villagers running.

A village elder called Ta-yoo came by and also heard them fighting. He pulled the men apart saying, 'Stop fighting!' Ta-in and Ta-na calmed down and agreed to let the elder solve their problem. They were afraid that otherwise they might hurt each other seriously. Ta-yoo thought about the problem for a long time. The villagers waited in silence for his decision. Finally he spoke.

'Ta-in, you caught the fish so you take the head. Ta-na, you did not catch any fish so you take the tail part. Because I have had to solve the problem for you, I will take the middle part of the fish.'

The two men were stunned but could not think of any other solution, so they agreed. Ta-in then took the head, Ta-na took the tail part and Ta-yoo took the biggest and best part of the fish. The villagers thought that it was a fair solution and walked away.

Both Ta-in and Ta-na were very sad. 'How foolish we were', said Ta-in. 'I caught the fish, and Ta-yoo got the best part. I should not have been so selfish.' 'No, I was the selfish one', said Ta-na. 'I didn't catch a fish, so I should have been happy to take the tail part.' The two men looked at each other. They finally realised that they had both been greedy. Because of this, they were both losers that day, but they had learned a valuable lesson.

From that day on, they worked together and helped one another. They shared their catches, no matter who had caught the most fish. In time the fish returned again in great numbers, and Ta-in and Ta-na caught so many fish that they could sell most of them. They even hired other men to help them with their fishing. They not only had become good friends again, they had also become wealthy.