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Teaching Tips

By Hui Li



In this gentle multigenerational adventure tale, author Hui Li cleverly embeds Chinese pictograms with the elements in every part of the story. As Lulu and her dog Dumpling cavort through an ancient Chinese landscape, encountering a fire-breathing dragon and saving the villagers (and eventually, also the dragon), readers are introduced to the forms of Chinese characters as graphic elements. The foreword, glossary, and author's note add the context and background for further understanding.

Potential questions & activities that can be paired with this book:

1. The fire-breathing dragon turned out to be not as dangerous once Lulu understood its problem. Have you ever had the experience of being misunderstood or misjudging someone else? What do you think we should do to avoid future misunderstandings?
2. Lulu went into the adventure land while she and her grandpa drew on scroll paper. What are some activities that you enjoy doing with your grownups? Can you make an adventure story based on the activity?
3. If we were to create pictograms ourselves, what might they look like? Remember, they shouldn't have too many lines each so it's easy to carve on the oracle bones!



A reminder to teachers: do not label the students' creations "Chinese Characters" or "Chinese Pictograms" - rather, have them name it after themselves: "Ali's 21st Century Pictograms" or "Mimi's Inventive Pictograms" to maintain cultural sensitivity and respect.

4. If we feel truly ambitious, in a group of three or four, create a graphic story incorporating some of the pictograms in the book OR your own created pictograms!

Additional Resources:

Chinese online dictionary: <https://www.mdbg.net/>

Picture dictionary for beginners: *DK's Mandarin Chinese-English Bilingual Visual Dictionary*. ISBN: 978-1465469199

Little Oxford English-Chinese Dictionary. ISBN: 978-7560076195

For advanced learners: *Merriam-Webster's Chinese-English Dictionary*. ISBN: 978-0877798590

Find more activities from Hui Li at <https://www.huilidraws.com/activities/scroll>

These Teaching Tips were prepared by Roxanne Hsu Feldman, a school librarian in New York City, originally from Taiwan.

Additional sources were provided by Hui Li.

