



Teacher's Notes: Cherry Blossom Festival

General Tips: The goal is to build background knowledge while leading an engaging discussion on any and all information that can be talked about on a given page. The items that you choose to bring up or focus on can be modified for the students you are working with. For example, if you have a student who can point to something in the picture, answer yes/no questions be sure to incorporate a lot more of that as you go through the book. On the same token, be sure to ask a lot of comprehension questions and critical thinking questions at the level appropriate for students working on those skills. There is something for everyone.

Addressing problem solving: Throughout the e-book, help students identify the problems that are involved and choice making opportunities throughout the article.

Page 1: This story happened in Washington, DC. About a hundred years ago is a long time. That is before your grandma was born. The mayor is an important person. He is the leader of the city. The Mayor of Tokyo. Tokyo is a city. It is in Japan. He gave a gift to President Taft. **Point:** Japanese lady, kimono, umbrella, cherry blossoms, Japan, USA **Questions:** Was 100 years a long time ago? Was it yesterday? What is a mayor? What is Tokyo? What is Japan? Where is it? What is a gift? Who did they give it to?

Page 2: William Taft used to be the president. He was a president a long time ago. He was president when Arizona first became a state. He was the president who said that AZ was a state. Presidents live in the White House. That is where Taft lived. He got a gift from the mayor of Tokyo. Tokyo is a city in Japan. **Point:** President Taft, hat, tie, cane, sidewalk, White House, trees **Questions:** What is the White House? Who lives there? Why did Taft live there? What was Taft's name? What did he get? Who gave it to him? Have you ever gotten a gift? Was he excited about the gift?

Page 3: The gift was trees! 3,000 trees! The trees were called cherry blossom trees. They are trees that grew in Japan. **Point:** Cherry blossom trees, water, tree trunk, sky, clouds, grass, Potomac River **Questions:** What does a cherry blossom tree look like? Where are they from? What was the gift? How many did he get? What did they do with the trees?

Page 4: Back then those trees were very exciting. The United States did not have that kind of tree. It did not grow here. Cherry Blossom trees grew in Japan, not the US. It was exciting. The trees are so pretty. Some of the blossoms are pink and some look white. **Point:** Japan, USA, Japanese building, Branches **Questions:** Where did the trees normally grow? Is Japan a long ways away from the US? Why do you think they gave President Taft those trees? Do you like the trees? Do you think they are pretty?

Page 5: The trees from Japan were a gift. The president got 3,000 of them. They were planted in Washington, DC. Today there are still a lot of those trees. They are all over Washington, DC. In the spring they bloom in the spring. **Point:** flower blossom **Questions:** Why are there so many cherry blossom trees in Japan? Where does the president live? When do the flowers on the tree blossom?

Page 6: The gift of the cherry blossom trees was a special gift. Each year there is a festival. It is called the Cherry Blossom Festival. It's in the spring because that is when the trees look so beautiful. The festival is a time to remember the gift from Japan. This spring it will start on March 25th. **Point:** March, 25th
Questions: What day of the week is the 25th? Is that the weekend? Would you like to go to that festival?

Page 7: There are a lot of fun things going on during the festival. One thing that is fun is the drummers from Japan. Would you like to see a Japanese drumming group? **Point:** drum, audience, drummer, drum stick
Questions: What can people see at the festival? What is a drummer? Where are the drummers from?

Page 8: The drummers are not the only fun thing happening. There is also a parade. The parade will be in Washington, DC. It is a Cherry Blossom Festival parade **Point:** balloon, cherry blossom, building, people wearing green shirts
Questions: What is a parade? Have you been to a parade? Why are they having that parade?

Page 9: The festival needs to be planned each year. They need to decide who will perform. They decide who will be in the parade. There is a Japanese Embassy in Washington. That is where some important people from Japan work. The first lady is the president's wife. This year that is Melania Trump. She and the people from the Japanese embassy planned the festival. Each year they plan one. **Point** Melania, First lady, Japanese Embassy, **Questions** : What does plan mean? Have you ever planned something?