

# The Firekeeper's Son

Book by Linda Sue Parks

Literature based unit study by Celia Hartmann and Ami Brainerd

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***Social Studies -- Korea:*** Today, Korea is two countries: North Korea and South Korea. Locate Korea on a map or globe. Inform your student that Korea is a peninsula (A peninsula is a piece of land surrounded by water on three sides. Italy and Florida are other peninsulas). About 80% of the Korean peninsula is mountains!

***Social Studies / Character -- Responsibility:*** When someone is responsible, he carries out the actions entrusted to him; he is ready to answer for his actions (and accept the consequence-- good or bad-- for those actions). Sang-hee was tempted to let the fire go out. How did he show responsibility? If you were Sang-hee's father, would you trust him? How might his father reward him? (with more responsibility and greater freedom/privileges). How do you show responsibility?

***Human Relationships -- Father and Son:*** In our story, Sang-hee's father takes time to explain the signaling system. Later, Sang-hee becomes concerned about where his father might be. Sang-hee races off to do his father's bidding...to light the fire so that the soldiers will not come. As Sang-hee tries earnestly to light the fire, he hears his father's voice. Later, as the two hobble down the hill, Sang-hee learns that when his father was a boy he too had wished to see the soldiers. Sang-hee's father was very proud that Sang-hee lit the fire and proved trustworthy.

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***Language Arts -- Simile:*** A simile is a comparison that uses like or as. Some examples from the story include:

"as bright as a soldier's sword"

"like a dragon with many humps"

"he knew the path like a friend"

Discuss these similes and their meanings with your student. Can you think of some ***original*** similes together? Use the words and blanks below. (try to stay away

from clichés! Clichés are over-used, worn-out phrases-- "as skinny as a rail" or "as tired as a dog")

Try to finish these similes:

As bright as \_\_\_\_\_

As tired as \_\_\_\_\_

He was old like \_\_\_\_\_

**Language Arts -- Personification:** In this story, the mountain path is personified. Pick out the examples from the text which give the mountain human attributes. Can your student personify a tree? A leaf? Maybe your older student would like to personify something more difficult like an emotion. Emotions are abstract (love, jealousy, hate, peace, frustration). Often times, writers will use personification to give some concrete qualities to something abstract. If love were a person, what would he wear? What would he do all day? What would he look like and what would he say? Your student may enjoy writing a short personification piece.

**Communications -- Bonfire Signal System:** Read Author's Note and discuss. Go-along book: *Puff -- Flash -- Bang! A Book About Signals* by Gail Gibbons. Explore ways people communicate without words (written or spoken), such as beacon fires, hand signals, alarms, and flags.

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**Math -- Ordinal Numbers:** This story can be used to help your child learn about ordinal numbers. Examples from the story:

"Our fire is the **first** fire."

"....a **third** firekeeper saw it."

When we learned to count, we used cardinal numbers: 1, 2, 3, etc. Those numbers tell us how many of something.

When using ordinal numbers, we count saying first, second, third, etc. We use ordinal numbers to indicate position or what order several things come in. For example, in a race a blue ribbon is given to the person who crossed the finish line first and a red ribbon to the person who came in second. Help your child

understand this concept even further by lining up five or ten of his favorite stuffed animals (counters, Lego, etc.) and helping him count using ordinal numbers, then see if he can do it on his own. If this is a new concept for a child, you may wish to work on several days during your rowing time.

***Math -- Triangles:*** Note that the father's hat, the tops of the huts, and the brush pile are all shaped like a triangle. Review the number of sides on a triangle (*tri* = three). What other things are shaped like triangles?

Can your student identify the triangles in the story by their sides?

#### Identifying Triangles by their sides

Isosceles- has two sides the same length and the third side a different length

Scalene- has all three sides different lengths

Equilateral-has all three sides the same length

You may want to cut some triangles out of paper and let your student measure the sides with a ruler to determine if they are isosceles, scalene, or equilateral.

Your older student may want to delve even deeper by learning to identify triangles according to their angles

Every triangle has at least two acute angles. It is the measure of the third angle that determines what type of triangle it is.

Acute-measures between 0 and 90 degrees.

Right-the angle measures 90 degrees.

Obtuse- measures between 90 and 180 degrees.

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#### ***Science -- Sprained Ankle***

Sang-hee "put an arm around his father's waist. His father hobbled as they walked, and leaned on Sang-hee's shoulder." Sang-hee's father may have sprained his ankle.

A sprained ankle is a common injury. Approximately 25,000 people sprain their ankles every day! Sometimes it happens when you are exercising or playing a sport; it can also happen when you simply step on an uneven surface. The bones

and joints in your ankles are held together with ligaments. Ligaments are stretchy and move with you as you walk, run, hop, go upstairs, etc. then go back to their normal position. When a ligament is forced to go beyond its normal stretch range (when the foot twists, rolls, or turns beyond its normal motions), a sprain occurs. A severe sprain causes the elastic fibers in your ligament to tear. (You can illustrate the three grades of sprains with a piece of elastic if you want).

There are three grades of sprains:

Grade 1- Mild

Slight stretching of the ligament and some damage to the fibers (called fibrils)

Grade 2- Moderate

Partial tearing of the ligament.

Grade 3- Severe

Complete tear of the ligament.

What to do for each type of sprain:

Go to the doctor; he may want to x-ray you to make sure you don't have broken bone.

Grade 1-

**R**-est your ankle by not walking on it

**I**-ce should be applied to keep swelling down; use 20-30 minutes 3-4 times daily

**C**-ompression bandages, ace-wraps, etc. that immobilize (don't allow you to use it) and support the ankle

**E**-levate for 48 hours keep your ankle above your heart level

Grade 2-

Use the RICE guidelines above; allow more time for healing

Grade 3-

You will probably need a cast and possibly even need surgery

Prevention

1. Warm-up with stretches before doing exercises or vigorous activities

2. Pay attention to the surfaces where you are walking/running
3. Wear good shoes
4. If you are out exercising or participating in a physical activity, pay attention to your body when it signals that you are tired. If you are tired and keep going, you are more likely to stumble, trip, etc.
5. Maintain good strength, muscle balance, and flexibility

**Science -- Human Skeleton:** It is also possible that Sang-hee's father broke his ankle bone. This would be a good opportunity to discuss the human skeleton system with your student. What bones are in the foot? What is the ankle bone called? (tarsal)

**Science -- Fire:** What makes a good fire? Small, dry kindling underneath. Larger pieces on top. Pyramid shape. Does the wood have to be dry? What happens if the wood is wet? Do some materials burn better than others?

You may want to use this book as an opportunity to discuss fire safety with your child.

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**Bible -- Temptation:** Sang-hee was tempted to not light the fire, so as to draw soldiers ready for battle to his village. He so desired to see those soldiers and their swords. We can go to God's Word and read several examples about men and women of the Bible who were tempted by various things and we can learn what happened to them. There are many lessons to be learned from these men and women. Remind your student of how Satan tried to tempt Jesus, but how He overcame it by using the Word of God. The Bible tells us many things to not be tempted by (discuss as age appropriate.) God will not let us be tempted by more than we are able. He will help us through it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Remind your student that one of the reasons God gave us his Word was for us to learn from it. The more we read and learn about His Word, the more we know how to fight off temptations in our life. Remember the Word is a "lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"....it will show us the way.

Memory Verse: James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

***Bible Memory Verses:***

Proverbs 20:11

"Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right."

You will be known for your actions whether they are good or bad. Sang-hee made a good choice and was probably known as a hero in the village.

Exodus 20:12

"Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."

What does the word honor mean? (respect, hold high, esteem) How did Sang-hee honor his father? How can you honor your parents?

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***Just for Fun***

- Read aloud: *A Single Shard* also by Linda Sue Parks
- Visit your local fire station
- Research some Korean recipes; cook and serve some authentic Korean cuisine

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