

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom \_\_\_\_\_

## A Crane Folktale

1. Which of these would be the best choice for a title to the story?
  - The Girl Crane
  - The Crane that Returned the Favor
  - Weaving Cloth
  - The Crane
2. What is the most likely reason the girl did not want the man and woman to see her while she was weaving?
  - She was ashamed she was thin.
  - She was worried about its looks.
  - She couldn't let its true nature be seen.
  - She was messy as she weaved the cloth.
3. This story is the best example of what type of literature.
  - Realistic fiction
  - Fantasy
  - Informational text
  - Mystery
4. What will most likely happen after the story?
  - The crane will return.
  - The crane will never return.
  - The man and the woman will find a new daughter.
  - The man and woman will keep weaving.

Long, long ago in a certain place there lived an old man and an old woman. By taking firewood to town every day and selling it, they were barely able to make a living.

One day as he was coming home from town the old man noticed something fluttering in the snow. "What could that be?" he said to himself.

Coming closer he found a crane struggling to free itself from a trap. "Oh, poor bird! I'll let you loose. Here..." The old man loosened the trap that was holding the crane's leg.

Spreading its broad wings the crane soared up toward the sky. "Kau! Kau! Kau!" she cried. After briefly circling overhead, the crane flew off toward the mountains.

"Never get caught again," muttered the old man.

That night there was a "ton-ton, ton-ton" sound. Someone was knocking on the front door. The old woman wondered who it could be at this time of night. When she opened the door, there stood the most beautiful girl she had ever seen. The girl spoke up. "I am lost. Could you please put me up for the night?"

"What a shame. Yes, come right in," replied the old woman.

The next morning the old man and woman woke up to find the house cleaned and breakfast already prepared. "What a bright girl she is!" Both of them took a liking to her. There upon the girl said, "I will work hard, so please let me stay here with you."

"What! You mean to say you will become our daughter! By all means!" They were overjoyed, and consented.

The girl was good-natured and worked very hard. She cleaned and did the wash and helped with many other chores. The old man was so happy he said to her, "Is there anything you wish to have?"

"I would like to have," she replied. "Would you buy me some yarn?"

The old man bought some yarn for his daughter. "I have a request," she said. "Please don't look in while I am weaving."

"All right. You can trust us."

The girl went into the shed and began weaving. "kata-kata baton, kata-kata battan" went the loom.

"She's a good weaver, eh?" Really, I say she can do anything!" Sitting beside the hearth the old couple listened spellbound to the sound to their daughter's weaving.

From then on the girl wove continually without eating. At last on the night of the third day she came out of the shed.

"Here. See what I made," she said as she spread the finished cloth in front of them.

"What a beautiful cloth!" exclaimed the old woman, her eyes wide open. The old man sighed many times and shook his head in wonderment.

"Please take it to town and sell it," requested the girl.

The old man took the cloth to town and cried out, "Is there anybody who would like to buy this clothe?" At once people began gathering around him and remarked, "This is extraordinary. We have never seen such beautiful cloth! It's almost as if the cranes are alive." The continued to admire the cloth, but nobody dared asked the price. Certainly it would bee too expensive.

Just then the lord happened to pass by. The old man timidly approached him and said, "Sir, please buy this cloth. It is very rare."

"What, a rare piece of cloth you say?" The lord dismounted from his horse and took the cloth in his hands. It glittered brightly and looked as if it would fly away any moment. "Well, it really is an amazing piece of cloth. I'll take it," said the lord as he handed over a bag full of koban. "Where id you get this?"

The old man swelled with pride as he answered, "My daughter wove it."

"Ah, good. I want another one woven. I'll pay you a handsome price for it.

"Yes, sire. Yes, indeed!"

With some of the gold coins the old man bought more rolls of silk yarn and hastily returned home.

"Look at all this money!" he exclaimed, waving the money bag back and forth.

"How lucky we are," cried the old woman with joy. At that she immediately began preparing a feast.

Handing the bundles of yarn to their daughter the old man said, "Here you are. We're counting on you."

The following day the girl again went into the shed. "Kata-kata battan. Kata-kata battan." The rhythmical sound of the loom could be heard coming from the shed.

"What a good weaver she is!" the old woman said with delight.

"We'll make a decent living because of her," joined in the old man.

The girl continued weaving without eating or sleeping. On the morning of the third day, the old woman began to worry about her daughter. Furthermore, she became curious as to how the girl wove.

"It wouldn't hurt to just peek, would it?" she asked.

"Don't do it! The girl asked us not to look in, didn't she?" The old man hurriedly tried to put a stop to his wife's suggestion. But the old woman couldn't hold herself any longer and peered into the shed through a crack in the window.

"Oh!" she gasped unthinkingly. There sat a crane, weaving on a loom. With her beak she was plucking her own feathers and weaving them into the cloth. The crane had become very thin, and as she wove, her tiny feathers went flying.

The old woman tried calling the old man, but no words came. All she could do was motion to him. Wondering what the matter was, he came up beside her.

"Oh, a crane!" He swallowed hard.

The girl came out of the shed carrying the newly-woven cloth. It seemed even more beautiful than the first one. Addressing the old man and woman, she said, "I am much obliged to you for your help. I am the crane you helped on that wintry day. Unfortunately, though, now that my real nature has been seen, I cannot remain in the form of a person. I truly hope the best for

you." Even as she spoke and the girl changed into a crane. Without pausing she went outside and took off into the sky.

"W...wait!" cried the old man and woman as they hurried after her.

"Kau! Kau! Kau!" called out the crane as she circled above the two. She soared ever higher and soon disappeared into the clouds.