



Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy

6

☑ **Lesson Objectives**

Core Content Objectives

Students will:

- ✓ Explain that fictional stories come from the author’s imagination
- ✓ Identify folktales as a type of fiction
- ✓ Explain that stories have a beginning, middle, and end
- ✓ Describe the characters, plot, and setting of “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy”
- ✓ Explain that people from different lands tell similar stories

Language Arts Objectives

The following language arts objectives are addressed in this lesson. Objectives aligning with the Common Core State Standards are noted with the corresponding standard in parentheses. Refer to the Alignment Chart for additional standards addressed in all lessons in this domain.

Students will:

- ✓ Demonstrate understanding of the central message or lesson in “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy” (RL.1.2)
- ✓ Recount and identify the lesson in folktales from diverse cultures, such as “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy” (RL.1.2)
- ✓ Orally compare and contrast similar stories from different cultures, such as “Tom Thumb,” “Thumbelina,” and “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy” (RL.1.9)
- ✓ Draw and describe one of the scenes from “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy” (W.1.2)
- ✓ Describe characters, settings, and events as depicted in drawings of one of the scenes from “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy” (SL.1.4)

- ✓ Add sufficient detail to a drawing of a scene from “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy” (SL.1.5)
- ✓ Prior to listening to “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy,” identify orally what they know and have learned about folktales, “Tom Thumb” and “Thumbelina”

Core Vocabulary

astonished, *adj.* Feeling or showing great surprise or wonder

Example: Yisbel was astonished to find a pony standing outside her apartment building; that does not happen very often in New York City!

Variation(s): none

crammed, *v.* Filled something with more than it could easily hold

Example: Marta crammed so many blocks into the container that the lid would not close.

Variation(s): cram, crams, cramming

deeds, *n.* Acts or actions

Example: Simple deeds, such as holding the door for others and saying “excuse me,” can make someone else’s day much better.

Variation(s): deed

dodging, *v.* Avoiding by moving quickly aside


Example: Chris was excellent at dodge ball, dodging every throw that came his way.

Variation(s): dodge, dodges, dodged

permission, *n.* Approval to do something

Example: The students asked their teacher for permission to throw an end-of-the-year party.

Variation(s): none

<i>At a Glance</i>	Exercise	Materials	Minutes
Introducing the Read-Aloud	Similar Stories from Different Lands: Story Element Review		10
	What Have We Already Learned?		
	Where Are We?	world map or globe	
	Purpose for Listening		
Presenting the Read-Aloud	Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy	(optional) rice bowl, chopsticks, sewing needle	15
Discussing the Read-Aloud	Comprehension Questions		10
	Word Work: Deeds	drawing paper, drawing tools	5
 Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day			
Extensions	Drawing the Read-Alouds	drawing tools, chart paper	20



Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy

6A

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

Similar Stories from Different Lands: Story Element Review

Review with students that people around the world love listening to and telling stories. Remind students that some of the stories told around the world are quite similar to each other, even though the stories originated in different places.

Review with students the basic elements of stories. The elements of stories are things that are found in every story, such as characters, setting, and plot. Remind students that the characters in a story are the people or animals that the story is about. The setting is where and when the story takes place. The plot is what happens in the story, or the events of the story in the order in which they happen. The conflict in a story is the problem the characters face. Characters in different stories from around the world might have similar conflicts, or problems, that they must deal with. Students should listen for how the characters, settings, plots, and conflicts are similar and different in these stories.

What Have We Already Learned?

Begin with a review of “Thumbelina” by asking students the following questions:

- Who can tell me what a folktale is? (A folktale is a story that someone made up long ago and that has been told again and again.)
- Who remembers the name of the folktale we listened to the previous lesson? (The name of the folktale we listened to in the previous lesson is “Thumbelina.”)
- In which country, or land, did the story of “Thumbelina” originate? (The story of “Thumbelina” originated in Denmark.)
[Have students locate Denmark on a world map or globe.]

- Who are the characters in “Thumbelina”? (The characters in “Thumbelina” are Thumbelina, the toad, the field mouse, the mole, the sparrow, and the little king.)
- How big is Thumbelina? (Thumbelina is scarcely as tall as a thumb.)
- What adventures does Thumbelina have? (Thumbelina travels down river on a lily pad, lives with a mouse in her home, and flies away to the warm countries on the back of a swallow.)
- What happens to Thumbelina at the end of the story? (She marries the little king.)
- Even though Tom Thumb was very small, he was still helpful to others. How was Thumbelina helpful to others? (Thumbelina saved the swallow’s life by secretly taking care of it each night. This shows us that even a little person can do great and wonderful things.)

Where Are We?

Tell students that today’s folktale originated in a country called Japan many, many years ago. Help students locate the country of Japan, which is part of the continent of Asia, on a world map or globe. You may wish to label each featured country on the map so that students can better keep track of and recall all of the different lands they learn about in this domain. Explain that Japan is made up of four major islands. Today’s story took place long ago on the biggest of these four major islands, Honshu. Tell students that today’s folktale is called “Issun Boshi,” which means “One-Inch Boy” in Japanese; it is also the name of the main character in this story. This folktale, like the previous two, also features a main character who is no bigger than a thumb.

Purpose for Listening

Ask students to listen carefully to find out how “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy” is similar to and different than “Tom Thumb” and “Thumbelina.”



Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy

← Show image 6A-1: Pagoda and Mt. Fuji in the distance

Long ago in a village in Japan, there lived an old man and his wife who more than anything wanted a child. They hoped and they wished. They went to the temple and prayed to the gods. “May we be blessed with a child,” they said, “even if he is no larger than our thumbs.”



← Show image 6A-2: The old man and the old woman with Issun Boshi

And then, their prayers were answered. In nine months’ time, a fine baby boy was born to the old couple. The child was lovely and very small. They called him Issun Boshi, which means “One-Inch Boy,” for he was no taller than his father’s thumb.¹

Issun Boshi grew up strong, smart, and helpful, though he grew no bigger. When twelve years had passed, Issun Boshi came to his parents and said, “Father and Mother, please give me your **permission** to go to the capital city, for I wish to see the world, learn many things, and make a name for myself.”²

His parents were very worried, scared to think of all the bad things that could happen to Issun Boshi in such a large city, but they knew their boy was smart and strong, so they agreed to let him go. They made for him a tiny sword out of a sewing needle. They also gave him a rice bowl for a boat and some chopsticks for oars.³

1 What other character names have “thumb” in them?

2 Issun Boshi asked for his parents’ permission to go to the capital city. When you ask for someone’s permission, you ask them to let you to do something.

3 People in Japan use chopsticks to eat food instead of forks.



← Show image 6A-3: Issun Boshi in a rice bowl boat⁴

In the rice bowl he floated down the river, using the chopsticks as paddles when the water became rough, and using his sword to catch fish. In a few days he arrived at the city of Kyoto.⁵ “My, what a busy city this is!” he thought. “So many people **crammed in**⁶ one space!” He walked carefully through the streets, **dodging**

4 [If you brought in a rice bowl, chopsticks, and/or a sewing needle, show each to the class as you read about them.]

5 Long ago, Kyoto was the capital or government center for Japan. Today, the capital is Tokyo.

6 or packed into

7 Issun Boshi moved carefully through the streets, *dodging*, or avoiding, feet and cart wheels.



← **Show image 6A-4: Issun Boshi and the noble lord**

feet and cart wheels.⁷ He kept walking until he came to a beautiful house, the largest in the city. At the foot of the steps sat a pair of shiny black *geta*, or wooden shoes. They belonged to the owner of the house, who was the wealthiest lord in the city.

The door of the great house opened. Out walked a man who put on the shiny black shoes. Issun Boshi called out, “Hello! Hello there!” The man looked around and, seeing no one, began to go back in. But Issun Boshi called out, “Down here! I’m down here, near your shoes! Please be careful you don’t step on me.”

The man, who was the lord of the house, leaned down and was **astonished**⁸ when he saw Issun Boshi. Issun Boshi bowed and politely introduced himself. “My name,” he said, “is Issun Boshi. I have just arrived in the city, and I would like to work for you.”

The lord picked up Issun Boshi in the palm of his hand. In a friendly voice he asked, “But what can a little fellow like you do?”

8 The lord was surprised to see someone as small as Issun Boshi.



← **Show Image 6A-5: Fly and sewing-needle sword**

A fly was buzzing around and bothering the lord, so Issun Boshi drew out his sewing-needle sword. With a quick swit-swat, away went the fly.⁹

“You are quite an amazing little fellow,” laughed the lord. “Come, you may work for me and live in my house.”

9 How does Issun Boshi help the lord? [You may wish to point out that it is not nice to harm living things, even little insects like flies.]



← **Show image 6A-6: Issun Boshi and the princess**

And so, tiny Issun Boshi went to live in the big, beautiful house, serving the noble lord. He made friends with everyone there, especially the princess, the lord’s lovely daughter. It seemed that he was always at her side, helping her in whatever way he could, whether by holding down the paper when she wrote a letter, or simply by riding on her shoulder and keeping her company while she walked through the beautiful gardens around the house. In time, the princess came to feel a strong affection for her little helper.¹⁰

10 [Pause here and ask the following questions to check student comprehension.]

1. What characters have you met?
2. Describe Issun Boshi’s journey to Kyoto.
3. How does Issun Boshi help the princess?

In the spring, Issun Boshi traveled with the princess and her companions to the cherry blossom festival. On their way home, they began to hear strange noises behind them on the narrow road. They could see nothing in the shadows, when suddenly a huge monster leaped into their path.



← **Show image 6A-7: The *oni***

Everyone screamed and ran—everyone except Issun Boshi and the princess.

“Who are you, and what do you want?” cried Issun Boshi.

“I am an *oni* [OH-nee],” growled the monster. An *oni*! The *oni*, were terrible creatures, who bothered the townspeople.

But Issun Boshi stepped forward and shouted, “Get out of the way, you demon! I am here to guard the princess. Step back!”¹¹

← **Show image 6A-8: Issun Boshi in the *oni*'s stomach**

“Ha! We’ll see about that!” growled the *oni*. Then he snatched up Issun Boshi, popped him into his mouth, and—gulp—swallowed him whole. Down, down Issun Boshi slid until he landed—plop—in the *oni*'s stomach.

“This *oni* should be more careful about what he eats,” said Issun Boshi. He pulled out his sewing-needle sword and began to tickle the *oni*'s stomach.

“Ow! Ooh! Agh!” shouted the *oni*. Then he gave a loud burp, and out popped Issun Boshi! The *oni* ran away, burping the whole way.¹²

← **Show image 6A-9: Issun Boshi, the princess, and the magic hammer**

Issun Boshi ran over to the princess. She was bending down and picking something up from the ground. With great excitement she said, “Look, Issun Boshi, the *oni* was so scared he dropped this magic hammer. If you make a wish on it, it will come true.”

Issun Boshi bowed to the princess and said, “My lady, I would ask that you make a wish.”

11 [Have students briefly discuss the following question with their partners] Even though Issun Boshi is a small person, he stands up to the *oni*. What would you do if you were Issun Boshi?



12 How does Issun Boshi defeat the *oni*?



13 What do you think Issun Boshi will wish for?

“No, Issun Boshi,” said the princess. “You won this because of your bravery. You should be the first one to wish on it.”¹³

So Issun Boshi took the hammer and said, “I already have my greatest wish, which is to serve you. But if I could have another wish, I would wish to be as tall as other people.”

14 What do you think the princess wished for?

Then he gave the hammer to the princess, who made a silent wish on it herself.¹⁴ Then and there, Issun Boshi began to grow taller . . . until beside the princess stood a handsome young man.



← **Show image 6A-10: Issun Boshi with the princess and his parents**

That night, when the princess told her father how brave Issun Boshi had been, and how he had risked his life to save her, the lord was so happy that he gave Issun Boshi permission to marry the princess. And so, you see, the princess’s wish came true, too.

15 or actions

Issun Boshi’s brave **deeds**¹⁵ were celebrated throughout the land. He and the princess lived happily together, along with Issun Boshi’s proud and happy parents, whom Issun Boshi had brought to the lord’s house to be part of his new family.

Discussing the Read-Aloud

15 minutes

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

1. *Literal* What did the old man and the old woman wish for in the beginning of this folktale? (They wished for a child.) In which other folktales did people wish for children? (People also wished for children in “Tom Thumb” and “Thumbelina.”)
2. *Literal* What is the setting of this story? (The setting of this story is in the village, at the big house, and at the cherry blossom festival.) For whom did Issun Boshi work when he arrived in Kyoto? (When Issun Boshi arrived in Kyoto, he worked for the wealthiest lord in the city.)
3. *Literal* What brave deed does Issun Boshi do? (Issun Boshi’s brave deed is to chase away the *oni*.)
4. *Evaluative* What does Issun Boshi wish for on the *oni*’s hammer? (Issun Boshi wishes to be as tall as other people.) What would you have wished for? (Answers may vary.)

5. *Literal* What happened to Issun Boshi at the end of this folktale? (He grew taller and married the princess.)
6. *Evaluative* Could this story really happen or is it fiction? (This story is fiction.) How do you know? (One-inch boys do not exist; there are no *oni*; magic hammers cannot make people taller; etc.)
7. *Evaluative* What lesson can we learn and use in our own lives from this folktale? (Little people can do great and wonderful things.)
8. *Evaluative* How were Issun Boshi's adventures similar to Tom Thumb and Thumbelina's adventures? (All three characters helped other people and did great and wonderful things for others in their adventures.)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask you a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

9. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* Pretend that you are only one inch tall like Issun Boshi. How could you be helpful to others? (Answers may vary.)
10. After hearing today's read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

Word Work: Deeds

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “Issun Boshi’s brave *deeds* were celebrated throughout the land.”
2. Say the word *deeds* with me.
3. Deeds are acts that can be good or brave, as in today’s read-aloud.
4. Michelle’s New Year’s resolution was to do several good deeds for others.
5. Have you ever done good deeds for others? Try to use the word *deeds* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “I did good deeds when . . .”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about?

Use a *Drawing and Discussion* activity for follow-up. Directions: Talk about good deeds you have seen your classmates or family members do. Explain what made these deeds good. Create an awards certificate recognizing a classmate for a good deed they have done. Present the certificate to your classmate, explaining why you have chosen to honor them for their good deeds. Be sure to begin your responses with “I saw _____ do good deeds when they . . .”



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy

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Extensions

20 minutes

Drawing the Read-Alouds

Tell students that by now they have heard three folktales that feature main characters no bigger than a thumb. Explain to students that this is an important similarity in these folktales, but that there are other similarities, as well as differences. Tell students that to discover the differences and other similarities, they are going to draw the characters, setting, and a scene from the middle of each read-aloud. Explain to students that although several events occurred in the middle of each read-aloud, they are to pick just one to draw and discuss.

Divide the class into thirds. On a large piece of chart paper, have one-third of the class draw the characters, setting, and one scene from “Tom Thumb.” Have the other two groups do the same for “Thumbelina” and “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy.” As students draw, circulate around the classroom and help any group or student who has trouble remembering the characters, settings, or events from the read-alouds. Students should write sentences describing their drawings using the sound-spelling correspondences taught thus far.

After students have finished drawing, have each group present their pictures and sentences to the class. As students present, ask them to name the characters they have drawn, describe the setting, and explain the scene from the folktale. Also, have students explain what occurs before and after the scene they have chosen. As the second and third groups present, prompt students to point out any similarities or differences they notice. Remember to repeat and expand upon students’ vocabulary, using richer and more complex language, including vocabulary from the read-alouds. At the end of the exercise, display the students’ posters around the classroom.



Pausing Point

PP

Note to Teacher

You should pause here and spend one day reviewing, reinforcing, or extending the material taught thus far.

You may have students do any combination of the activities listed below, but it is highly recommended you use the Mid-Domain Student Performance Task Assessment to assess students' knowledge of similar folktales from different lands. The other activities may be done in any order. You may also choose to do an activity with the whole class or with a small group of students who would benefit from the particular activity.

Core Content Objectives Up to This Pausing Point

Students will:

- ✓ Explain that fictional stories come from the author's imagination
- ✓ Identify folktales as a type of fiction
- ✓ Explain that stories have a beginning, middle, and end
- ✓ Describe the characters, plot, and setting of a given story
- ✓ Explain that people from different lands tell similar stories

Student Performance Task Assessment

10 Riddles for Core Content (Instructional Master PP-1)

Note: Name the pictures in each row as you read each riddle to students.

Directions: I am going to read a riddle about one of the stories you have heard. First, you will listen to the riddle that I read. Next, you will look at the two pictures in the corresponding numbered row as I name them. Then, find the picture that answers the riddle. Finally, you will circle the correct picture.

1. **Billy Beg/Tom Thumb:** I use a magic belt and stick to defeat a one-eyed giant and a dragon. Who am I? (Billy Beg)
2. **Rhodopis/Thumbelina:** I'm scarcely as tall as a thumb. I saved the life of a hurt swallow. Who am I? (Thumbelina)
3. **Tom Thumb/Rhodopis:** Two robbers laugh at me and call me an elf when I say I can help them. Who am I? (Tom Thumb)
4. **Cinderella/Billy Beg:** My stepsisters treat me horribly and I receive help from a fairy godmother. Who am I? (Cinderella)
5. **Issun Boshi/Cinderella:** I am clever and perform good deeds despite my small size. I also rescue a princess from an *oni* monster. Who am I? (Issun Boshi)
6. **Billy Beg/Rhodopis:** A falcon swoops down and takes one of my slippers to the pharaoh. Who am I? (Rhodopis)

Activities

Different Lands

Materials: World map

Help students locate and identify on a map the different lands discussed in this domain. Name each country, noting the continent on which it is found, and ask students if they remember any folktales that come from that country. You may prompt discussion by asking questions such as, "Where does "Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy" take place?" (Japan) or "Where does Billy Beg live?" (Ireland)

Picture Review

Show the Flip Book illustrations from any read-aloud again, and have students retell the folktale using the illustrations.

You may also show various illustrations from the folktales that have been read so far. Focus on illustrations that show events that are similar to reinforce the Core Content Objectives of similar stories from different lands.

Sequencing Events with Image Cards

Materials: Image Cards 1–10; Instructional Master PP-2,

Use Image Cards 1–10 to sequence and retell “Cinderella” and “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy.” Talk about the beginning, middle, and end of the plot of each story. These image cards may also be used as a center activity.

An instructional master has also been provided for “Issun Boshi: One-Inch Boy” if you would like for students to sequence the events of the story individually.

Domain-Related Trade Book or Student Choice

Materials: Trade book

Read a trade book to review a particular folktale or variation; refer to the trade books listed in the domain Introduction. You may also choose to have students select a read-aloud to be heard again.

Key Vocabulary Brainstorming

Materials: Chart paper, chalkboard, or whiteboard

Give students a key domain concept or vocabulary word such as *clever*, *deeds*, or *worthy*. Have them brainstorm everything that comes to mind when they hear these words. Record their responses on a piece of chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard for reference.