

# Mary Fujii



Daughter of Japanese Immigrants  
(historical)  
1922

## Section Contents

Teacher Introduction

Story

- Introduction
- My Family
- The Family Business
- Chores
- School and Learning
- Festivals and Traditions

Vocabulary

Images

- Fujii Family Home & Nursery
- Fujii Family

Lesson Plans

1. Hayward's Blooming Business
  - Instructions for Teachers
  - Student Worksheet and Chart
2. Art Tells the Story
  - Instructions for Teachers
  - Image: *Farm*, Hisako Hibi 1940
  - Images from *Peaceful Painter: Memoirs of an issei Artist – Hisako Hibi* by Ibuki Lee, 2004
3. Haiku
  - Instructions for Teachers
4. Karuta Cards
  - Instructions for Teachers
5. Colorful Carnations
  - Instructions for Teachers

Karuta Card Translations

Storybook Summary

## Mary Fujii

### Teacher Introduction

The story of Mary Fujii is the true story of the eldest daughter of the Fujii family of Hayward. The Fujiis owned a flower nursery on Soto Road between 1920 and the mid 1990s, except during World War II when the family was interned at Topaz.

The Hayward area has had many nurseries going back to the earliest days when men like William Meek and Henderson Lewelling had large operations. Around 1900, Italian and Portuguese immigrants established smaller nurseries. At that time, horticulture was the leading revenue producer in the area. By 1915, there were four Japanese-owned nurseries in the county: the Fujii nursery, the Okada nursery, the Shibabata nursery, and the Domoto nursery. There were also four nurseries that were leased by Japanese Americans. Into the 1920s and 1930s more nurseries were established and about one half were Japanese run.

Unfortunately, during the Japanese's Internment in World War II, many of the nursery owners lost their businesses. Some were able to go back to their homes and businesses after the war because of helpful neighbors and friends who managed the property for them. The Fujii family's nursery was taken care of during the war and they were able to get back into business in the late 1940s.

Mary Fujii's younger sister, Kimiko Fujii Kitayama, shared the story of Mary and the Fujii family with Tina Tworek, a graduate student intern from California State University East Bay History Department.



*Mary and her younger sister, Kimiko Fujii Kitayama*

Mrs. Kitayama said that her sister Mary graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, where she got a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology. Then she went to the University of Chicago in Illinois to study for her Master's degree. After Mary got this degree, she worked on a Ph. D. in Anthropology which she almost completed. She married another anthropology student and they had two sons. Mary died of lung cancer when she was about 56 years old.

Today, Mrs. Kitayama is a volunteer at the Hayward Area Historical Society. We greatly appreciate her sharing her pictures and family stories for this project – they are treasures.

## Mary Fujii



In addition to Mary, the Fujii children were Katsuyo ("Sally"), Kenji, Kimiko ("Kimi"), Sumiko ("Sue"), and Hanako. Like many immigrants or children of immigrants, the Fujii children "Americanized" their names at some point in their lives. Mary however did not have a Japanese name.

Tina Tworek did additional research on the Japanese American experience in the early 1900s and developed this section.

*Mary as a student in Berkeley*

### Generations

The first significant wave of immigration from Japan to the United States began in the late 1800s and virtually ended in 1924 when the U.S. federal government put a quota on the number of people immigrating to the country and barring all people who were ineligible for citizenship. Japanese could not become U.S. citizens, although their children born in this country were automatically citizens.

Here are some words that help students understand how the Japanese designate the different generations of people living in the United States. The Japanese words for 1, 2, 3, and 4 are *ichi*, *ni*, *san*, and *yon*.

- Issei:*** A Japanese immigrant, first generation in the United States (could not obtain citizenship)
- Nisei:*** Second generation Japanese American, first generation born in the United States
- Sansei:*** Third generation Japanese American, second generation born in the United States
- Yonsei:*** Fourth generation Japanese American, third generation born in the United States
- Kibei:*** Japanese American born in the United States, who went to Japan to live for a while and then returned

The *Issei* generation was mostly men who had been farmers in Japan (some had worked on the sugar plantations in Hawaii). They came to the United States in search of a better life. The first to settle in the East Bay were farm laborers in East Oakland's Elmhurst district. Many of them eventually moved to the Hayward area (particularly the Mt Eden and Ashland neighborhoods) and took up farming here as well. They grew flowers and vegetables (especially cucumbers and tomatoes).

## Mary Fujii

The *Issei* men did not speak English and relied on hand signals to sell their crops. They would carry their produce in baskets on their backs and walk to the ferry to go to the markets in San Francisco. The next generation, the *Nisei*, were able to better negotiate the family businesses as they were citizens, spoke English, and purchased trucks and cars to improve farm efficiency.

Note:

*At one point in the story, Mary talks about being hit by her teacher for not knowing English. Please carefully explain that it is now illegal in the state of California to administer corporal punishment. This part of the story also provides you the opportunity to discuss English as a second language and bilingual classes.*

## Mary Fujii

### Introduction



Hello! My name is Mary Fujii. Make sure you pronounce both “i’s” in Fujii. You say it like this “fu-gee-ee” – it has three **syllables**. My father named me Mary after America.

I was born in Oakland, California in 1913. My mother didn’t go to a hospital to give birth to me. Instead a **midwife** came to our home to help my mother give birth there. The midwife helped before and after I was born. She cooked and cleaned the house and made sure that my mother and I were alright. My brother and sisters were born at home, too, and the midwife helped my mother with their births, too.

### My family

My father’s name was Ryutaro Fujii. My mother’s name was Katsu Fujii. They were born in Japan.

My parents were Japanese. My father came from Japan in 1902 by boat. He was 21 years old when he landed in San Francisco. He came to study, but first he had to work to make money. Other people from Japan who lived in the area helped him get jobs. One of his jobs was working in the orchards at the Winchester House in San Jose.

My mother was also born in Japan. Sadly, her parents died when she was just 12 years old. So she had to go a private **boarding school**. Mama became a teacher in Japan. My father’s mother liked my mother and asked her to go to the United States and marry her son (my father). It was a popular Japanese **custom** for parents to arrange the marriage of children. My mother came to the United States in 1912 by boat. Mama and Papa got married in 1912 and then moved to Hayward.

Father opened a **nursery**. This was a lot of work, but it was also special, because it was our family business.

Mama had to do hard work, too. She helped my father in the nursery. She had to learn how to cook and do other chores. She didn’t have to do that in Japan, because her family was **prosperous** and had servants. Here in America, she learned working skills from the women at the Domoto’s nursery who lived next door.

## Mary Fujii

My parents and other adults like the Domotos were called **Issei** or first **generation**. They were the first generation in their family to live in the United States. My sisters and brother and I are called **Nisei**, because we were born in the United States. We are second generation Japanese-Americans, the second generation to live here.

Here is an easy way to remember: *ichi* is 1 and *ni* is 2 in Japanese

The children like me of the Nisei generation are America **citizens**. According to U.S. law, my parents could not become American citizens, because they were born in Japan. Many people thought that this was a bad law.



*Fujii Family Portrait*

This is a picture of my family. The man in the middle was my father. My mother was holding my little brother on her lap. I am on the right sitting next to my sister Katsuyo. The man standing behind us was a person who worked for us at the nursery.

I was born in 1913. I had four sisters: Katsuyo (her nickname was Sally), Kimiko (but most people called her Kimi), Sumiko (called Sue), and Hanako. We had one brother named Kenji.

## Family Pictures



## Mary Fujii



### The Family Business

Our family owned a **nursery**. This was a place where plants and flowers were grown to sell. Our nursery was on the corner of Orchard Avenue and Soto Road in Hayward.



My parents started the nursery here in 1920. We grew **carnations** of many colors. Our house was right next to the **greenhouses** where the carnations grew.



## Mary Fujii



We had eight greenhouses. They were mostly made of glass. When it was cold and rainy outside, inside the greenhouse was warm, and there was no rain inside, of course. That way we could **regulate**, or choose, the temperature we wanted for our plants.

Mama and Papa both worked in the nursery. Sometimes when I was not in school, like during summer vacation, I helped in the nursery, too. But during school when Mama was busy working at the nursery with Papa, I stayed at home and made sure that my brother and sisters did their homework and their chores and didn't get into trouble. Mama said that we couldn't listen to the radio during the day, because it would make us lazy. My parents helped us with our math homework when they were not working. Both Mama and Papa could read English so they also helped us with reading.

Our neighbors were also in the nursery business. One family was the Anselmos who were Portuguese. We had a lot of fun with their nephew Georgie.



*Here is a picture of my sisters and me with Georgie.*

## Mary Fujii

### Chores

I'd like to tell you what kind of jobs my sisters, my brother, and I did in the nursery. We watered the carnations with a hose. We bunched the flowers according to their **quality**, so they looked all about the same. Each bunch had 24 flowers in it. Then Papa took all the flower bunches to the Flower Market in San Francisco to sell.



To get new flowers to grow, we would **disbud** the other flowers so that only one bud was left. Only one flower per stem would grow and it would be larger. We cut the **side shoots** and used them as **cuttings** to start new plants.



We also weeded the flower beds.



On St. Patrick's Day we made the carnations green! We took white flowers and put them in water dyed green. After a few hours, the dye went up the stem and into the flower. It turned the flower green. People liked that and bought a lot of them.

### School & Learning

I want to tell you what happened on my first day of school. When I first started, I went to school in a neighborhood called Ashland. I didn't speak English. I spoke only Japanese. My parents could read in English (and Japanese), but they spoke only Japanese at home with us children. Papa spoke English when he went to San Francisco to sell our flowers at the Flower Market in San Francisco.

Because I didn't understand English, my teacher hit me. This was very upsetting. I made sure that when my brother and sisters went to school, they spoke English. I didn't want them to get hit when they started school. I tried to protect them from this.



*John Muir School was built in 1922.*

## Mary Fujii

Next, I went to John Muir Elementary School in Hayward. My sister, Sally, and I liked it there. It was right across the street from our house. My mother made us come home for lunch because we lived so close. When I got older I went to Bret Harte, then to Hayward High.

Besides going to school we had a tutor come to our house to teach us Japanese reading and writing. I also took piano lessons, and my sister, Sally, took violin lessons. We had to walk into town to take our lessons. While we were in town, we went to the Hayward Library.

### Festivities & Traditions

Our papa loved ALL holidays – American and Japanese. We celebrated them all. These were the Japanese holidays we celebrated:

New Year's Day:	the same day as American New Year's, January 1
March 3 (3/3):	Girls' Day (called Sangatsu-no-oseku or Hinamatsuri)
May 5 (5/5):	Boys' Day
Early May:	Hanamatsuri, the Flower Celebration
July/August:	Obon Festival, the Festival of the Dead

On Japanese New Year, families exchange gifts of food. We ate some special foods on holidays, like dried **fish roe** (fish eggs) which are soaked in sake for a few days. Sake is a kind of Japanese wine.

On Girls' Day, March 3, we showed all our Japanese dolls: the Emperor and the Empress dolls and their attendants. We put out an offering of Japanese cakes and fruit, and then the next day, after we had our parents' permission, we ate the offering.



*Credit: Some People I Know.  
Houghton Mifflin, 1991*

On Boys' Day the boys flew kites that look like **carp** (a kind of fish). They showed their dolls, too.



*Credit: Some People I Know.  
Houghton Mifflin, 1991*

For the **Obon Festival** we ate **ohagi**, which is dark brown bean paste around the edge of a bowl of rice. Other special foods we ate were **sushi** and octopus. We also ate shellfish on this day.

## Mary Fujii

Our father was a **Buddhist**. Many Japanese and Japanese Americans are Buddhists. There was no Buddhist temple near us, so Papa took us to the Buddhist Church in Oakland when there were big celebrations. At these important events there was an **ochigo** procession on the streets around the church. The smaller kids dressed in special outfits just like they wore in Japan.



This is a picture of my sister dressed in traditional *ochigo* clothing.

Some Japanese people are **Christians**. Mama was a Christian. The school she attended in Japan was run by Christian **missionaries**. Sometimes a Christian minister came to our house to study the Bible with our mother.

We all loved Christmas, and we exchanged gifts with our family. On Memorial Day we took flowers to the gravesites of our parents' friends, because we were not close to our own ancestors, who were buried in Japan. On the 4th of July Papa bought us firecrackers. We would put the firecrackers into green apricots that we took off trees. We lit the fuse and

BANG!!! What a mess!

Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter, Valentine's Day and all of our birthdays were important times for celebrations, too. Like I said before, our Papa loved ALL holidays, and so did we!

I want to tell you one more special thing. We had a **Japanese bathhouse** called an *o-furo*. We took a bath just like in Japan. The *o-furo* was a small wooden building with a wooden tub in it. The tub was a rectangle about 3 feet wide and 4 feet long and about 3 feet deep. The floor of the building was concrete with a drain in the middle. Underneath the tub was a piece of tin. Beneath that was a fire to heat the water. We made a fire under the tub from outside the bathhouse where there was an opening. We used wood and paper to make the fire. Before we got into the tub, we first got a bucket of the warm water from the tub. Then we poured it over ourselves and scrubbed until we were clean. Then we could go into the tub and relax.

Vocabulary

**boarding school** – a school where children live and go to school

**Buddhist** – someone who believes in the Buddhist religion

**carnation** – a flower, the carnation is the official flower of Hayward

**carp** – a fish

**Christian** – someone who believes in the Christian religion

**citizen** – a person who is an official member of a country

**custom** – the way something is done, a tradition

**cuttings** – parts of a plant cut off to be re-planted

**disbud** – to take the bud off of a flower

**fish roe** – fish eggs

**generation** – all the people who were born around the same time

**greenhouse** – an inside place to grow flowers and plants

**Japanese bathhouse** – a special building just for bathing

**midwife** – a woman who comes to a family home to help deliver and take care of a baby

**missionary** – a person who teaches others about his or her religion

**nursery** – a business that grows plants and flowers

**Obon** – the Japanese Festival of the Dead

**ochigo** – a parade of boys and girls in costumes

**ohagi** – bean paste for eating

**prosperous** – to be successful and have money

**quality** – how good something is

**regulate** – to change the temperature

**sake** – Japanese wine

**side shoots** – new parts of a plant that grow out of the side

**sushi** – a type of Japanese food

**syllable** – a part of a word (cat has one syllable, rabbit has two syllables)

**Issei** – A Japanese immigrant, first generation in the United States

**Nisei** – Second generation Japanese American, first generation born in the United States

Mary Fujii

Vocabulary

***Sansei*** – Third generation Japanese American, second generation born in the United States

***Yonsei*** – Fourth generation Japanese American, third generation born in the United States

***Kibei*** – Japanese American born in the United States, who went to Japan to live for a while and then returned

**Mary Fujii**



**Lesson Plans**

*People:* Mary Fujii  
*Classroom Kit:* Immigration Discovery Kit

**1 – Hayward’s  
Blooming Business**

**Activity Goals**

- To understand that agriculture was an important aspect of the local economy
- To understand the role Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans played in the community’s history

**Setting the Context**

According to Harwood Hall’s book *Eden Township: Its Agriculture*, nurseries represented “the most intensive use of the land” in the Hayward area. The nursery businesses provided root stock and young plants for orchards, young shrubs for landscaping and windbreaks, and field-grown flowers and bulbs. The growers supplied the wholesale markets as well as retail outlets.

Japanese American nurseries grew roses, gladiolus, chrysanthemums, heather, bonsai trees, and ornamental shrubs. Of course carnations were a major crop. At one time, Hayward grew more carnations than anywhere else in the world. Mary Fujii’s family grew this flower which became known as the official flower of Hayward and her younger brother Kenji was eventually elected president of the American Carnation Society in 1966.

Eventually, one by one, the nursery owners sold their land to developers as land values increased. By the 1990s, all were gone.

**Activity Instructions**

1. Distribute copies of the “Issei Farmers in the Hayward Area” chart. This information is based on a 1922 list of East Bay farmers, published by the Japanese American News. Only the first few names on the list are reprinted here. A full listing is available at the HAHS archives. Explain to your students that in the Japanese language, what we would consider the last name is actually written first. Find Mary’s father Yutaro on the list.
2. Students can complete the worksheet based on the information they find in the chart.

<b>Mary Fujii</b>
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### Issei Farmers in the Hayward Area Chart

<i>Who:</i>	<b>Issei Farmers</b>
<i>Where:</i>	<b>Hayward Area</b>
<i>When:</i>	<b>1922</b>

<b>Name</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Occupation / Crops</b>
Abe Shunichi	San Lorenzo	Berry Farmer
Araki Shinji	Mt Eden	Farmer: Cucumber & Tomato
Endo Usaburo	Hayward	Farmer: Cucumber & Tomato
Enomoto Kazue	Hayward	Farmer: Strawberry
Fujino Masanosuke	Hayward	Farmer: Pea & Cucumber
Fudenna Kiichi	Hayward	Farmer: Strawberry
Fujii Yutaro	Hayward	Nursery: Carnation Flower
Fujino Toyojiro	Mt Eden	Farmer
Furuta Tatsuto	Mt Eden	Farmer: Cucumber & Tomato
Goto Fujita	Mt Eden	Farmer, Pool House
Haramaki Saburo	Hayward	Technical Expert Gold Fishery
Hoshino Isetaro	San Lorenzo	Farmer
Inouye Toyohachi	Hayward	Farmer: Strawberry
Imose Taro	San Lorenzo	Cannery Foreman

**Mary Fujii**



**1 – Hayward's  
Blooming Business**

**Instructions**

➤ Look at the chart. Answer these questions:

1. The chart tells you about Issei farmers. From your vocabulary, do you remember what Issei means?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What year was the chart made?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What three bits of information does the chart tell you?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Mr. Haramaki wasn't a farmer of plants. What did he grow?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Can you find Mary's father on the chart? What was his full name?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. How many farmers grew carnations like Mr. Fujii?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Mary Fujii**



**Lesson Plans**

*People:* Mary Fujii  
*Classroom Kit:* Immigration Discovery Kit

**2 – Art Tells the Story**

**Activity Goals**

- To understand that agriculture was an important aspect of the local economy
- To understand the role Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans played in the community's history

**Setting the Context**

This activity uses three paintings by the artist Hisako Hibi (1909-1991).

Hisako Hibi and her husband Matsusaburo Hibi lived in Hayward before World War II with their two children Satoshi (“Tommy”) and Ibuki (“Peek-a-boo”). They lived at 16 Jackson Street in Hayward – a neighborhood where several of the Japanese nurseries were, including the Fujii’s. Hisako and Matsusaburo were artists, and he taught the Japanese language to children. Mary’s younger sister, Kimi, recalls taking lessons from Mr. Hibi in a classroom on the lower level of the Hibi home. About 20 children of all ages would come for class after school to learn calligraphy, and to read and speak Japanese. Mr. Hibi had textbooks from Japan for the students to use. Kimi remembered him as a good teacher.

Mrs. Hibi and her work were recently featured in a museum exhibition at the Japanese National American Museum in Los Angeles and at the de Saisset Museum at the University of Santa Clara. There is also a book about her life and art entitled *Peaceful Painter Hisako Hibi: Memoirs of an Issei Woman Artist* published by Heyday Books. The exhibit and book chronicle her life from Hayward to the Japanese Internment Camp at Topaz, Utah and her return to San Francisco. (Like the Hibis, Mary and her family were also interned at Topaz during the second world war.)

**Mary Fujii**



**Lesson Plans**

*People:* Mary Fujii  
*Classroom Kit:* Immigration Discovery Kit

**2 – Art Tells the Story**

**Activity Instructions**

1. Display the three paintings by Hisako Hibi of her home in Hayward.
2. Discuss the paintings with your students. Start with simple questions that help with describing and analyzing the paintings; eventually use more abstract questions that will lead to further interpretation and meaning making.
  - What colors are used in the paintings?
  - What is going on in the paintings?
  - What do you see that makes you say that?
  - Why would Mary's family put these paintings in their home?
  - What types of art do you have at home? Why?
3. To deepen their perception of the paintings, ask students to think about what life was like when the Hayward area was largely agricultural.
  - How many houses are in each painting?
  - Do these look like crowded neighborhoods?
  - What type of road is being shown?
  - What things tell us that this was an agricultural area?
  - What modern technologies do you see?
4. Now, have students discuss their own homes and neighborhoods.
  - What is similar to the artist's/Mary's home and neighborhood?
  - What is different?
5. Finally, have the students tell their own home's story through art making. While Hisako Hibi worked with oil paint, any media will work.

**Mary Fujii**



**Lesson Plans**

*People:* Mary Fujii  
*Classroom Kit:* Immigration Discovery Kit

**3 – Haiku**

**Activity Goals**

- To discuss experiences of immigrants.
- To retell a story using descriptive language.

**Setting the Context**

Haikus are a short Japanese poem that consists of three lines. The lines are five, seven and five syllables respectively. Haikus are reflective, descriptive poems, about people, objects or an event.

**Activity Instructions**

After hearing Mary’s story and reading “Grandfather’s Journey,” have the children write a haiku (5-7-5) about traveling from Japan to California. Encourage them to use descriptive language and reflect on this traveling adventure. Have them think about what Grandfather missed and loved about both California and Japan. Use the words below for inspiration.

Words from Mary’s story:

Boy’s Day	dolls	nursery
carnation	generation	orchard
carp	Girl’s Day	plants
chores	greenhouse	rice
custom	holiday	sister
cuttings	kite	<i>sushi</i>

Words from “Grandfather’s Journey:”

beauty	family	suitcase
boat	hometown	surprise
buildings	homesick	traveling
city	love	trees
country	sea	water

**Mary Fujii**



**Lesson Plans**

*People:* Mary Fujii  
*Classroom Kit:* Immigration Discovery Kit

**4 – Karuta Cards**

**Activity Goals**

- To quickly recognize and distinguish between letters and words.
- To create a drawing that summarizes text.

**Setting the Context**

The word *karuta* is derived from the Portuguese word *carta* (card). Karuta are rectangular cards inscribed with numbers, pictures or writing that are used for playing card games. These cards are variations of Western cards brought to Japan by Portuguese sailors in the early 1600s. Today, karuta is a favorite during New Year's festivities.

Children play with *iroha karuta*, the alphabet cards because players only need to recognize the Japanese "alphabet" and 48 popular proverbs. In *iroha karuta*, a deck of 96 cards is used. Half the deck contains picture cards that have both a picture and a different *kana*, or Japanese syllable. These cards are called *e-fuda* (picture cards) or *tori-fuda* (grabbing cards). The other half deck contains the full text of a Japanese proverb, or well-known saying.

The basic idea of karuta is to be able to quickly identify and grab the called card before it is grabbed by an opponent. The caller of this game recites a proverb and the players go for the card on which is written the first syllable of the proverb along with a picture illustrating the proverb.

This is a very active game that requires a lot of space. To play, line up the cards in several rows and have the children stand on the other end of the room. When the proverb or verse is called, the children run to the cards to identify the proverb text or picture with syllable. The first child to pick up the correct card gets one point. The winner is the student with the most cards.

**Mary Fujii**

**Lesson Plans**

*People:* Mary Fujii  
*Classroom Kit:* Immigration Discovery Kit



**4 – Karuta Cards**

**Materials Needed**

- Index Cards
- Pens and markers

**Activity Instructions**

Have the students create their own karuta cards and play the game according to the Japanese rules above.

1. Hand each student two index cards.
2. On one card, have them write one sentence of a favorite rhyme, song or storybook.  
For example: Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star
3. On another card, have them draw a picture of the story and write the first letter or word of that verse.  
For example: Twinkle or T
4. Make sure that the students write their name on the backs of both cards.
5. Collect all the cards and sort them into two piles: image cards and text cards.
6. Line the image cards up into a few rows on one side of the room.
7. Have the children stand on the other side.
8. Call out the verses from the text cards and have the children run and collect their cards.

**Option 1:**

Use the image cards to call out the verses and the text cards for the children to collect.

**Option 2:**

Make photocopies of the cards so that you can line up both the text and image cards. This will allow for two children to be able to pick up a card during each call. Use your photocopied list to call out the verses, remembering to call out each verse just once.

**Mary Fujii**



**Lesson Plans**

*People:* Mary Fujii  
*Classroom Kit:* Immigration Discovery Kit

**5 – Colorful Carnations**

**Activity Goals**

- To understand how agriculture was an important part of the economy
- To name crops that were/are locally grown
- To recognize that children played a part in the economy
- To view the transportation of water in a vascular plant.

**Setting the Context**

In honor of St. Patrick’s Day, Mary and her sisters would help dye carnations green. Why did the flowers change colors? How did they do that?

Read Mary’s story to the class. Discuss the role that Mary and her sister’s played in the family’s nursery.

**Materials Needed**

- carnations (or celery stalks)
- water
- food coloring of any color
- cup or other container

**Activity Instructions**

- Give each student a cup
- Pour 1/3 cup water into the cup
- Add a few drops of food coloring and stir
- Cut slits into the carnation or celery
- Place carnation or celery stalk in the cup of colored water
- Wait and look at the color change (may take 1-24 hours)

**Paper Carnations**

While the students are waiting for their flowers or celery to change color, create colorful carnations from origami (or thin colored) paper, available at most craft stores. Origami is the traditional Japanese art of paper folding.

## I Ro Ha Karuta (Proverb Karuta) Translation

By Tomoyo Kitazawa

See cards in Mary Fujii's artifact bag

1

ㇿ(Ro) *Ron yori shoko.*

Translation - Proof is stronger than argument.

Wisdom - A single fact is worth more than a lot of arguments.

Similar English Proverb – The proof of the pudding is in the eating.

2

ㇿ(Ru) *Ruri mo hari mo migakeba hikaru.*

Translation - Glass and crystals will both sparkle when polished.

Wisdom – When efforts are made, there will be results/improvements.

3

へ(He) *Heta na yokozuki.*

Translation – Pursuing interest with zeal, despite lack of talent.

Wisdom: The journey is the goal.

4

ㇿ(Tsu) *Tsukiyo ni kama o nuku.*

Translation - The cauldron is stolen on the moonlight night.

Wisdom - Mistakes are made when we let our guard down.

5

ㇿ(Ri) *Ryo-yaku wa kuchi ni nigashi.*

Translation - Good medicine is bitter to the mouth.

Wisdom – Helpful comments are hard to accept.

6

か(Ka) *Kawaii ko niwa tabi o sase.*

Translation - Send your dear child traveling.

Wisdom - Send your precious children out for experiencing the world so that they gain insights and grow wise as a person.

Similar English Proverb – Spare the rod and spoil the child.

7

た(Ta) *Tabi wa michizure, yo wa nasake.*

Translation - Companions in a journey, compassion in a society.

Wisdom - When traveling, it is reassuring to have company, and when living life, it is good to be compassionate to each other.

8

**ね(Ne)** *Nen niwa nen o ire.*

Translation - Be careful, and yet more careful.

Wisdom - Check and double-check. = Measure thrice before you cut once.

9

**こ(Ko)** *Ko wa sangai no kubikase.*

Translation - A child is the neck-shackle to its parents throughout the three worlds.

Wisdom - Children keep parents busy for all their lives.

10

**や(Ya)** *Yasumono kai no zeni ushinai*

Translation - Buy cheap and waste your money.

Wisdom - To buy cheap goods is to lose money.

11

**え(E)** *En wa ina mono aji na mono.*

Translation - Matches are made mysteriously by chance.

Wisdom - There is no telling which two will make a match.

Similar English Proverb – Marriages are made in heaven.

12

**て(Te)** *Teishu no sukina aka-eboshi.*

Translation - Red hat that the master likes

Wisdom - Let the husband have his favorite red eboshi (type of hat which usually comes in black only). = Families have to follow what the master of the house likes.

13

**さ(Sa)** *Samben mawatte tabako ni sho.*

Translation - Let us go round three times and have a smoke

Wisdom – Wait to rest until after finishing what you need to do.

14

**す(Su)** *Sukikoso monono jozunare.*

Translation - Liking is what makes us be good.

Wisdom - Nothing is hard to a willing mind.

15

**う(U)** *Uso kara deta makoto.*

Translation - A lie which happened to come true

Wisdom - Many a true word is spoken in jest.

**Storybook Summary - Mary Fujii**  
***Grandfather's Journey***

By Allan Say  
Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1993

*Grandfather's Journey* is a lean text with rich context and imagery. It traces the life of the author's grandfather from Japan to the United States and through his return home to Japan. It provides vivid scenes of the beauty of both countries, and the main character's love of his homeland and adopted home is evident.

Throughout his travels, Grandfather decides that he likes California the best and ends up settling in San Francisco with his bride.

The book takes a shocking turn when WWII breaks out and the Grandfather's beloved city is completely destroyed. But this event is relayed in the same spirit as the rest of the book, with haiku-like text, not saying more than is needed. Eventually they return to live in Japan with their daughter (the author's mother).

The conclusion of the book completes a circle. Like his Grandfather, the author lives a life between Japan and California, loving both places.

*Discussion Topics*

- Japanese immigration to the United States in the early 1900s
- WWII disrupted the lives of millions of people
- Comparing *Grandfather's Journey* with the story of the *Crossroads* child Mary Fujii
  - Mary Fujii's parents and Grandfather and his wife came to the United States at a time when immigration to U.S. was still legal (before the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 prohibiting Japan from issuing passports to workers wanting to migrate to the U.S.). They settled in California where the majority of Asian immigrants took residence.
  - Immigrants bring with them their traditions, memories, and love of home, often times missing their homeland.

