

A Bowl Full of Peace



A

Classroom

Discussion Guide

Dear Teachers,

A Bowl Full of Peace is a true story about Sachiko Yasui and her family's survival of the U.S. atomic bombing over Nagasaki, Japan during World War II.

Woven throughout the story are enduring signs of strength: resilience, healing, hope, understanding, and love. These characteristics and the ice chips that quench their thirst fill Sachiko's bowl full of peace—and they can fill ours too. By exploring Sachiko's story, we are reminded why peace is the essential work for all of us.

To explore Sachiko's story, the following color-coded slides offer your students different levels of discussion: literal, personal reflection, critical thinking, and collective action.

You may want to discuss these questions with your whole class or have small groups of students discuss sets of questions. In the end, may Sachiko's story and the discussions that follow inspire you and your students to reach out to one another in peace and understanding.

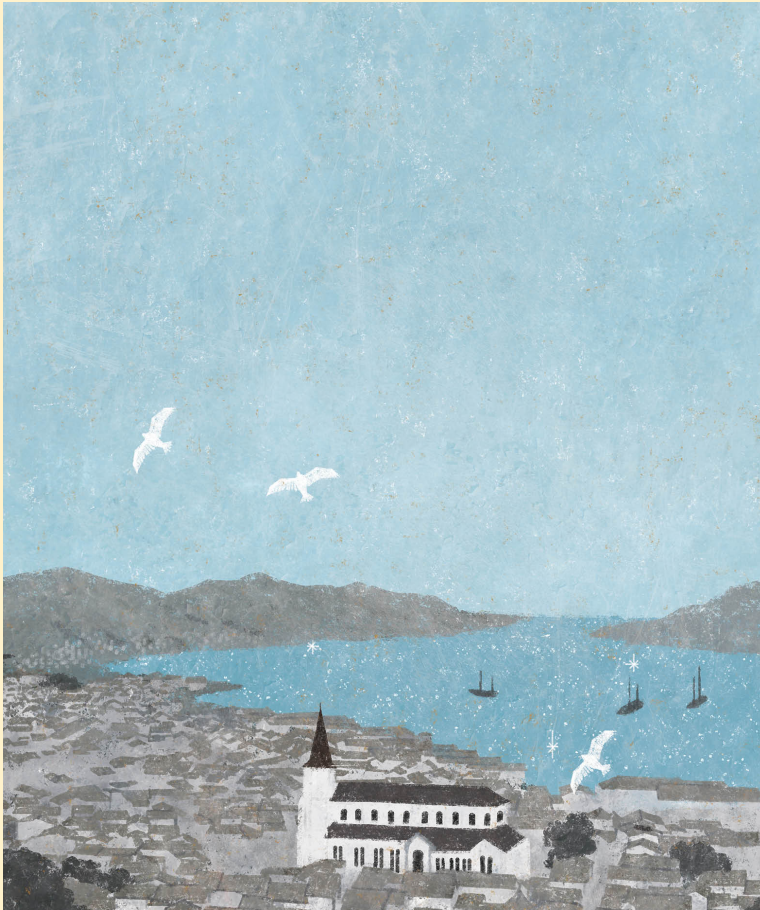
For more ideas and resources, see
“A Note from Caren Stelson” [here](#) on this website.



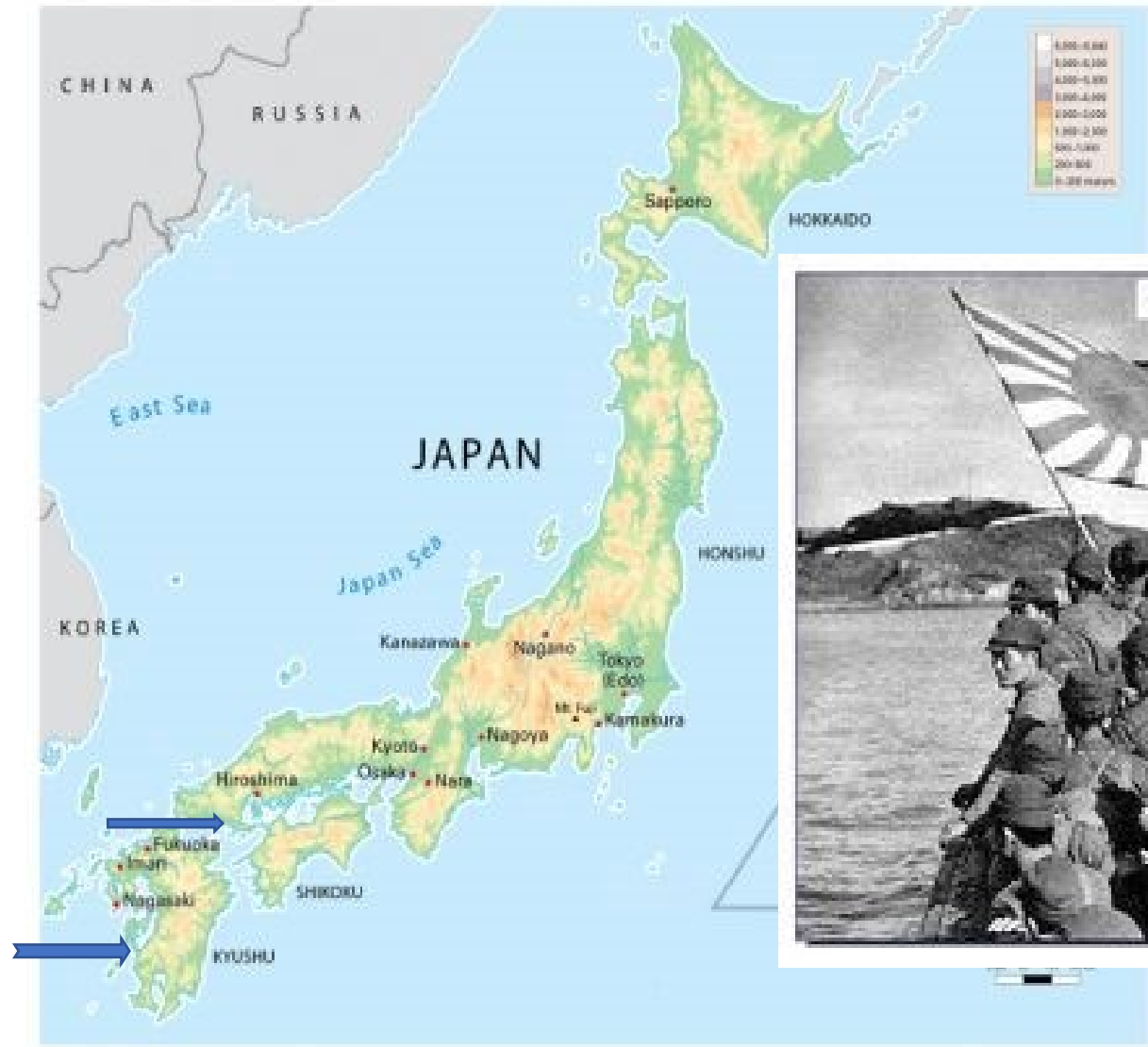
Setting of the Story

***A Bowl Full of Peace* takes place in the city of Nagasaki, Japan.**

Can you find Japan on a map?



Where do you live?



World War II

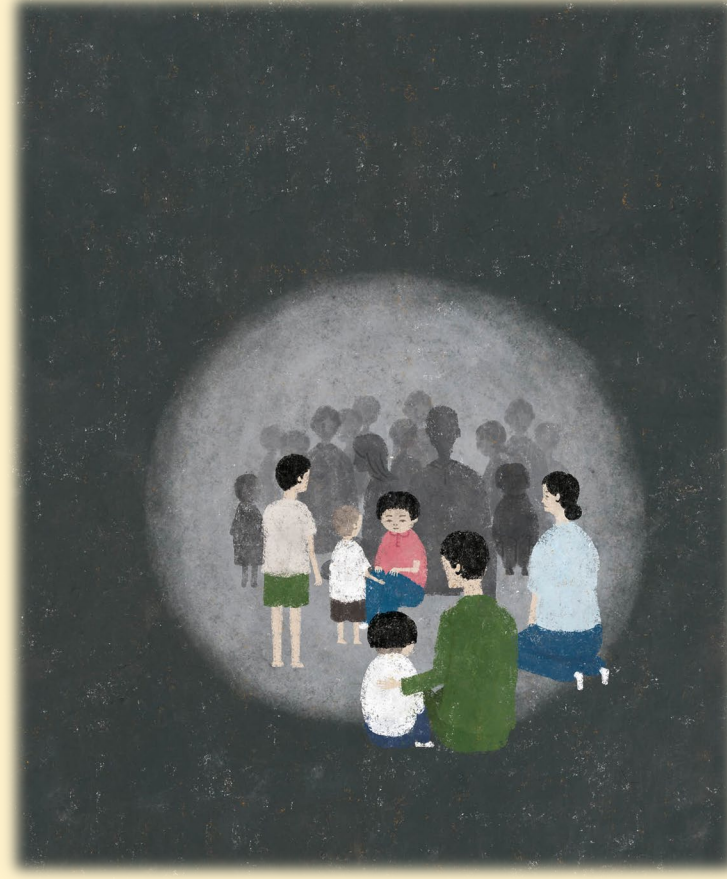
Sachiko's story begins during World War II.
What are some facts you know about World War II?

Thinking about Sachiko's Story



What did you learn about Sachiko's family in the beginning of the story? What happened to them as the story unfolds?

Illustrations Help Tell the Story



How does the illustrator Akira Kusaka use colors and shapes to help tell Sachiko's story? How do these colors and shapes bring out the emotions of the story?



Grandmother's Bowl

Why did Sachiko's mother fill Grandmother's bowl with ice chips?

How does the bowl's role in the story change from the beginning to the end?

What does Grandmother's bowl mean to Sachiko as she grows older?

Itadakimasu

(ee-tah-dah-kee-mahs)

*The Japanese word literally means,
“We humbly receive this food.”*

When Sachiko’s family press their hands together and bow their heads, they remain grateful for being together, even during very difficult times.

What are you grateful for in your life?

How might naming what you are grateful for help you through difficult times?





A Message in a Picture

What do you see in this illustration?

What feelings do you have as you study this picture?

What message might artist Akira Kusaka want to share with us through his art?



Grief and Joy

Grief is a sense of loss and sadness.

What words can describe Sachiko and her family's grief?

How did filling Grandmother's bowl with ice help Sachiko's family heal from war?

How did you feel when you experienced a difficult loss? Can you describe how that sadness felt in your body?

What did you do, or could have done, to help heal your sadness?

What do joy and happiness feel like for you?

Sachiko Tells Her Story

Why do you think Sachiko waited 50 years after the war's end to tell her story publicly?

Why did Sachiko think it was so important to share her story, especially with children?

How might Sachiko's story be an important one for you?



Big Questions about War

World War II was the deadliest war in human history.
Over 60 million people died during this war.

What might people lose when caught in a war?

What are some reasons countries go to war?

What are some ways people can avoid going to war?

What skills can we learn to find resolutions to
conflicts and bring about peace?



Atomic bombing over Nagasaki.



Nagasaki Peace Park

What Is in a Bowl Full of Peace?

Sachiko's mother filled Grandmother's bowl with ice chips every year as a ritual of peace.

For Sachiko to grow into a peacemaker, her mother also must have "filled" Grandmother's bowl with –

- resilience,
- kindness,
- empathy,
- compassion

What do these words mean to you?



What's in Your Bowl Full of Peace?

If you had a “bowl full of peace,” which word of peace would you most want to put in your bowl?

What could you do to turn your peace word into action?

What ripple effect might your actions have on others around you?

What other words would you put in your bowl? Can you think of more words to bring about greater understanding and connection?

courageous

caring

respectful

resilient,

open-hearted

deep listener

empathetic

kind

trusting

grateful

friendly

hopeful



compassionate

patient

GENEROUS

Spreading Peace

There are many ways to spread peace and make new friends in the process.

What can you and your classmates do to bring a greater sense of peace to your home, school, and your community?

Look around.
Where are *you* needed most?



Questions to Live By

Sachiko Yasui shared these questions with author Caren Stelson. Here they are for all of us:

What is peace?

What kind of person should I be?

Keep pursuing answers to these questions.

