The Meaning of Gifts: Stories from Turkey

Before Reading

BEFORE READING ACTIVITIES (PAGE 44)

For activities 1 to 4, encourage students to exchange ideas, and to speculate and to guess. Do not tell them the answers. They will find out the answers as they read.

ACTIVITY 1 THE GUESTS
1 d 2 yes

ACTIVITY 2 THE PICTURE OF THE YEAR 2000
1b, 2b, 2c

ACTIVITY 3 THE HORSE OF DEATH
3

ACTIVITY 4 THE LITTLE HUNTERS AT THE LAKE
1 a 2 c

ACTIVITY 5
The Guests: grateful, host, welcome
The Picture of the Year 2000: fields, flowers, mountains
The Horse of Death: fever, ill, spots
The Little Hunters at the Lake: bullet, gun, shoot

After Reading

ACTIVITY 1 AFTER READING
1+10 Halil Efendi wanted to visit the money-lenders, so he brought his family to Istanbul.
2+13 Izzet Efendi only had a small house, but he welcomed Halil Efendi’s family into it.
3+14 After nineteen days, the host family felt angry because their guests ate lots of food and never said thank you.
4+8 One day, the women of the host family began to talk about their guests, and the wife of Halil Efendi heard their angry voices.
5+9 When Zarafet opened the door, Halil Efendi’s wife was there with her children, ready to leave.
6+11 She thanked the ladies of the house, and said they were very, very kind.
7+12 The host family couldn’t say, ‘Go away! Goodbye!’; so they said, ‘You must stay, dear friends!’

ACTIVITY 2 AFTER READING
Today all the children brought gifts for their teachers. There were lots of flowers and other beautiful things. One little boy, Guldiken, gave me something strange—a piece of parchment. I didn’t understand. Why did he do that? Of course, Guldiken came to the city only a few weeks ago. Before that, he lived in a village in the mountains. Life is very different there, I think.

All the children drew pictures of the year 2000 today for a competition. Guldiken didn’t draw a computer or a car—he drew a huge red sun. What a strange boy!

ACTIVITY 3 AFTER READING
The most likely versions are these, although other variations are possible.
1 The shopkeeper found Unal on the black horse. He felt sorry for Unal, and gave him the black horse. Unal felt very happy after that. A week later, he got better and the shopkeeper smiled a lot.
2 Unal’s grandmother found Unal on the black horse. She felt angry with Unal, and shouted at him. Unal felt very sad after that. A week later, he died, and his grandmother cried a lot.

ACTIVITY 4 AFTER READING
If students need help with this, encourage them to look at links in the language; for example: What does it mean? > It means, etc.
3 PEKER: ‘Dad, do hunters ever shoot cranes?’
5 FATHER: ‘No, Peker. People never kill cranes.’
8 PEKER: ‘Why don’t they? Is it because cranes are symbols of love?’
4 FATHER: ‘Symbols of love? Who told you that?’
1 PEKER: ‘Ali the birdseller. But what does it mean, Dad?’
7 FATHER: ‘It means that cranes are very loving birds. They know how to love. A crane never leaves its mate, you see. They stay together until death.’
9 PEKER: ‘Do they? But what happens when somebody shoots— I mean, when one of the cranes dies?’
2 FATHER: ‘Its mate is very unhappy. So don’t ever shoot a crane, Peker.’
6 PEKER: ‘No, Dad, of course not!’

ACTIVITY 5 AFTER READING
Cranes are big birds. They are usually grey, and have long necks and long legs. When the cold weather comes, they fly away to warm countries. The male and the female stay together all their lives.
ACTIVITY 6  AFTER READING
Words across: gift, wood, village, trouble, sheep, mate, symbol, gun, mountains
Words down: measles, hole, flute, grave, horse, cloud, bullet, wall, neck, guest, hunt, city, moon, frozen

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1. The sentence is: The cranes forgive us.
2. The Little Hunters at the Lake
3. Hikmet.
4. Some snowdrops.
5. He was unhappy (his eyes were red from crying) because he was still sorry about the dead crane and its mate. But he was also happy, because the cranes had forgiven them.

ACTIVITY 7  AFTER READING
Open answers. Encourage students to express their opinions about the characters.

ACTIVITY 8  AFTER READING
Both haiku are about The Picture of the Year 2000.
Notes for the teacher:
This activity helps students to think about the stories they have read, and what they see as the themes, or points of interest in the story. It also helps them to practise the key vocabulary of the stories. There are no right or wrong answers for this activity, provided that the haiku accurately reflects some aspect of the story.

- For classroom work students can work in pairs or small groups to write their haiku. When all the groups have finished, there can be a guessing competition, with other groups guessing which story each haiku is about. Other possibilities include a haiku recital (each group in turn reads out their haiku to the class), and a poster display.

- If students are doing their reading at home, writing a haiku is a creative way of showing they have read and understood the story. Haiku can be written in students’ own reading diaries, or shared with the class. A good way is to keep a big ‘Reviews Book’ in the classroom, and each student writes their haiku in the book for other students to read.

Haiku don’t rhyme or scan, but must keep to the 5 / 7 / 5 syllable rule. They can be one long sentence, or a number of short sentences, or just phrases. They can be funny, or sad. Avoid using characters’ names. These examples for the other stories in this book show some different ways language can be used in haiku.

A child died tonight.
Listen, parents everywhere.
Take care. Watch your child.

Eating bread, meat, rice, and staying, staying, staying!
Why don’t they go home?

Cranes fly south to find warm weather. Bullets fly too, and a cold grave waits.