



THE MOUSE'S WEDDING

SUMMARY OF STORY:

Father Mouse wants to arrange a marriage for his daughter with the mightiest creature in the world. So he sets out to find who that is.

THEMES:

Understanding strengths and weaknesses
Acceptance of self

READING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT:

Children always have impromptu responses, start by discussing them. In addition, the following questions will help develop the children's vocabulary, sequencing skills and comprehension of the story.

1. Why does Father Mouse go to see the Sun?
2. What does the Sun tell Father Mouse? Is that true?
3. What does the Cloud tell Father Mouse? Is that true?
4. What does the Wind tell Father Mouse? Is that true?
5. What does the Wall tell Father Mouse? Is that true?
6. Whom does the daughter marry?
7. Do you agree that Father Mouse has found the mightiest creature in the world? Why or why not?

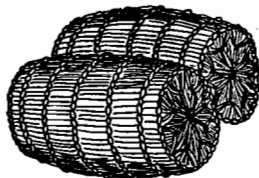
CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

The Mouse's Wedding is an engaging way to introduce a curriculum unit on the weather and/or the place of the sun in our solar system. There are many children's science books at all levels on these topics

The Mouse's Wedding is an example of a **circle type story**. This type of **circuious tale** often has a main character who wishes to be greater than he is. Other well-known examples of circle stories would be: *The Stonecutter* by Gerald McDermott, *If you Give A Mouse A Cookie* by Laura Joffe and *Ox Cart Man* by Donald Hall.

CULTURAL BACKGROUND:

This tale might originally have come from China. Variations of it are found throughout East Asia.



Card #1: The mouse family is shown, dressed in formal *kimono*, sitting on cushions (*zabuton*). Father Mouse is enjoying his sake (*sah-keh*) or rice wine. Behind Mother Mouse are stacks of rice which are stored in the traditional straw bales. Behind Father Mouse are the traditional wooden measuring boxes. The bottom box is full of rice, the middle box is full of beans and the top box is full of wheat.

CUSHIONS or ZABUTON (*zah-boo-toh-n*): Used for sitting in a Japanese style-room.



RICE WINE or SAKE (*sah-keh*): A wine which is made by adding *koji* (fermented rice) to rice and water, then fermenting them. It is a clear drink with a lovely bouquet. *Sake* is normally heated to body temperature before drinking by pouring it into a flask called a *tokkuri* and placing this in hot water. It is usually drunk from small cups called *choko*.

KIMONO (*key-moh-noh*): The *kimono* is the traditional Japanese wrap-around garment with rectangular sleeves. Worn by both men and women, the kimono is secured at the waist with a wide sash, or *obi* (*oh-bee*). Kimono, which can be made from silk, wool, linen, cotton or synthetic material are usually sewn by hand. Families may pass especially prized kimono from generation to generation.

Nowadays, kimono are generally reserved for formal occasions, such as weddings, funerals and special holidays. Kimono fabrics and designs vary according to the wearer and the occasion: Children and young women wear brightly colored kimono with long sleeves, married women wear kimono of darker or more subdued hues with shorter sleeves and men wear solid dark colors. The most formal kimono for both men and women is black and embroidered with the family crest or *mon*. Perhaps you noticed that the *mon* for Father Mouse and later (Card # 12) for Mother Mouse and Chukichi is a little mouse head! The shape of the kimono is fixed, and individuality is achieved by careful selection of the material, the style of weaving and dyeing, the color and the pattern, as well as by the choice of *obi*. Getting dressed in a kimono is a complicated procedure. Traditionally the technique was passed on from mother to daughter, but now it is taught in special schools as well. Many beauty shops offer "kimono dressing" services.

