

# The Magical Red Kimono

## Resource Guide

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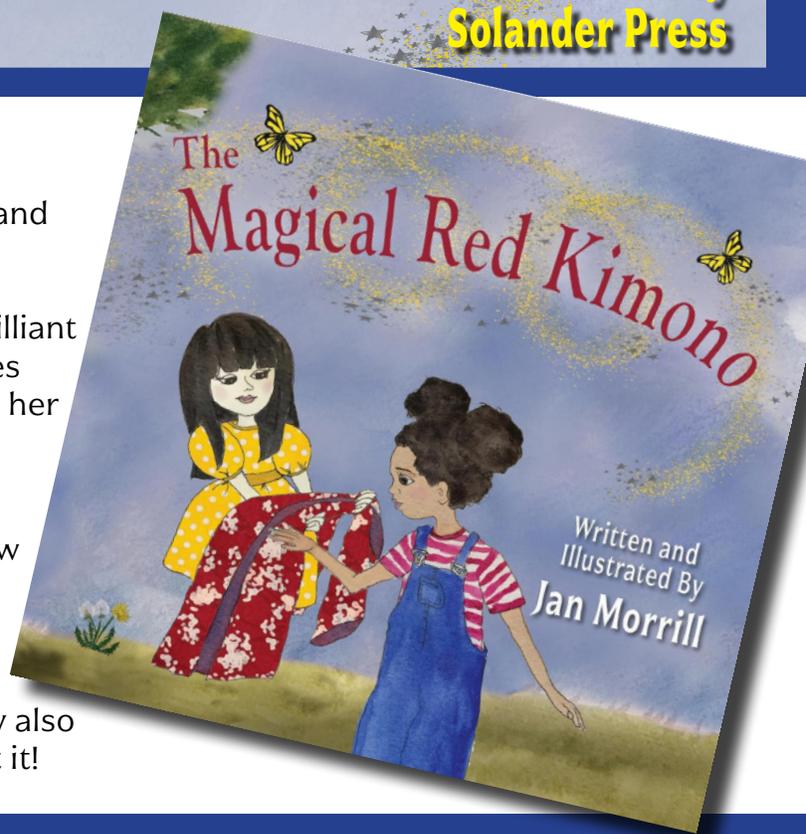
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**Synopsis:** One hot summer day in Arkansas, Sachi and Jubie are bored and need an adventure.

Everything changes when Sachi comes up with a brilliant idea. She'll teach Jubie a Japanese dance! She hurries through the gate of Rohwer Relocation Camp to get her red kimono for Jubie to wear.

When she returns, Sachi teaches Jubie about the Japanese festival known as Obon and shows her how to do the dance called Tankō Bushi. Jubie twirls and dances as the red kimono floats and swirls around her.

Not only do Sachi and Jubie find adventure, but they also discover that magic happens when you least expect it!



### About the Author:

Jan Morrill was born and (mostly) raised in California. Her mother, a Buddhist Japanese American, was an internee during World War II. Her father, a Southern Baptist redhead of Irish descent, retired from the Air Force. Her debut novel, *The Red Kimono* (University of Arkansas Press, February 2013) and many of her short stories reflect memories of growing up in a multicultural, multi-religious, multi-political environment.



# About the Book

**Ages: 3- 10 years old**

**Grade: Pre-K through Grade 4**

**Publisher: Solander Press**

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## About the Guide

This resource guide includes discussion questions and other activities to incorporate *The Magical Red Kimono* into Language Arts, Social Studies and Art. It is designed for educators and parents of students in Pre-K through Grade 4.



# Language Arts & Social Studies

## Activity #1: Before Reading:

Look at the cover of *The Magical Kimono*. Can you tell or write a story about what you see on the cover? How does your story compare to the story in the book?

## Activity #2: Book Discussion Following Reading:

1. Sachi and Jubie grew bored of watching clouds go by. What did they decide to do then? What do you like to do when you're bored?
2. Sachi taught Jubie about kimonos, obis, Obon, and Tanko Bushi. What new things have you learned from your friends?
3. What do you like to do? Would you like to teach a friend?
4. How are Sachi and Jubie different? How are they the same? What do you think makes our differences special?

## For older children (Ages 8-10):

*The Magical Red Kimono* is based on a scene from Jan Morrill's historical fiction, *The Red Kimono*. (University of Arkansas Press, 2013)

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, questions and fears about the loyalty of people of Japanese descent began to arise. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 ordered approximately 120,000 people of Japanese descent to be interned in ten relocation centers located around the United States. Two thirds of the internees were American citizens. Many were children.

Approximately 16,000 internees were brought from the west coast by train to two different camps in Arkansas: Rohwer and Jerome.

Nine of the ten relocation camps were closed by the end of 1945, with the exception of Tule Lake, which closed in 1946. Most internees returned to California. However, some relocated to other states. Some returned to Japan.

1. What is an internment camp?
2. Why was Sachi in an internment camp?
3. What would it feel like to be forced to leave your home, your friends, and your belongings to move to a camp?
4. What would you miss most if you had to move to an internment camp?
5. How can learning about the past help us today?

# Language Arts & Social Studies

## Activity #3: A Few Japanese Words:

**Kimono** - a long robe with wide sleeves traditionally worn with a broad sash as an outer garment by the Japanese.

1. Who wore a kimono in the story?
2. Why did Sachi think the kimono was “magic?”

**Obi** - a broad sash worn with a Japanese kimono

1. Why did Jubie want to take the obi off?

**Bon Odori** - a Japanese dance held during Obon

**Obon** - a festival celebrated in August that involves traditional dances, food offerings and family reunions.

1. Why do you think Jubie confused the three words, Obi, Bon Odori and Obon?

**Tanko Bushi** - A coal mining song from northern Kyushu, Japan. The folk song has changed with the times and has been adopted in Bon Odori festival dances.



# Social Studies

## Activity #4: Learn Tanko Bushi

(Music & Instruction: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZbGxJzXB8M>)

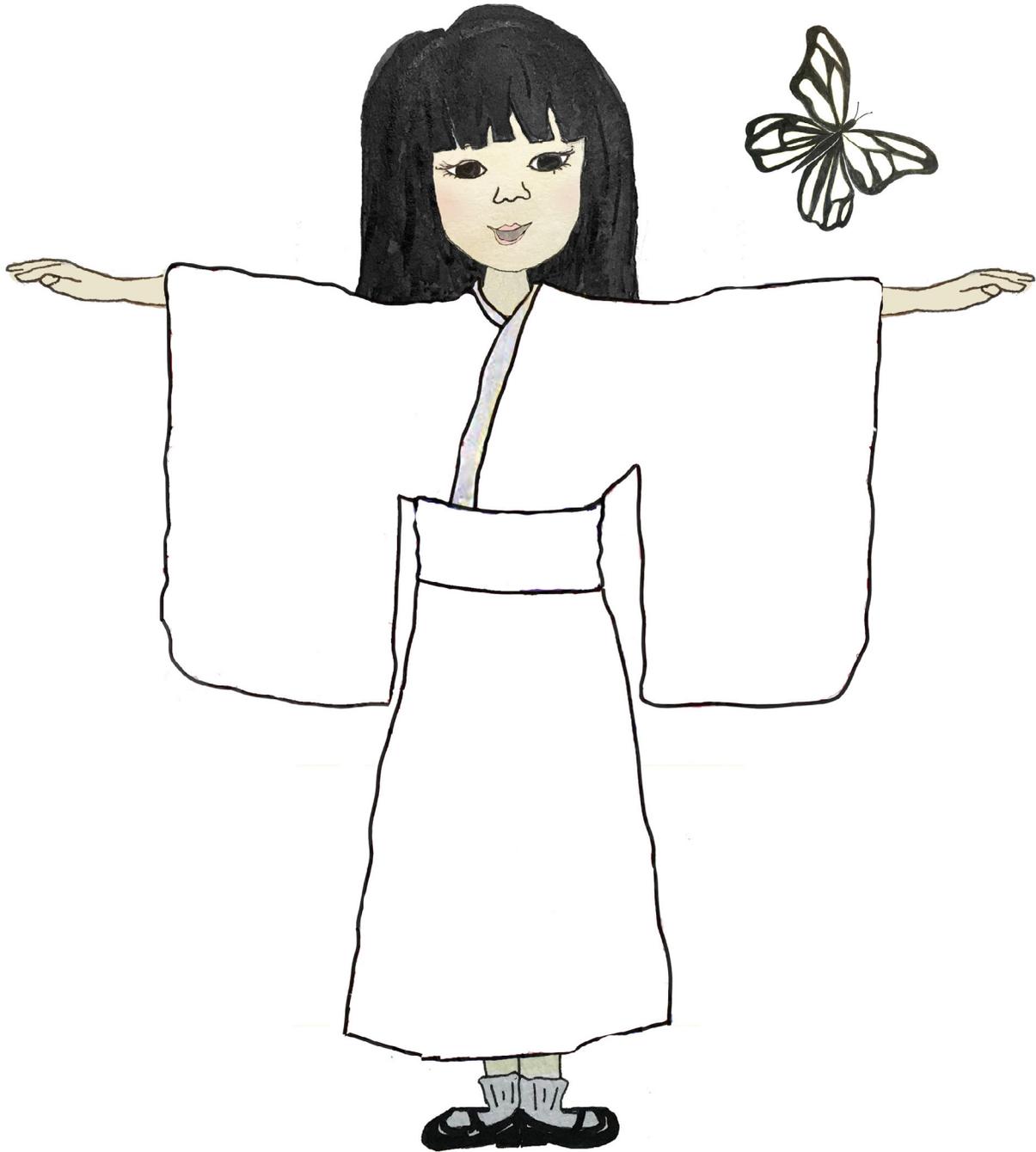
① Dig, dig (right)	② Dig, dig (left)
 <p>Take your right foot a step forward and dig coal out with a shovel twice.</p>	 <p>Repeat on the left side twice.</p>
Pause , Tsukiga-	deta deta-

③ shoulder	④ shoulder	⑤ go back	⑥ go back
 <p>Step your right foot forward and put coal into a basket on your back over your shoulder</p>	 <p>The same action with your left foot and hand.</p>	 <p>The basket become so heavy, then you go back. Step back your left foot first. You still try to put coal into the basket with your right hand.</p>	 <p>Step back your right foot. Hold up your left hand.</p>
tsuki ga-	deta-	a yoi	

⑦ push	⑧ push	⑨ open	⑩ You did it ! Chochon-ga-chon
 <p>Step your right foot forward and push a coal cart.</p>	 <p>Step your left foot forward and push a coal cart.</p>	 <p>In order to spread coal on the ground, cross your arms in front of you body and then move them to your sides. Slightly bend your knees at the same time</p>	 <p>Put your feet together and clap your hands twice, pause, then clap once.</p>

# Art

## Design and Color Sachi's Kimono



The Magical Red Kimono  
[www.janmorrill.com](http://www.janmorrill.com)

# Art

## Design and Color Jubie's Kimono



The Magical Red Kimono  
[www.janmorrill.com](http://www.janmorrill.com)

# Suggested Reading & Resources

## **Non-Fiction**

Inada, Lawon Fusao, ed. *Only What We Could Carry: The Japanese American Internment Experience*. Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2000.

*Rohwer Outpost* (Rohwer Internment Camp, Arkansas). 1942–1945.

Takei, George. *To the Stars: The Autobiography of George Takei, Star Trek's Mr. Sulu*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994.

Tunnel, Michael O., and George W. Chilcoat. *The Children of Topaz: The Story of a Japanese-American Internment Camp*. New York: Holiday House, 1996.

Uchida, Yoshiko. *Desert Exile: The Uprooting of a Japanese-American Family*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982.

## **Fiction**

Dallas, Sandra. *Tallgrass*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007.

Ford, Jamie. *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2009.

Guterson, David. *Snow Falling on Cedars*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1994.

Houston, Jeanne Wakatsuki, and James D. Houston. *Farewell to Manzanar*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973.

Morrill, Jan. *The Red Kimono*, Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 2013.

Schiffer, Vivienne. *Camp Nine*, Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 2011.

## **Video**

*Kintsukuroi*, directed by Kerwin Berk (Ikeibi Films, 2025), DVD.

*Time of Fear*, directed by Sue Williams. Perf. George Takei. (PBS Home Video, 2005), DVD.

## **Websites**

Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project, [www.densho.org](http://www.densho.org).

Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, [www.heartmountain.org](http://www.heartmountain.org).

Jerome Rohwer Committee, <https://jeromerohwer.org>.

Rohwer Japanese American Relocation Center Museum, <https://rohwer.astate.edu/>

The Japanese American National Museum, [www.janm.org](http://www.janm.org).

Tule Lake Committee, <https://www.tulelake.org>.