Art and Literature Around the World-Teacher Background

As people from around the world immigrated to America, they often continued to create traditional forms of art and tell folktales as a pastime and as a connection to home. Below is some brief background on traditional arts and stories from some of ethnic groups present in Rock Springs in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Japan

Origami:

The word origami is Japanese for paper folding ("oru" means folding and "kami" means paper). The art of paper folding is thought to have originated in China almost 2000 years ago. Eventually though, it spread to Japan, where it was more fully developed. At first, origami was rare because paper was so expensive. Paper was folded to make decorations for ceremonial occasions and for religious shrines. However as time went on, the art expanded and became a popular activity in Japan. Around 1900, origami began to spread to the United States as travel and immigration between Japan and the United States increased. Rock Springs was home to many Japanese immigrants who came to work in the mines or on the railroad, and open their own businesses, especially in the early twentieth century.

Issun Boshi:

The story of Issun Boshi it is often compared to that of Tom Thumb in English folklore. Issun refers to a Japanese measurement, equivalent to about 1 inch, and boshi is Japanese for son. Although there are many different versions of the story in Japanese folklore, each includes themes often seen in Japanese literature, including the extraordinary achievements of a unique child.
Germany

Scherenschnitte:

Scherenschnitte is German for “scissor cuts.” Like origami, the art of paper cutting is also thought to have originated in China, but it is often associated with Germany, where it has been popular since the 1500’s. Scherenschnitte often includes silhouettes and symmetrical designs. When Germans began to immigrate to the United States in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, they created designs that reminded them of home. Germans began to come to Rock Springs to work in the mines and on the railroad in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries. Art, such as scherenschnitte, helped them maintain a connection to their homeland.

The Cunning Little Tailor:

The Cunning Little Tailor is a German folktale collected by the Grimm brothers. It is a variation on the common fairytale theme in which a man marries a princess.
Russia

Matryoshka:

Matryoshka are Russian dolls that stack in one another. The name *matryoshka* is thought to come from the Russian name Matriona. They were first created in Russia in 1890 as a children's toy, though they may have been inspired by dolls found in Japan. Usually, the dolls are made out of wood and painted, often intricately. The nesting dolls quickly became popular in Russia and are associated with the country today. Traditionally, the dolls depicted peasant girls but doll sets today might be in any number of different styles, including political leaders, and animals.

*Baba Yaga:*

Baba Yaga is a famous witch in Eastern Europe, especially Russia, and there are many tales about her. *Baba* means "grandmother" or "old woman" in several Slavic languages, and *Yaga* may have its roots in an old Slavic name. Typically, she is portrayed as old, ugly, and evil, often cooking and eating her victims, although there are stories about Baba Yaga in which she is sought out for her wisdom, at the risk of the seeker.


Slovenia

Idrija Lace:

Idrija lace comes from a town in western Slovenia with the same name (Idrija). It is a unique type of bobbin lace, crafted on a bula, or a stiff cushion and is used to decorate tablecloths, napkins, curtains, and on clothing. Lace has been made in the area since at least the 17th century and has been passed down from generation to generation. In addition to lace making, Slovenian immigrants brought other artistic traditions to Rock Springs, including intricately decorated wedding bread.

The Golden Bird:

There are many versions of The Golden Bird, especially in European cultures. The version included here is traditionally Slovenian, however a similar version was collected by the Grimm brothers. The Golden Bird is a variation of the common folktale theme in which a supernatural animal helps the protagonist.
Art and Literature Around the World

Preparation:

The artwork and literature included in this lesson lends itself well to a variety of activities, for small groups or the whole class, and can focus on 1-4 different cultures. A few options are suggested in the lesson plan.

For this lesson plan, teachers will need:

- Some background of the cultures and crafts present in Rock Springs in the early 20th century (provided)
- To be prepared to divide the class into 4 groups (depending on the activity)

Materials:

- **Included in trunk:**
  - Artifacts
    - Scherenschnitte (C-1)
    - Matryoshka dolls (C-2 and C-3)
    - Idrija lace sample (C-4)
  - Master copies of craft templates/directions for 4 student crafts

- **What you will need:**
  - Scissors (for class or small groups)
  - Crayons, markers, or colored pencils for class
  - Hole punchers (for class or small groups)
  - Copies of the 4 folktales (for whole class or small groups depending on the activity)
  - Copies of the craft templates/directions (for the whole class or small groups)
    - Square paper (if using origami or lace activity)
    - 3 inch high X 6 inch long paper strips (if using the paper cutting activity)

- Note: Illustrated versions of "Baba Yaga" and "Issun Boshi" exist, some titles are included on the suggested reading page, however these versions are not included in the trunk.
Art and Literature Around the World

Level: 3rd Grade
Estimated Lesson Time: 30 minutes (or more if desired)
Standards/Curriculum: (depending on the activity)

Social Studies:
  2. Cultures/Cultural Diversity
    A. Students will identify cultural characteristics in our community
    B. Students will recognize how cultures have influenced music, literature, and art in their community.
    C. Students will compare and contrast a culture to their own

Fine and Performing Art:
  1. Creative Expression Through Production
    4.1A.5: Students use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner.
  2. Aesthetic Perception:
    4.2.A.4: Students explain their preference for specific works.
  3. Historical and Cultural Context:
    4.3.A.1: Students know that the visual arts have both a history and specific relationship to various cultures.
    4.3.A.2: Students identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and environments.
    4.3 A.3: Students understand that history, environment, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other.

Reading for Literature:
  1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as a basis for the answers.
  2. Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
  3. Describe characters in a story and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
  4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

Geometry
  2. Partition shapes into parts with equal areas. Express the area of each part as a unit fraction of the whole.

Learner Objectives:
  1.) Students will know how and be able to identify artwork from various cultures.
  2.) Students will know how and be able to compare and contrast artwork and literature from other cultures.
  3.) Students will know how and be able to follow directions to create art and use their creativity to add to it.
Procedure:

- **Warm-up:** Discuss the concept of folk culture with students. Ask them to brainstorm some folk traditions (fairytales, stories, art, etc.) they may have grown up with (5 mins).

- **Option 1:**
  - As a class, read 1 (or all) of the folk stories (from the German, Japanese, Slovenian, and Russian cultures) and discuss. Possible questions are included after each story.
  - Pass around the art from 1 (or each) of the cultures.
  - Let students choose a craft to reproduce.

- **Option 2:**
  - As a class, read each of the stories.
  - Compare and contrast the stories, possibly considering some of the following questions:
    - What can these stories tell us about the different cultures (what types of activities, social structures, or landscapes were common)?
    - Do these stories teach us a lesson? Are they similar lessons?
    - What similarities or differences do we see in the characters?

- **Option 3:**
  - Break the class into 4 groups.
  - Assign each group a folktale to read.
  - Have each group answer the questions about the story (included after each story) and create the craft associated with the culture.
  - Ask each group to share the story they read and the craft they created.
  - As each group presents, discuss the story and the artifact.
  - Once each group has presented, discuss. Possible questions include:
    - What are some similarities between the crafts and stories? What are some differences?
    - These crafts and stories have long histories, do we see their influence in the art we make today?
    - Why did immigrants continue to create traditional art?
Art and Literature Options:

Russia:

Folktale: *Baba Yaga*

Art: Matryoshka (Russian stacking dolls)

Student craft: Paper matryoshka

Instructions:

Color the templates as desired.

Cut around the dolls and attached strips of paper, making sure that the dolls stay attached to the strips on either side.

Glue the edges of the paper strips together so they form a circle.

Stack the dolls into each other.

Germany:

Folktale: *The Cunning Little Tailor*

Art: Scherenschnitte (German paper cutting)

Student craft: Scherenschnitte (person paper chain-more challenging; fish-easier)

Instructions:

Cut strips of paper about 3 inches high and at least 6 inches long (longer if you would like; the longer the paper, the longer your chain of people will be)

Trace the person template onto one edge of the paper strip, aligning the edge of the arm with one edge of the paper.

Fold the paper like an accordion, making the first crease at the person's opposite arm.

Cut around the person, making sure not to cut at all where the "hand" would be. These creases keep the people together. (see sample)
Japan:

Folktale: *Issun Boshi, the Inch-High Samurai*

Art: Origami (pictured below, but no sample artifact is included)

![Origami artwork](image)

**Student craft:** Origami hat (more challenging), Origami dog (easier)

Instructions: See templates

Slovenia:

Folktale: *The Golden Bird*

Art: Idrija lace (pronounced "idria")

**Student craft:** Paper lace

Instructions:

Using a square piece of paper, fold the top right corner to meet the bottom left corner.

Next, fold the top left corner to meet the bottom right corner.

Bring the bottom left corner to meet the bottom right corner (you should have a basic right triangle shape).

Without changing the position of the triangle, cut about 1/2 inch off of the right corner of the triangle. The cut should be rounded, like the top of a circle.

Use a hole punch to make holes in the triangle, creating a "lace" effect. Make sure not to cut away all of the folded edges-these keep the paper together.

Unfold the "lace" and smooth it on a flat surface.
Origami Hat

1. Fold in half
2. Fold in the dotted line to meet the center line
3. Fold in the dotted line
4. Fold in the dotted line
5. Fold in the dotted line
6. Fold in the dotted line
7. Tuck the corner into the pocket
8. Finished
**Origami Dog**

1. Start with a square piece of paper placed with one of the corners facing you. Fold the top corner down to line up with the bottom corner to form a triangle.

2. Somewhere between 1/3 and 1/2-way across the top of your triangle, fold one of the corners down toward the triangle's point but sticking over the edge of the paper. Repeat this fold with the other corner. These flaps will be your origami puppy's ears.

3. Make a fold along the bottom point of the original triangle to create your origami puppy's chin.

4. Now for the finishing touches! Draw a face on your puppy and give him a name.
Folktales Vocabulary Words

**Issun Boshi, Inch High Samurai**

Estate- a large piece of property, usually with a home on it

Ferocious-fierce

Courageous- brave

Renowned- famous

**Baba Yaga**

Birch- a deciduous tree

Loom-a device used to weave cloth

Sieve-a device that liquid can drain through

Mortar-a bowl in which substances can be ground with a pestle (Baba Yaga is said to fly around in one)

Pestle-a club shaped device for grounding substances (Baba Yaga is said to have steered her mortal around with one)

Gnashed-to grind your teeth together, often a sign of anger.

Gnaw-to wear away, usually by biting

**The Cunning Little Tailor**

Cunning-crafty or clever

Vice- An object to hold or grip something with, like a clamp
There once lived a man and a woman. The woman died and the man married a second time, but from his first marriage he had a daughter. The mean stepmother didn't like her and tried to think of ways to get rid of her for good.

Once, when the father was away somewhere, the stepmother told the girl: "Go to your step-aunt's, my sister's, ask her for a needle and some thread so that I can sew you a shirt." That aunt was Baba Yaga.

But the girl wasn't stupid, and first she stopped at her other aunt's house. "Hello, dear aunt!" "Hello, my darling! What brings you?" "Mother sent me to her sister's to ask for a needle and some thread so she can sew me a shirt."

So her aunt told her what to do. "When you get there, there will be a birch, dear niece, and it will slap you in the face. You just put a ribbon on it. Then the gates will screech and flap. You just pour some oil on the hinges. The dogs will bite you. You just throw them some bread. The cat will scratch your eyes. You just give it some ham."

The girl set off. She walked for a long time, and finally arrived at a small house and Baba Yaga sat in it, weaving. "Hello, dear aunt!" "Hello, my darling!" "Mother sent me to ask for a needle and some thread so she can sew me a shirt."

"All right, well for now, sit down and do some weaving."

So the girl sat at the weaving loom, and Baba Yaga left to give orders to her maid. "Go, heat up the bathhouse and give my niece a bath, and make sure she's nice and clean. I want her for my breakfast."

The girl sat still as a statue, frightened nearly to death, and asked the maid: "Dear maid! Don't spend so much time lighting the wood as pouring water on it, and don't hurry hauling water, use a sieve for it!" And she gave her a kerchief.
Baba Yaga was waiting. She walked up to the window and asked: "Are you weaving, dear niece?"
"Yes, I'm weaving, auntie!"
Baba Yaga stepped away. The girl gave the cat some ham and asked it: "Isn't there a way to get out of here?"
"Here's a comb and a towel," the cat said, "take them and run away; Baba Yaga will run after you. You put your ear to the ground, and as soon as you hear that she's close, throw the towel first. It will turn into a great wide river. If Baba Yaga crosses the river and starts catching up again, put your ear to the ground again, and as soon as you hear that she's close, throw the comb. It will turn into a deep, dark forest. She won't be able to get through it!"
The girl took the towel and the comb and ran. The dogs wanted to tear her to pieces, but she threw them some bread, and they let her pass. The gates wanted to close, but she poured some oil on the hinges, and they let her through. The birch wanted to slap her in the face and blind her, but she tied a ribbon around it, and it let her pass.
Meanwhile, the cat sat at the weaving loom and started weaving. He didn't weave so much as he tied the threads into knots. Baba Yaga walked up to the window and asked: "Are you weaving, dear niece?"
"Yes, I'm weaving, auntie." the cat answered in his rough voice.
Baba Yaga ran into the house. She saw that the girl was gone, and started yelling at the cat -- why didn't he scratch out her niece's eyes?
"How many years have I served you," the cat said, "you never even gave me a bone, and she gave me some ham."
Baba Yaga became furious at the dogs, the gate, the birch, and the maid, and she started yelling at them.
The dogs told her: "How many years have we served you, you never even gave us a burnt crust, and she gave us some bread."
The gate said: "How many years have I served you, you never even poured water on my hinges, and she poured oil on them."
The birch said: "How many years have I served you, you never even tied a string around me, and she tied a ribbon."
The maid said: "How many years have I served you, you never even gave
me a rag, and she gave me a kerchief."

Baba Yaga quickly sat in her mortar, in which she flew, steered it with the pestle, and set off on the trail of the girl.

The girl put her ear to the ground, and heard that Baba Yaga was chasing after her, and that she was close already. She threw the towel. It turned into a great wide river. Baba Yaga arrived at the river and she gnashed her teeth in anger. She returned home, gathered her bulls, and brought them to the river. The bulls drank up the entire river until it was dry. Baba Yaga set off once again in pursuit.

The girl put her ear to the ground again, and heard that Baba Yaga was close. She threw the comb. It turned into a deep, frightening forest. Baba Yaga began gnawing on it, but try as she may, she couldn't gnaw through it. She turned around and went home.

Meanwhile, the man returned home and asked: "Where is my daughter?"
"She went to visit her aunt," the stepmother said.
A little later, the girl arrived home.
"Where were you?" her father asked her.
"Oh, daddy!" she said. "This is the way it was. Mother sent me to my aunt's to get a needle and some thread to sew me a shirt, but her sister turned out to be Baba Yaga, and she wanted to eat me."
"How did you get away, daughter?"

So the girl told him. As soon as the man found out everything, he became very angry at his wife and sent her away. From then on, he lived happily ever after with his daughter.
Baba Yaga Questions

1.) Briefly summarize the story.

2.) What steps did the girl have to take to get away from Baba Yaga's house?

3.) How did Baba Yaga know that the girl had escaped?

4.) Is there a moral to this story?
Long, long ago in a village, a baby boy was born. Now there was nothing unusual about that, except that this child was no bigger than your little finger. His parents didn't care how tiny he was, though. They were delighted to be blessed with such a beautiful son, and they showered him with love. They named him "Issun Boshi," and even after several years had passed, he was still about as big as your little finger.

One day while Issun Boshi was playing outside, he climbed to the top of a tall tree. "Wow!" he cried. "What a big world it is!" He could see a great river winding away into the distance.

That night, Issun Boshi asked his father, "Pa, where does that river flow to?"

"To the other side of the mountains, son."

"What's on the other side of the mountains?"

"Well, that's where the capital, Kyoto, is. And in the capital, there are lots and lots of people. And big temples and mansions, and estates where the samurai warriors live... Oh, it's a very exciting place."

From that moment on, Issun Boshi, could think of nothing but the capital. One day he went to his parents and told them he'd made a decision.

"I'm going to the capital to become a samurai."

His mother and father tried desperately to make him change his mind, but he would not. At last, seeing how determined he was, they gave in. His father found a needle to serve as a sword, and his mother gave him a rice bowl to use as a boat and a chopstick to paddle it with. The next day they all walked to the river. The inch high youngster began paddling downstream toward the capital.

"Goodbye!" Issun Boshi took a fond last look at his old hometown as the swift current of the river carried him off. Along the way, his rice-bowl boat slammed into rocks, dropped over waterfalls, bounced through rapids, and was tossed about in a raging storm. But Issun Boshi never gave up.

Many weeks went by before Issun Boshi caught sight of his destination at last. The capital was even larger and more beautiful than he had imagined. There were more houses than you could count, and Issun Boshi stopped before the grandest of them all. "This is the place for me," he declared, knocking on the gate.
The house belonged to the famous samurai, Lord Sanjo. When Issun Boshi was brought before him, the great man was surprised to see how tiny his visitor was. After he'd heard Issun Boshi’s story, Lord Sanjo said "All right, why don't you stay here and serve me? I'm sure we can find a place for you."

Issun Boshi was given a job as guard to Lord Sanjo’s only daughter, Haruhime. Soon Issun Boshi and Haruhime became the best of friends. Together they read books, practiced writing, and played music. Issun Boshi also trained every day at swordsmanship. His heart was still set on becoming a great samurai.

It was soon spring in the capital, and Haruhime decided to visit Kiyomizu Temple. Now, at that time there were rumors of hideous demons who would come out at night and kidnap lovely young girls. To guard against this, Lord Sanjo selected seven of his strongest warriors to accompany Haruhime on her visit to the temple. Issun Boshi also volunteered to go along.

They arrived at Kiyomizu Temple safely. It was after praying there, as they walked home in the dark, that a ferocious demon suddenly stepped out of the brush in front of them.

"A d-d-demon!"

The supposedly brave and strong warriors ran for their lives at the sight of the huge red monster with horns, long claws, and sharp fangs.

"I'll take that girl right there," growled the demon, pointing at Haruhime.

"Oh no you won't, you ugly devil," said Issun Boshi, standing in front of the creature. But he was so small that the demon only looked around wondering where the voice had come from.

"Down here, right in front of your big fat nose! It is I, the samurai Issun Boshi.

"What's this?" grunted the demon. "Ah, ha, ha! Pesky little insect!" The monster picked Issun Boshi up and tossed him into its foul-smelling mouth. Gulp!

"Issun Boshi!" cried Haruhime as her courageous bodyguard disappeared down the demon's throat.

"The little pest is gone, now it's just you and me!" No sooner had the demon said this than it doubled over, clutching its stomach and shrieking, "Ow! Stop it! That hurts!"
Inside the monster's belly, Issun Boshi had drawn his needle-sword and was slashing and jabbing.

"Please stop! I'll be good, I promise!" screamed the demon.

"All right, then," came Issun Boshi’s muffled voice. "Open your mouth and stick out your tongue." The demon did as it was told, and out popped Issun Boshi, waving his needle. "Haruhime!" he called. "Are you all right?"

"Yes, Issun Boshi. Thanks to you."

Issun Boshi looked up at the enormous demon and shouted, "Don't you ever show your face around here again!

"Yes, sir!" and the demon fled in tears, holding its stomach.

When it had gone, Haruhime spotted something the monster had left behind.

"It's a magic hammer!" she exclaimed. "This will grant any wish you make. Issun Boshi, my hero, what would you like?"

"I'd like to be bigger..."

Haruhime smiled and sat in front of him. Shaking the magic hammer, she said, "Grow tall, Issun Boshi!" And with every shake of the hammer, Issun Boshi grew taller and taller. Finally before Haruhime stood a handsome, long-legged, broad-shouldered young man.

Thus, it was that only a few short years after leaving his country home, Issun Boshi realized his dream. He became a renowned samurai, famous in the capital for his skill in conquering demons. He married the beautiful Haruhime, and Lord Sanjo gave them a splendid new estate of their own. Issun Boshi sent for his mother and father, who came to stay with him and his bride, and they all lived happily ever after.
Issun Boshi, the Inch-High Samurai Questions

1.) Summarize the story.

2.) What did Issun Boshi use for a sword, a boat, and a paddle? Why?

3.) Why did the other warriors run away when they saw the demon?

4.) Is there a moral to this story?
Once upon a time there was a princess who was extremely proud. If a suitor came she gave him some riddle to guess, and if he could not answer, he was sent away. She let it be known that whoever solved her riddle could marry her. Three tailors decided to try to answer her riddle. The two oldest of these tailors thought they had done so much complicated work as tailors that they would succeed in answering the riddle. They thought that the third tailor was useless though, so they said to him, "Just stay at home; you cannot do much with the little knowledge you have." The third tailor, however, did not let himself be discouraged, and said he would manage well enough. They all three announced themselves to the princess, and she told them her riddle.

The princess said, "I have two kinds of hair on my head, of what color is it?"
"If that is all," said the first tailor, "it must be black and white, like the cloth which is called "pepper and salt."
The princess said, "Wrongly guessed; let the second answer."
Then said the second, "If it is not black and white, then it is brown and red, like my father's coat."
"Wrongly guessed," said the princess, "let the third give the answer."
Then the third tailor stepped boldly forth and said, "The princess has a silver and a golden hair on her head, and those are the two different colors."

When the princess heard that, she turned pale and nearly fell down with terror, for the third tailor had guessed her riddle, and she had believed that no man on earth could discover it. When her courage returned she said, "There is still something else that you must do. Below, in the stable, is a bear with which you shall spend the night, and when I get up in the morning if you are still alive, you will marry me." She expected, however, that this would get rid of the tailor, for the bear had never yet left anyone alive. The little tailor did not let himself be frightened away, but was quite delighted and agreed.

When the evening came, the little tailor was taken down to the bear. The bear was about to attack the little fellow but the tailor said, "I will soon make you quiet." Then, without fear, he took some nuts out of his pocket, cracked them, and ate the kernels. When the bear saw that, he was seized with a desire to have some nuts too. The tailor felt in his pockets, and gave him a handful; they were, however, not nuts but pebbles. The bear put them in his mouth, but could get nothing out of them.
"Eh!" he thought, "I cannot even crack a nut!" and then he said to the tailor, "Here, crack me the nuts."

"It's easy!" said the little tailor. Then he took the pebble and nimbly put a nut in his mouth in its place, and crack, it was in two!

"I must try the thing again," said the bear. So the tailor once more gave him a pebble, and the bear tried and tried to bite into it with all the strength of his body, but he could not.

When that was over, the tailor took out a violin from beneath his coat, and played a piece to himself. When the bear heard the music, he could not help beginning to dance, and when he had danced a while, he was so happy that he said to the little tailor, "Is the fiddle heavy?"

"Light enough for a child. Look, with the left hand I lay my fingers on it, and with the right I stroke it with the bow, and then it goes merrily!"

"So," said the bear; "fiddling is a thing I should like to understand too, so that I might dance whenever I want. What do you think of that? Will you give me lessons?"

"Certainly," said the tailor, "if you have a talent for it. But just let me see your claws, they are terribly long, I must cut your nails a little." Then a vice was brought, and the bear put his claws in it, and the little tailor screwed it tight, and said, "Now wait until I come with the scissors," and he let the bear growl as he liked, and the tailor lay down in the corner on a bundle of straw, and fell asleep.

When the princess heard the bear growling so fiercely during the night, she believed that he was growling for joy, and had made an end of the tailor. In the morning she arose careless and happy, but when she peeped into the stable, the tailor stood before her.

Now she could not say another word against the wedding because she had given a promise before everyone. The King ordered a carriage to be brought, in which she was to drive to church with the tailor, and there she was to be married. When they had got into the carriage, the two other tailors, who had false hearts and envied him and his good fortune, went into the stable and unscrewed the bear from the vice. The bear, in great fury, ran after the carriage. The princess heard him snorting and growling; she was terrified, and she cried, "Ah, the bear is behind us and wants to get you!" The tailor was quick and cried, "Do you see the vice? If you do not leave you will be put into it again." When the bear saw that, he turned around and ran away. The tailor drove quietly to church, and the princess was married to him at once, they lived happily.
1.) Summarize the story.

2.) Why did the princess ask the tailors riddles?

3.) Why did the tailor give the bear pebbles instead of nuts?

4.) Is there a moral to this story?
The Golden Bird

In a kingdom there lived a king with three sons. He had a wonderful garden where there was an apple tree with golden apples. But he couldn't have them because every morning the apples disappeared before they were ripe. Nobody could catch the thief.

One night the eldest son went to the garden to try to catch the thief. But he fell asleep under the tree all night. In the morning another apple was missing. The next day the middle son tried to catch the thief. He also slept all night.

The third day the youngest son went to guard the tree and he watched carefully all night. He saw a beautiful golden bird picking a ripe apple. The bird flew away but three golden feathers fell on the grass. The prince brought the golden feathers to the king. The king wanted to have the golden bird. He promised the kingdom to the son who could bring the bird to him.

The first year the eldest prince got a horse, some food, and some money. He looked for the bird in a forest. Suddenly he met a big bear. The bear asked the prince for some food but the prince would not give him any because he was selfish. The bear predicted bad luck for the prince and disappeared. An hour later, wild robbers caught the prince, took his money and horse, and the eldest son became a robber. He didn't return home.

The second year the second son started to look for the bird. While he ate his meal in the forest, the bear came and asked for food. The prince chased him away. An hour later the robbers took everything from him and he also became a robber. He didn't return home.

The third year the youngest prince started looking for the bird. In the middle of the forest he sat down to eat his meal. While he ate, the bear came and asked for food. The youngest son was kind and generous. He offered the bear all his food. The hungry bear ate the food and wanted to eat the horse as well. The prince gave it to him. The bear was satisfied and promised to help him.

The prince rode on the bear to a big rock. The bear told him how to open the rock and get the bird. He advised the prince to take the first bird at the door so that he would not wake up the guards.

The rock opened and there was a big cave with beautiful golden birds in golden cages. He forgot the bear's advice and chose the most beautiful one at the back of the cave. The guards caught him but promised him the chosen bird if he brought them the fastest horse in the world. He left the cave.
The bear was angry because the prince didn't obey him. But he showed the prince another rock. Again he told him to take the first horse at the door of the cave. The rock opened but the prince didn't take the first one. He chose the most beautiful one at the back. The guards caught him and they promised him the horse if he brought them a mermaid.

The bear was very angry but he agreed to help the prince again. He told him what to do and disappeared.

The prince went to the coast and started selling all sorts of jewellery, such as silver mirrors, colourful combs, pearls and scarves. Three mermaids came up from the sea. He spoke only with only one. Every time he shook hands with the mermaid, his wish came true.

When they shook hands for the first time he wished that they were both in the horses' cave. They appeared in the cave and the prince got the horse.

When they shook hands for the second time, he wished that they were both in the birds' cave. There he got the most beautiful golden bird.

When the prince and the mermaid shook hands for the third time, he wished to be with the bear. Immediately, they found themselves next to the bear. The bear wished them luck and went his own way.

On the way to the king's castle they came to the town square. There, people were getting ready to hang both of the prince's older brothers. He paid the people to let his brothers go. But his brothers were evil and once they had been let go, they took the bird, the horse, and the mermaid and left their kind brother with nothing. They travelled to the castle and gave the presents to the king.

The king was very happy. But the bird stopped singing, the horse became wild, and the mermaid started crying.

With the bear's help, the youngest brother returned to the castle. But nobody would let him in. His father didn't recognize him because his clothes were torn and his face was dirty. But he went to the wild horse. When the horse saw the prince, it was happy and it started eating and neighing.

Then the prince went to see the bird. When the bird saw him, it was happy and started singing. The mermaid heard the bird singing and rushed into the room. She went to the prince and kissed him. The king recognized his youngest son. The wicked brothers ran away and never came back.

The prince married the mermaid. They ruled the kingdom and lived happily ever after. The apple tree in their garden gave them golden apples every year and the golden bird sang beautiful melodies to them.
The Golden Bird Questions

1.) Summarize the story.

2.) How do the different brothers treat the bear differently?

3.) What items does the bear show the youngest brother?

4.) Is there a moral to this story?