I have been inspired by Japanese illustrators and designers for years. In the fifties I loved Taro Yashima's remarkable hand separated colour illustrations for Crow Boy and Umbrella. In the sixties I encountered the wonderful work of Chihiro Iwasaki and was enchanted by her watery evocative picture books and illustrated fairy tales. In the seventies I discovered Anno's inventive concept books with tiny hidden details long before 'Waldo.' After World War II when everything Japanese interested North America, children's picture books from the late forties through the sixties reflected that interest. At that time Japanese arts and crafts inspired interior and graphic design around the world. Children's book writers, illustrators, editors and publishers as well as librarians sought out and worked with Japanese designs and stories. Not surprisingly, given the legacy of Japanese print making, Japanese illustrators such as Taro Yashima and Kazue Mizumura created the most beautifully mechanically separated illustrations ever made. Until the mid eighties illustrators were sometimes asked to do their own separations in order to save the cost of photographically separating the work. The process most often resulted in static work but these two created works of art. I know, because inspired by Yashima I agreed to separate my work, but most of mine were static indeed.

As you will learn from the following annotated bibliography the illustrators I mentioned are only a few of the great Japanese book creators whose work has been published in North America over the past fifty years. For this issue I knew just who to ask, Yukiko Tosa, a gifted, animated Vancouver children's librarian. She loves children, toys, stories and fun. You can hear joy in her voice, one of those voices one never forgets and always recognizes. Yukiko is a brilliant storyteller, an origami artist and the creator of this extensive selected and annotated bibliography of illustrated Japanese folk tales.

(Kathryn E. Shoemaker, editor, Picture Window)

The following list is a personal selection of favourite illustrated Japanese Folktales currently housed at the Vancouver Public Library.

In the past, most Japanese folklore collections in English had little or no illustrations. However, there are more being published as single tales in the picture book format and newer collections tend to have illustrations. We begin with a list of Individual Folktales for Children. The titles listed here show an eclectic mix of illustrations and styles.

The second part is a list of Variants of ten beloved folktales. For each tale, there are a number of retellings, each with a different illustrator. There is a wide range of artistic interpretation in both language and graphic style.

The third part is a list of Collected Folktales for Children including a collection by well-known Japanese-American writer, Yoshiko Uchida.

The final section is a list of Recommended Websites, some which have their own distinctive online illustrations with animation and music added.

Most of these titles can be found under the following Subject Headings in the VPL Library's Catalogue: Fairy Tales – Japan; Folklore – Japan; Tales – Japan

Individual Folktales for Children:


From an old folktale remembered by the artist Yoshimura in his youth about the wicked brothers and their youngest brother who set off to ask a Princess to decide which of them is the ugliest and how they meet some interesting creatures along their way.


Adapted from a Japanese Noh play, this is a story of a Samurai warrior who is robbed of his lands except for three dwarfed trees and how one stormy night a pilgrim alters the lives of all of them.


A father's fear of the terrible leak ultimately saves him from a thief and wolf.


This story is adapted from "The Strange Folding Screen", a story in Nihon No Minwa edited by Minorii Kakiuchi, about a spoiled rich man who discovers a respect for nature aided by a frog who helps him to turn his life around. Illustrator/author Hamaanaka is a Japanese American.


The annotated bibliography may be selective or comprehensive in its coverage. A selective annotated bibliography includes just those items that are best for the topic while an exhaustive annotated bibliography attempts to identify all that is available on a subject. Organization of an Annotated Bibliography. The organization of the annotated bibliography, if not prescribed by faculty instructions, may be one of various methods, including but not limited to: Alphabetical. Annotated Bibliography Samples. Summary: This handout provides information about annotated bibliographies in MLA, APA, and CMS. Overview. Below you will find sample annotations from annotated bibliographies, each with a different research project. Remember that the annotations you include in your own bibliography should reflect your research project and/or the guidelines of your assignment. As mentioned elsewhere in this resource, depending on the purpose of your bibliography, some annotations may summarize, some may assess or evaluate a source, and some may reflect on the source's possible use. These selective bibliographies include more than 350
In the 16th century, this is the story of Yurikawa, a tale of Odysseus in Japanese.


There seems no way to save four hundred villagers from imminent and unsuspecting death; then the wise old man high on the mountain knows what he must do.


One of the publisher's stories in their series of Japanese folk tales, this tale tells a humorous story about the monkey and the crab who learn a lesson about sharing and explains how hairs grow from the end of the crab's pincer.


This sweet story is about an old man who brags so much about his new heifer that the clogmaker and his apprentice decide to teach him a lesson.


This is adapted from a story, "Smells and Jingles," in William Elliot Griffis's Japanese Fairy World: Stories from the Wonder-lore of Japan published by J.H. Barhyte (1880) in which Yoshī tries to capture the delicious smell of the Sabu, the eel broiler's eels.


This is an older folktale reminiscent of "Rumpelstiltskin" about a carpenter and a terrible ogre who lives in the river.


A translation of "Ten ni nobotta Gengoro" an amusing tale of a fun-loving Gengoroh who finds a magic drum that gets him into trouble and lands him in Lake Biwa where there is a large fish called the Gengoroh carp.


A thieving badger meets a dreadful fate in the hands of a revenging rabbit in this book from Kodansha's series of classics for children.


Fifth in the series of classics for children by Kodansha. A kind old woodcutter and his greedy neighbor are appropriately rewarded according to their actions.


This is a humorous tale of two tengu, or gargoyles, with long, lovely noses who must decide which nose is the more beautiful.


This is an adaptation of an anonymous 12th century scroll tale in the “Tsusumi Chunagon Monogatari” about a free-spirited girl who loved caterpillars. The soft oil wash paintings bring a surrealistic addition to the story.


This is a universal tale of a mouse couple who search for the mightiest and best husband for their daughter.


Based on the tale "The old woman and her dumpling" by Lafcadio Hearn about an old woman who is captured by wicked creatures while chasing a dumpling and when she escapes, she becomes the richest woman in Japan. Humorously retold and great for oral storytelling.


This is the tale of a loyal cat that uses his special power to help his friend, a poor and humble priest.


A pair of mandarin ducks separated by a cruel lord rewards a compassionate couple who risk their lives to reunite them. The beautiful watercolor and pastel paintings are reminiscent of 18th century Japanese woodcuts.


This is the tale of how each year of the Japanese calendar got its name and why Cat and Mouse are enemies today.


This is an adaptation of "A story of Oki Islands", a tale of a brave daughter of an exiled samurai warrior and the journey she undertakes to be reunited with him.


This is based on an Ainu folktale in which a pet puppy and fox retrieve their young master's good luck charm that was stolen from an ogre.

This is a retelling of one of the most popular and ancient short Japanese pillow tales called 'makura' which is also part of the 'rakugo', the famous joke tales of Japan. In this story, a miserly landlord swallows a cherry pit and a cherry tree begins to grow on top of his head.

Schroeder, Alan. *Lily and the Wooden Bowl*. Illustrated by Yoriko Ito. New York: Doubleday Book for Young Readers. 1994. This tale is a retelling of the story of a young girl who wears a wooden bowl over her face to hide her beauty and how she eventually finds love, riches, and happiness.


Teijima, Keizaburo. *Ho-Limilim: A Rabbit Tale from Japan* Translated by Cathy Mizumura. New York: Philomel Books. 1990. Translation of ‘Isopo Kamuy’. This Ainu tale was written by Hisakazu Fujimura as told to him by Yae Shitaku, an Ainu descendent. The bold, multi-colored woodcuts evoke the primitive, rugged forestland of northern Japan.

Tompert, Ann. *Bamboo Hats and a Rice Cake: A Tale Adapted from Japanese Folklore* Illustrated by Demi. New York: Crown. 1993. This tale involves a poor old man who seeks good fortune for the New Year by trading his wife’s kimono for rice cakes. Along the way he comes across some Jizo statues that eventually bring him the luck he has been seeking. Demi has incorporated Japanese calligraphy into the text.


Wells, Ruth. *The Farmer and the Poor God: A Folktale from Japan* Illustrated by Yoshi Miyake. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 1996. This is a tale of a poor family who decide to move away since they feel they are cursed by the poor god living in their attic and how their fortunes are changes when the poor God decides to do something about their move.

Yamaguchi, Tohr. *The Golden Crane: A Japanese Folktaile* Illustrated by Marianne Yamaguchi. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 1963. This moving and poetic folktale comes from the Niigata area of Japan. It tells a story about an orphaned deaf and dumb boy who rescues an injured golden crane and in the process is rescued by a group of sacred cranes when the Lord Governor decides to claim the crane for himself; illustrations are done with beautiful black and white brushwork.

Yoda, Junichi. *The Rolling Rice Ball*. Illustrated by Saburo Watanabe. Translated by Alvin Tresselt. New York: Parents’ Magazine Press. 1969. Translation of ‘Omusubi Kokorin’, a retelling of one of the oldest Japanese folktales about a kind old woodcutter who is taken down a mouse hole and richly rewarded in contrast to his greedy neighbors who end their days in poverty.

**Variants of Famous Tales:**

**THE BOY WHO DREW CATS**


THE CRANE WIFE or TSURU NYOBO


Matsutani, Miyoko. The Crane Maiden. Illustrated by Chihiro Iwasaki. Translated by Alvin Tresselt. New York: Parents’ Magazine Press. 1968. This is another translation of “Tsuru no ongaeshi”, illustrated by the late beloved Chihiro Iwasaki.

Morimoto, Junko. The White Crane. Sydney, Australia: Collins. 1983. This is a retelling of the classic crane tale beautifully illustrated by Morimomo.


INCHLING or ISSUN BOSHI

Brenner, Barbara. Little One Inch. Illustrated by Fred Brenner. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, Inc. 1977. This is a new version of “Issun Boshi” with a contemporary twist using two common legendary Japanese folk figures of the ‘Kappa’ and the ‘Tengu’ in this retelling.

Hughes, Monica. Little Fingerling: A Japanese Folk Tale Illustrated by Brenda Clark. Toronto: Kids Can Press. 1989. This Canadian publication is a retelling of the classic “Issun Boshi”, the tale of the little inchling. Clark’s research into the Edo period and her exquisite watercolors captures the charm and atmosphere of that time.

Ishii, Momoko. Issun Boshi, The Inchling: An Old Tale of Japan Translated by Yone Mizuta. Illustrated by Fuku Akino. New York: Walker. 1967. The retelling of the classic tale — a Japanese version of “Tom Thumb” — about a young man who saves a princess from demons and is granted his wish to be as tall as other men.

McCarthy, Ralph F. The Inch-High Samurai. Illustrated by Shiro Kasamatsu. Tokyo & New York: Kodansha International. 1993. This is another adaptation of “Issun-boshi” the one inch man who saves princess from demons and appears as the fourth book in the publisher’s series of children's classics.

Morimoto, Junko. The Inch Boy. New York: Viking Kestrel. 1986. This is the legendary story of the little boy who faces many dangers as he battles the demon Onis.


MAGIC LISTENING CAP, HAT or EAR


Wakana, Kei. The Magic Hat. New York: Scroll Press. 1970. Translation of “Kiki mimi zukin”, a well-known tale about a kindly poor man who saves a fox and is given a magic hat that gives him the ability to understand wildlife and thus save a rich man’s daughter.

THE MOON PRINCESS or KAGUYA-HIME


McCarthy, Ralph F. The Moon Princess. Illustrated by Kancho Oda. Tokyo: Kodansha International. New York: Distributed in the United States by Kodansha America. 1993. This is a well-loved tale about a young girl found in a bamboo by a kindly old bamboo cutter who grows up to be a wise and renowned beauty but must return to her real home. Kodansha Children’s Classics series #2

THE PEACH BOY or MOMOTARO


Sierra, Judy. Tasty Baby Belly Buttons Illustrated by Melon So. New York: Knopf. Distributed by Random House. 1999. This is a modern variant of the classic tale of “Momotaro”, or The Peach Boy but in this case it features a young girl names Urikohime who is born from a melon, battles the monstrous Oni who steal babies to eat their tasty belly buttons.
THREE STRONG WOMEN

This is a retelling of a famous oral folktale handed down for generations about how a young sumo wrestler meets his match in three women, a daughter, mother and grandmother, he meets on his way to a tournament.

A newer version with different illustrators.

THE TONGUE-CUT SPARROW or SHITAKIRI SUZUME

Using the 1908 retelling of "Shitakiri suzume" in which a kind old man and his greedy wife pay separate visits to the tongue-cut sparrow and receive gifts that they justly deserve.

The classic tale of a kind old man who helps an injured sparrow and is rewarded generously while his greedy wife gets what she deserves. (Also part of the Kodansha Children's Classic Series)

URASHIMA TARO

An adaptation of the classic Japanese tale of Urashima Taro who saves a turtle and finds himself in an underwater kingdom and the tragic consequences of his return to his own country.

Translation of "Urashima Taro", a young fisherman who saves a turtle and is invited to live in the Dragon Palace of the King of the Sea only to suffer tragic consequences.

WISE OLD WOMAN

This is a retelling of a wonderful tale about the wisdom of the elders in which a grandmother helps her grandson solve three riddles to save the village from the enemy. The sweet illustrations add a touch of humour and delight to the text.

This is a retelling of the intergenerational story about an old woman who demonstrates the value of her age when she solves a warlord's three riddles and saves her village from destruction.

Collected Tales For Children:

This is a collection of eight unusual stories with black and white drawings and includes an excellent bibliography on Japanese folklore.

This collection of nine famous folktales includes beautiful oriental-style illustrations.

A collection of ten familiar folktales that have a mysterious element to it such as the Green Willow; the Crane Maiden and more.

A collection in two volumes of well-known Japanese tales each with five or six tales included in each and sweetly illustrated by Imoto. There is also a Note to Parents on how to capture a child's imagination through stories from Professor Nishimoto of Showa Woman's College.

The author has selected and retold twelve tales of well-known animals and the artist has enhanced the stories using striking woodcuts.

This is a collection of ten famous folktales.

This collection includes six well-loved tales including the traditional story of "Kintaro, the King of the Forest".

This is one of the first collections of fourteen familiar tales translated and adapted by the well-known Japanese American author Uchida with black and white drawings by Jones. A Glossary and Pronunciation guide is included. These are excellent for oral storytelling.

This is a personal collection of six folktales culled from the author's childhood memories.
Recommended Websites:

Folk Legends of Japan:
From the Kids Web Japan and the Japan Information Network. There is currently a collection of 18 classic stories you can read online with background music and animated movement.

Folktales from Japan:
http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/japan.html
Here is a list of eight folktales selected and edited by Professor D.L. Ashliman who conducts folklore research in Southern Utah. There is also a link to “Japanese Legends about Supernatural Sweethearts”, a collection of seven stories.

Google Web Directory Japanese Folklore Sites:
http://directory.google.com/Top/Society/Folklore/Literature/Tales/Fairy_Tales/World_Tales/Japanese/
A great collection of websites to explore from the Google search engine's page.

Japanese Folk Tales:
http://japan.lisd./resources/jumppages/folktales.html
From Japan Online Project, there are more links to websites and lesson plans for teachers from K-12 on Japanese topics including Fairy Tales and Tall Tales.

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These selective bibliographies include more than 350 books by and about people of color published in the United States between 1980 and 1990 (Vol. 1) and 1991 and 1996 (Vol. 2) are recommended for children from birth to age 14. Covers: history, people and places; poetry; folklore, mythology and traditional literature; seasons and celebrations; books for babies; concept books; issues in today’s world; biographies; understanding oneself and others; picture books; fiction for new readers, young readers and teenagers. An annotated guide to fiction and non-fiction on the history and culture of minority groups in the United States and Canada, and native cultures around the world. Bibliographies include books from preschool to high school level.

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