

# Reader's Theatre / Performance Notes

## *Yuuki and the Tidal Wave*

*Production Notes by P. J. Rittiger*

✓ *3 Ways to Use this Play Script:*

**Students read aloud the play while remaining seated in the classroom.** Ask readers to skip all bracketed stage instructions. This play has six characters with speaking lines; you may choose to rotate turns for speaking roles.

**Students perform the play in the classroom.** Seat audience members on the floor in the center of the room.

**Students perform this play onstage.** Refer to the production notes that follow.

### Scenery Suggestions

***If students perform the play in the classroom,*** create your set for ACT 1 in one corner or side of the room and set up your scenery for ACT 2 in the opposite corner or on the opposite side of the room. As the scenes change, the actors cross the room, acting as if they are running and fighting their way up a gigantic mountain. Audience members turn around to follow the action. There is no need to distinguish ACT 1 from ACT 2.

***If students perform this play onstage or in a large room,*** maintain the separation of ACT 1 and ACT 2. If you have a curtain available, close the curtain between acts.

### ACT I - Scenery Suggestions

ACT 1 takes place in a Japanese village by near the sea. Paint backdrop of ocean, small homes, as well as a sky with deep gray clouds. Portions of the rice fields must show in order for Yuuki to set them “ablaze.”

You'll need a home for Yuuki and his family, as well as a few plastic or cardboard trees and shrubs. Yuuki's home can be built of large boxes painted shades of brown. The roof can be a dark green fabric or more boxes. Create the illusion of fire by tying a bunch of real twigs and branches together with brown yarn. Weave strips of aluminum foil

## "Yuuki" – Performance Notes

through the branches. Paint part of each aluminum foil strip with orange paint for your fire. Remember to leave a branch or two outside of the bundle tied with yarn, because Yuuki will need to use one to carry to the rice crops.

ACT 2 takes place on the mountaintop. Find at least a dozen large boxes that are wood or heavy cardboard and build them into a pyramid shape. Keep in mind that real mountains are not smooth sided and your mountain does not need to be, either. Let the boxes stick up and out at odd angles. Once stacked, kids can paint the mountain shades of brown, black and green. Another way to create a mountain is to simply paint one on a backdrop.

### **ACT I - Prop List**

In ACT 1, props include baskets; plastic or real fruit; plastic, silk or real flowers; plastic or real foods; and paper lanterns.

In ACT 2, there are no essential props. The villagers have run from the beach to the top of the mountain to save their lives so they don't carry anything.

### **Casting**

This play can accommodate any number of children because of the presence of the OTHER VILLAGERS. The recommended number of villagers is as few as three or as many as 15.

In *Yuuki & the Tidal Wave*, there are serious characters and humorous characters. The children who assume the roles of YUUKI'S MOTHER, FIRST VILLAGER and SECOND VILLAGER should be encouraged to enjoy behaving in an amusing way when acting out these roles. YUUKI'S MOTHER'S humorous appeal is found in the way she snaps off her lines, as if she were in charge of everything in the world. FIRST VILLAGER and SECOND VILLAGER are the jokesters of the village. For contrast, the students who assume all of the other roles in this play, such as YUUKI, YUUKI'S FATHER, VILLAGE BOY and all of the other characters, should be encouraged to perform their roles in a serious manner.

### **Costumes**

Japanese robes can be created using flowery drapes of fabric and cloth belts worn over a child's regular clothing. Pajamas and robes can also be used if they evoke a Japanese appearance. If you want your actors to appear to be perspiring when they reach the mountaintop, spritz them with water from a mister before the beginning of ACT 2.

**Casting Slips**  
*Yuuki and the Tidal Wave*

**Yuuki**

**Yuuki's Father**

**Yuuki's Mother**

**First Villager**

**Second Villager**

**Village Boy**

**Person of the Village**

**Person of the Village**

**Person of the Village**

**Person of the Village**