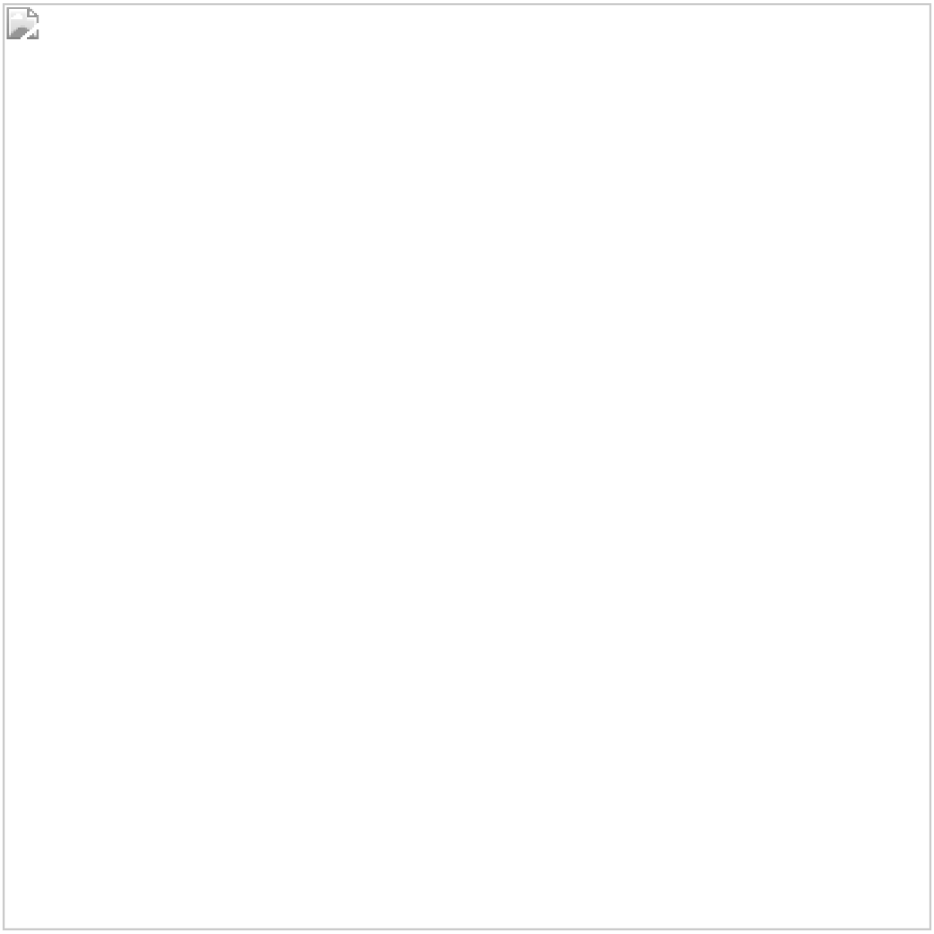
COLORING THE CLASSICS

Kintaro, the Golden Boy

A Tale from Japan



Long, long ago there lived in Kyoto a brave soldier named Kintoki. He married a beautiful lady, but through the malice of some of his friends he fell into disgrace at Court and was dismissed. He did not long survive it, and he died.

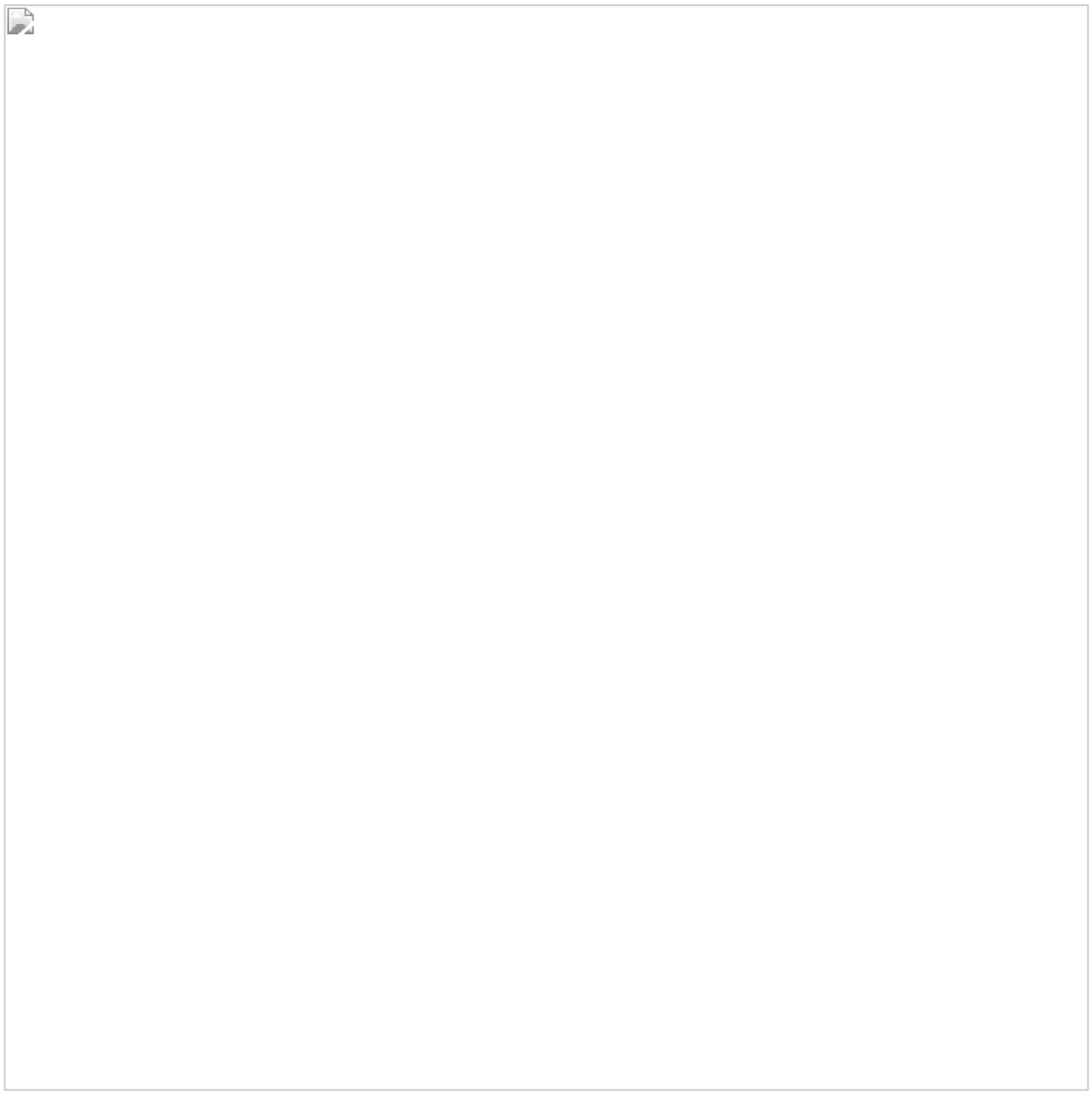
His young wife, fearing her husband's enemies, fled to the Ashigara Mountains. There in the lonely forests, where no one came except woodcutters, a little boy was born to her. She called him Kintaro, or the Golden Boy.

TALK ABOUT IT

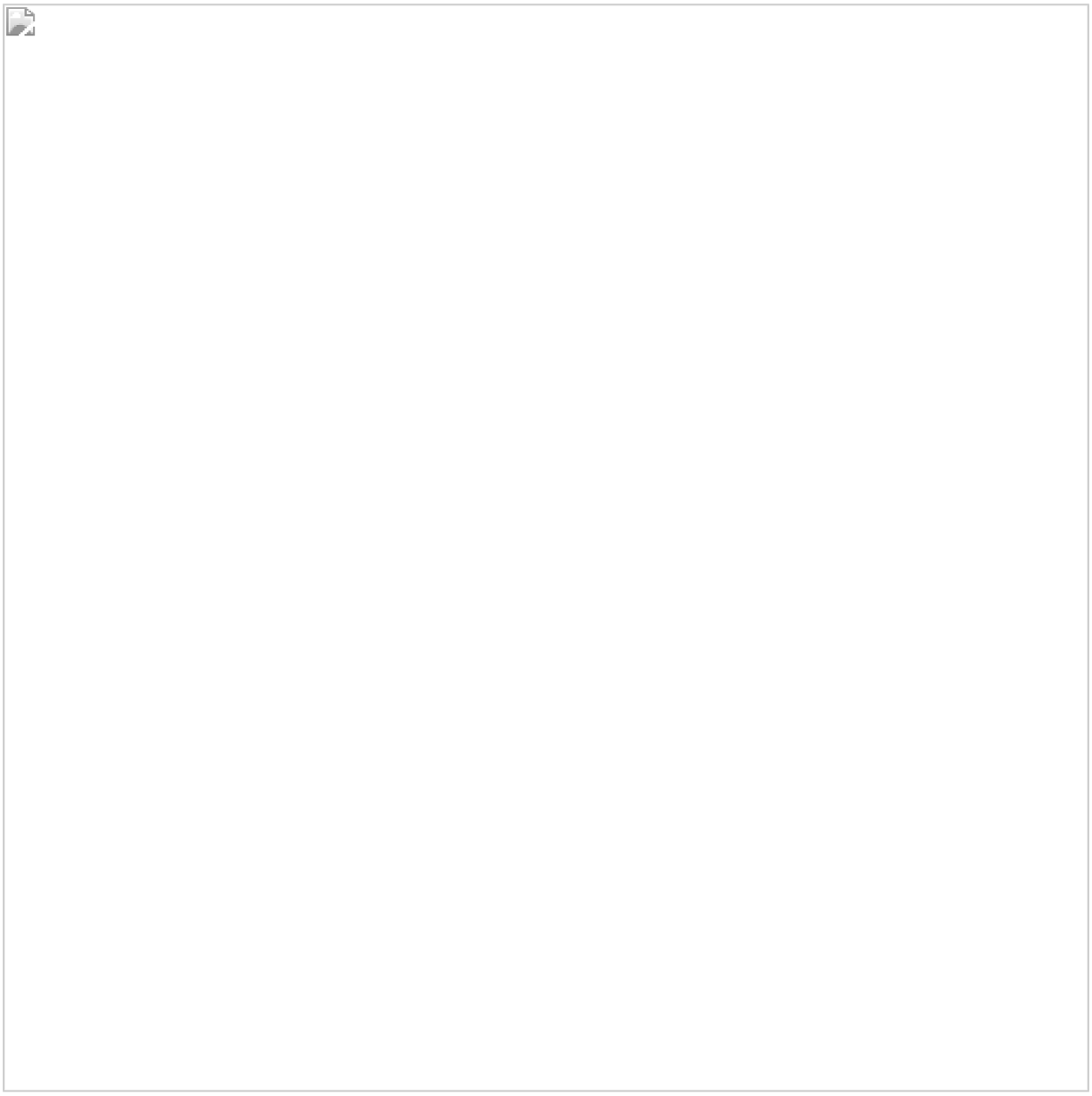
Kintaro grew up far from other people. What do you think it was like in the forest?

This book belongs to _____

Kintaro, the Golden Boy · another picture



The Strongest Boy



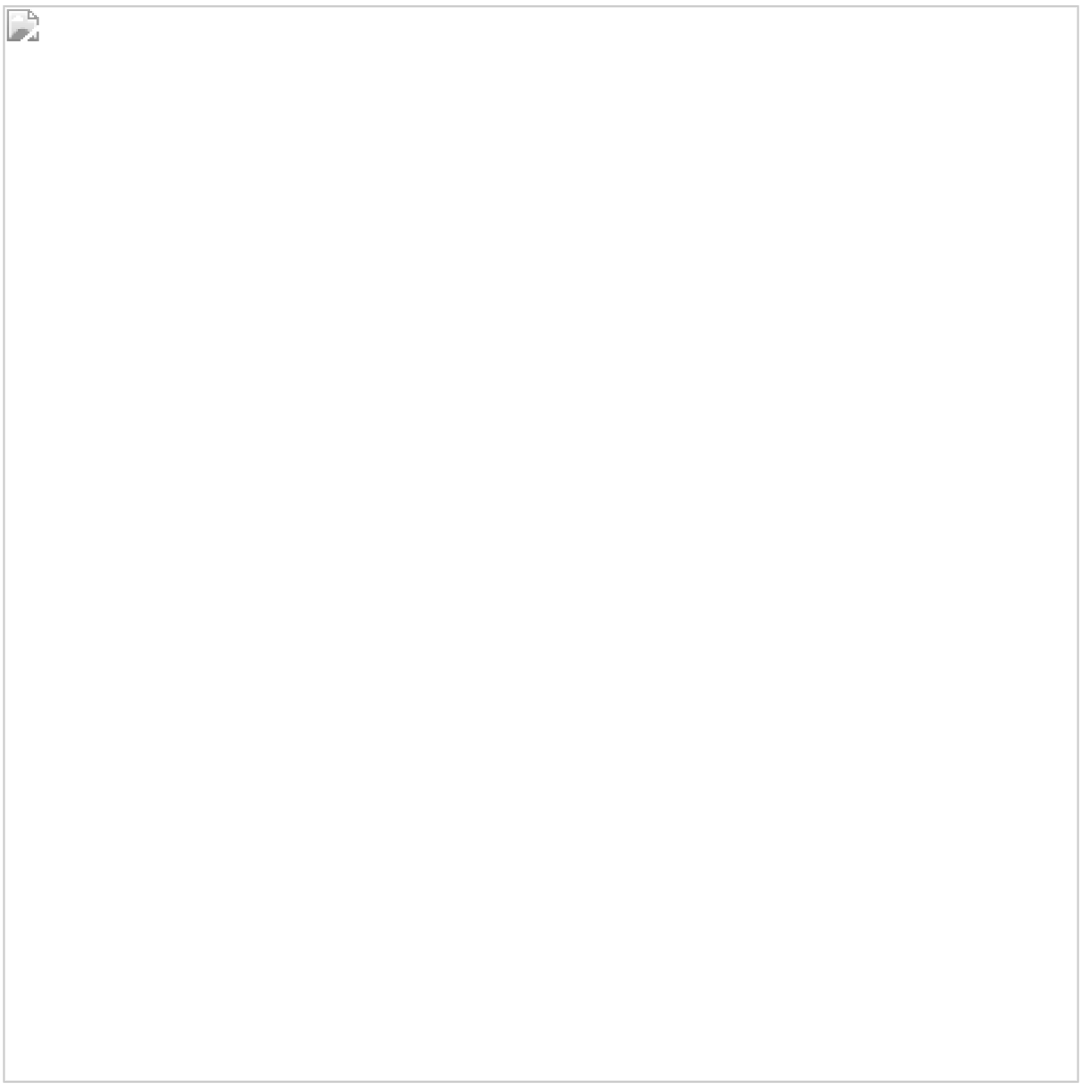
The remarkable thing about this child was his great strength. By the time he was eight years old he could cut down trees as quickly as the woodcutters.

His mother gave him a large ax, and he went out in the forest and helped the woodcutters. They called him “Wonder-child,” and they called his mother the “Old Nurse of the Mountains,” for they did not know her high rank.

Another thing he liked to do was smash up rocks and stones. You can imagine how strong he was!

TALK ABOUT IT

What is something you are good at that took you a long time to learn?

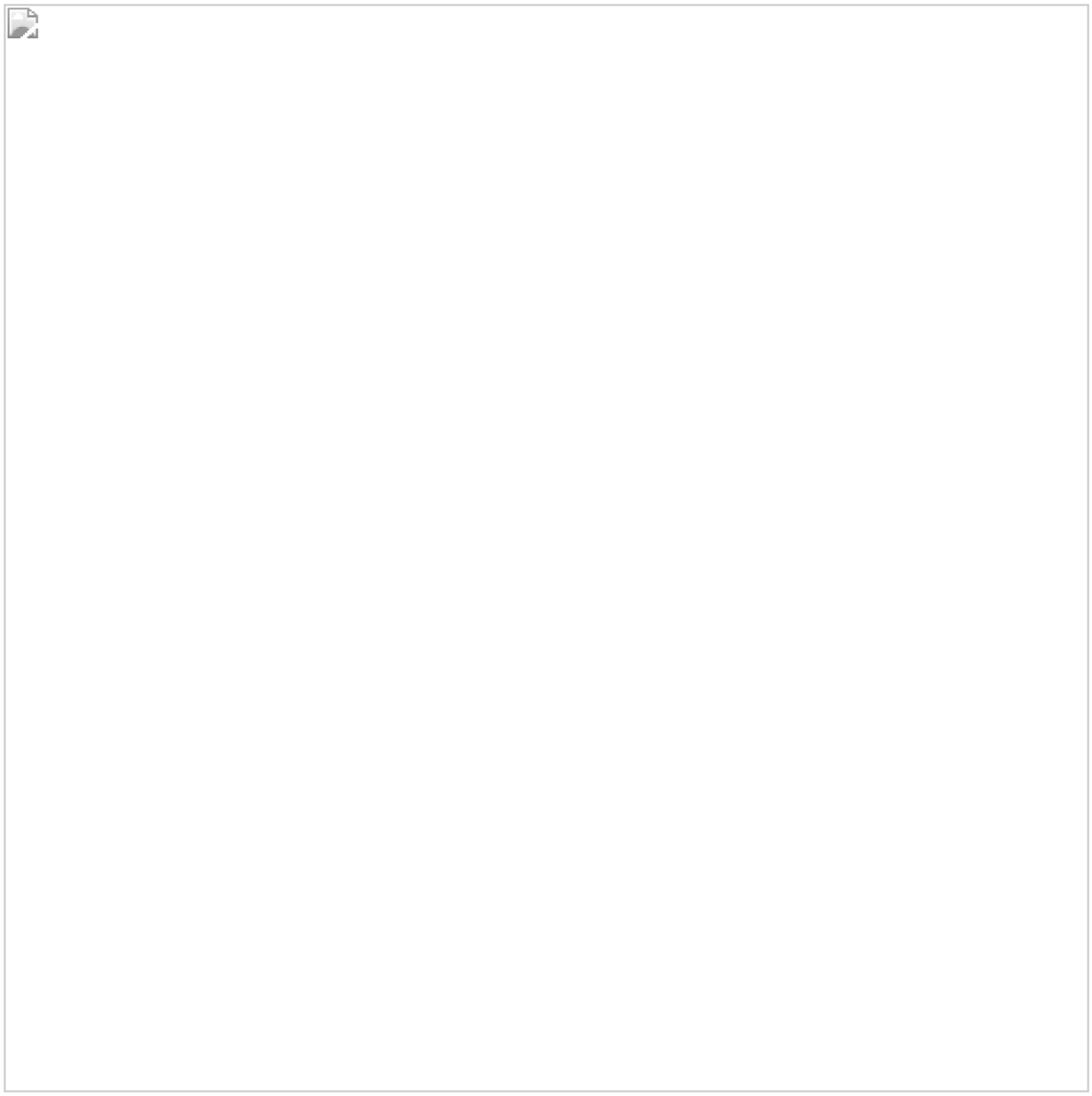


Think about it

1. What did the woodcutters call Kintaro?

- ○ Wonder-child
- ○ Little Bear
- ○ Mountain King

Friends in the Mountains



Kintaro grew up all alone in the mountain wilds. So he made friends with the animals, and learned to understand them and speak their strange talk.

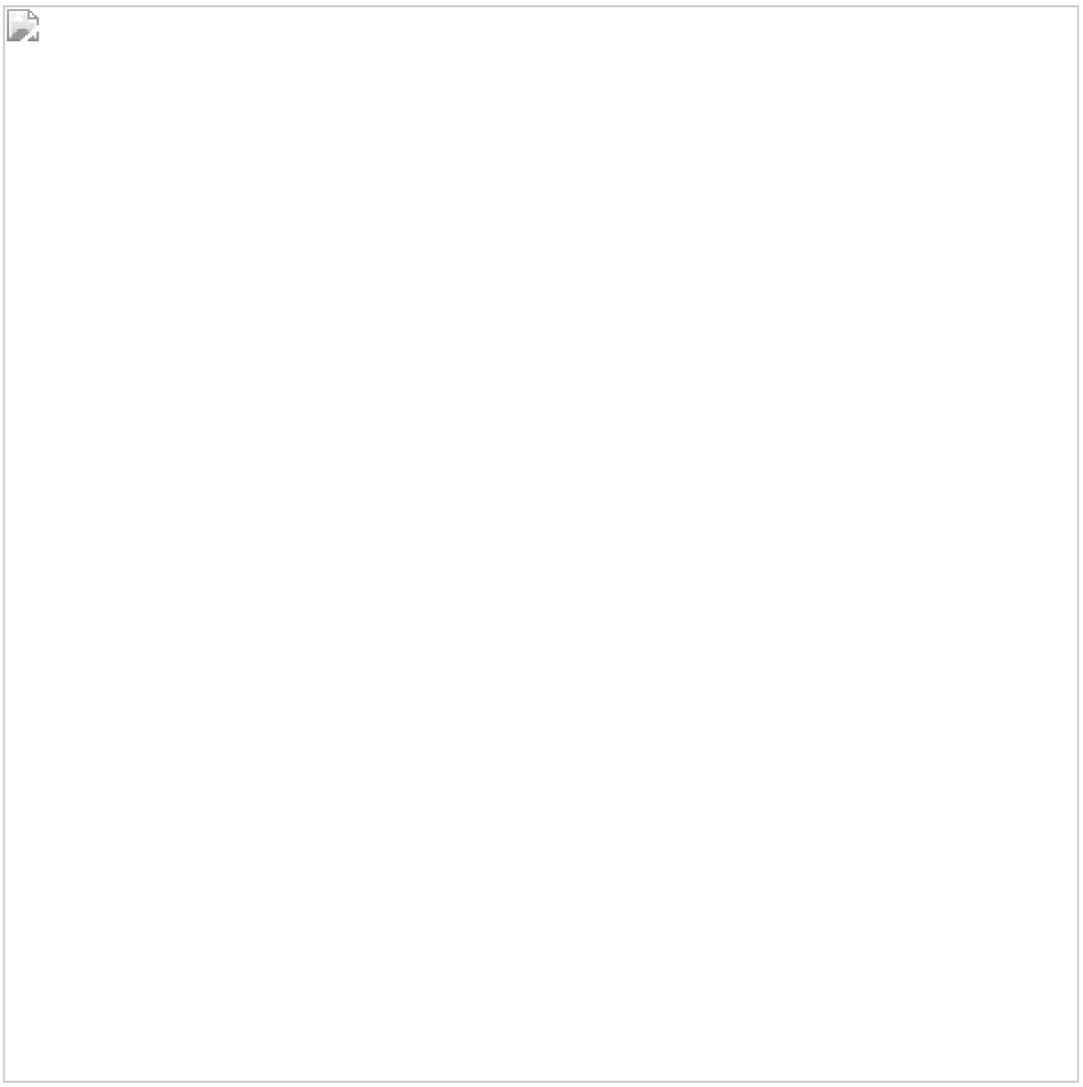
They grew quite tame and looked upon him as their master. His special friends were the bear, the deer, the monkey and the hare.

The bear often brought her cubs for Kintaro to romp with, and he would ride home on her back to her cave. He would put his arms round the deer's neck, to show that its long horns did not frighten him. Great was the fun they had together.

TALK ABOUT IT

Kintaro had no boys and girls to play with, so he made friends with animals. Who are your friends?

Friends in the Mountains · another picture

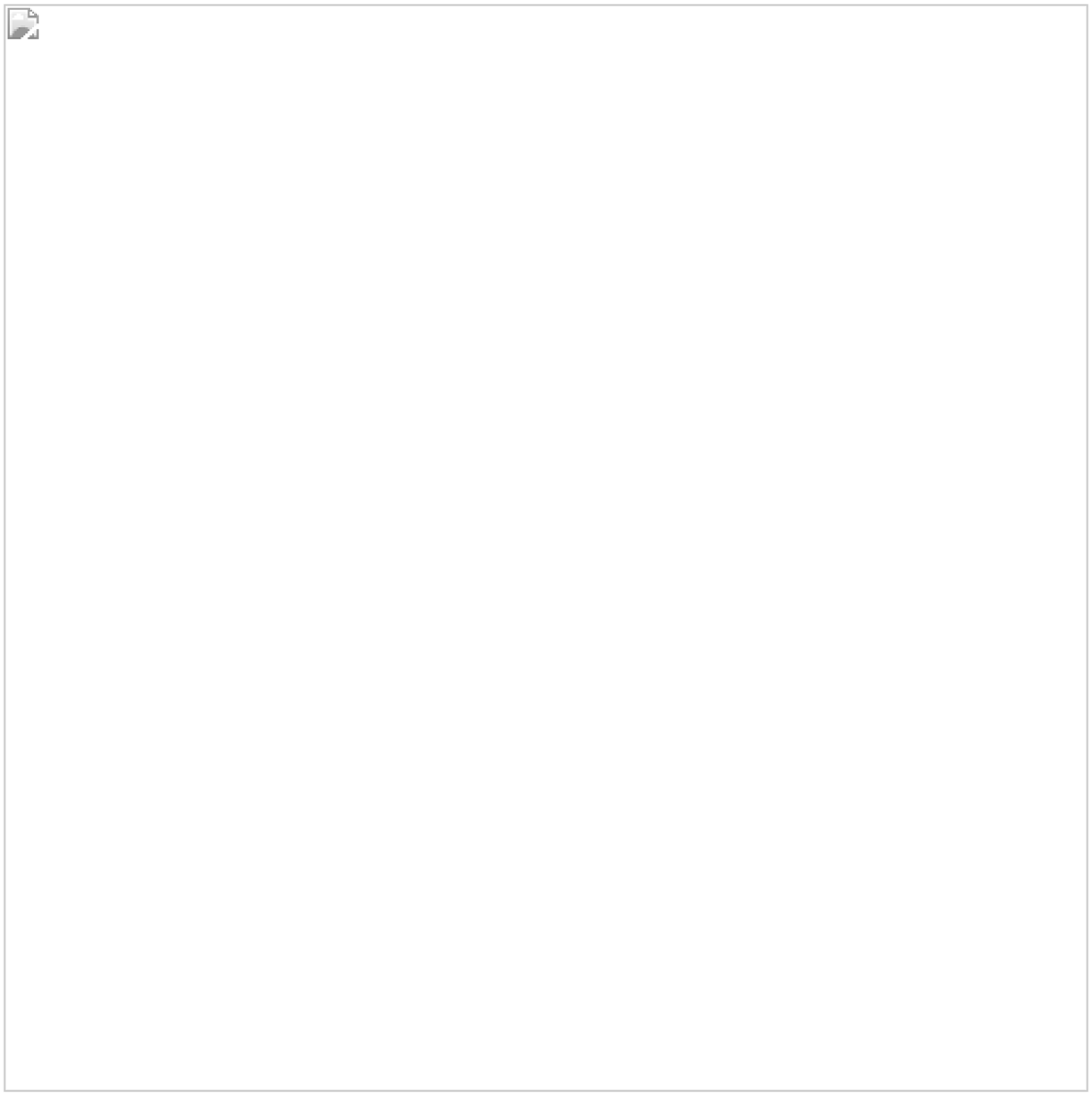


Think about it

1. Which four animals were Kintaro's special friends?

- ○ Bear, deer, monkey and hare
- ○ Wolf, fox, crow and boar
- ○ Tiger, bear, hare and dog

A Wrestling Match



One day Kintaro and his four friends went up into the mountains, to a wide, grassy plain covered with wild flowers.

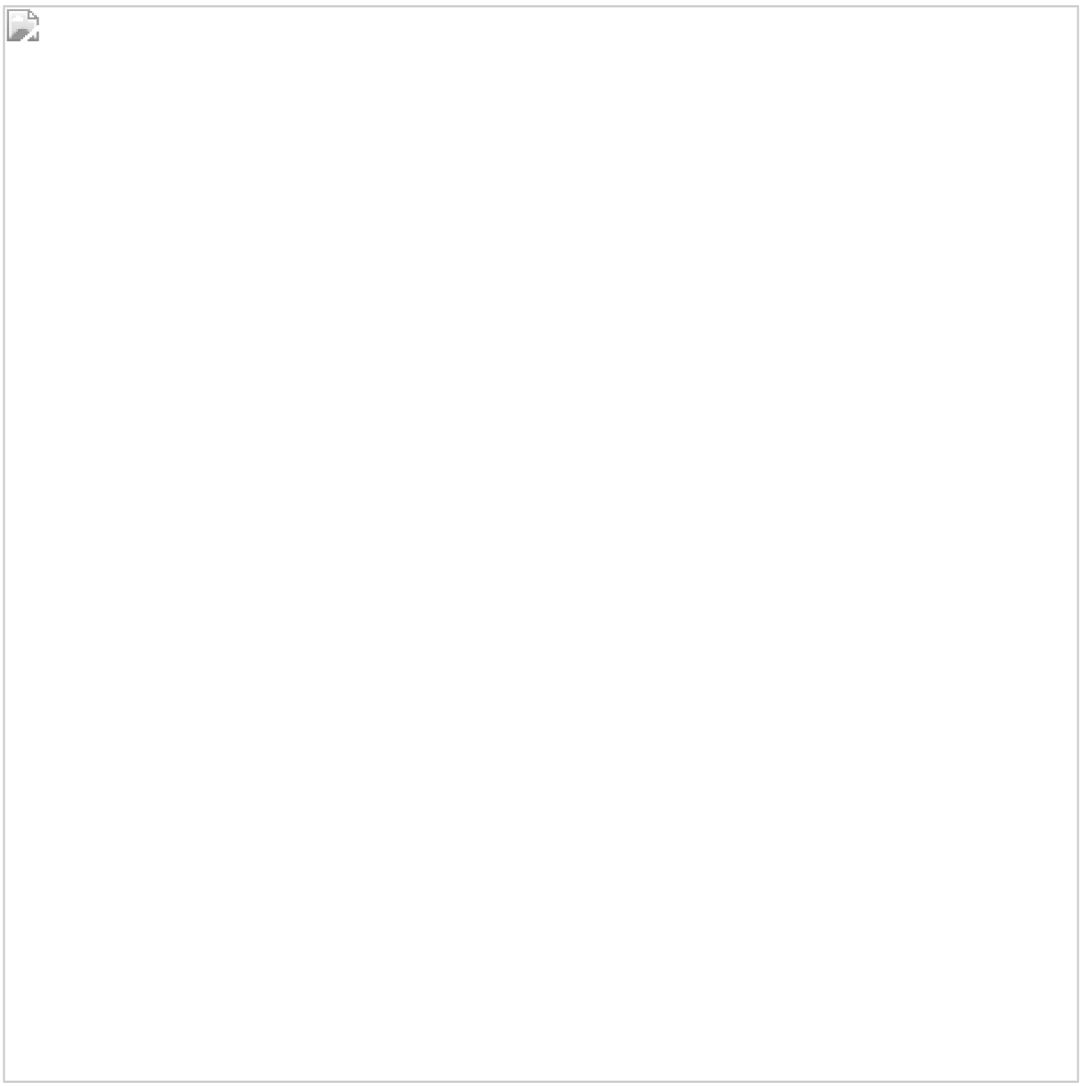
Kintaro said, “Here is a place for a good game. What do you all say to a wrestling match?”

“That will be great fun,” said the bear. “I am the strongest animal, so I will make the platform for the wrestlers.” She dug up the earth and patted it into shape, and the others helped.

“I will look on while you all wrestle with each other,” said Kintaro. “I shall give a prize to the one who wins in each round.”

TALK ABOUT IT
What games do you like to play with your friends? Do you play for a prize?

A Wrestling Match · another picture

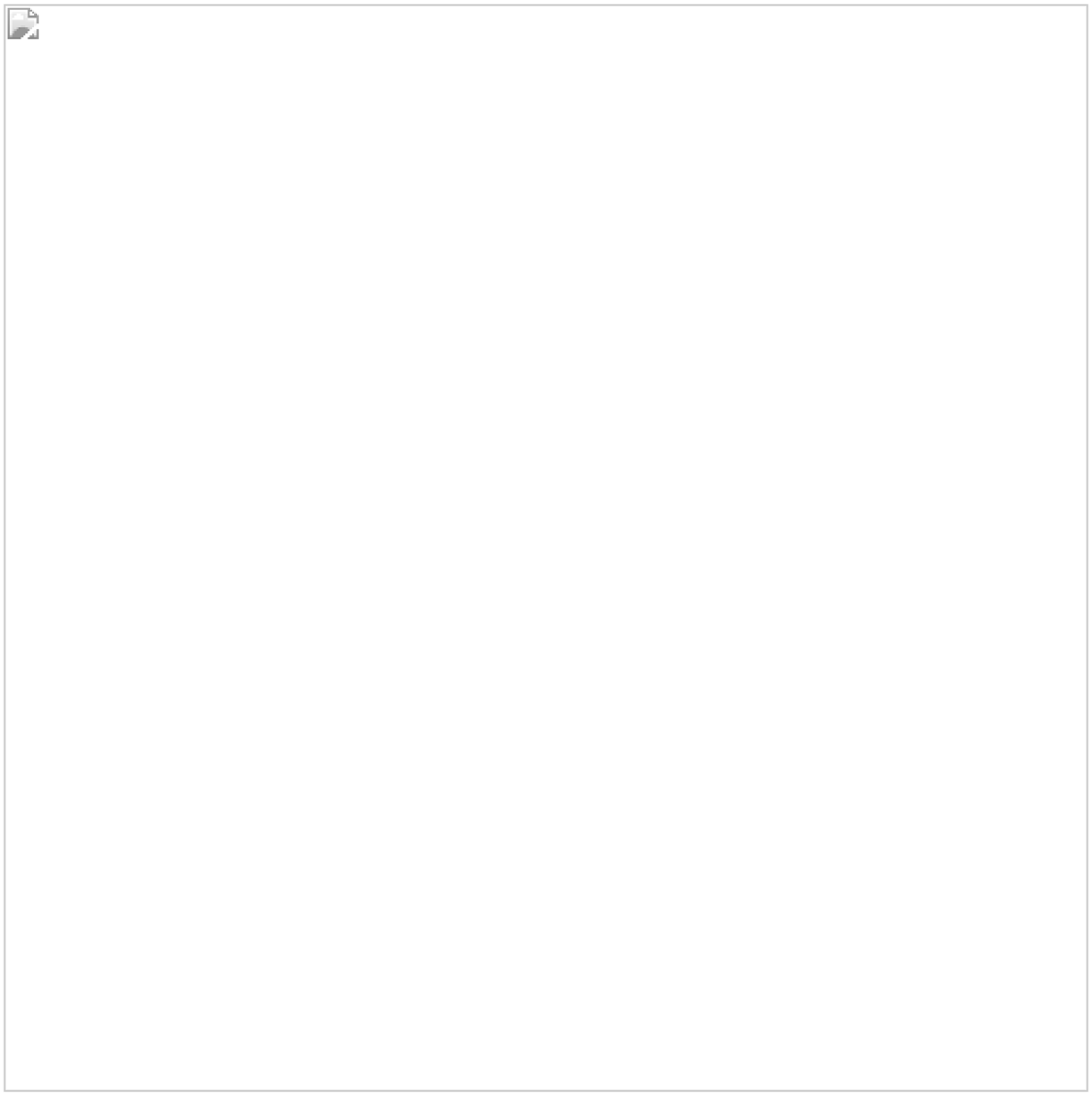


Think about it

1. What game did Kintaro suggest?

- ○ Hide and seek
- ○ A wrestling match
- ○ A race

Red-back and Long-ears



The deer was umpire. “Red-back! Red-back!” he called to the monkey. “Are you ready?” Then to the hare: “Long-ears! Long-ears! are you ready?”

When the deer dropped a leaf, they rushed upon each other, crying “Yoisho, yoisho!” At last the hare gave the monkey a good push and sent him flying off the platform.

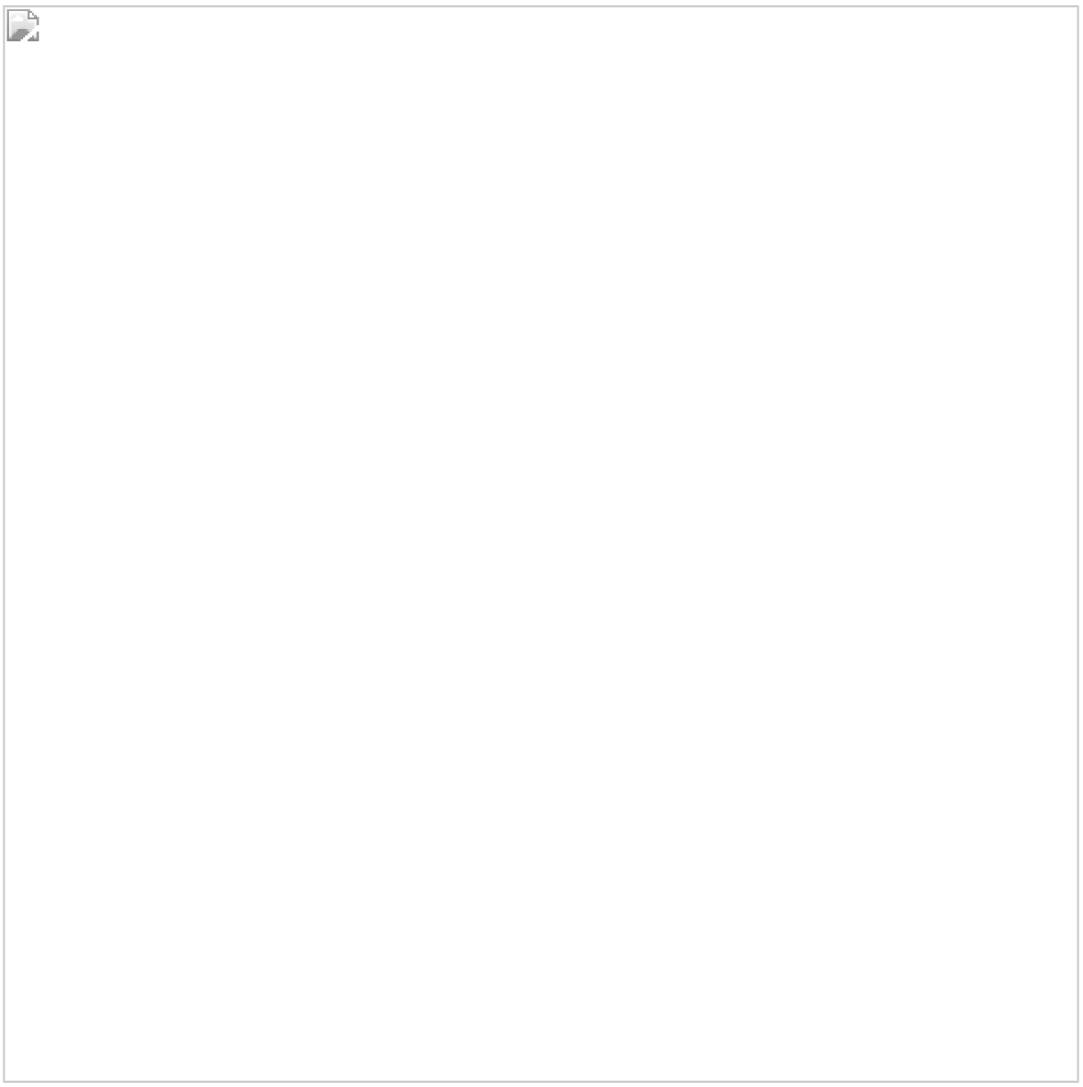
“Oh, oh! how my back hurts—my back hurts me!” cried the monkey.

“This round is finished—the hare has won,” said the deer. Kintaro gave the hare a rice-dumpling from his luncheon box. “Here is your prize, and you have earned, it well!”

TALK ABOUT IT

How do you feel when you lose a game? What helps?

Red-back and Long-ears · another picture

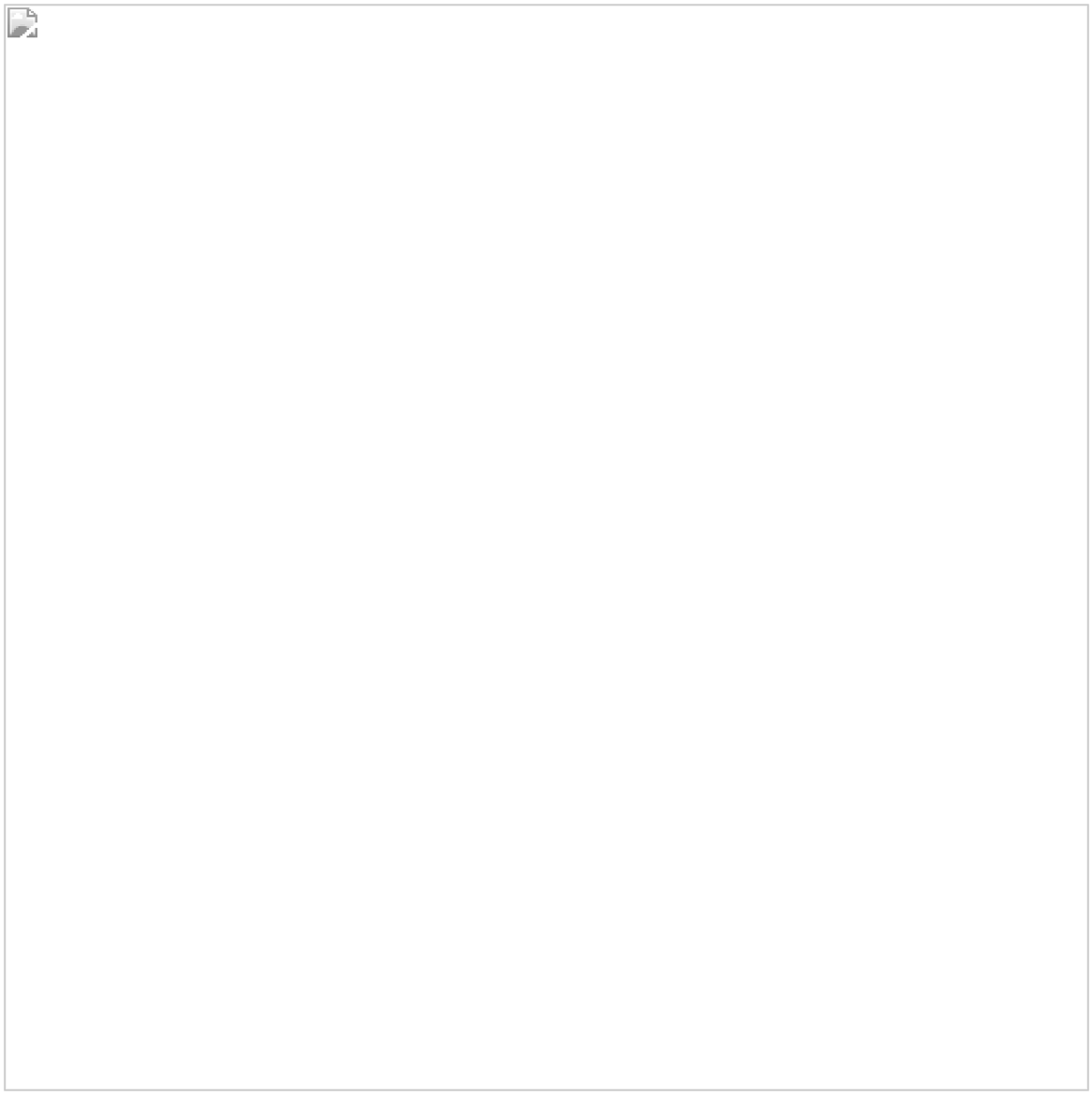


Think about it

1. What was the prize?

- ○ A flower
- ○ A rice-dumpling
- ○ A shiny stone

Another Chance



The monkey got up looking very cross, for he felt he had not been fairly beaten. “My foot slipped and I tumbled,” he said. “Please give me another chance.”

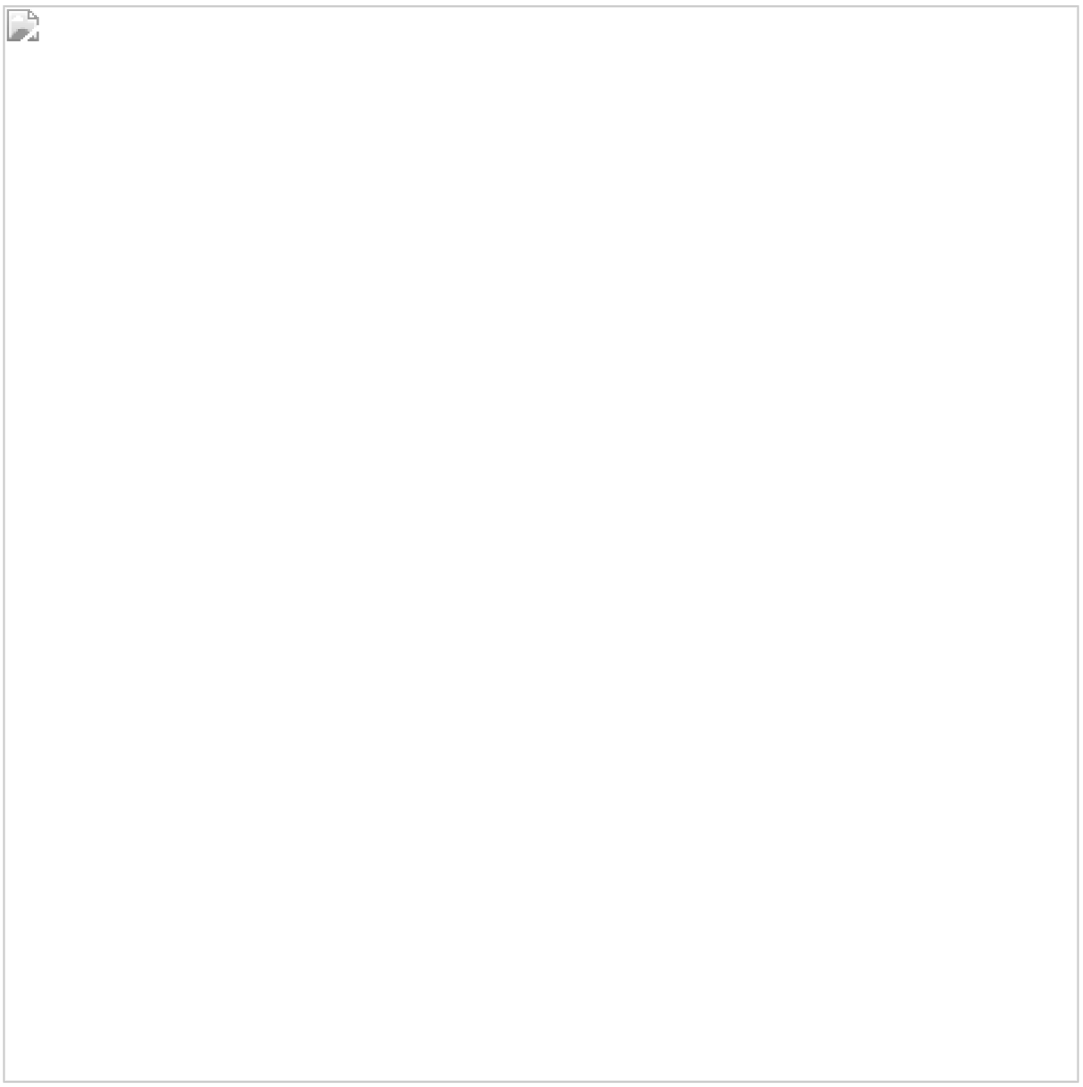
Kintaro agreed. This time the cunning monkey got hold of the hare’s long ear and pulled it hard. The hare was thrown off his guard, and the monkey caught one of his legs and sent him sprawling.

The monkey won a rice-dumpling, and forgot all about his sore back.

Then the deer wrestled the hare, and went down on one knee. So, sometimes one winning and sometimes another, they played until they were tired.

TALK ABOUT IT

The monkey got hold of the hare’s ear to win. Do you think that was fair? Why or why not?



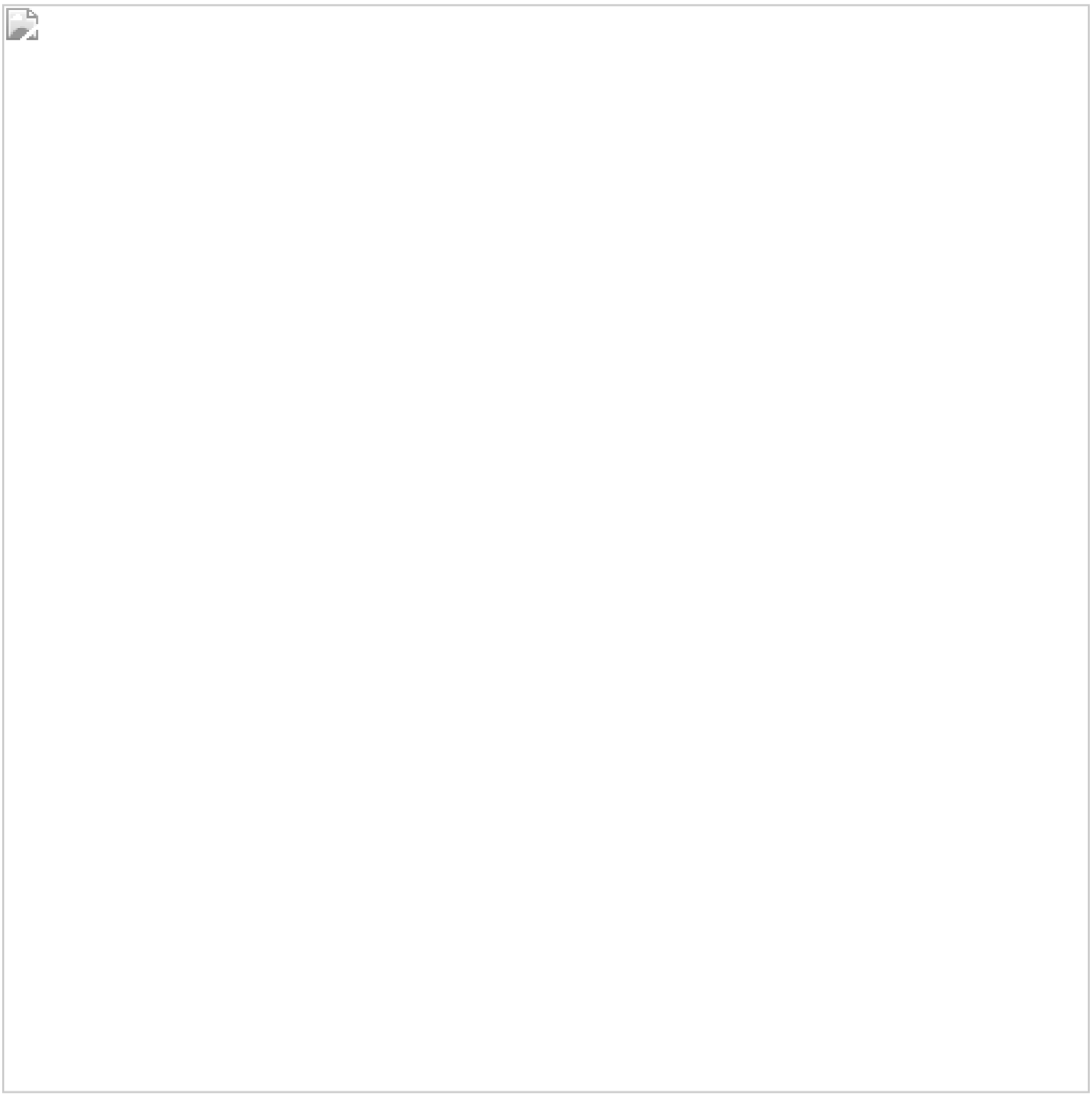
Think about it

1. How did the monkey win the second round?

- ○ He was faster
- ○ He pulled the hare's long ear
- ○ The hare fell asleep

2. What would you have said to the monkey?

The Tree Bridge



“This is enough for to-day,” said Kintaro. On the way home they came to a river rushing “don, don” through a valley, with no bridge. The animals all looked serious.

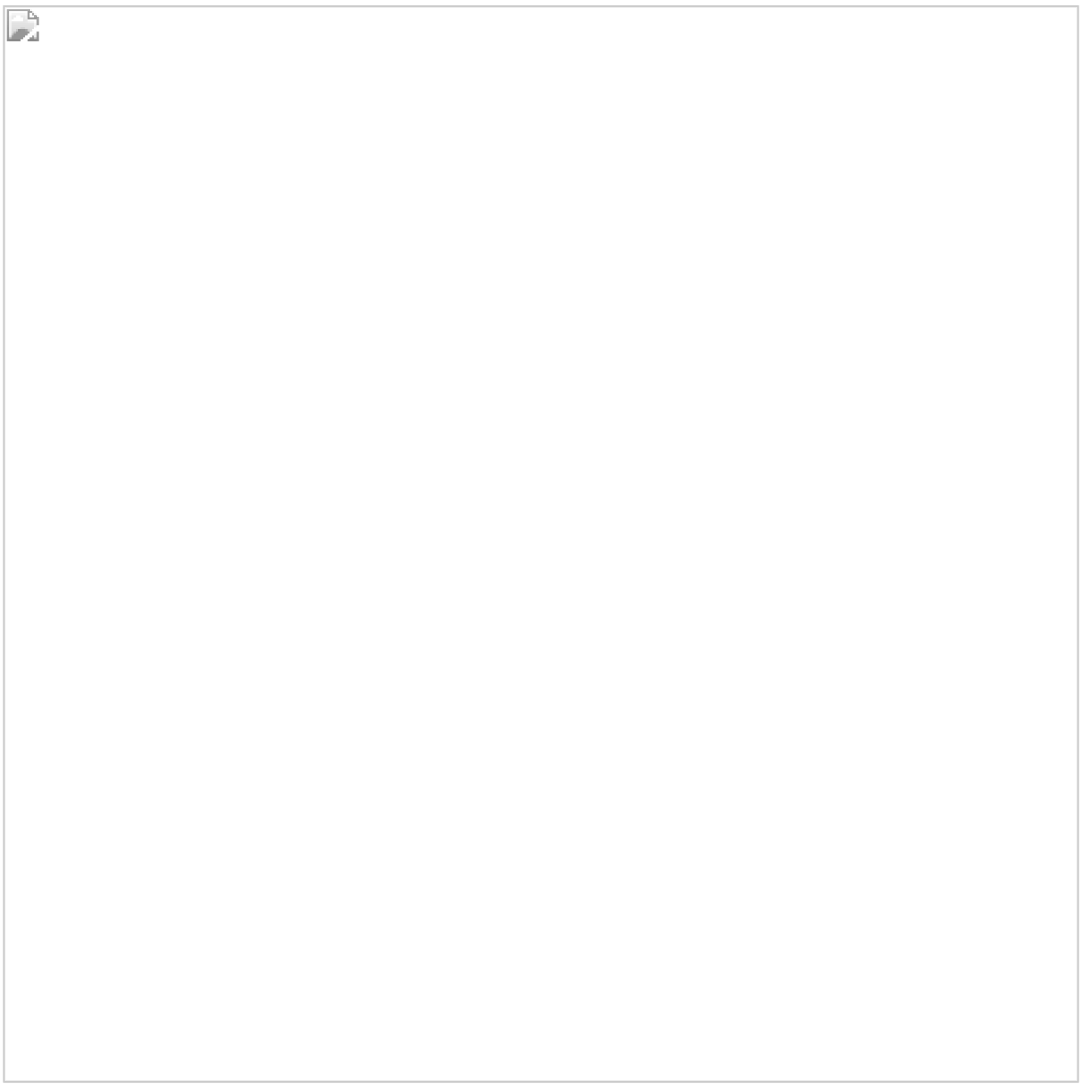
“Wait a moment,” said Kintaro. “I will make a good bridge for you all in a few minutes.” He pulled at a great tree by the water with all his might, once, twice, thrice! At the third pull the roots gave way, and “meri, meri” (crash, crash), it fell across the stream.

“It is quite safe, so follow me,” said Kintaro, stepping across first. “How strong he is! how strong he is!” cried the animals.

TALK ABOUT IT

Kintaro used his strength to help his friends get home. How could you use something you are good at to help someone?

The Tree Bridge · another picture

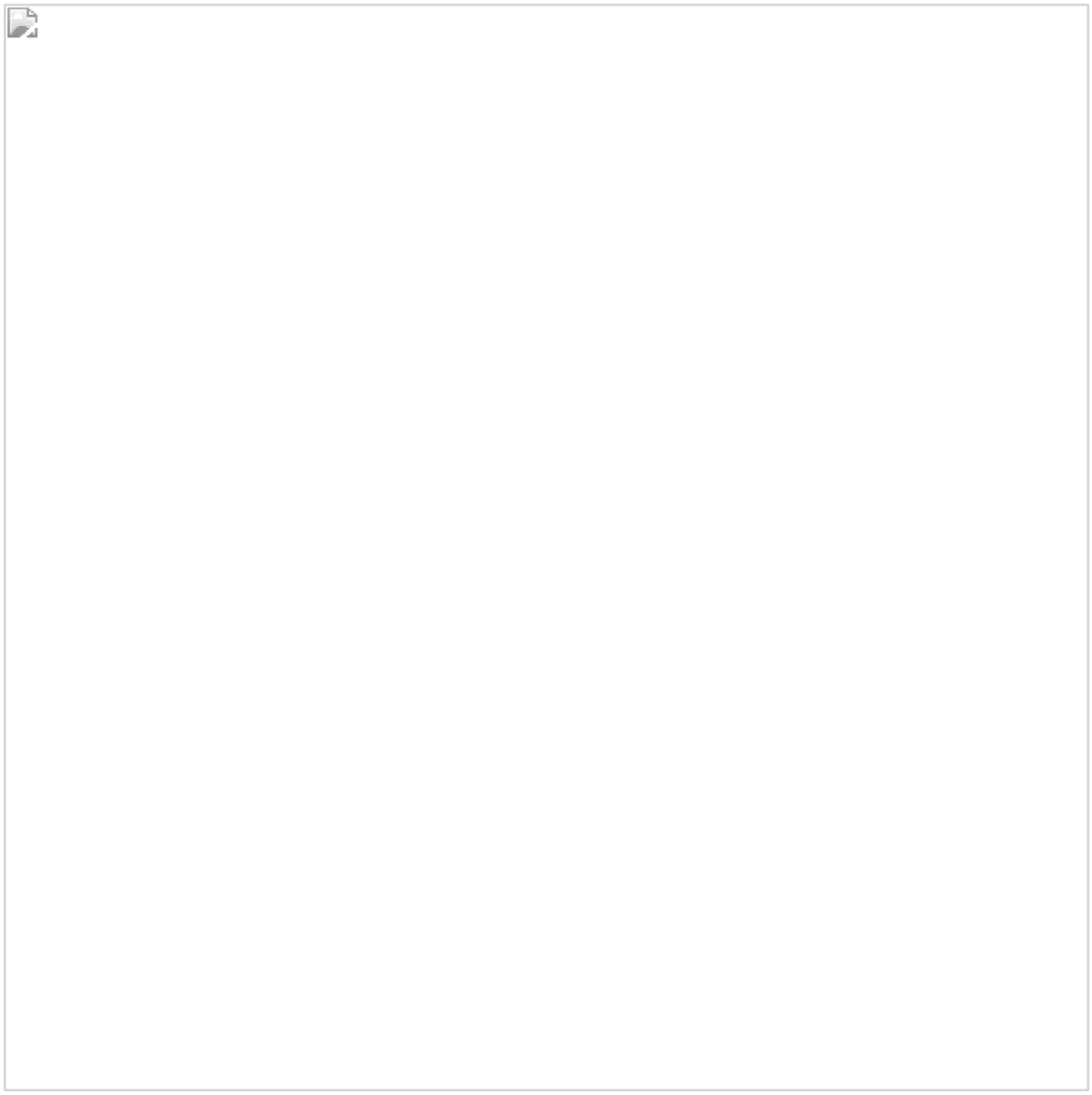


Think about it

1. How did Kintaro make a bridge?

- ○ He cut down a tree with an ax
- ○ He pulled a big tree over by the roots
- ○ He carried the animals across

Home to Mother



A woodcutter on a rock above the stream had seen it all. He rubbed his eyes. “This is no ordinary child. Whose son can he be? I will find out before this day is done.” He followed them across the bridge.

Kintaro knew nothing of this. On the other side the animals went home to the woods, and he went to his mother, who was waiting.

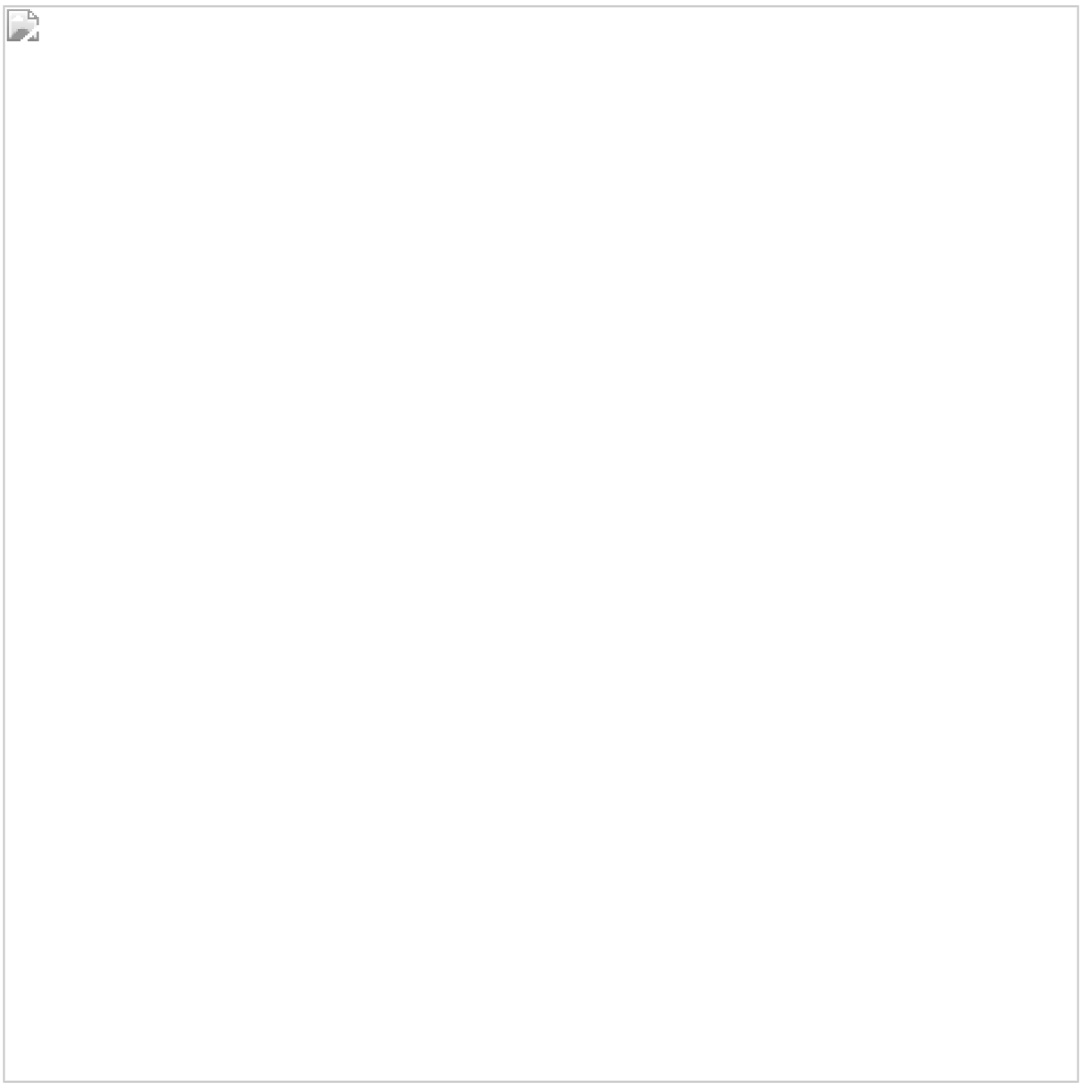
“Okkasan (mother), here I am!” he said.

“O, Kimbo!” said his mother with a bright smile. “How late you are to-day. I feared that something had happened to you.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Kintaro’s mother was glad to see him home safe. Who waits for you at the end of your day?

Home to Mother · another picture

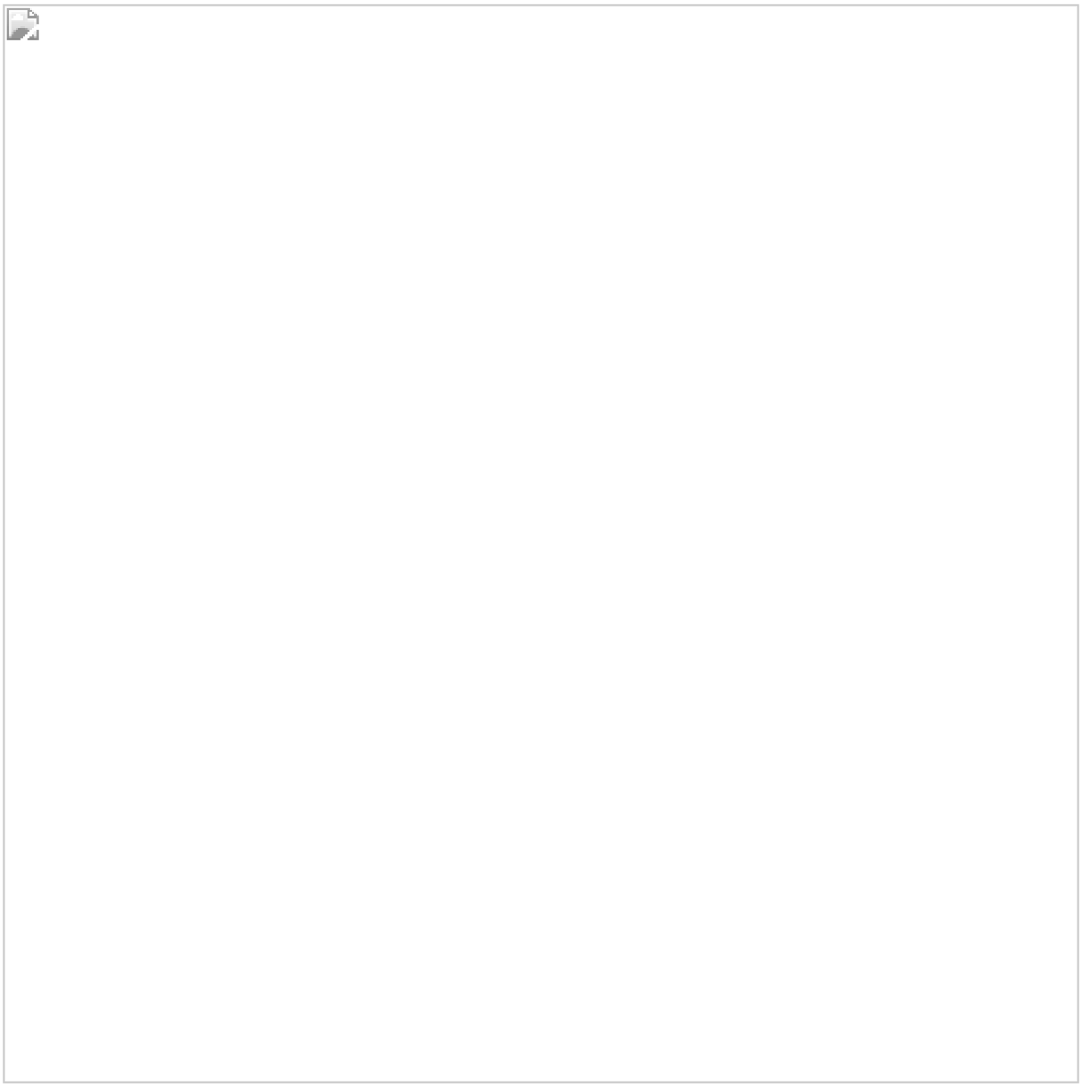


Think about it

1. Who followed Kintaro home?

- ○ The bear
- ○ A woodcutter
- ○ The monkey

The Old Woodcutter



“Now tell me who is the strongest of all?” asked his mother, pretending not to know.

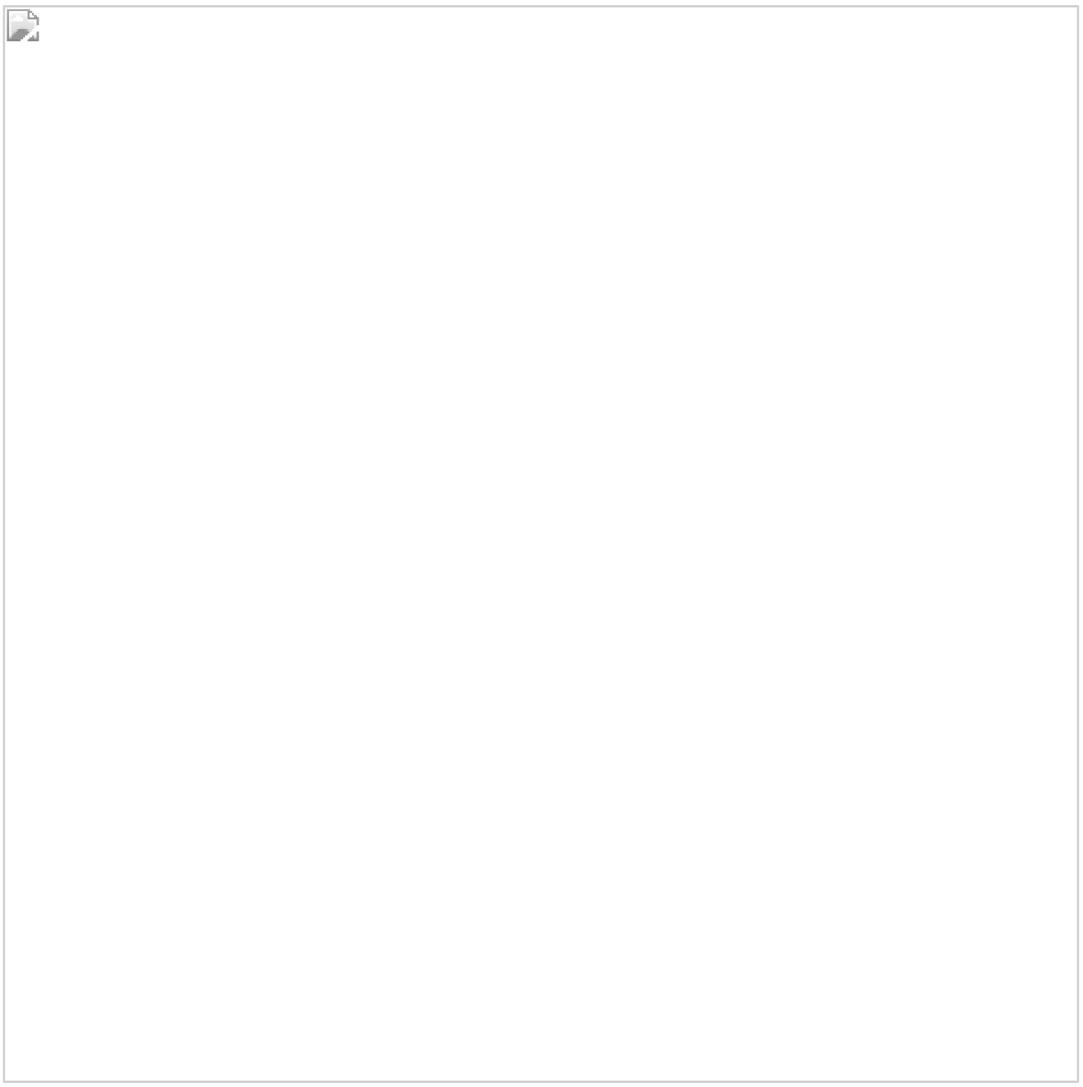
“Oh, mother,” said Kintaro, “don’t you know that I am the strongest?” After him came the bear, he said, and then the others.

Suddenly a voice outside said, “Listen to me, little boy! Next time you go, take this old man with you to the wrestling match.” It was the woodcutter. He came in and said, “Let us see who has the strongest arm—this boy or myself?”

They grasped hands and wrestled a long time, evenly matched, till the old man gave up and called it a drawn game.

TALK ABOUT IT

Kintaro said, “don’t you know that I am the strongest?” Is it good to say that about yourself? What do you think?

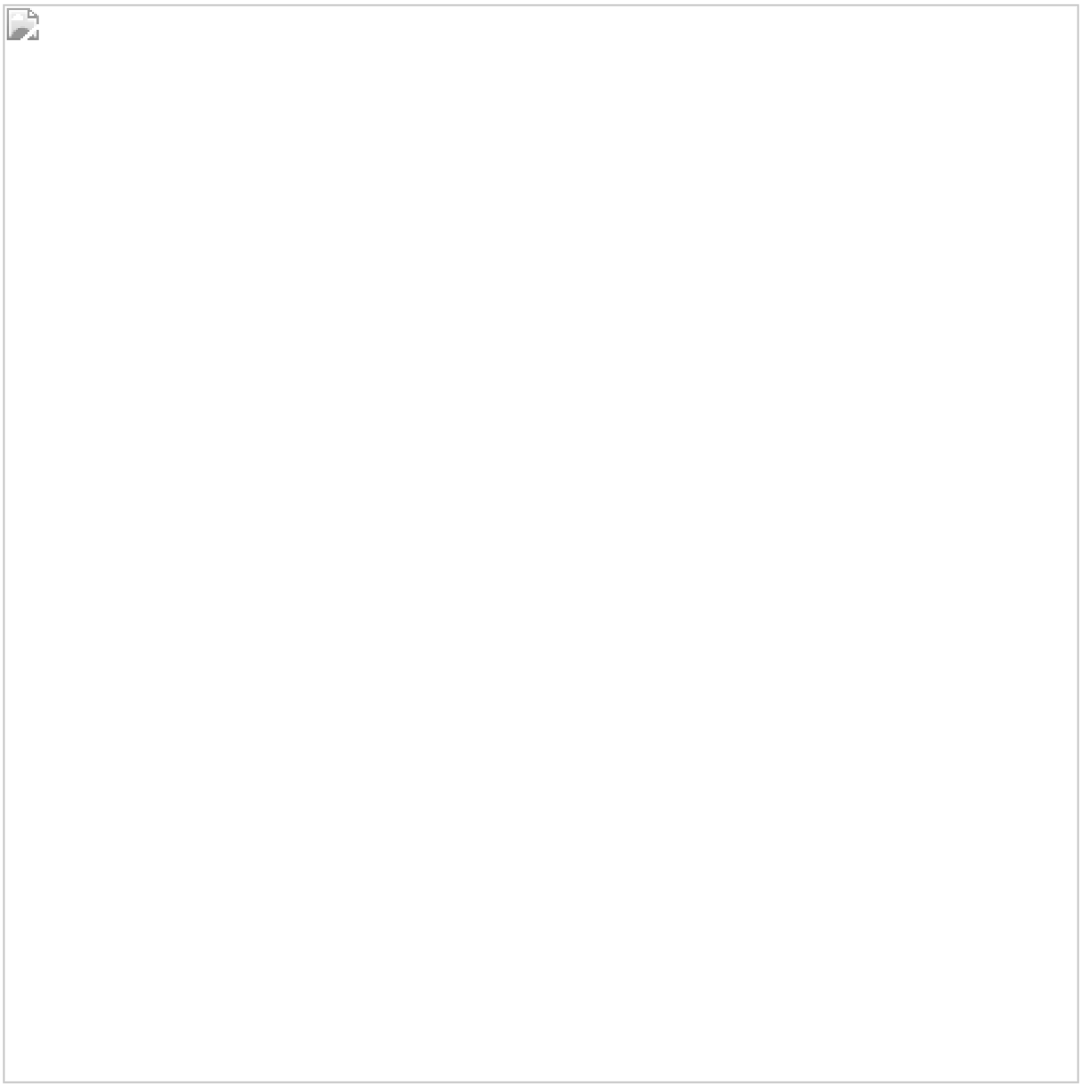


Think about it

1. Who won the arm wrestle?

- ○ Kintaro
- ○ The old man
- ○ Neither; it was a drawn game

A General in Disguise



“You are, indeed, a very strong child,” said the woodcutter. “When you are full-grown you will surely be the strongest man in all Japan.”

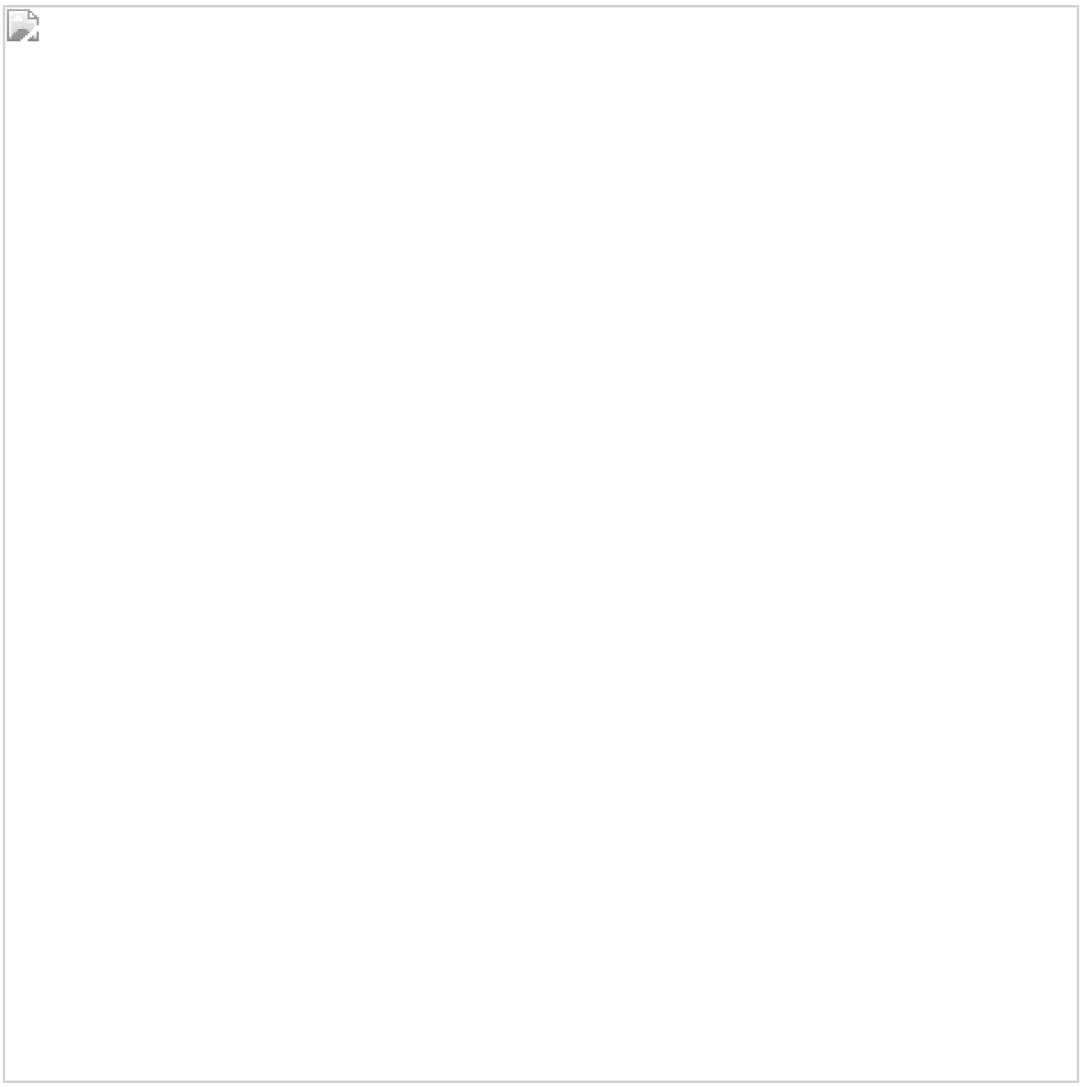
He asked the mother to send her boy to the Capital to become a samurai. She wished it too, but they had no friend there.

“You need not trouble yourself about that. I am no woodcutter! I am one of the great generals of Japan. My name is Sadamitsu.”

The mother bowed to the ground. “I will then intrust my son to you.” Kintaro cried, “Oh, joy! joy! I am to go with the general and one day I shall be a SAMURAI!”

TALK ABOUT IT

The general was dressed as a woodcutter, but he was really a general. Have you ever found out someone was not who you thought?

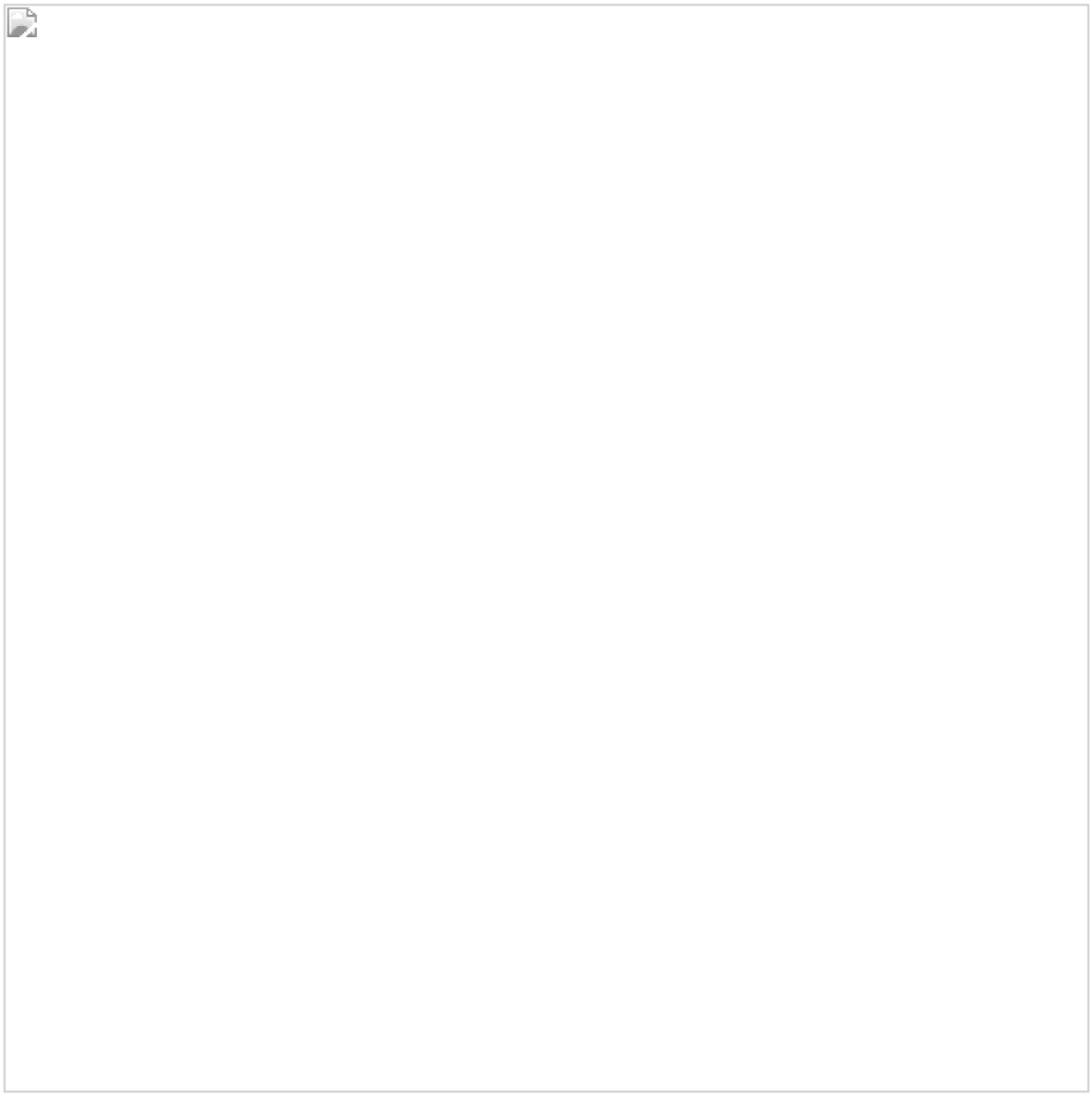


Think about it

1. Who was the old woodcutter really?

- ○ A king
- ○ The general Sadamitsu
- ○ Kintaro's uncle

Goodbye to the Mountain



The general set off for the Capital at once, taking Kintaro. His mother was sad to part with her boy, for he was all she had. But she hid her grief, because it was for his good.

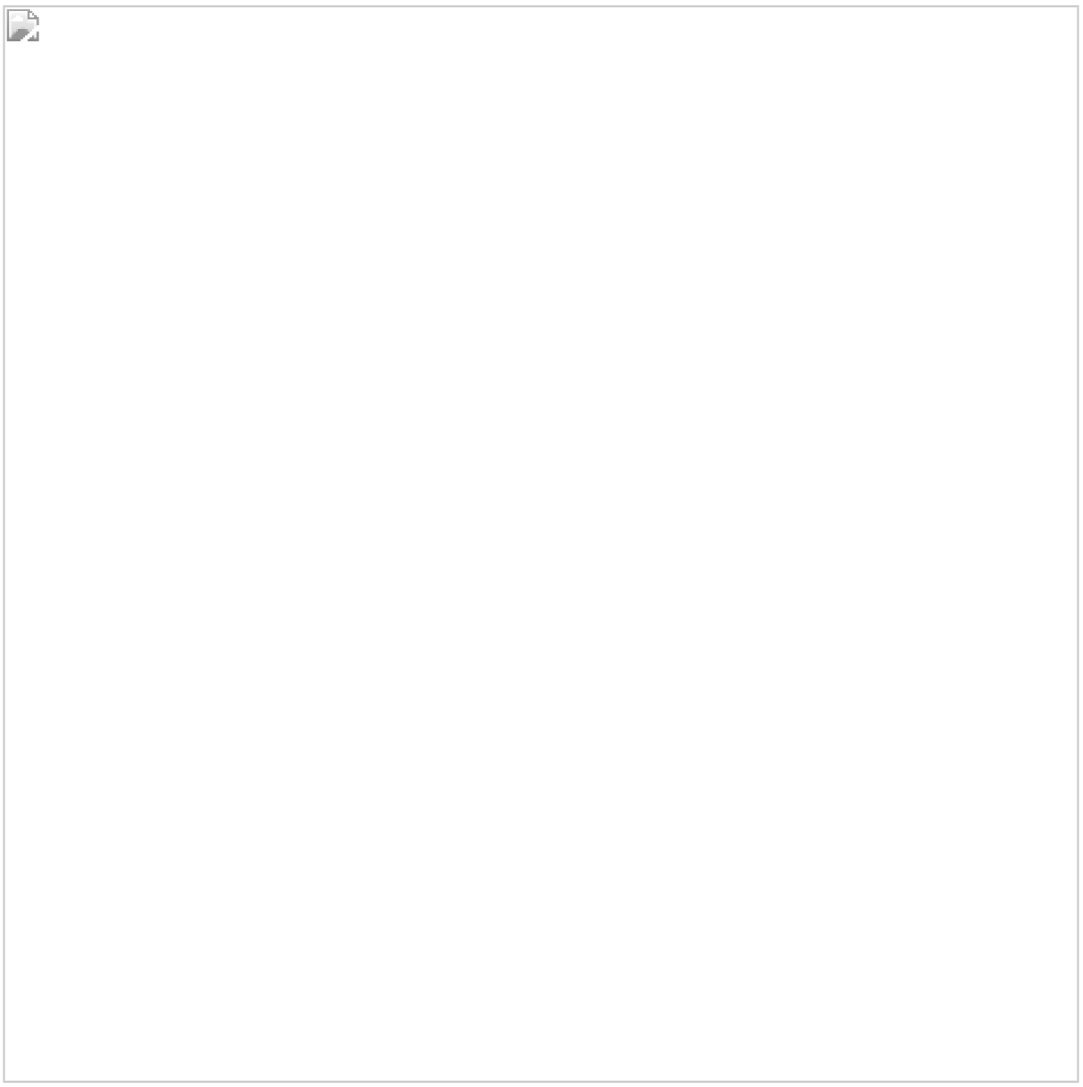
Kintaro promised that as soon as he was a knight wearing two swords, he would build her a home and take care of her in her old age.

“Kimbo,” said his mother, “mind and be a good boy.” “Mr. Kintaro,” said the faithful animals, “we wish you good health on your travels.” Then they climbed a tree and watched him grow smaller and smaller, till he was lost to sight.

TALK ABOUT IT

Kintaro’s mother was sad but let him go. What do you think was hardest for her?

Goodbye to the Mountain · another picture

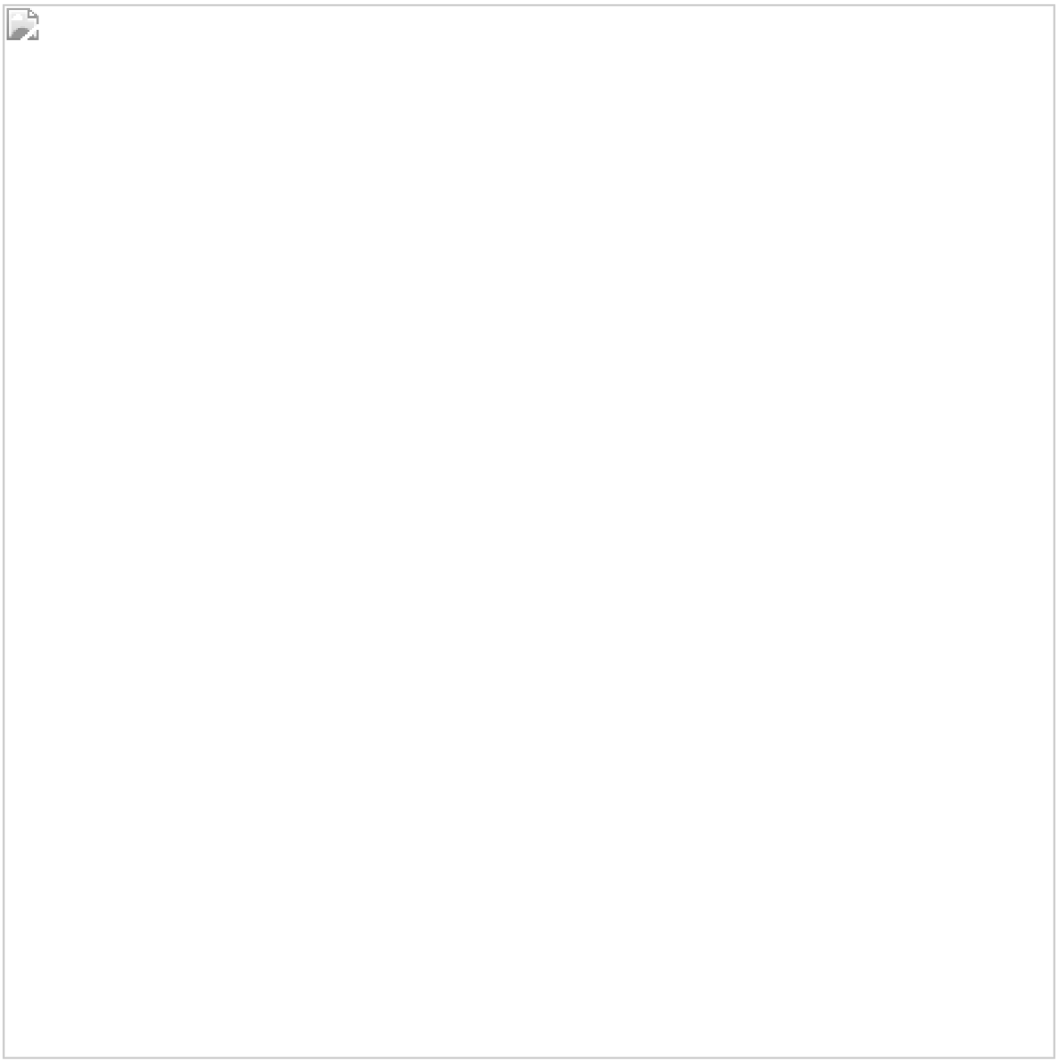


Think about it

1. What did Kintaro promise his mother?

- ○ To write every day
- ○ To build her a home when he was a knight
- ○ To come back in a year

The Four Braves



Lord Raiko, the general's master, was delighted with Kintaro, and made him one of his vassals at once.

When Kintaro grew up, he became Chief of Lord Raiko's famous band, "The Four Braves," and by far the strongest of them all.

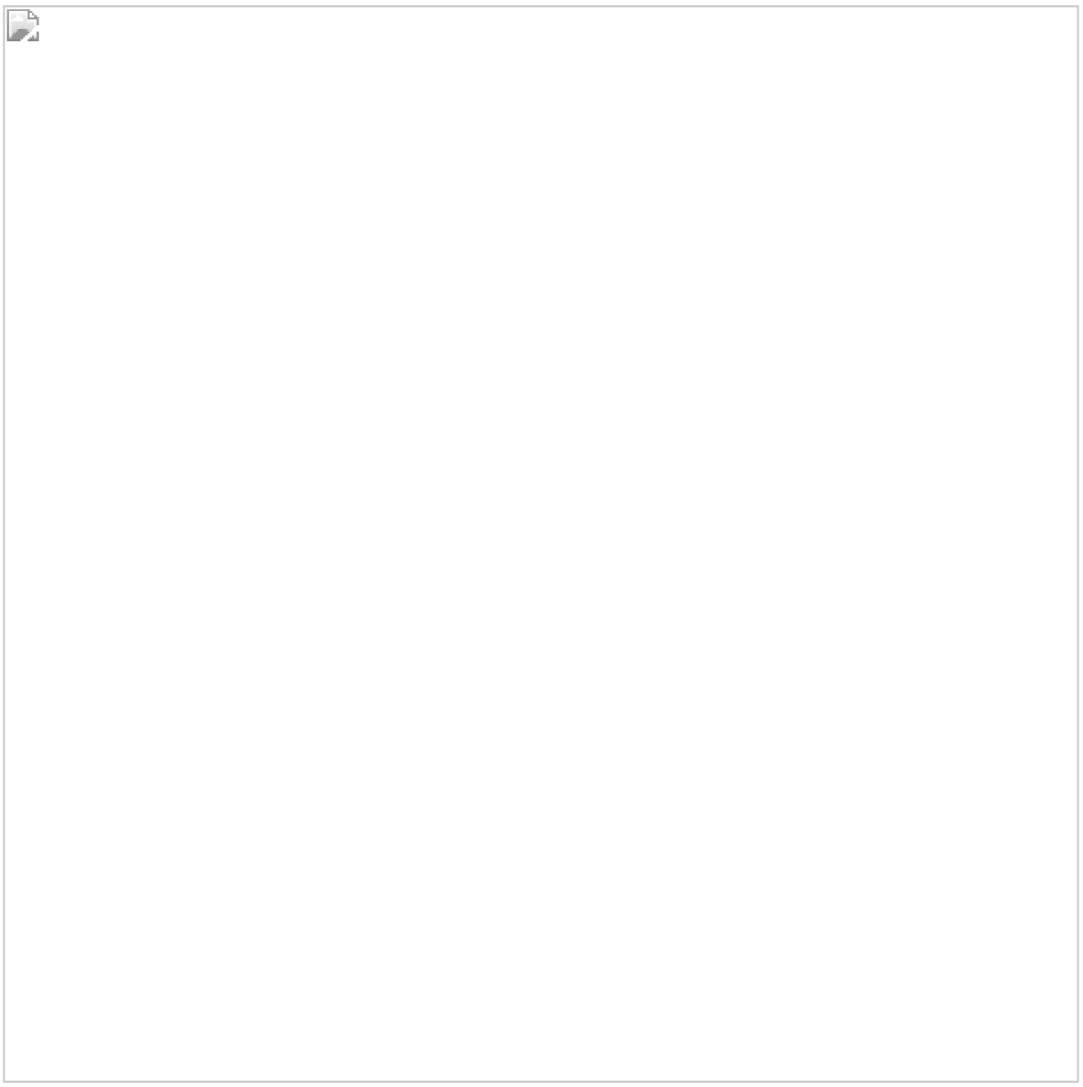
When a fierce monster frightened the people, Kintaro made short work of it and carried its head back in triumph.

Kintaro became the greatest hero of his country. Keeping his promise, he built a comfortable home for his old mother, who lived happily with him in the Capital to the end of her days.

"Is not this the story of a great hero?"

TALK ABOUT IT

Kintaro kept the promise he made to his mother. Is there a promise you want to keep?



Think about it

1. What did Kintaro do for his mother in the end?

- ○ Sent her a letter
- ○ Built her a comfortable home
- ○ Took her back to the mountains

2. Do you think Kintaro is a hero? What makes someone a hero?

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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