A Pot of Gold/The Clever Farmer

retold by Adrienne Jansen
illustrated by Freya Blackwood

**Book Summary**
These folk tales tell the stories of two farmers. The first farmer is an honest man who finds a pot of gold and has to decide whether to keep it. The second farmer is a clever man who needs to escape from a hungry tiger.

**Features of the Book**
- Direct speech
- Short stories
- Specialized vocabulary – Vietnam, clay, lesson, plow, buffalo, cleverness
- Third-person narrative

**Word Study Opportunities**
- Irregular plural – thieves
- Verb endings “ed” and “ing” – looked, lifted, buried; plowing, talking, watching
- Compound words – something, someone, without, inside, outside, anything

**Purpose**
*A Pot of Gold/The Clever Farmer* can be used to introduce and reinforce the following standards-related skills:
- Identifying the features of different genres;
- Interpreting and analyzing characters’ feelings, relationships, and actions;
- Exploring problem resolution;
- Exploring homophones;
- Forming and supporting opinions about a text;
- Writing alternative endings for a story.

**The Guided Reading Lesson**
- Identifying the features of different genres
- Interpreting and analyzing characters’ feelings, relationships, and actions
- Exploring problem resolution

**Materials needed**
- A copy of the text for each child and one for the teacher
- A dry-erase board or chart paper and markers
- A globe or an atlas
- Optional: the blackline master and a pencil for each child

**Introducing the text**
Discuss the cover of the book and read the titles and the names of the author and illustrator. Read the blurb on the back cover.

- *What is a folk tale?* (A folk tale is an old narrative story that has a moral and is associated with a particular country)
- *Where is Vietnam?*

Find Vietnam on the globe or in the atlas together.

- *What does the picture on the cover tell us about Vietnam?*

Discuss the countryside, climate, kinds of animals, people’s clothing, and general lifestyle in Vietnam.
Reading and discussing the text
This can be taken over two days. If your group can read the book with less support, adjust the lesson plan accordingly.

Day One
Ask the children to read page 3 silently.
– What do you think the farmer should do with the gold? Why?

The children can now read to the end of page 7.
– What do you know about the farmer and his wife?
– What is the farmer’s problem?
– How do you think the farmer and his wife are feeling?

Ask the children to read pages 8 to 10 silently.
– What do you think happened to the gold?
– What do you think the thieves should do?
– What do you think they will do?

Now ask the children to read pages 11 to 15.
– Do you think the farmer did the right thing? Why?
– How do you think the story will end?

The children can read the rest of the story independently.
– How was the farmer’s problem resolved?
– What do you think is the moral of this story?

Day Two
Briefly discuss the features of a folk tale. Identify these features in A Pot of Gold.

Read the title of the second story. Ask the children to read pages 20 to 21 silently.
– What is the farmer’s problem?
– What do you think he should do?

Ask the children to continue reading silently up to page 25.
– Does the tiger know what cleverness is?
– How can you tell?
– What do you think the farmer is planning to do?
– Is that a good idea? Why?

Ask the children to read the rest of the story independently.
– How did the farmer solve his problem?
– Do you think the farmer was clever? Why?
– What do you think is the moral of this story?

Revisiting the Text
The activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson or during later reading sessions as mini-lessons or individual activities.

**Exploring homophones**
Find “there” on page 4. Write “there” and “their” on chart paper and discuss their meanings.
– When two words sound the same but have different meanings, we call them homophones.

Discuss “two” and “to” on page 9 and “know” and “no” on page 31. Write them on the chart. Encourage the children to look for homophones as they read and to add any new homophones to the chart.

**Forming and supporting opinions about a text**

Draw a two-column chart on chart paper and write the titles of the two stories at the top of the columns.
– What did you like about A Pot of Gold?
– What did you dislike about it?
– How could it be improved?

Write the children’s responses on the chart. Ask these same questions about The Clever Farmer and add the children’s responses to the chart.
– Which story did you like the best? Why?

**Writing alternative endings for a story**

– What else could have been in the pot when the farmer and his wife opened it in their house?
– How could this have changed the ending of the story?

Encourage the children to work in pairs to discuss alternative endings for A Pot of Gold.
– In The Clever Farmer, how could the tiger have escaped from the ropes?
– How would this have changed the ending of the story?
– How else could the farmer have stopped the tiger from eating him?

Encourage the children to discuss alternative endings for The Clever Farmer with their partner and then to share their ideas with the whole group.

**The children can complete the blackline master on page 89.**