



## Lesson Extensions and Activities for *Pattan's Pumpkin*

**Age Range:** 5 - 8 years

**Reading Is Fundamental**

**Google Voyager Folktales Unit**

### Book Description

Pattan lives with his wife, Kanni, on the banks of a mighty river in India. One day, their garden produces an amazing pumpkin that grows and grows until it's bigger than elephants, goats and mountains. When the storm clouds burst and the waters of the river rise, will Pattan's pumpkin be a vessel of salvation for his whole family?

### Folktale Background

The story of Pattan and the flood is told by the Irular people, a tribe that lives on the hills of Mannarkkadu in the Palakkad district of Kerala in southern India. In fact, the tribe believes that they are descended from Pattan. In the original story, the pumpkin is a "churraka," a gourd that was one of the earliest cultivated fruits of mankind.

### Vocabulary

Gallop – The fastest pace of a horse or other four-legged animal.

Roam – Move about aimlessly.

Ailing – In poor health.

Fury – Violent anger.

Sapling – A young tree.

Lashing – Striking someone with a whip or a stick.

Ferried – To transport from one place to another.

Prickly – Covered in prickles.

Crested – Formed a curling, foamy top (specifically said of waves).

Plains – Large areas of flat land with few trees.

Bask – Lie in a relaxed pose, exposed to warmth and light typically from the sun.

Descendants – A person, plant or animal that is descended from a particular ancestor.

Reverence – Deep respect for someone or something.

### Prior to Reading

- Ask students if they have heard of India. On chart paper, create a Venn diagram and have students share what's similar about the U.S. and India and what's unique to each country. Note students' answers even if they're incorrect as you will go back and discuss the answers after learning more about India.
- Walk students through the India [Google Voyager Experience](#). Students will learn about where the story is set. Add additional notes to the Venn diagram as you walk through the experience.
- Share with students that *Pattan's Pumpkin* is a story set in India. Ask if they've heard any other stories set in India and call on volunteers to share.

## While Reading

- Stop reading on the page that says, “He shared his food with everyone — the animals, the birds and the insects.” Ask students if there’s anything that they share with animals, birds and insects.
- Stop reading on the page that says, “‘I’ll plant it by my hut and look after it,’ he thought.” Ask students to guess what will happen to the ailing plant.
- Stop reading on the page that says, “And still it grew bigger...and bigger... and BIGGER.” Ask students to demonstrate with their hands how big the largest pumpkin they’ve ever seen is.
- Stop reading on the page that says, “When the pumpkin glowed like fire under a burst of lightning, he had an idea...” Ask students to guess what his idea is.
- Stop reading on the page that says, “The bison snorted.” Ask students to demonstrate the noises that goats make and the noises that bison make.

## Post Reading Activities

- Lead a discussion about the tale. Ask students such questions as:
  - What makes Pattan’s pumpkin so amazing?
  - How do Pattan, Kanni and all of the animals escape the flood?
  - How does Kanni keep everyone calm in the pumpkin?
- Have students complete the Criss Cross, Memory Matching, and Word Search puzzles about *Pattan’s Pumpkin* on RIF’s Literacy Central (<https://www.rif.org/literacy-central>).

## Lesson Extensions and Activities

Here are some ways to further explore the story:

Primary Standard for all activities: RL.K.10 (Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.)

- **Math** – Have students use vegetable seeds, like the ones that Pattan plants in the book, to solve word problems.
  - Example word problem: Pattan plants ten pepper seeds, four banana seeds and six pumpkin seeds. Every pepper seed sprouts into a pepper plant, and Pattan ends up with five peppers from each plant during his first harvest. One of the banana seeds sprouts, and Pattan gets five bananas from it. Only five of the pumpkin seeds sprout and each grows four pumpkins. How many peppers, bananas and pumpkins does Pattan have after his first harvest?

Objective: Students will be able to use representations to solve addition and subtraction problems.

Standards: CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.OA.A.1 (Use addition and subtraction within 20 to solve word problems involving situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart, and comparing, with unknowns in all positions, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.)

Materials:

- Printouts with word problems related to *Pattan’s Pumpkin*
- Seeds from vegetables and fruits mentioned in *Pattan’s Pumpkin*

- Pencils
- **Arts** – When the storm starts, Pattan invites all of his animal friends and his family to climb in the pumpkin. That must have been one stuffed pumpkin! Have students illustrate what they think the inside of the pumpkin looked like based on the description from the book.

Objective: Students will design and create artistic works based on a description.

Standards: National Core Arts Standards, Anchor Standard #3 (Refine and complete artistic work.)

Materials:

- Glue
  - Markers
  - Colored pencils
  - Construction paper
  - Pencils
  - Magazines that can be cut
  - Scissors
- **Science** – Pattan has a thriving garden full of food that he shares with everyone, including animals, birds and insects! Have students explore characteristics of organisms by dissecting fruits and vegetables. Point out different components of the vegetables and fruits (e.g., the skin, flesh, juice, etc.) and have students taste each and describe what they taste.

Objective: Students will explore the characteristics of fruits and vegetables.

Standards: NSES Physical Science Standards Levels K-4 (Characteristics of organisms)

Materials:

- Various fruits and vegetables
  - A knife
  - Pencils
  - Paper
- **Writing** – The flood must have been a wild ride for the animals that Pattan invited into his pumpkin! Choose an animal and then recount the story from his or her perspective.

Objective: Students will recall details from a book to write from a character's perspective.

Standards: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.3 (Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.)

Materials:

- Journals
- Pens