

# The Five Chinese Brothers

by Claire Huchet Bishop

Monochromatic illustrations, a clever story line and the unbreakable bond between brothers are all beautifully captured in this classic story of family, loyalty and love.



## Read

### Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *What would you do if your sibling was in trouble?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder why the brothers are smiling?

### During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

### Rare Words in *The Five Chinese Brothers*

- indefinitely: for unspecified length of time
- obey: do as told, be controlled
- promptly: done immediately, quick to act
- delighted: somebody or something giving joy
- extraordinary: unusually excellent or strange
- algae: an organisms of a group that lives mainly in water and includes seaweeds
- desperate: as a last resort
- gestures: a movement made with a part of the body in order to express meaning
- condemned: give somebody legal sentence
- execution: killing of somebody as part of a legal process
- bobbing: to bounce up and down quickly and repeatedly

### After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Who did the brothers live with?
- Why was it easy for the First Brother to catch fish?
- Did the First Brother want to take the little boy fishing with him?
- Did the little boy obey the First Brother?
- What was the Second Brother's neck made of?
- Long stretchy legs would be helpful sometimes. Can you think of how?
- What did the Fifth Brother do while he was in the brick oven?

Do

## Situation Solvers

Have children describe each of the brothers' special characteristics in the story. Then present several problematic situations to the children. For example, say to the children: *The Five Brothers need to get a treasure chest from a mountain top. Which brother should get the treasure chest? The brother with legs that stretch? Why?* After presenting a variety of these situations, have children talk about the many different things they could do if they had the characteristics of the Five Brothers.