

# *The Complete Story of Sadako Sasaki*

Authors: Sue DiCicco and Masahiro Sasaki

Lexile Level: 910 Grade 4-6 Middle Grade Novel

## Suggested Book Discussion Questions

A note to educators:

The discussion questions in this resource can help facilitate deep conversation about not only the story of Sadako but the history and life lessons that come from this biographical, historical novel about a young girl who pays the ultimate sacrifice for a war not her own and who teaches and continues to teach the world a valuable lesson about life, family, commitment, and perseverance against all odds.

These questions are focused on personal connections and aren't meant to have one exact response, and as such you will find no answer key. The goal is to foster analysis and higher-level thinking about oneself and the world by using the text as a catalyst. You will find that many of the questions require students to support their claims with text evidence as required by the Common Core State Standards.

Select the questions that best fit your needs and the needs of the children reading the book. We hope you find the resource helpful. Looking to connect with other children reading the book? Post a question to [Padlet](#) and invite a connection class to collaborate or share thinking and have students respond to each other. Have students who have trouble writing, consider using [Flipgrid](#). Post a discussion question and have students respond orally. Then share the grid with another class and watch magic happen as your students consider other viewpoints and respond.

Both resources are free and easy to set up as well as secure for classroom use.

Lexile Power Words:

intense, minor, sole, negative, resist, ration, raw, distribute, vary, minimize, stressful, harmony, bond, brief, bail, secure, reliable, propose, unfinished, considerable

The following CCSS are met within these questions:

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6

Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.<sup>1</sup>

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.8

Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.10

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

## List of Possible Discussion Questions:

1. How would you describe Sadako? What character traits does she possess? What evidence from the text supports your claim?
2. Compare Sadako's life to your own childhood. Do you find similarities? Differences? Select one similarity and one difference and explain.
3. What surprised you? Why?
4. What does the author think you already know? How does this impact your understanding of the story?
5. Every book you read leaves a mark on your heart, meaning it has changed you as a person in some way. Reflect back on this book, how are you different now? What parts of the book brought about that change? What will you do differently or how will you act differently in the future because of this book? Be sure to explain your claims and support them with evidence.
6. Sadako's brother supported her throughout her life. What can you learn from the relationship between the siblings?
7. The description of the moment the bomb dropped and what the Sasaki family went through paints a picture in your mind. Reread that section with a focus on your emotions. What do you notice?
8. Across the globe there are many viewpoints as to why the United States decided to drop the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 including:
  1. To cease the war,
  2. To experiment what they had developed and see the impact, therefore intact cities were selected.
  3. The Manhattan project had spent \$20 billion creating the bomb and needed to prove its worth.
  4. The USA wanted to be superior to USSR in the arms race.Research this historical time period in world history. Did the United States do the right thing? Why or why not? What would you have done differently?
9. How would you describe Sadako's brother? If you could ask him a question, what would it be and why?

10. What is the symbolism in the paper crane?
11. How do you feel when you make a paper crane? Why?
12. The author uses first hand accounts and actual photographs in this book. What impact do the images and personal stories told by her brother have on your emotions as you read? On your understanding of the story? On the historical events? Be sure to support your claims with evidence from the text.
13. If you could go back in time to talk to the pilot who dropped the bomb, what would you tell him?
14. If you could go back in time to talk with Sadako, what would you tell her about how she inspired you?
15. How did Sadako change as a person throughout her story? What caused those changes? Support your claims with evidence.