

## **THE LOTUS SEED by Sherry Garland**

### **OVERVIEW:**

The Lotus Seed tells the story of a little girl's grandmother who has kept a lotus seed from the Imperial Palace in Vietnam with her throughout her life. The family has had to flee Vietnam and settle in the United States. Not knowing its significance, the narrator's little brother takes the seed and plants it somewhere in the backyard. To have lost this treasure from home nearly destroys their grandmother until one day a lotus plant grows and blooms. She gives a seed from the pod to each of her children and the narrator decides that she too will keep the seed in a special place to someday grow for her own family as a way to preserve their family's heritage from Vietnam.

### **Materials from the box:**

Book: *The Lotus Seed*

1 ziplock bag with Ao Dai (Girl's top from Vietnam) item VI

Book: *Hoang Anh: A Vietnamese American Boy*

Lotus seed pod in small box

### **Discussion Questions:**

(To be used as you read the story or afterwards)

1. Where does the grandmother keep the lotus seed?
2. Why did she take the lotus seed instead of her ivory combs?
3. Why did the little brother take the seed?
4. Why is the lotus seed important to the author?

### **Suggested Activities**

1. Show your students the **ao dai** from the box. Take notice of the cloth and how it is different from the clothes that the students are wearing. **Appendix D** has background information on the ao dai.
2. Have students draw a picture of what they would like to take from their home if they had to leave like the grandmother in the story. Have them explain why it is important.
3. Encourage each child to bring in and tell about one important thing that they have gotten from an older family member or friend that helps tell about their family or culture.
4. Make a picture map of the grandmother's life. Talk about why she had to leave Vietnam.
5. Show the students the **lotus seed** from the kit. Compare it to other plant seeds they are familiar with. **Appendix E** has more information on the lotus.