



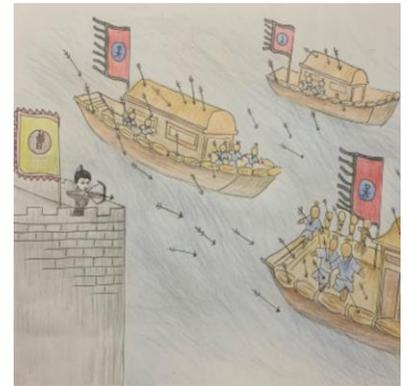
CREATING SPACES
TO SHARE OUR STORIES
AND BUILD FRIENDSHIPS ACROSS DIVIDES

What makes a Good Leader? – CONFUCIANISM

Background:

This story is about a famous military strategist, **Zhu Ge Liang**, and comes from the Confucian tradition. The stories about Zhu Ge Liang show he has lots of knowledge of astronomy, geography, military strategy etc, but he also has the ability to come up with original and effective plans by using this knowledge. A very wise leader.

The strategy in this story is summed up in four words 'Straw boats, borrow arrows' – '*Cao Chuan Jie Jian*' in Chinese. It is used in everyday speech as an idiom to conjure up the idea of using limited resources, making the most of what you have to win your battles. These idioms are widely used in Chinese culture.



Straw Boats Borrow Arrows - (Story can be found on back)

Follow up questions:

1. What did Zhu Ge Liang do in this story that demonstrates he was a good leader?
2. How did Zhu Ge Liang use his resources to get what he needed?
3. What advantage did Zhu Ge Liang have that helped him to make good choices?
4. What do you think you have learned from this story?
5. What knowledge and skills do you think the national leaders of today might need?

Straw Boats, Borrow Arrows

General Zhou Yu was jealous of Zhu Ge Liang's intelligence. He decided one day that he would play a trick on him. He challenged him to find 10,000 arrows so that they would have enough to go to war against General Cao Cao. He gave him ten days to find the arrows, but Zhu Ge Liang said, "No problem, I will have them in three days." He thought he must be joking.

Zhu Ge Liang worked with his friends to find twenty boats and a large quantity of straw. He had his men make straw men and put them on the boats. Then they put out into the river, rowed to where Cao Cao, his enemy, was camped and arranged the boats in a long line facing East.

Now, a heavy fog had settled on the river, so Cao Cao could not see them coming. Zhu Ge Liang ordered his men to beat drums and shout loudly so that Cao Cao thought a large army had arrived. Cao Cao didn't want to send his army onto the river to fight as they couldn't see the enemy, so he ordered them instead to shoot their arrows towards the sound of the drums and shouting.

It was not long before the straw men on the boats were so full of arrows that the boats were leaning over to one side, so Zhu Ge Liang ordered them to turn around and face West. The men continued to beat the drums and shout until they had collected just as many arrows on the other side, then they all shouted, "Thank you!" Cao Cao realised that he had been tricked, but there was nothing he could do about it. The boats had already rowed home, taking his arrows with them.

When Zhou Yu heard that Zhu Ge Liang had collected his 10,000 arrows, he could hardly believe his ears! He had been looking forward to laughing at Zhu Ge Liang, but instead he said, "Zhu Ge Liang is too clever, I can't compare with him!"

How did Zhu Ge Liang know that there would be heavy fog on the third day? He had studied astronomy and geography, so he was able to forecast the weather and win a great victory, using straw and boats to borrow arrows.

(Translation from Beijing Language and Culture University Press Carol Chen and Xianlong Meng)