



# *A Single Shard*

by Linda Sue Park



Family Study Guide by Maggie Hogan

Illuminations Year 2



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### ~ Weeks 1 and 2 ~

#### **Supplies**

- *A Single Shard* by Linda Sue Park
- Polymer clay (such as Sculpey)—used throughout the study—enough for each student to make two small items
- Korea Outline Map
- World atlas
- Food—suggestions: rice, kimchee, fish (such as flounder), dried or fresh persimmon, and rice cakes)
- Whiteboard
- Bible (for Bible study on the last day)

#### **Note to Parent**

- We will have three main projects/activities to do in this study guide
  - Mapping Korea
  - Working with clay
  - Bible study on the theme that God is the potter—we are the clay
    - If you can possibly arrange a visit to a potter's studio and/or a kiln, it would be so worth your time! This is a lovely story that revolves around pottery and to see a potter in action would vividly make this come alive. If that isn't possible, is there a ceramic studio in town that would let you visit and see how a kiln works? If you are unable to do either of these, please do a Google search on "throwing a pot" and watch several videos.

#### **Reading Schedule**

##### **Week 1**

Day 1: Chapters 1 and 2

Day 2: Chapters 3 and 4

Day 3: Chapters 5 and 6

Day 4: Chapters 7 and 8

## **Week 2**

Day 1: Chapters 9 and 10

Day 2: Chapters 11 and 12

Day 3: Chapter 13, Author's Note, "What's So Special About Celadon?," Interview with the Author, and About the Author

Day 4: Bible Study and End-of-Book Wrap-Up

## **Vocabulary**

Many of the vocabulary words assigned for this study guide are words you may have already come across in other Family Study Guides. Just review old words and take a minute to figure out new words in context. The majority of words are simple enough that the teacher can most likely define them while reading the book aloud. Other words may need to be looked up if they are unfamiliar, but this FSG is not concentrating on vocabulary.

- An entertaining way to check if students understand certain words is to have them combine as many of the day's vocabulary words as they can into one sentence. Some sentences could also be quite amusing to act out!

## **Geography Assignments**

- Use the outline map of Korea and its answer key to label the places listed in your reading.

## **Characters**

- **Tree-ear**—orphan boy, about age 12 at start of book
- **Crane-man**—homeless man who has cared for Tree-ear since he was a toddler
- **Min**—very talented, grumpy potter
- **Ajima**—Min's kind wife
- **Kang**—another potter in town
- **Emissary Kim**—person in charge of awarding pottery commissions

## **Week 1 - Day 1**

- Read Chapters 1 and 2.

## **Vocabulary**

- peruse (v)
- avail (v)
- marrow (n)
- symmetry (n)
- oaf (n)

- impudence (n)
- quash (v)

### **Geography**

- Find North and South Korea on a map or in an atlas. (During the time period of our book, there is no distinction between North and South Korea—they were just one country.)
- What continent are they on?

### **Discussion Generators**

1. What was the joke that Crane-man and Tree-ear shared as they greeted one another?
2. What was the “fortune” Tree-ear carried home in his waist pouch?
3. What decision did Tree-ear wrestle with while following the farmer on the road?
4. Do you think Tree-ear made the right decision? Why or why not?
5. What is a “jiggeh”?
6. What did Crane-man say about work versus stealing?
  - Tell the stories behind Tree-ear’s and Crane-man’s names.
7. By Crane-man’s reckoning, how old was Tree-ear now?
8. Why did the two bother to “eat” two chicken legs with no flesh?
9. What kind of “housekeeping” chores did Tree-ear do?
10. Who was Min?
11. Why did Min throw away the “perfect” vase?
12. Why was Min willing to work “without walls”?
13. Why was Ch’ulp’o an important village for ceramics?
14. Why did Min suddenly begin beating Tree-ear?
15. What did Tree-ear do when he first heard Min shout?
16. What did Tree-ear do in response to Min’s shouting and beating?
17. What did Tree-ear offer to do in exchange for having broken the pottery?
18. What was Tree-ear’s first day like?
19. How did Crane-man minister to Tree-ear?

### **Hands-On Activity**

- Try to bandage your own hand as Tree-ear did with a handkerchief. Can you do it?

## **Week 1 - Day 2**

- Read Chapters 3 and 4.

### **Vocabulary**

- rifle (v)
- insolence (n)
- savory (adj)
- fervent (adj)
- sludge (n)
- sieve (n)
- winnow (n)
- pummel (v)
- commission (n)

### **Geography**

- Find Korea on your answer key map. Label it on your outline map.
- This book takes place on the west coast of Korea. On your outline map, highlight the west coast in yellow.
- Find Puan on your answer key map. Label it on your outline map. (Puan was the district where Ch'ulp'o was located.)
- Find Ch'ulp'o on your answer key map. Label it on your outline map.
- Find the Yellow Sea on your answer key map. Label it on your outline map.
- Find China on your answer key map. Label it on your outline map.

### **Discussion Generators**

1. Why did Tree-ear feel like “a beast with two heads”?
2. What routine did Tree-ear develop?
3. What did Crane-man teach Tree-ear about the mountain?
4. How long did Tree-ear work for Min to pay off his debt?
5. Why did Tree-ear offer to continue to work for free?
6. Do you think the arrangement between Tree-ear and Min was fair? Why or why not?
7. Was gathering clay as easy as it looked?
8. What did Min's wife fix for Tree-ear to eat, and how did he receive the food?

9. Why was Tree-ear ashamed of himself at dinner that night?
10. Why did Tree-ear tell Min's wife he'd brought his own bowl for lunch, and what was his real reason?
11. Do you think this lie was permissible since it was for a good cause? What does the Bible say?
12. Why did Tree-ear throw his bowl in anger?
13. Why did Min's wife say, "This bowl had a great desire to become my hat"?
14. Once he found a safe hiding place for his bowl, what odd discovery did he make each night?
15. What new skill did Tree-ear learn in this chapter?
16. Why was keeping his ears open to the talk of the village important to Tree-ear?
17. Why did Crane-man say Tree-ear's name was apt?
18. How did this ability help him in his work?
19. What did Tree-ear decide was Min's life desire?
20. In what ways did Tree-ear thank Min's wife for her generosity in feeding him?
  - On your whiteboard, write out the steps to draining clay

### **Hands-On Activities**

- Try some rice and kimchee. (Kimchee is widely available in a jar in the produce/vegetarian section near the tofu.)
- Prefer fish? Tonight is a great night to fix flounder.
- Go to Google Images and type in "celadon pottery"; you'll see lots of beautiful examples.
- While in Google Images, type in "celadon color." Either describe this color orally or in writing or create it with crayons or color pencils.
- It's time to get out the modeling clay and begin softening it! This week you will be working on making your own small clay figure. Today, just play with it and try out different shapes. Tomorrow you'll decide what you are going to make and bake.

### **Week 1 - Day 3**

- Read Chapters 5 and 6.

### **Vocabulary**

- garb (n)
- vigilance (n)
- plait (n)
- pantaloons (n)
- connoisseur (n)



- surreptitious (adj)
- invective (n)

## **Geography**

- Find Kangjin on your answer key map. Label it on your outline map.

## **Discussion Generators**

1. What time of year is it in the opening of Chapter 5?
2. Why was Tree-ear spying on Kang?
3. What did Tree-ear think Kang might be doing with the red and white “slip”?
4. Did Tree-ear still hope to sit on the pottery wheel any day now?
5. What is a “prunus vase” and what was it used for?
6. What skill had Crane-man taught himself?
7. Why did Tree-ear continue to glean rice even though he didn’t need it now that Min and his wife fed him?
8. What Aesop’s fable does his hard work remind you of?
9. Do you know a Bible verse about working?
10. Where did the two friends live during the cold winter months?
11. What special gift did Min’s wife give Tree-ear?
12. How did Tree-ear share them?
13. Whom did Tree-ear spy on at the end of the chapter, and why?
14. What big news did Tree-ear hear about in the village?
15. Which potter seemed to have a little secret?
16. What question about stealing did Tree-ear ask Crane-man?
17. How did Crane-man answer?
18. On the day the emissary came to judge the pottery, what startling new kind of work did Kang reveal?
19. Was the emissary pleased with Min’s work, and how could you tell?
20. Who do you think will win a commission from the emissary?

## **Hands-On Activities**

- Go to Google Images and type in “flowering plum.” Have you seen one of these trees in bloom before? They are absolutely beautiful!
- Is your clay nice and soft yet? Keep working it and today try your hand at an uncomplicated design—maybe a vase or a simple cat? Here are photographs and step-by-step directions for making a polymer clay cat: <http://www.wikihow.com/Make-Polymer-Clay-Cats>

- Perhaps you would like to draw a vase instead? Go to: <http://www.wikihow.com/Draw-a-Vase>

## **Week 1 - Day 4**

- Read Chapters 7 and 8.

### **Vocabulary**

- harangue (n)
- exult (v)
- noxious (adj)

### **Discussion Generators**

1. How did Min react to the news that Kang had made inlaid pottery?
2. What unusual event occurred one day when Tree-ear was draining clay?
3. Why did Min prefer to fire his pieces in at least two different batches?
4. How did Crane-man make Tree-ear's life a little easier at night?
5. What event kept Crane-man from going to the temple to live, many years earlier?
6. What happened to the five beautiful, melon-shaped vases that Min had made to show the emissary on his return trip to Ch'ulp'o?
7. Whom did Emissary Kim award the pottery commission to?
8. Why?
9. Why did Emissary Kim bother to visit with Min one more time?
10. What did Tree-ear rashly promise Min's wife?
11. What did Min's wife ask in return?
12. What does "Ajima" mean?
13. What was she really saying to Tree-ear?
14. How did Crane-man counsel Tree-ear to go on this journey?
15. What did he mean by that?
16. How did Min react when Tree-ear finally got up the nerve to ask him if he would teach Tree-ear how to make a pot one day?
17. What cruel words did Min use?

### **Hands-On Activity**

- Today, make your final clay design for this week (save some clay for next week!) and bake it according to the manufacturer's directions.



## **Week 2 - Day 1**

- Read Chapters 9 and 10.

### **Vocabulary**

- endeavor (v)
- baffle (v)
- ebb (n)
- trepidation (n)

### **Geography**

- Find Japan on your answer key map. Label it on your outline map.
- Find Puyo on your answer key map. Label it on your outline map.
- Find the Kum River on your answer key map. Label it on your outline map.

### **Discussion Generators**

1. Why did the potter's trade always pass from father to son?
2. What little saying did Crane-man share with Tree-ear concerning his desire to become a potter?
3. Can you think of another way of saying this?
4. Do you, like Tree-ear, prefer to figure out a saying without someone explaining exactly what it means?
5. What does this mean—"How much slower the work went when the joy of it was gone."?
6. What was the "second door" that "blew open"?
7. What did Crane-man make for Min?
8. What did Ajima ask of Crane-man?
9. Did Crane-man immediately agree? Why or why not?
10. Why did Crane-man finally agree to go daily to the house of Min?
11. What gift did Tree-ear give Crane-man before his journey?
12. What final words of advice did Crane-man give Tree-ear before he left?
13. What do you think this meant?
14. Describe the routine of Tree-ear's first six days of travel.
15. What is "gokkam"?
16. What badly frightened Tree-ear the night he spent alone in the forest, and why?
17. What do you think of his fear of foxes?
18. Is there something you are afraid of, even though you don't want to be?

19. Find a Bible verse that speaks to fear.
  - Optional for Older Students: Retell the story of the “Rock of the Falling Flowers” as related by Crane-man.
20. What did Crane-man tell Tree-ear about true courage?
21. How was Puyo different from every other place Tree-ear had been?
22. What surprising item did he see for sale at the seller’s stall?
23. What did this inspire Tree-ear to do?

### **Hands-On Activities**

- If it is a nice day, go for a fast walk! Maybe take along some rice cakes or dried persimmons.
- Time to get out the modeling clay again and begin softening it! This week you will be working on making your second small clay figure. Today, just play with it and try out different shapes. Tomorrow you’ll decide what you are going to make and bake. Can you make one even better than last week’s?

## **Week 2 - Day 2**

- Read Chapters 11 and 12.

### **Vocabulary**

- jovial (adj)
- quell (v)
- skepticism (n)

### **Geography**

- Find Songdo on your answer key map. Label it on your outline map.
- Find Seoul on your maps—although Seoul is the capital of South Korea, it did not yet exist at the time of Tree-ear’s journey.

### **Discussion Generators**

1. What was the outcome of the robbers’ attack on Tree-ear?
2. What did Tree-ear decide to do with the single shard?
3. How often did Tree-ear seem to eat on the remainder of his journey to Songdo?
4. What did the crying toddler remind Tree-ear of?
5. How was Songdo “like Puyo, only more so”?
6. How did Tree-ear talk his way into seeing Emissary Kim?
7. How did the emissary’s assistant react to the news that Min’s work had been destroyed?

8. How did Emissary Kim react when he saw the single shard?
9. What saying about the finest celadon work did the emissary use to describe Min's shard?
10. What did Tree-ear see in the emissary's eyes, and whom did he remind Tree-ear of?
11. What message did Emissary Kim tell Tree-ear to give to Potter Min?
12. How many works did Tree-ear think Min could complete in a year?
13. What could not be "molded into words"?

### **Hands-On Activities**

- Act out the scene with the robbers on the cliff top.
- Is your clay nice and soft yet? Keep working it. What happens if you dampen it?
- Try your hand at molding small pieces of pottery or a little monkey or turtle.

### **Week 2 - Day 3**

- Read Chapter 13, Author's Note, "What's So Special About Celadon?," Interview with the Author, and About the Author

### **Vocabulary**

- barrage (n)
- eddy (n)
- dank (adj)
- girth (n)

### **Discussion Generators**

1. How did Tree-ear journey back to Ch'ulp'o?
2. How did Ajima respond when she first saw Tree-ear?
3. How did Min first respond to the news that he had gained a commission?
4. What sad news did Min tell Tree-ear?
5. What compliment did Min give Tree-ear?
6. Where did Tree-ear spend that night?
7. How did Tree-ear honor Crane-man in his thoughts?
8. Why did Min tell Tree-ear to cut large logs the next day?
9. What amazing kindness did Ajima bestow on Tree-ear?
10. What image helped calm Tree-ear?
11. What design do you think Tree-ear would put on his first prunus vase?

12. What reason does the author give for the fact that until recently, few people in Korea were homeless?
13. True or false: Every piece of pottery described in detail in this book exists in a real museum or collection.
14. What country has always valued celadon pottery from Korea?
15. What was the cause for the brown spots on the pottery?
16. Why is Seoul, the capital of South Korea, not mentioned in this story?
17. What does the author compare the fear of foxes to in our culture?
18. List the three basic types of pottery.
19. Which type of pottery is celadon?
20. What does the author say are the three basic threads of this story?
21. What two geographic terms does she cite as the primary factors in determining how a people group live?
22. What geographic feature plays an important role in this book?
23. How does the author research her books?
24. Where was Linda Sue Parks born?
25. From which country did her parents emigrate to the United States?
26. Which of her books won the Newbery Medal for excellence?

### **Hands-On Activity**

- Today, try your hand at a more complex design—maybe a special bowl or a favorite animal? (Tomorrow you will have one final chance at your clay and then it will be baked.)

### **Week 2 - Day 4**

- The book is finished! But don't stop now—spend a few minutes on this Bible study to tie in biblical application with what you have learned about pottery. And finish out your study with the last few hands-on ideas.

### **Bible Study on “You are the potter, I am the clay.”**

- **Note:** Older students should recognize that in order to truly understand a verse, one needs to read it in its context—or its “home”—not as a single, isolated verse.
- Isaiah 64:8 (NKJV)  
<sup>8</sup>But now, O LORD,  
You *are* our Father;  
We *are* the clay, and You our potter;  
And all we *are* the work of Your hand.

- What does this verse mean? Let's break it down.
  - **But now, O Lord, You are our Father;**
    1. Who does Isaiah say the Lord is?
      - Isaiah is reminding God that He is our Father and in spite of all the ways we have sinned against Him, He is still our Father.
  - **We are the clay, and You our potter;**
    2. Can you think of another way of saying this?
    3. What did God create us from?
    4. What is a potter able to do with his clay?
  - **And all we are the work of Your hand.**
    5. What would be another way to express this?
- Now let's look briefly at Psalm 138:8, especially the last line.
- Psalm 138:8 (NKJV)

<sup>8</sup>The LORD will perfect *that which* concerns me;  
Your mercy, O LORD, *endures* forever;  
Do not forsake the works of Your hands.

  - **Do not forsake the works of Your hands.**
    1. What does "forsake" mean?
    2. If you put this verse together with Isaiah 64:8, how might you communicate their meaning?
- Ephesians 2:10

10For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

  1. What does this verse say we are?
  2. What were we created to do?
  3. Who has already prepared the way for us?
- Psalm 119:73

73Your hands have made me and fashioned me; Give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments.

  1. How does the psalmist say we were made?
  2. What does the psalmist here ask God for?
  3. Why?
  4. What can we learn from this verse?

### **Discussion Generators**

1. Do you know God as your Father?
2. Think about the clay you have been molding this week. What kind of clay are you?
3. What kind of clay do you want to be?
4. What kind of vessel or piece of pottery is the Lord making you into?
5. How are you allowing the Master Potter (God) to make, shape, break, remake, fire, decorate, display, and use you? How many ways can you come up with?
6. Where are you in the process of “being molded”? Are you just being sliced from the earth; have you already been rinsed and drained; are you on the wheel; have you already been molded and put into the kiln? If so, how are you “firing”? Are you a lovely color or do you need to be remade and refired?
7. Have you learned anything about yourself or about the Lord as you have thought about being the clay?

### **End-of-Book Wrap-Up Activities**

- Make and bake your final design.
- Finish any undone projects.
- Finish mapping.
- Did you manage to see a potter working at his or her wheel, either live or on video?
- Wrap it all up by listening to or singing Hillsong’s “The Potter’s Hand.” You can hear it here:  
<https://myspace.com/hillsong/music/song/the-potter-s-hand-live-68123492-74797638>



