

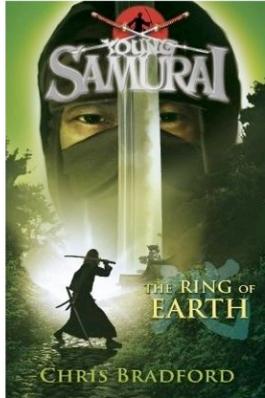


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**Young Samurai: The Ring of Earth by Chris Bradford**

**CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION GUIDE**



**Young Samurai: The Ring of Earth  
By Chris Bradford**

ISBN 978-0-141-33253-6

**ABOUT THE BOOK**

**JACK FLETCHER IS IN MORTAL DANGER.**

With no sensei to protect him, Jack is on the run with just his wits and his swords against new and unknown enemies on the treacherous road to Nagasaki and home...

But the Shogun's samurai are hot on his trail. Barely escaping their clutches, Jack runs headlong into a trap. Kidnapped by ninja and led to their village deep in the mountains, Jack has no means of escape.

Discovering his fate is now bound by the Five Rings - Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and Sky - Jack must learn all he can from his sworn enemy.

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES SHEET AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. Read the letter that Jack writes to Jess at the beginning of the book then either:
  - a) write a letter or e-mail to someone who you haven't seen for a year or more and tell them about your lifeor
  - b) compose a letter that Akiko might have written to Jack after he set off for England at the end of book 3 '*Young Samurai: The Way of the Dragon*'.
2. In chapter 1, Jack is discriminated against because he is both a foreigner and a Christian. In small groups discuss how this happens today and think of ways that this kind of negative behaviour can be overcome, then feedback your suggestions to the main group. Elect someone to write up a list of the suggestions for all to discuss.
3. When Hanzo meets Jack for the first time he thinks he's a folk legend called 'King of the Tengu'. Research this character and write a short report of your findings. In addition, choose a folk legend you know of, research the legend and then give a short presentation to the class of your findings.
4. In chapter 6, the description of the village is very vividly described, either individually draw the scene as a picture; or work in small groups to produce a collage of the scene.
5. In chapter 9, Jack discovers to his surprise that Soke and Hanzo are ninja. There are many comparisons in this book between 'samurai' and 'ninja'. On a note book or on the computer, draw up a grid showing the similarities and differences - you could include things such as clothes, weapons, code of conduct, status in society, jobs they did, etc.
6. In chapter 18, Jack discovers Soke playing a wind instrument called a '*shakuhachi*' which is used in meditation. What is meditation? How is it achieved? What part does a musical instrument play in meditation?

Make a list of at least 5 other wind instruments that you know of and research what they are and where they originated from - such as the *Panpipes* of the Andes in South America.



7. In chapter 21, a 'nightingale floor' is mentioned - what is it and how does it work?

Research and list other traps and hiding places that might have been used in homes/castles in the past.

Then research the hiding place of the 'wooden horse' used in World War 2 and write up your findings.

8. In chapter 22, Jack is shown some innocent looking farm tools that can be used as weapons. Describe some of them and also compare the weapons that the ninja used with weaponry of the modern age.
9. In chapter 39, Jack is taken into a cave behind a waterfall by Tenzen. Research and describe what is often found in a cave. List them under the headings of geology, animals, fish, insects and plants, etc.
10. Here are 15 words taken from this book. Write a short story using at least 10 of these words (you could use all 15 if you want!). You are allowed to use the words more than once.

target	river	ninja	flute	legend
stealth	skills	plan	torches	bamboo
garden	burst	whisper	puddle	scatter

### **Note For Teachers**

- Please look at the Teachers' Resources used for my first 3 books as you will find activities that can also be used for book 4.

[http://www.chrisbradford.co.uk/Chris\\_Bradford/Teachers.html](http://www.chrisbradford.co.uk/Chris_Bradford/Teachers.html)

- For further information on the series, please visit:

[www.youngsamurai.com](http://www.youngsamurai.com)

- For further information on Chris Bradford, please visit:

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