

Who is Who at the Party?

Characters: Narrator, Emperor, Empress, Daimyo, Powerful Shogun (and his family), 2 Samurai, Shogun's Daughter, 3 outcasts, 2 merchants, 2 farmers, 1 Ronin.

Assign students roles with some props such as name tags, dark sunglasses for the samurai.

Narrator: One Friday evening a Party was held at the Emperor's house.

Emperor: (Takes a seat next to the Empress) I hope this party goes well. I want to make a good impression.

Empress: How could you not make a good impression, you are a direct descendent of a god. The party will be a success if everyone dresses well according to their status and keeps their appropriate place and behaviour.

Emperor: I wonder if anyone will speak to us? They all seem too scared.

Empress: I'm not sure they are worthy of speaking to us.

Narrator: The Daimyo and Shoguns were invited with their families and they bought with them their Samuuri as protection.

(Daimo and Shoguns are standing together – samurai as security around them)

Powerful Shogun: Stand down men, at ease. The party is here to be enjoyed.

Daimyo: A great party but I don't understand why the Emperor invited all these merchants and craftspeople, they are simply not worthy of being here. The farmers have supplied excellent produce for this event and the chef has certainly put the ingredients to good use.

Powerful Shogun: Now don't forget everyone that after this party, you are to bring your families to Edo and they may stay at my castle until your next visit in one year.

Daimyo: They will stay with you? Why?

Powerful Shogun: I never want to underestimate your loyalty to me. They will be safe as long as you do your job. I see that Nobo-san is alone, that Ronin should never have been invited.

Daimyo: He is an amazing warrior, he has not been the same since his master was arrested, put on trial and executed for treason.

Narrator: Not everyone is happy to be at the party.

Ronin: (speaking to himself) I wish I had not come. I don't know why I was invited. What is the Emperor's motive for me being here? I am alone, master-less, there is no one to protect, what will I do now?

Narrator: The Emperor silently summons the Ronin (Emperor beckons)

Emperor: Ronin, thank you for attending this evening.

Ronin: (bowing low to the Emperor) Thank you for inviting me Emperor. I am interested to know why you have invited me since my master was tried and executed without honour. I am now without honor.

Emperor: I am quite aware of the circumstances of your life, you however have acted with honour throughout these events and I am curious as to how you will live your life from now on. The Bushido way is important to us, our family, our country.

Ronin: Emperor, I still live according to the way of the code and will until my last breath. My life offers no path without a master.

Emperor: That is exactly what I wanted to hear Ronin. You are regarded as one of the most courageous, loyal and sincere warriors in our country and I would like to ask you to set up a school to teach the code, my son would benefit from such an education. These ways are vital to keeping the peace within our country, the Shogun believes that complete obligation to a individual's station and behavior is essential and therefore your path will now be devoted to educating the younger generations to come.

Ronin: Are you sure Emperor, a master-less Samurai?

Emperor: You are without a master Ronin, and you will need to maintain your place if you wish this to work. You are however, not without honour. See that you perform well in this new position. Good night.

Ronin: (bowing low) Thank you Emperor

Narrator: One Shogun was very powerful and his Samurai were the best in the land. But the land was now at peace and the Samurai were getting bored.

Samurai 1 (whispering to others): man, I am soooo bored. There is nothing to do here. The land is at peace, its not like anyone is going to cause any trouble. Everyone is doing their job and obeying the rules. I think I'm going to enjoy myself a bit. Have some of that new food. It looks amazing.

Samurai 2: At least we are getting paid to be here. I have my eye on a new katana blade.

Samurai 1: I am so bored at home I have been turning my hand to that poetry style. Haiku. Wanna hear one?

Samurai 2: Sure

Samurai 1: An old pond, a frog leaps in, the water resounds.

Samurai 2: That's deep man, let me ponder over that one for a while.

Samurai 1: I sure wish there was a battle going on, I could feel more valuable. I miss the old days. I might go and watch the puppeteer.

Narrator: For this occasion the Emperor had also invited some local farmers and some merchants. The farmers sat together and the merchants kept to themselves except one merchant who had eyes for a young beautiful daughter of the most powerful shogun.

Farmer 1: Mate, I can certainly use this party. Been working those fields all day. So hungry.

Farmer 2: Have you tried that new Sushi stuff that chef is making. The Emperor certainly looks impressed by it.

Farmer 1: Of course it's good, it's my rice he is using. I harvested it just today.

Farmer 2: Well it's my fish, off my boat.

Narrator: The Powerful Shogun comes over to the farmers.

Powerful Shogun: I hear that the chef is using your produce in his preparation of tonight's meal fellas.

Narrator: Both farmers bow low to the Shogun.

Powerful Shogun: You show such great loyalty to me and to the Emperor. Thank you for your hard work in providing for our people. Your efforts are truly appreciated.

Farmer 1: Thank you Shogun, you do us a great honour by speaking to us.

Powerful Shogun: I would always speak to you sir, I would never waste my time with merchants. They are beneath me. You provide such a great service, merchants, what are they? What do they do?

Narrator: The Shogun leaves the farmers and returns to his family.

Merchant 1: Mind your eyes kid. Don't get me into any trouble, there are powerful samurai about at this party. I would like to keep my head on my shoulders.

Merchant 2: But she is beautiful, she keeps fluttering her eyelashes at me.

Merchant 1: She is the daughter of the most powerful Shogun. You are not her type, know your place. It was hard enough to get an invite to this party. I don't want you stuffing it up for me. I want to trade with these new powers. They are no longer paying for war, so they need a place to spend their money, why not with me? Keep your eyes on business kid.

Merchant 2: I'm going to go and chat with her.

Merchant 1: No!

Merchant 2: It's only a party, I'm not going to start any trouble by speaking with her.

(Merchant 2 walks over to the Shogun's daughter)

Merchant 2: Hi what's up?

Daughter: Nothin' You?

Merchant 2: Well...

Samurai 1: (Steps in front of the daughter) You'd be best to know your place mate! (and he puts his hands up to fight.

Shogun: Mate, mate, mate, let's handle this like gentlemen, yeah. Now you get back to your merchant friend and I'll tell you now that my daughter is out of bounds to you. Know your place and behave accordingly.

Merchant 2: Or...?

Shogun: We don't want to lose our heads over this one mate.

Merchant 2: Fine (and winks and waves at the daughter)

Narrator: The party is going well again after the merchant takes his leave away from the Shogun's daughter. Although, people do not see the uninvited guests that are staring in through the window.

Outcast 1: I don't see why we are not invited to these events. We provide important services. Even the merchants were invited to this one.

Outcast 2: You know they don't deal with death very well. You know the Shogun pays me good money for the tanned hides of the beasts I kill, you can see the shoes that he and his samurai wear, that leather had to come from somewhere. Fine shoes it has made too. Where does he get the leather for his amour? Me. Me, me, me, me, me!

Outcast 3: And who does he think cleans up after his samurai have battled? Those bodies don't just disappear themselves. I work hard. Man, I sure would like to taste some of that food.

Narrator: The Emperor was a proud man but the Shogun did not value his opinion in matters of government. Regardless, the Emperor also invited local craftspeople to the party to show their crafts, including a puppeteer and musicians for entertainment and in particular a chef who created the most wonderful fresh fish with rice in little bite sized portions, perfect for parties.

Chef: This is my best work yet. The emperor allowed me to buy the best ingredients for his party.

Puppeteer: Your food is delicious, you will probably have an invite to cook for the Shogun next. I hope my new puppet show delights the crowd as much as your food.

Chef: Thank you. I am sure you will be a success also. It is such an honour to be allowed to come to the party. I could hardly believe that I was invited. The Emperor does not usually allow us craftspeople to come to these occasions.

Puppeteer: Times are changing. He even has allowed merchants to come to this shin dig. They keep to themselves though.

Chef: and that is how it should be my friend. They are scum.

Puppeteer: Look at them flashing their money around pretending they have status here. I even saw one try to pick up the Shogun's daughter.

Chef: Nooooo. He should know his place.

Narrator: The Emperor is pleased with his party and how the night is unfolding. It is rude for anyone to leave before the Emperor though. After all, he is the most important person at the party.

Powerful Shogun: (bowing low) Emperor, Empress, thank you so much for the invitation to attend your party here at the palace.

Emperor: Thank you Shogun. I appreciate that you attended. I understand what a busy man you are, attending to such important matters for our country.

Powerful Shogun: No need to worry Emperor, the country is in good hands.

Emperor: That is why I appointed you Shogun. I must take my leave, we are tired and ready to retire for the evening.

Powerful Shogun: Your highnesses (bows low).

Narrator: The Emperor and Empress leave the party, (all the cast bow towards the Emperor and his Empress as they leave) the Shogun turns to his colleagues and begins to bid them farewell.

Shogun: Remember friends. You would do well to ensure that your families are all settled in my houses in Edo by the end of the week. I would hate to think that our loyalties had been so quickly forgotten.

Narrator: The Shogun and his family leave the party. (The rest of the cast bow low as they leave)

The party was a success but was everyone happy at the party?