**Lesson Topic**

# Kamikaze

**Relation to USS Kidd**

The Kidd was Attacked by a Kamikaze on 11 April 1945 killing 38 men and wounding 55.

**State Standard**

RL.K.5

LC.RL.K.10b

RL.1.4

RL.2.4

RL.3.5 R

RL.4.2

**Lesson Goal**

Poem interpterion.

**Objectives**

Students will examine the imagery of the poem

**Materials needed for lesson**

***Kamikaze***

by **Beatrice Garland**

*Her father embarked at sunrise*

*with a flask of water, a samurai sword*

*in the cockpit, a shaven head*

*full of powerful incantations*

*and enough fuel for a one-way*

*journey into history*

*but half way there, she thought,*

*recounting it later to her children,*

*he must have looked far down*

*at the little fishing boats*

*strung out like bunting*

*on a green-blue translucent sea*

*and beneath them, arcing in swathes*

*like a huge flag waved first one way*

*then the other in a figure of eight,*

*the dark shoals of fishes*

*flashing silver as their bellies*

*swiveled towards the sun*

*and remembered how he*

*and his brothers waiting on the shore*

*built cairns of pearl-grey pebbles*

*to see whose withstood longest*

*the turbulent inrush of breakers*

*bringing their father’s boat safe*

*- yes, grandfather’s boat – safe*

*to the shore, salt-sodden, awash*

*with cloud-marked mackerel,*

*black crabs, feathery prawns,*

*the loose silver of whitebait and once*

*a tuna, the dark prince, muscular, dangerous.*

*And though he came back*

*my mother never spoke again*

*in his presence, nor did she meet his eyes*

*and the neighbors too, they treated him*

*as though he no longer existed,*

*only we children still chattered and laughed*

*till gradually we too learned*

*to be silent, to live as though*

*he had never returned, that this*

*was no longer the father we loved.*

*And sometimes, she said, he must have wondered*

*which had been the better way to die.*

**Lesson**

Introduction Who was the principle enemy of the United States in the Pacific theatre in World War II? Towards the end of the war Japan started to use a new weapon, ‘kamikaze’. In Japanese the word means ‘divine wind’. A kamikaze was an aircraft loaded with explosives. The intent of the kamikaze was to make a suicide attack on an enemy target. Have a discussion on: How do you think the Japanese air force persuaded young men to carry out this attack? Why did young men agree to it?

Development

1) Reading the poem – Distribute the poem. Students read it once individually, then aloud as a class several times.

2) Understanding the poem

– Ask students the following questions, have them justify their answers by citing lines of the poem.

- What did the pilot take with him on the day of the attack?

- What was the pilot’s father’s job?

- At what point did the would-be kamikaze pilot decide not to go through with his mission?

- How did the would-be kamikaze pilot’s family and neighbors react to his return?

3) Analyzing the poem – The word ‘Japan’ means Land of the Rising Sun, a name which is depicted in the current Japanese flag and, more explicitly, in the flag of the Japanese imperial army, shown below.

**Assessments**

Have a class discussion on the interpretation of the poem.