

Remember
to annotate
as you read.

Notes

Chi Li and the Serpent

- 1 Many moons ago, a ferocious serpent lived in a mountain above a Chinese village. One day, to the villagers' dismay, the giant snake came down from its cave and demanded half their rice. The terrified people quickly complied. That winter, they had barely enough to eat.
- 2 The serpent returned the following year. The villagers pleaded with the serpent not to take their rice, but the snake just hissed disdainfully. The people handed over half their rice.
- 3 This went on every year for nine years until a girl named Chi Li said, "Enough! I will put an end to this!" Her parents tried to dissuade her, but Chi Li was determined.
- 4 The next day, she set out with a hound, a sword, and a bag of sweetened rice balls. As she neared the serpent's lair, she laid the rice balls sideways along the path. Then she and the hound hid. Drawn by the scent, the serpent soon slithered forth. It devoured one rice ball, and then another. The hound dashed out and ran wildly around the snake in a circle. The serpent tried to seize the hound, but when it went clockwise, the hound went counterclockwise, and vice versa, until the serpent was so dizzy that it toppled over.
- 5 Chi Li speedily jumped forward. With a mighty swing of her sword, she chopped off the serpent's head. The villagers hailed her as a hero, and everyone lived peacefully from then on.