Tomioka Tessai was a Japanese artist who told stories with his paintings.

Take a Closer Look

- What are three things that Tomioka Tessai enjoyed learning about? Number them.
- How did Tomioka help others learn how to paint? Underline how you know.

Tomioka Tessai was proud to make art about things that were important to him.

- What important story could you tell with art?

___________________________________
___________________________________
___________________________________

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Tomioka Tessai was a Japanese artist who told stories with his paintings.
Early Life

Tomioka Tessai was born in Kyoto, Japan in 1837. When Tomioka was a child, he got sick. His right ear was damaged. He would never be able to hear well again. Tomioka was comforted by his father’s collection of books. He spent a lot of time reading.

Studying and Exploring

Tomioka enjoyed learning. He studied books, poetry, history, and calligraphy. When he got older, he traveled the country. He went to historic sites and places that were beautiful. He collected things during his travels, such as stories from newspapers and leaves from trees.

Tomioka’s Art

Tomioka also spent a lot of time painting. He painted the beautiful places he visited. He painted about famous stories and people from history. He even opened his own school and taught painting. Over his life, Tomioka made close to 20,000 paintings. He wrote poems and stories on many of them. His work still hangs in museums today.

Amazing Fact!

Tomioka’s art includes painted pictures and calligraphy. Calligraphy is the art of writing words in a beautiful way.

These paintings by Tomioka are called Earthly Paradise and Sacred Mountains. Can you spot the calligraphy?