



**Japan-in-a-Suitcase
Teacher Materials**

**Kid's Arts in Japan:
Origami and Calligraphy**

Kid's Arts in Japan: Origami and Calligraphy

Presentation Agenda

1. PowerPoint Presentation (10 minutes)
 - Greeting and self-introduction
 - General information about Calligraphy
2. Activity - Calligraphy (15 minutes)
 - Japanese practice sheet with brush pen
3. PowerPoint Presentation (5 minutes)
 - General Information about Origami
4. Activity – Origami (15 minutes)
 - Flapping bird or Samurai Hat
5. Closing (5 minutes)
 - Q and A
 - Practice Good-bye in Japanese

Japanese Greetings and Words

Greetings:

Good Morning = おはよう = Ohayo (Oh-hah-yoh) Sounds like Ohio!

Hello, Hi = こんにちは = Konnichiwa (Kohn-nee-chee-wah)

Thanks = ありがとう = Arigato (Ah-ree-gah-toh)

Good Bye = さようなら = Sayounara (Sah-yoh-nah-rah)

Key words from the presentation:

Nihon or Nippon = にほん or にっぽん (Nee-hohn or Neep-pohn)
=Japan

Kimono = きもの (Kee-moh-noh) = Japanese traditional clothes

Origami = おりがみ (Oh-ree-gah-mee) = Folding paper craft

Shodo = しょう (Sho-do-oh) = Calligraphy

Kanji = かんじ (Kah-n-ji) = Chinese Character

Fujisan = ふじさん (Fu-ji-sa-n) = Mt. Fuji

Sakura = さくら (Sah-ku-ra) = Cherry blossom

Samurai = さむらい (Sah-mu-ra-ee) = Japanese historical warrior

Introduce yourself in Japanese!

My name is _____.

Watashi no namae wa _____ desu.

わたしのなまえは _____ です

(Wah-tah-shee noh nah-mah-eh wah _____ dess.)

Japanese Writing System

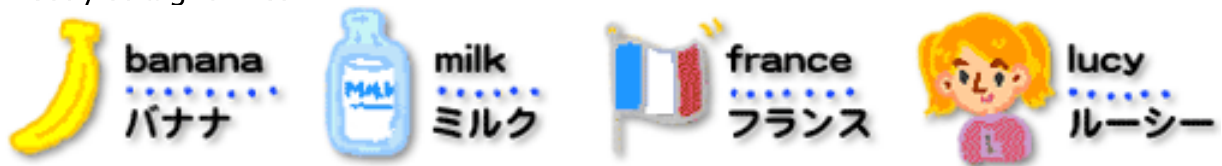
Japanese is written with three types of characters: hiragana, katakana, and kanji. They have different functions, and combinations of the three are used to write sentences.

1. Hiragana

Like the English alphabet, each *hiragana* letter represents a specific sound and does not have any meaning per se. Unlike in English, there is only one way of pronouncing a single *hiragana* letter or combination of letters. For example, "e" can be pronounced many different ways in English, as in *red*, *redo*, and *poorer*. The hiragana "あ," though, is always pronounced as "a" in father.

2. Katakana

Katakana letters are another way of writing the *hiragana* sounds and are usually used for foreign words. While Hiragana uses round strokes, Katakana uses mostly straight lines.



3. Kanji (Chinese characters)

The Japanese imported *kanji* from China a long time ago and absorbed it into their language by assigning Japanese meanings. *Kanji* are different from *hiragana* and *katakana* because they have specific meanings.



子 = Ko = Child



山 = Yama = Mountain



月 = Tsuki = Moon



川 = Kawa = River



上 = Ue = Top/Up



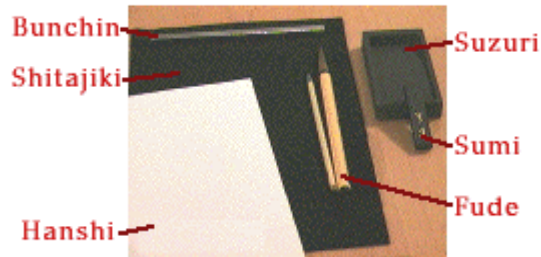
下 = Shita = Bottom/Down

Japanese Calligraphy (Shodo)

Calligraphy is an art form that has been studied for over three thousand years. Knowledge of calligraphy is an important step in the understanding of Japanese culture. Calligraphy is not merely an exercise in good handwriting, but rather the foremost art form of the Orient. It is the combination of the skill and imagination of the person who has studied intensely the combinations available using only lines. Japanese calligraphy (Shodo) attempts to bring words to life, and endow them with character. The characters must be written only once. There is no altering, touching up, or adding to them afterwards. Children in Japan start learning calligraphy in the 3rd grade. In Shodo class, students are required to be calm and focused.

A calligraphy set consists of:

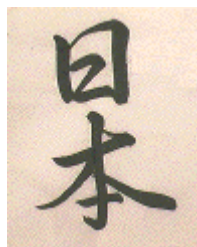
- **Shitajiki:** Black, soft mat. It provides a comfortable, soft surface.
- **Bunchin:** Metal or plastic stick to weight down the paper during writing.
- **Hanshi:** Special, thin calligraphy paper.
- **Fude:** Brush. There is a larger brush for writing the main characters and a smaller one for writing the artist's name.
- **Suzuri:** Heavy black container for the ink.
- **Sumi:** Solid black material that must be rubbed in water in the suzuri to produce the black ink which is then used for writing. Of course, "instant ink" bottles is also available in bottles.



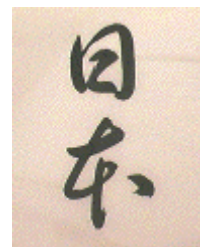
Unlike the strokes of Roman letters, the strokes of Japanese Hiragana, Katakana and Kanji all have to be drawn in the correct order. When you learn Japanese characters, you draw one stroke after the other. This is called the square (**Kaisho**) style of writing. School children first learn how to write Kaisho style, but this style is mostly used for printing materials, rather than everyday writing. There are two other styles of writing, in which the Kanji become a little bit less legible, just like when writing Roman letters in a fast way. These two styles are called semi cursive (**Gyosho**) and cursive (**Sosho**). Gyosho is the most commonly used for daily writing.



Kaisho:
Square style



Gyosho:
Semi cursive style



Sosho:
Cursive style

WHAT IS ORIGAMI?

Origami is the Japanese word for paper folding. **ORI** means to fold and **KAMI** means paper. Together, they form the word "origami." It is an art form that has been handed down from parent to child through many generations. Origami involves the creation of paper forms, usually entirely by folding. Animals, birds, fish, geometric shapes, puppets, toys and masks are among the models that even very young children can learn to make in just one sitting.

HISTORY

The art of making paper from pulp originated in China in the year 102 A.D. Paper then became more available to the masses. The secret of making paper was kept in China for several hundred years and then finally made its way through Korea and into Japan. A Buddhist monk is said to have carried this secret. The introduction of paper making to Japan coincided with the development of their religion and soon became part of the lives of its people. Colors and silk threads were added and origami was held in high esteem. Gifts were decorated with "noshi." Noshi had particular fold patterns depending on the gift.

In Japan, origami was taught in schools in the past. Today, however, children are generally taught origami at home. Holidays are celebrated with colorful origami decorations made by the family. On Children's Day (formerly Boy's Day), children make colorful carp: a fish that swims upstream, against the current. This symbolizes strength. They also make kabuto, or samurai helmets, with newspapers. During the summer, Tanabata, the Star Festival, is celebrated. Live bamboo branches are decorated with origami stars and other paper decorations in a manner which brings to mind a decorated Christmas tree.

About the Crane Origami



Sadako Sasaki

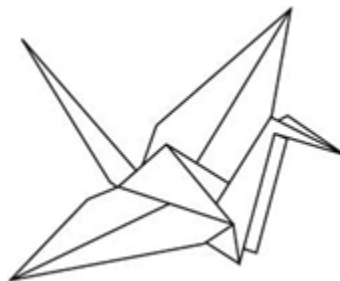


Sadako's statue

Perhaps the most well known origami model is the crane. It has become the international symbol of peace. In Japan, every child eventually learns to make the crane. Eleanor Coerr is credited with popularizing the crane with her book, *Sadako and 1,000 Paper Cranes*. This book, which is widely available, tells the story of a young girl who was exposed to the radiation during World War II. Several years later she develops leukemia. Her friend visits her in the hospital with an origami crane. She tells Sadako that the crane is a symbol of long life and that if Sadako can make 1,000 cranes, she will be well. Sadly, she is unable to complete her project. With less than 700 cranes completed, Sadako lapses into a coma and dies. When her classmates realize that she had not been able to complete her dream, they all decide to fold the remaining cranes. Soon the 1,000 cranes are complete.

Today at Peace Park in Hiroshima, there is a huge statue with a replica of Sadako holding up a giant crane. Her classmates were given the honor of deciding what to write on the base of the statue. This is what they chose:

*This is our cry
This is our prayer
Peace in the world*



Useful Websites

Teachers:

www.jnto.go.jp

Excellent teacher resource. Contains information on geography, language, population, history, culture, tradition, events, amusement, food, etiquette, current events and more. Also Supports wonderful photo galleries.

<http://www.askasia.org/teachers/>

Many resources for teachers teaching Asian subjects grades K-12, including lesson plans and current essays on Asian culture.

<http://aboutjapan.japansociety.org>

New interactive website for educators, featuring lesson plans, essays and annotated hands-on material for in-class use.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/>

The Japan Times is a free news source that offers many resources for both teachers and students about modern Japan.

www.bento.com

Information on food (food culture, recipes, and what's new in Japanese restaurants for select areas.

<http://spice.stanford.edu/docs/147>

Annotated lists of recommended websites about Japan arranged by topic. Provided by the National Clearinghouse for U.S.–Japan Studies

Students:

<http://jguide.stanford.edu/>

Ultimate guide to finding resources on a specific topic of Japan. Has currency converter, current time, and news and media in Japan. Great for teachers and students exploring culture

<http://www.origami-club.com/en/>

Lots of origami ideas with animated instructions

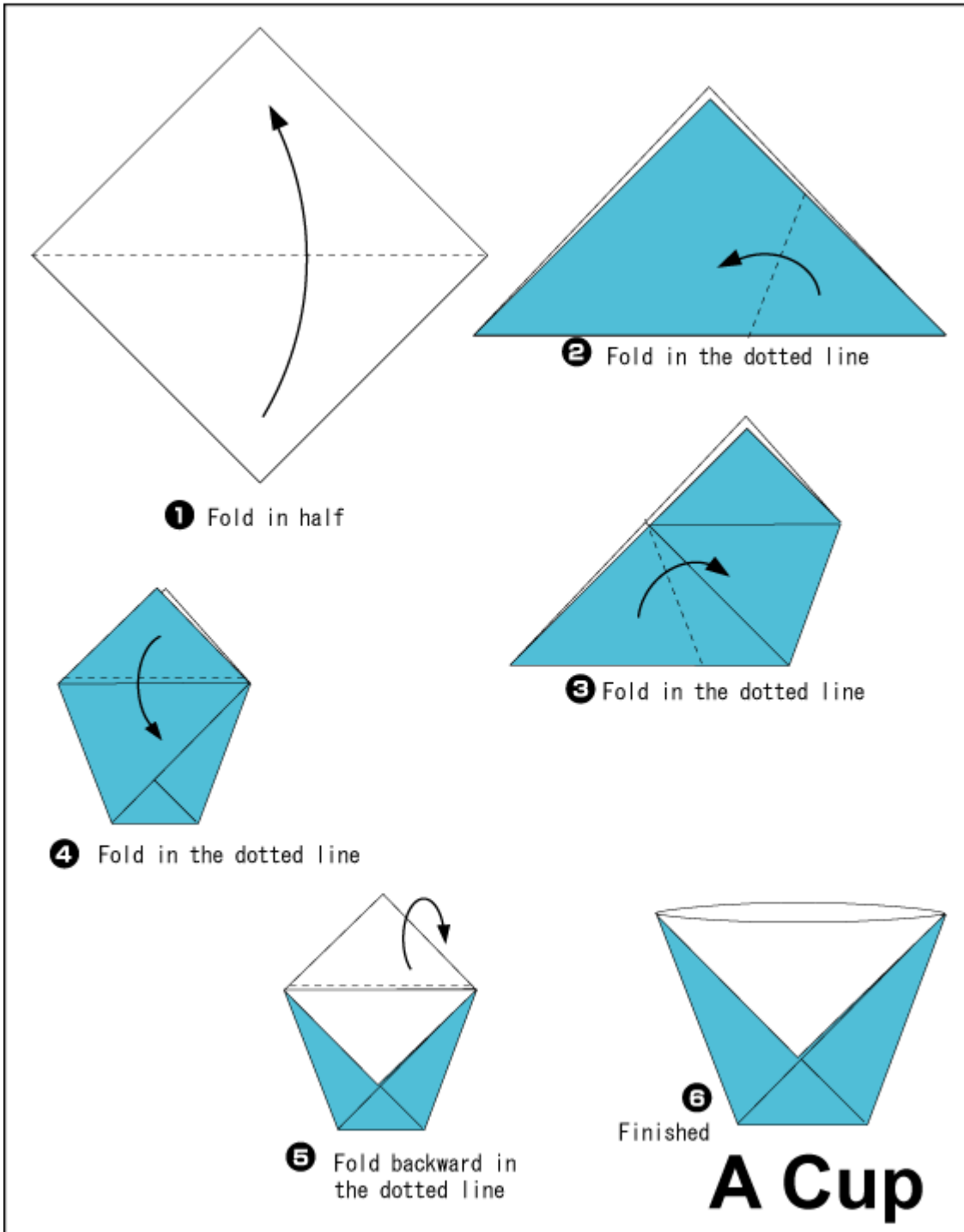
<http://web-japan.org/kidsweb/>

Fun interactive activities and the latest “cool” things from Japan

Origami Instruction

(We won't make this origami in our presentation, this is only for your information)

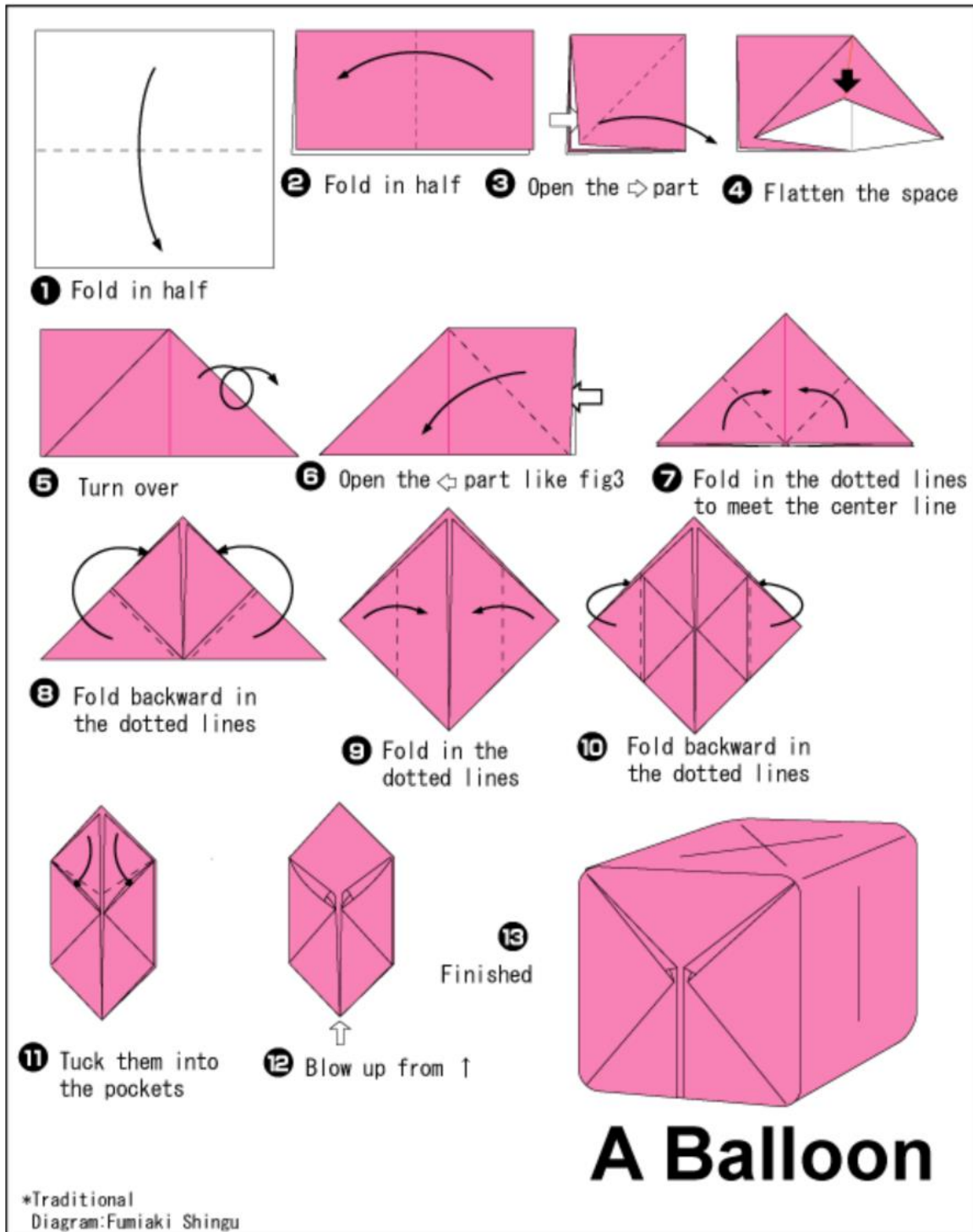
Skill Level - Beginner



Additional Origami Instructions

(We won't make this origami in our presentation, this is only for your information)

Skill Level - Intermediate



Map of Japan

<http://worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/jp.htm>



Japan

<http://worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/jp.htm>

