

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

BY GIACOMO PUCCINI



2014-15 GUIDEBOOK

A Letter to the Teachers

Opera Colorado is pleased to continue providing engaging and educational programs and performances for students across Colorado. What follows is a guide that we hope you find useful as you, and your students, learn about and explore Giacomo Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. In the spirit of exploration, we have included a set of 45 minute lessons that connects the opera with all different subjects of learning: music, visual arts, language arts, social studies, math, and science. The lessons include reference to, and are based upon, the new Colorado Department of Education's Academic Standards: specifically, focusing on the fourth grade expectations. This does not mean, however, that these lessons should be limited to this age group. While we would be very pleased if you used these lessons in the exact format provided, we encourage you to expand, alter, and adapt these lessons so that they best fit your students' abilities and development. After all, the teacher knows their student's needs best. We would appreciate your feedback on our teacher evaluation form found at the end of this guide, and we hope that you enjoy all that Opera Colorado has to offer!

Ciao!

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Contact us to learn more!

Opera Colorado's Education & Community Engagement department offers many more programs to assist your students as they continue to discover the world of opera. We have programs that take place at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House as well as programs that we can bring directly to your classroom. We even have opera education specialists that can teach lessons directly to your students.

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MADAMA BUTTERFLY

COMPOSED BY GIACOMO PUCCINI

LIBRETTO BY GIUSEPPE GIACOSA AND LUIGI ILlica

BASED ON THE PLAY OF DAVID BELASCO

PREMIER PERFORMANCE: LA SCALA, MILAN, FEBRUARY 17TH, 1904

CAST OF CHARACTERS

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PINKERTON.....A US NAVY LIUTENANT.....TENOR
CIO-CIO-SAN / MADAMA BUTTERFLY.....A FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLD GEISHA.....SOPRANO
SHARPLESS.....THE US CONSUL IN NAGASAKI.....BARITONE
GORO.....A JAPANESE MARRIAGE BROKE.....TENOR
SUZUKI.....CIO-CIO-SAN'S SERVANT.....MEZZO-SOPRANO
BONE.....CIO-CIO-SAN'S UNCLE.....BASS
PRINCE YAMADORI.....A JAPANESE NOBLEMAN.....BARITONE
TROUBLE.....THE SON OF CIO-CIO-SAN AND PINKERTON.....CHILD ACTOR
KATE PINKERTON.....B.F. PINKERTON'S AMERICAN WIFE.....SOPRANO



www.newyorksocialdiary.com

SYNOPSIS

THE OPERA TAKES PLACE IN NAGASAKI, JAPAN BEGINNING IN 1904.

ACT 1

A US Naval Lieutenant, B. F. Pinkerton, is inspecting the house he has leased from a Japanese marriage broker, Goro. Goro has also obtained a young geisha wife, Cio-Cio-San, and servants for the Lieutenant Sharpless, the American Consul, arrives and Pinkerton begins to boast about how great the sailor's life is - collecting women around the world from port to port. And though she does not know it yet, Cio-Cio-San is no exception. She



Pinkerton is inspecting the house with Sharpless and Goro.
Photo courtesy of Cincinnati Opera

believes that the 999-year marriage contract Pinkerton has signed is proof of his devotion even though the contract includes a chance for annulment at the end of every month. Sharpless warns the young Lieutenant that Cio-Cio-San may not be taking the marriage so lightly, but Pinkerton brushes him off saying that one day he will marry a "real" American wife. Meanwhile Cio-Cio-San is heard singing about her new life. As she enters the room to tell Pinkerton how she became a geisha and how happy she is now, her relatives cut in with their objections. In an adjacent, quiet room she shows her bridegroom her dearest possessions and informs him of her plan to convert to his Christian faith. The wedding is then

performed by the Imperial Commissioner and all toast to the "happy" couple. The festivities are soon interrupted by Bonze, a Buddhist priest and Cio-Cio-San's uncle, who scolds the young bride for renouncing her ancestor's religion. Angered by this outburst, Pinkerton sends his guests away and the couple is left alone to sing of their love.

ACT 2

Three years have passed as Cio-Cio-San eagerly awaits her husband's return from America as Suzuki, Cio-Cio-San's servant prays to the gods to help. She then shows Cio-Cio-San what little money they have left in hopes that she will realize Pinkerton is not returning and that she needs to move on. Cio-Cio-San, still veiled by ignorance, tells her servant to have faith and that Pinkerton is returning. Sharpless enters with a letter from the Lieutenant, but before he has the chance to read it, Goro enters with a rich suitor for her, Prince Yamadori. Cio-Cio-San will not entertain the idea of a

new husband, as she still believes that Pinkerton will

return. After Sharpless is left to read the letter to Cio-Cio-San, which suggests that her husband may not return. In response, she brings out her son, Trouble, insisting that once Pinkerton knows he has a son he will return and if not she would rather die than go back to the life of a geisha. Seeing her devotion, Sharpless decides not to reveal the full contents of the letter. A cannon is heard in the distance as Pinkerton's ship has arrived.

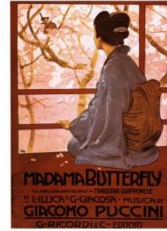


Scott Hendricks as Sharpless and Amanda Echaz as Cio-Cio San in Act II
Photo courtesy of bbc.co.uk

Cio-Cio-San is full of joy and excitement and has Suzuki help her fill the house with flowers. Night falls as Cio-Cio-San, Suzuki and Trouble begin their waiting vigil.

ACT 3

The morning comes and Suzuki insists that Cio-Cio-San rest. She carries her child to his bed as she hums a lullaby. Sharpless enters the house with Pinkerton and his new American wife, Kate. Suzuki agrees to gently break the news to Cio-Cio-San. Full of remorse, Pinkerton rushes out of the house. Cio-Cio-San comes in excited to see Pinkerton. Seeing Kate, she realizes the truth and agrees to give up her child if



Pinkerton returns for him. After sending everyone away, she takes the sword with which her father committed suicide. Choosing to die with honor rather than than live in disgrace, she bows before a statue of Buddha and gets ready to take her own life. Right then Suzuki pushes Trouble into the room to persuade Cio-Cio-San not to take her life. Cio-Cio-San sends trouble to play in the garden and stabs herself. As she lies dying, Pinkerton is heard calling her name.

MEET THE COMPOSER!

FULL NAME: GIACOMO ANTONIO DOMENICO MICHELE SECONDO MARIA PUCCINI

DATES: DECEMBER 22, 1858 – NOVEMBER 29, 1924

NATIONALITY: BORN IN LUCCA, ITALY. DIED IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM.

EARLY YEARS

Giacomo Puccini was born into a long line of talented musicians. Giacomo's great-great grandfather had held the position of choirmaster and organist at the Cathedral of San Martino. This position would be held by four consecutive generations of Puccini men, including Puccini's father. As a master of counterpoint, which is a musical form that incorporates two simultaneous melody lines, Giacomo's father helped him to establish a firm knowledge of music and composition.

At the age of fourteen, Giacomo was already an accomplished organist, performing in his hometown of Lucca. It would not be until the age of twenty-two that Giacomo would finally begin to receive a formal education in music. In 1880, Giacomo entered the Milan Conservatory, but only with the assistance of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Puccini was fortunate in that he was exposed to a variety of theatrical styles, including opera and spoken drama in his hometown of Lucca, Italy. It is these experiences at the theatre that planted the ideas for stories that Puccini would later shape into some of his most famous operas.

It was not long after his entrance into the Milan Conservatory that Puccini's interest in opera began to materialize. At

the age of twenty-six, Puccini's first opera, *Le Villi*, premiered. This opera caught the attention of publisher Giulio Ricordi, who



funded Puccini's second opera, *Edgar*, in 1889. This relationship between Puccini and Ricordi would last until Ricordi's death in 1912.

Despite moderate attention paid to his first two operas, Puccini's reputation as a composer did not begin to develop until his third opera, *Manon Lescaut*, in 1893.

While some composers are only remembered for one great masterpiece, Puccini's status as a composer arose out of three separate operas. Known as Puccini's "Big Three," these operas are *La bohème* (1896), *Tosca* (1900), and *Madama Butterfly*



Puccini's "Big Three" – Bohème, Tosca, and Madame Butterfly
Photos courtesy of Wikipedia.org

(1904). Through the utilization of *verismo*, or storylines that focus on the rough and gritty aspects of common life, Puccini was able to infuse raw emotion into

his characters, as well as the music they sing. This has appealed to countless generations of audiences as Puccini's characters are completely relatable in that they are passionate, flawed, and ultimately human.

Puccini was one of the last composers influenced by the *verismo* of Italian composers, particularly composer Giuseppe Verdi. As the main figure in the Italian opera of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Puccini symbolized the decline of *verismo* as he combined the traditional musical lightness and realism of Verdi with Wagnerian musical colors and leitmotifs. *Madame Butterfly* is an example of his blending of traditionalism and exoticism. Puccini also experimented with the new harmonies of the early 20th century, as an

admirer of contemporary composers such as Stravinsky, Debussy, and Strauss.

In 1924, Giacomo Puccini was diagnosed with cancer of the throat. He died later that year in Brussels, Belgium. There are disputes as to the cause of Puccini's death, but most sources believe that he died of a heart attack during an emergency surgical treatment for the cancer. His final opera, *Turandot*, was left unfinished at the time of his death. The last two scenes of the opera were finished by composer Franco Alfano.

MEET THE LIBRETTISTS!

GIUSEPPE GIACOSA 1847 — 1906

Born on October 21, 1847 in Colletterto Parella, near Turin, Giacosa followed in his father's footsteps, and entered the University of Turin as a law student. Working in his father's law firm after graduation, he was introduced to the literary world by making such friends as Sacchetti, Boito and Camerana. Gaining mild respect in the literary world with his scripts, Giacosa's first mainstream hit was the opera *Una partita a scacchi* (A Game of Chess), a comedy written in verse (1873). He soon ventured into journalism, writing for newspapers and magazines. After moving to Milan, Italy in 1888, Giacosa entered the education world teaching at the University and Conservatory. As his theatrical works became more successful, he eventually left his teaching positions. In 1891, he was one of several playwrights to be asked to collaborate with Puccini for *Manon Lescaut*. Giacosa suggested the help of Luigi Illica and thus began the great collaborative trilogy of Giacosa, Illica and Puccini.



Giacomo Puccini, Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica
Photo Courtesy of Opera Resource

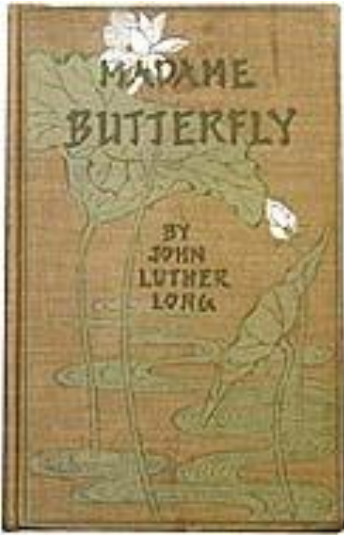
LUIGI ILLICA 1857 — 1919

Born on May 9, 1857 near Piacenza, Italy.

Conflicts between him and his political father coupled with continued poor performance in school swayed him to leave home. At this time, he set sail for four years having an adventurous life including fighting the Turks in the Battle of Plevna. Moving to Milan in 1879, Illica began working for a literary newspaper run by his cousin and soon became a reporter. Moving to Bologna, he co-founded the radical newspaper *Don Chisciotte* which was soon suspended due to ties with anti-French demonstrations. Upon returning to Milan, he used the pen name Luigi della Scorziana to publish his works. During a period of over two decades, Illica wrote over thirty libretti. It was through these well-done, yet lesser known texts that he caught the attention of Puccini and Giacosa, who asked him to help collaborate on the problematic *Manon Lescaut*. The team worked together so well that Puccini invited them to collaborate again on the ever successful *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Madama Butterfly*. The call of the battlefield being too strong, Illica enlisted with the army as a volunteer in 1875 for one year until a fall from a horse forced him to move back home to Colombare where he died in 1919.

MEET THE AUTHOR!

JOHN LUTHER LONG “MADAME BUTTERFLY”



The cover of the book version of the short story, Madame Butterfly by John Luther Long, published in 1903.

This long short story begins with two men, in this case Americans, on a ship arriving in a Japanese harbor, and one of them decides to get married in Japan. B.F. Pinkerton revolutionizes his bride's life. He strips her of any pride in her Japanese identity and family. He tries to develop in her a sense of irony (hence her decision to name her child "Trouble"): ...she named the baby, when it came, Trouble. Every Japanese baby begins with a temporary name; it may be anything, almost, for a little while. She was quite sure he would like the way she had named him- Trouble, meaning joy. That was his own way. As for his permanent name, -he might have several others before, - that was for him to choose when he returned.

Having taught her to value her relationship with him at the expense of family and personal pride, Pinkerton leaves her and goes home to marry an American woman, Adelaide. He returns after an absence of about a year to Japan, where his wife is determined to adopt the blue-eyed, half-caste baby.

She meets Cho-Cho-San in a bureaucrat's office without knowing that this is her husband's other wife.

Cho-Cho (Butterfly), who understands the situation from Adelaide's conversation with the official, goes home and prepares to commit suicide with her father's sword. However, when she hears her baby crying, she realizes she has something to live for after all and drops the sword; she, her baby, and the servant "disappear."

Long's story is satirical rather than tragic. The character of Pinkerton dominates the story, and Long seems to have imagined this selfish, domineering man quite fully; he even appears in the opening pages of Long's novel, *Miss Cherry-Blossom of Tokyo*, in a passing reference as an officer whose story of "the Pink Geisha" is so tedious and unpleasant that a fellow officer leaves the ship to avoid hearing it again.

MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT!

David Belasco was a flamboyant and ambitious playwright and producer, who developed the possibilities for spectacular sets, emotionally powerful lighting, and other stage effects. He was born in San Francisco in 1853 and in the late 1880s moved to New York and by 1895 was famous for his plays. *Madame Butterfly*, based on Long's story, was an important triumph. It was a one-act play, the second item on a double bill (preceded by a farce).

The entire play is set at the time when Pinkerton returns to Japan, after an absence of 2-4 years (depending on the age of the child recruited to play Trouble). Cho-Cho-San, her maid

Suzuki, the American consul, and the Japanese marriage broker all discuss her marriage in the opening scene, but Pinkerton himself does not appear onstage until the very end. A striking piece of stagecraft was a long pause during which Cho-Cho and Suzuki watch the sunset, evening, night, and dawn, waiting for Pinkerton to come to visit; this took place on stage with no dialogue, just music and lights to indicate the passage of time. The baby "Trouble" is now a girl, and at least a year older than in the story. When Butterfly sees that Pinkerton's ship has returned, she tells the baby, "This is the bes' nizest momen' since you was borned. Now your name's Miss Joy!"

Butterfly gives her daughter a doll to hold during their night-long vigil. Pinkerton, arriving at the house, expresses surprise and regret that Butterfly has remained faithful; he picks up the dropped doll, explaining that he did not know about the baby until they arrived, when his wife Kate was the first to hear of it: "Well, it was rather rough on [my wife]--only married four months. Sharpless, my Kate's an angel--she offered to take the child."

Kate confronts Butterfly knowing who she is, and when she calls her a "pretty little plaything" and "takes her in her arms," Butterfly replies: "No--playthin'--I am Mrs. Lef-ten-ant B. F.-- No--no--now I am O-Cho-Cho-San, but no playthin'...." The most important change Belasco made to Long's plot was the ending: whereas Long allowed Cho-Cho-San to decide to live and take care of her baby, Belasco had her go through with her suicide, so that the half-Japanese child will be adopted by the American couple. The woman's suicide remained in the opera, and became the essential focus of the story as a tragedy.



Late 19th Century Portrait of David Belasco

BEHIND BUTTERFLY

In the summer of 1900, Puccini, in London for his premiere of *Tosca*, attended David Belasco's play, *Madame Butterfly*, at the suggestion of the play's stage manager. Though he did not know any English, Puccini fell in love with the story's overall theme and atmosphere and thought that it had the makings of a great opera. By 1901, Puccini had acquired the rights to the play as well as the talents of Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa.



www.musicwithease.com

Though Puccini was fascinated with Eastern cultures, he did not know much about the music that came from them. Not wanting the opera to sound too "Italian", he enlisted the guidance of Japanese near Milan and studied the score of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Mikado*. Through the use of composition techniques such as writing melodies based on a pentatonic non-typical opera sound, Puccini was able to create a more Eastern sound.

While composing *Madama Butterfly*, Puccini was in an automobile accident that nearly killed him. He also had a few disagreements with Illica regarding the libretto, but all was worked out and rehearsals began in Milan at La Scala. There was much hype surrounding the opera as this was Puccini's third full collaboration with Illica and Giacosa.

Unfortunately, the audience was completely unreceptive and made so much noise throughout that the music could barely be heard. Some say that this was the work of Puccini's rivals who hired a *claque* to distract everyone. However there are many possible factors that could have contributed to the audience's honest opinion: The opera was originally performed in two acts with the second being exceptionally long and disproportionate to the first, Pinkerton's role was much smaller and superficial than in present day and it was hard for an audience to accept a lead tenor role to be so insignificant. The people of Milan were also not accustomed to hearing such strange harmonic and melodic references.

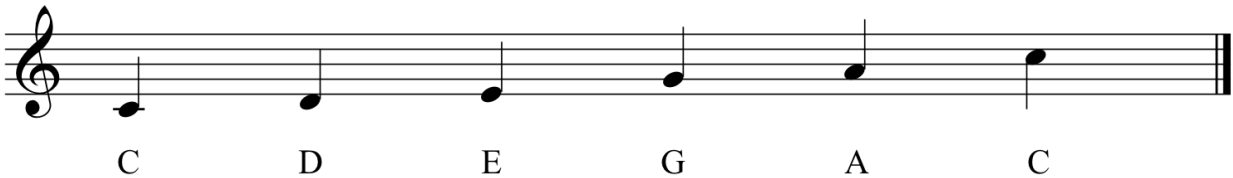
Fortunately, Puccini was neither a vain nor sensitive composer. Though he was surprised and hurt by the opera's reception, he recognized its problems and revised it for the Brescia debut. Just three months after its premier, *Madama Butterfly* was reworked and ready for a second try. It was a huge success and has remained so ever since.

LISTENING GUIDE

Throughout the opera, Puccini creates a Japanese feel through the use of the *pentatonic* scale. Try teaching your students a diatonic versus a pentatonic scale.

- What differences do they notice?
- How would they describe the way each sounds?

Pentatonic Scale-a scale consisting of five notes. The most common pentatonic scale is (do-re-mi-so-la-do)



Diatonic Scale- an eight-note musical scale composed of seven pitches and a repeated octave. The most common diatonic major scale is (do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti-do)

A musical staff in treble clef showing the most common diatonic major scale. The notes are C, D, E, F, G, A, B, and C, written as quarter notes. The notes are positioned on the staff as follows: C on the first line, D on the second line, E on the second space, F on the third space, G on the fourth space, A on the fifth space, B on the first line of the next octave, and C on the first line of the next octave. The notes are labeled with their letter names below the staff.

note names: C D E F G A B C

whole & half steps: W W h W W W h

<http://www.themeandvariations.org/>

LISTENING GUIDE; CON'T.

Web Listen www.metoperafamily.org/metopera/history/sounds

^ Go to the web-site listed above and choose selection 132 of Renata Scotto singing Madame Butterfly. The excerpt is sung in Italian and the English translation is included below.

^ Ask students to listen first. Even though the words are in Italian, there is a lot of other information in the sounds of the music and voice that communicate meaning. Ask them to describe the emotions the singer is expressing for that character. It is perfectly all right for students to have different interpretations.

^ Next, ask students to read the English translation below and then listen again. What do they know about what Cio-Cio-San(Madame Butterfly) is feeling from the opera singer's voice? From the libretto (lyrics)?

Why did Puccini include the melody of the Star Spangled Banner?

(Butterfly and Suzuki are looking out into the harbor. Suzuki has just sung: Una nava da Guerra (a warship)

Reggimi la mano ch'io ne discerna
il nome, il nome.....il nome.....
Eccolo: Abramo Lincoln!
Tutti han mentito!Tutti!
Sol io lo sapevo....sol io che l'amo.
Vedi lo scimunito tuo dubbio? È giunto!

Proprio nel punto che ognun diceva:

Piangi e dispera.
Trionfa il mio ammor! Il mia amor, la mia fè,
trionfa intera.
Ei torna e m'ama!

Steady my hand so that I can pick out
The name, the name.....the name....
There it is: Abraham Lincoln!
They were all lying! All of them!
I alone knew...only I who love him.
Can you see how foolish were your doubts?
He has come!
Just at the moment when everyone was
saying:
Weep and despair.
My love triumphs! My love, my faith,
triumphs completely.
He has returned and he loves me!

Activity Courtesy of Tennessee Opera

VISUAL ARTS ACTIVITY: JAPANESE PAPER DOLL

GEISHA DRESS

Geisha wear traditional kimono with the style, pattern and color depending on the season. Three layers are worn year-round except in the winter when they wear an overcoat. While they are barefoot indoors, geisha wear flat sandals outside, unless the weather is bad, in which case they wear raised wooden clogs called geta. Their face is covered in pale, white makeup to mask their emotions and create an illusion that they are a work of art.

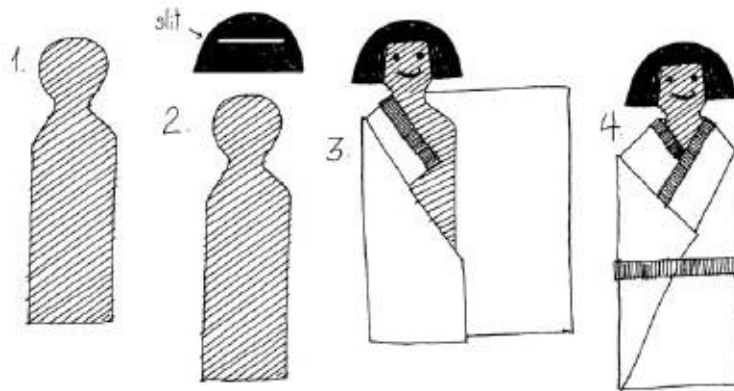
Make a costume with a cardboard cutout of a traditional Japanese Geisha.

What colors might she be wearing? What does her makeup look like?



msatminidolls.minilists.com

How to Make a Japanese Paper Doll



What You'll Need:

- Poster board
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Construction Paper
- Markers or Colored Pencils
- Tape

1. From poster board, cut out a rectangle that measures 7-1/2 inches tall. At a short end of the rectangle, cut out a round head shape. Trim below the head to make sloping shoulders. (This should look like a large, round-headed clothespin.)

2. For the kimono, cut out a 6-inch square from colored construction paper. For the sash, cut out a 6-3/8 inch rectangle from black paper. Cut out a wig from the black paper. In the center of the wig, cut a horizontal slit that is wide enough to fit over the doll's head. Fit the wig onto the doll's head.

3. With markers or pencils, draw a face on the doll. Fold down the top 3/8 inch of the kimono to make a collar. Color the collar with a marker or pencil. Lay the kimono flat so the folded collar is face down.

4. Center the body on top of the kimono. Fold a top corner of the kimono down over the doll's shoulder. Working on the same side of the kimono, fold the paper vertically to cover the doll's body. Use the same method to fold the opposite side of the kimono. Wrap the sash around the doll from front to back, and tape the ends together in the back.

Courtesy of: lifestyle.howstuffworks.com

DRAMA LESSON



Newcitystage.com

The Five C's: More to the story

Using the Five C's, have your students analyze the opera as drama:

CHARACTERS: Are they interesting? Believable? Are their actions, words, thoughts consistent?

CONFLICT: What conflicts are established? How are they resolved?

CLIMAX: To what climax does the conflict lead?

CONCLUSION: How well does the conclusion work? Is it consistent? Satisfying? Believable?

CONTEXT: What are the historical, physical, and emotional settings?
Sets and costumes?

Activity Courtesy of San Francisco Opera

SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY: NAVAL JOURNAL ENTRY



<http://www.geheugenvannederland.nl/>



Gojapango.com

WRITE A JOURNAL ENTRY AS IF YOU ARE A NAVY OFFICER
JUST ARRIVING IN JAPAN.

How many days have you spent on the ship?

Name at least 3 things that are different about Japan from the
United States.



japaneseprints-london.com

- what is the weather like?
- what does the landscape look like?
- what city in America does Japan remind you of?

DRAW THE ROUTE YOU WOULD TAKE!



Photo Courtesy of: João Felipe C.S.

MATHEMATICAL LESSON: WONDERFUL WHALE ORIGAMI

MATH VOCABULARY:

QUADRILATERAL: Any figure that has four sides.

SQUARE: A quadrilateral that has four right angles (90 degrees) and four congruent sides. The shape you start with for the whale is a square. You turn it on its point to make it a diamond.

LINE OF SYMMETRY: A line that divides two halves that match. As you fold the diamond in half, you are making a line of symmetry down the center.

CONGRUENT: Equal in measurement. Your two halves of the diamond are congruent figures.

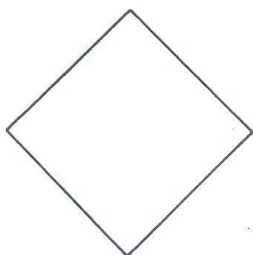
TRIANGLE: Any figure that has three sides.

SCALENE TRIANGLE: A triangle that has no sides that are the same length. As you make your folds in step two, you are creating four new triangles. These are all scalene triangles.

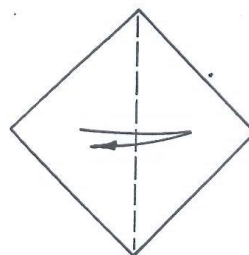
THINK ABOUT IT:

After completing step 4, how many triangles can you count? Remember that larger triangles can contain smaller triangles.

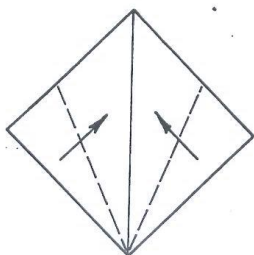
Find all the triangles that make matching pairs. How many pairs are there? In step 6, you have made a quadrilateral-a shape that has four sides. Do any of those sides match? What about the angles inside the quadrilateral?



1 Put a square of paper on the table so it looks like a diamond.



2 Fold the left point over to meet the right point. Unfold, and find the center crease.



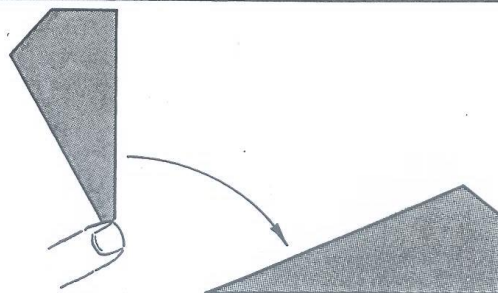
3 Fold the lower left and right sides to meet the center crease.



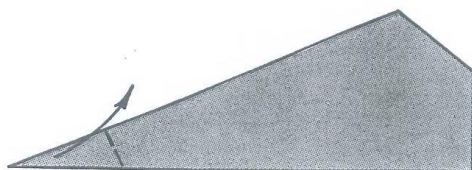
4 It looks like an ice-cream cone. Now fold the top point down, as shown.



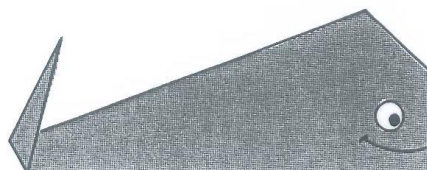
5 Fold the right side over to meet the left side.



6 Put your finger on the bottom point as you turn the whale sideways.



7 Fold the end point up to make a tail.



Online Education Feedback

Opera Colorado strives to provide quality programs that meet the needs of students and teachers across the state. Please take a few minutes to let us know what you think of our programs. Opera Colorado is also interested in hearing from your students! We would be happy to receive letters or artwork from them.

Thanks for your support!

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