

by Kathryn Schultz Miller  
Directed by Jeffery Matthews

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# A Thousand Cranes

Adapted by Kathryn Schultz Miller  
 Directed by Jeffery Matthews

**Scenic & Costume Design**

Dorothy Marshall Englis

**Stage Manager**

Brian Peters

**Director of Education**

Marsha Coplon

**Artistic Supervisor**

Jeffery Matthews

## The Company

Sadako / **Christena Doggrell**

Mother / Grandmother Oba chan / **Meghan Brown**

Father / **Alan Knoll**

Kenji / **Jason Contini**

Financial assistance for this theatre has been provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, (which believes that a great nation deserves great art) a federal agency; the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency; the Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis; and the St. Louis Regional Arts Commission.





# SETTING THE SCENE

## Hiroshima, Japan 1955

World War II began in 1931, though the United States did not enter the war until Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The war was fought on two main fronts, one in Europe, the other in the Pacific. While the war in Europe concluded in the spring of 1945 when Germany and Italy surrendered, the war in the Pacific continued.

In July of the same year, the United States issued the Postdam Declaration giving the Japanese government an ultimatum to surrender or face “prompt and utter destruction.” When Japanese newspapers printed only days later that the declaration had been rejected, President Harry S. Truman made the decision to drop the first atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima. The atomic bomb produced a blast so great that it immediately killed 70,000–80,000 people and destroyed 90 percent of the city. From where the bomb was dropped, everything within a three mile circle was completely burned. When Japan still refused to surrender, on August 9, three days after the first bombing, a second bomb was dropped on the city of Nagasaki. With destruction as severe as the first, Japan offered to surrender the next day.



Though the explosion of the atomic bombs was very deadly and damaging to the people of Japan, another unexpected hazard was the radioactive material that fell to earth in the fallout. This radiation poisoned people who had survived the bombing as well as people for generations after. Sadako was one of these people who came through the initial bombing unharmed, but faced sickness from the radiation years later.



## WHO'S WHO?

Feisty, 12-year-old

### SADAKO

is the fastest girl in her class and is looking forward to an upcoming city-wide race, until she meets an unexpected challenge.

### KENJI

is two years older than Sadako, but is still her best friend and racing partner.

### Sadako's MOTHER

is very traditional and insists her daughter respect her elders and the spirits of her ancestors.

### OBA CHAN,

Sadako's grandmother, was killed years ago in the atomic bomb but is still a strong presence in her family.

### FATHER

loves his daughter very much and encourages her to do her best in the race and in her life.

平和  
peace



## WHAT'S THE STORY?



*A Thousand Cranes* is the story of Sadako, a young girl born in Hiroshima during World War II. When the play opens Sadako is training for a foot race with her best friend Kenji. Two years older than she, Kenji acts much like a brother and coach. Although he teases Sadako about being as slow as a turtle, he assures her that she will win the upcoming race. Excited, Sadako rushes home to tell her parents of Kenji's predicted outcome, but she must calm herself and behave with the proper respect before they will hear her news. That night, Sadako's mother and father are preparing for Oban, the Japanese celebration of the ancestors. They explain to their daughter that this is a time to remember the ancestors who have died, and they will be lighting a special candle in remembrance of Oba chan, Sadako's grandmother who was killed when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. Though she was very young, Sadako remembers her grandmother, and the bomb. She wonders if her grandmother can see her when she runs.

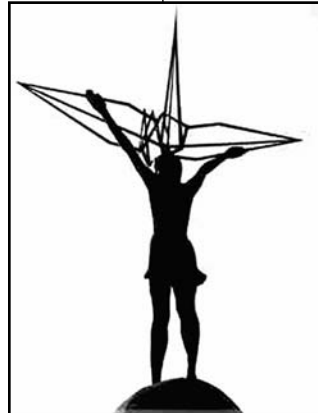
The next day, Sadako and Kenji are again training until Sadako trips and falls. She thinks she is okay until she tries to stand

and realizes that she feels dizzy. Sadako's parents take her to a doctor and she is diagnosed with "radiation sickness," or leukemia. She wonders how she could be sick when the bomb was so very long ago.

Sadako is too sick to run in the race, so Kenji comes to visit her in the hospital. Her friend gives her the gift of a gold paper crane and reminds her of the old Japanese myth that claims a person who folds 1,000 paper cranes will be granted a wish. Hopeful, Sadako sets out to fold 1,000 cranes, but she is too sick to complete the task. Grandmother Oba chan comes as a spirit to lead Sadako to the home of the ancestors. There Sadako meets many others who were harmed by the bomb. Saddened by the loss of their friend,

Kenji and Sadako's other classmates finish Sadako's cranes and hope for a wish of their own. In memory of Sadako, the children create a monument to their friend in Hiroshima Peace Park, inscribed with their common wish:

"This is our cry,  
This is our prayer,  
Peace in the World."



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peace



# WORDS TO THE WISE



**Bunraku:** a type of theatre popular in Japan using masks and puppets while actors are dressed in black

**Leukemia:** one of the four main types of cancer, in Sadako's case, thought to have been caused by radiation poisoning

**Oban:** Day of the Spirits, a Japanese celebration honoring one's ancestors, held either July 13–15 or August 13–15 depending on the region

**Kimono:** a long, loose, wide-sleeved Japanese robe worn with a broad sash

**Saki:** an alcoholic beverage made from fermented rice

**Sushi:** a type of Japanese cold finger food made with rice cakes that may be wrapped in seaweed and topped with vegetables or raw fish

**Origami:** the Japanese art of paper folding



## READ MORE ABOUT IT

**We encourage you to examine these topics in-depth by exploring the following books, Web sites and videos.**

Ishii, Takayuki. *One Thousand Paper Cranes : The Story of Sadako and the Children's Peace Statue.* Laurel Leaf, 2001.

Coerr, Eleanor. *Sadako.* Putnam Juvenile; Reprint edition, 1997.

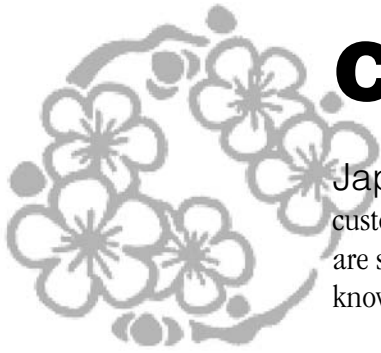
Yep, Laurence. *Hiroshima.* Scholastic Paperbacks, 1996.

Visit <http://www.paperfolding.com/> to learn about the Japanese custom of origami and paper cranes.

To learn more about the real Sadako Sasaki, visit <http://www.sadako.org/>.

For information on Sadako's memorial visit <http://www.city.hiroshima.jp/shimin/heiwa/crane.html>. Here you can also find information about sending your own offering of cranes to Sadako, read other children's messages of peace from all around the world and create your own message.

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# Culture Club

Japan is a country with a long and rich heritage of tradition. Many ancient customs are very important to the Japanese and are still practiced with regularity. Here are some Japanese customs that are well-known around the world. What others do you know about?

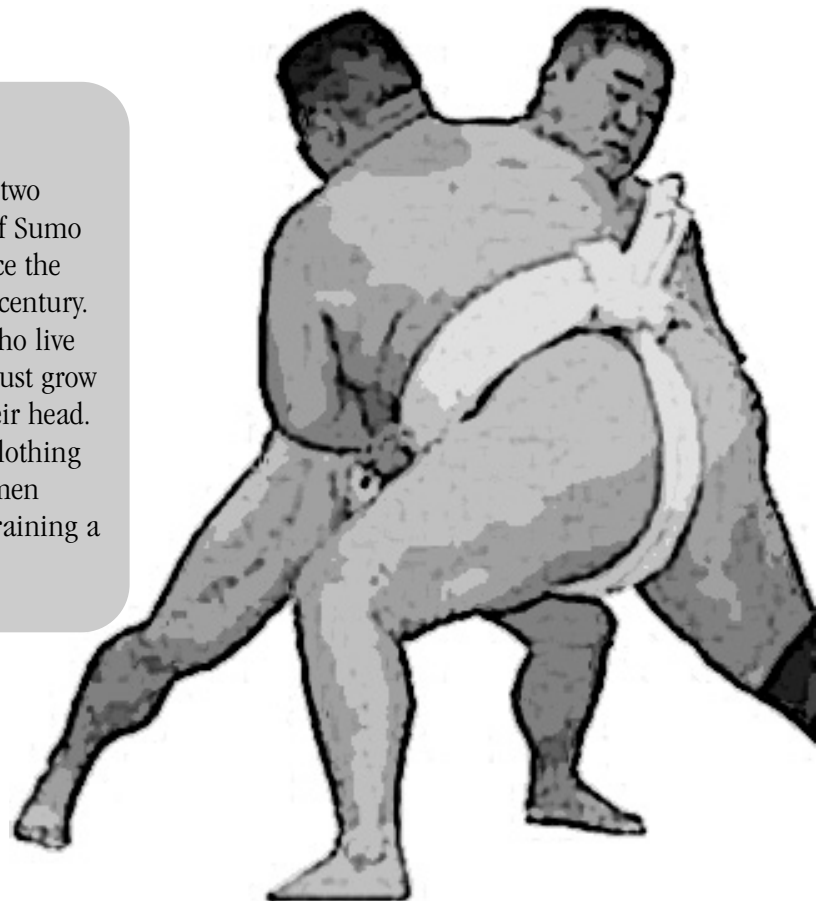


## SADO

Tea was introduced in Japan in the ninth century for medicinal purposes and is still very important in Japanese culture for both health and simply for enjoyment. The Tea Ceremony, or Sado, is a ritual influenced by Zen Buddhism in which green tea is ceremonially prepared and served in a tranquil setting. Everything from the cleaning of the specific utensils to the formal clothing worn to the sounds and smells of the room must be followed precisely in a tea ceremony. There are many steps and rules involved, and since a tea practitioner must know not only about tea but about other customs like calligraphy, flower arranging, ceramics and incense as well, it often takes years to learn the art.

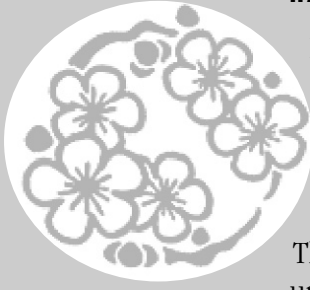
## SUMO

Sumo is a competitive Japanese sport in which two wrestlers face off in a circular ring. The sport of Sumo has been a part of Japanese culture at least since the 16th century and maybe as early as the eighth century. Modern Sumo involves professional wrestlers who live their lives in a very controlled manner. They must grow their hair long and wear it in a top knot on their head. Wrestlers must also wear traditional Japanese clothing when in public. Former wrestlers are the only men allowed to train new participants, and in this training a very strict daily schedule is followed.



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*peace*

## HAIKU



Haiku is a mode of Japanese poetry consisting of a pattern of five-seven-five syllable lines. Traditional haiku will center on nature, seasons or people, though modern haiku can be about any subject. An example of a haiku is:

The stars are shining.  
They will shimmer and they'll glow  
until the sun shines.



## SUSHI

If you lived in Japan you would often eat sushi. In Japanese cuisine, sushi is a food made with vinegared rice combined with various types of toppings or fillings. Sushi can include meat, seafood, vegetables or egg and may be cooked or raw. There are many different types of sushi. Some sushi is served rolled in *nori* (seaweed) and is called *maki* (rolls). Sushi with toppings laid onto clumps of rice is called *nigiri* and *chirashi-zushi* is made with toppings served over a bowl of rice.

## GEISHA

Geisha are skilled Japanese entertainers who exhibit traditional arts of music, dance and storytelling. Young women who wish to become geisha may begin their training after middle school and during their apprenticeship, live in traditional geisha houses. After years of studying traditional music, dance, flower arranging, tea ceremony, calligraphy, literature and poetry, geisha are then hired to perform at parties or events. In public, geisha must wear traditional kimono and the recognizable makeup with white base, red lips and black and red accents around the eyes.



## ORIGAMI

The Japanese art of Origami is now practiced all over the world. The goal of origami is to produce a specific shape using only a small number of different folds. Most origami begins with a sheet of colorful square paper, and proceeds with folding a design without tearing or cutting the original sheet. The crane is one of the most popular and famous origami designs because of the legend suggesting that anyone who folds 1000 cranes will be granted their heart's desire.

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peace



# Earth Matters

After the atomic bomb was dropped during World War II, Sadako and her family experienced first-hand the destruction to the environment. Not only did the bomb destroy the city and its surroundings, it also left a poison scar on the land that would hurt people for years to come. In many cases, people do things they think will be good for the world, without knowing or caring about the terrible impact it may have on our environment. Oil spills, global warming, water pollution—all of these are issues which come about because we are careless with our earth.

In the space below, write down three things that you have noticed are harming our environment. In the next box, write three real solutions you believe we can use to fix these problems. With your teacher, list your problems and solutions, as well as those of your classmates, on the board. Take a vote in class and choose which three ideas you want to focus on. Now, with your teacher, write one letter from the entire class addressing your environmental concerns. Tell what you have noticed in the environment and what you think can be done to help. Pass around a second sheet of paper and let everyone sign your letter.

Visit the website of the United Nations Environment Program ([www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org)) to find out who else is concerned. Click on the link “Around the World” and you will be given the name and address of a government leader in each country to whom you can voice your concerns and opinions. Choose as many leaders as you want and send your letter. Let them know that you will do your part to help our environment, and you hope they will continue to do the same.

**Problem:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**My idea for a solution:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Number Crunch

In *A Thousand Cranes*, Sadako and her best friend, Kenji, are very excited to run the Hiroshima city-wide races. Races and other track and field events have been very popular forms of exercise and competition since the early days of the Olympic games. Many cities around the world hold races each year that draw thousands of competitors. Though in the United States we often measure distances in inches, feet or miles, in much of the world distance is measured on the metric system in centimeters, meters and kilometers. Track and field races are also usually measured in metric units.

1. Using the conversion chart provided, calculate the distance of these popular races in miles.

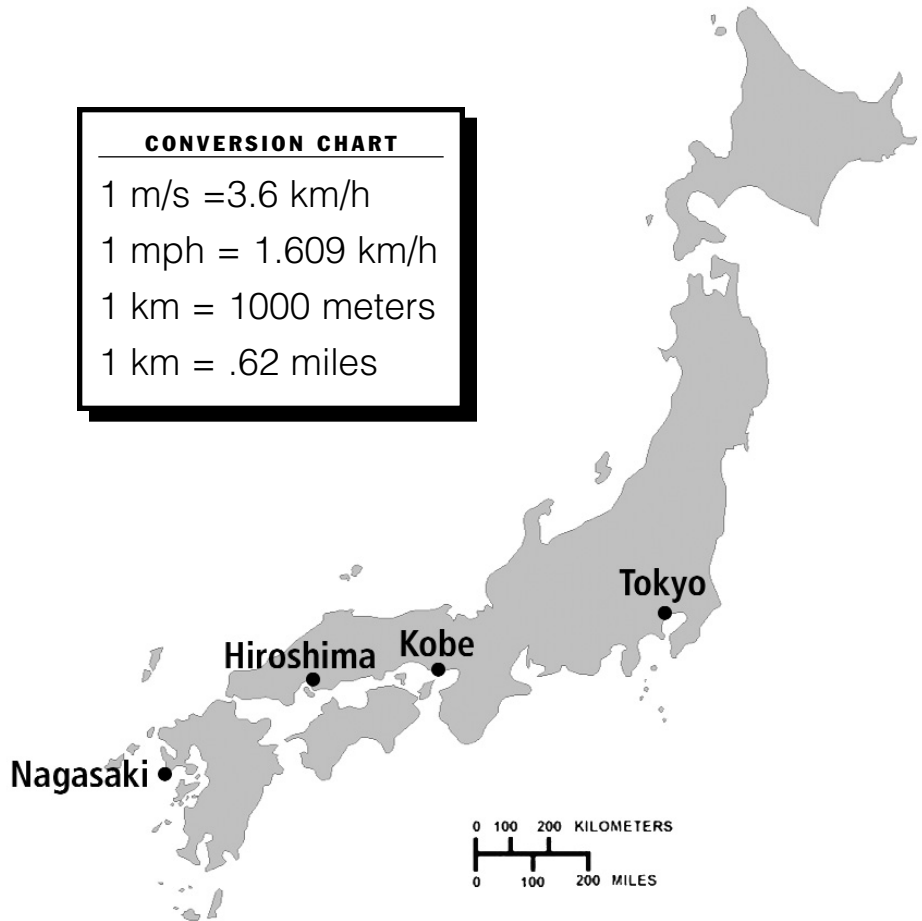
1. 100 meter dash \_\_\_\_\_
2. 800 meter middle distance \_\_\_\_\_
3. 10,000 meter marathon \_\_\_\_\_

2. In addition to the distance of a race, the speed of the runners can be measured in different ways. Below are the running speeds of several different racers. Can you calculate their speeds in meters per second and kilometers per hour?

	<b>MPS</b>	<b>KPH</b>
1. human walking 3 mph	_____	_____
2. human running 10 mph	_____	_____
3. cheetah running 68 mph	_____	_____
4. peregrine falcon 200 mph	_____	_____
5. snail 0.03 mph	_____	_____

**CONVERSION CHART**

1 m/s = 3.6 km/h  
 1 mph = 1.609 km/h  
 1 km = 1000 meters  
 1 km = .62 miles



II Sadako and Kenji are preparing for a race in their hometown of Hiroshima, but we don't know how long the race is. Using the map of Japan, measure the distance in miles between these cities. If Sadako ran the average human speed of 10 miles per hour, how long would it take her to finish these races?

1. Hiroshima to Nagasaki \_\_\_\_\_
2. Hiroshima to Tokyo \_\_\_\_\_
3. Hiroshima to Kobe \_\_\_\_\_

The world record holder for the fastest human running time is US Olympian Michael Johnson whose fastest speed has been clocked at 10.35 meters per second. If Sadako could run as fast as Michael, how long would it take her to finish these races?

1. Hiroshima to Nagasaki \_\_\_\_\_
2. Hiroshima to Tokyo \_\_\_\_\_
3. Hiroshima to Kobe \_\_\_\_\_

Please feel free to adapt these materials to suit your classroom needs and save them for future use. The activities in this unit address the following Missouri Knowledge Standards and Illinois Learning Standards

MO: CA1, CA2, CA3, CA4, MA1, MA2, SC4, SC8, SS5, SS6, SS7

IL: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 13, 27



# Can U Haiku?

Now that you know about Japanese culture and traditions, try one yourself! On the lines below write a haiku of your own. It can be about nature, your friends, your family—whatever you want. Decorate the area around your poem and cut on the dotted line. You can hang your haiku in your room at home, or give it as a gift to someone you care about. Be sure to explain what a haiku is!

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



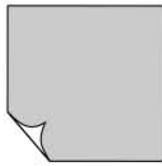
平和  
*peace*

# Practice Peace

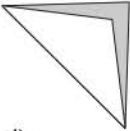


You've heard the Japanese legend that if you fold 1000 paper cranes you will be granted a wish. Sadako's classmates folded cranes in a wish for peace. What wish can you think of that could help someone else? Along with your classmates, use the directions here to fold as many paper cranes as you can. You can display your cranes in your school and use them to tell everyone about Sadako's wish for peace. You could also sell your cranes to your friends and family and before you know it, you'll have enough money to help make a new wish come true. Pool the money you earn with the rest of your class and decide on a way to spend it together. Maybe you will donate it to a charity you like, use it to buy something for your school or send it to someone who really needs a wish.

Begin with a **square** piece of paper — ideally one side colored and the other plain. Place the colored side face up on the table. In all diagrams, the shaded part represents the colored side.

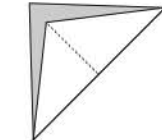


**1** Fold diagonally to form a triangle. Be sure the points line up. Make all creases very sharp. You can even use your thumbnail.

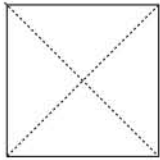


Unfold the paper. (important!)

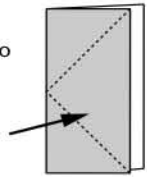
**2** Now fold the paper diagonally in the *opposite* direction, forming a new triangle.



Unfold the paper and turn it over so the white side is up. The dotted lines in the diagram are creases you have already made.

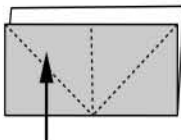


**3** Fold the paper in half to the "east" to form a rectangle.

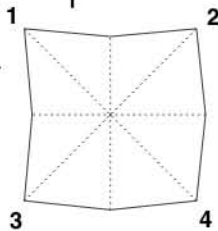


Unfold the paper.

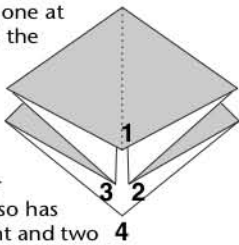
**4** Fold the paper in half to the "north" to form a new rectangle.



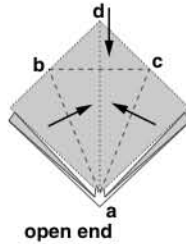
Unfold the rectangle, but don't flatten it out. Your paper will have the creases shown by the dotted lines in the figure on the right.



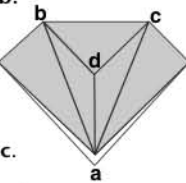
**5** Bring all four corners of the paper together, one at a time. This will fold the paper into the flat square shown on the right. This square has an open end where all four corners of the paper come together. It also has two flaps on the right and two flaps on the left.



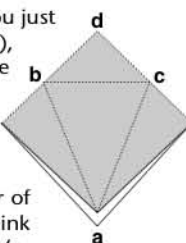
**6** Lift the **upper right** flap, and fold in the direction of the arrow. Crease along line a-c.



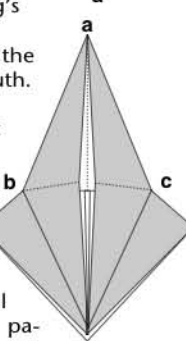
**7** Lift the **upper left** flap and fold in the direction of the arrow. Crease along the line a-b.



**8** Lift the paper at point d (in the upper right diagram) and fold down the triangle bdc. Crease along the line b-c.

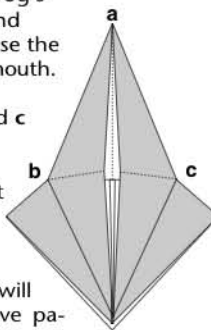


Undo the three folds you just made (steps 6, 7, and 8), and your paper will have the crease lines shown on the right.



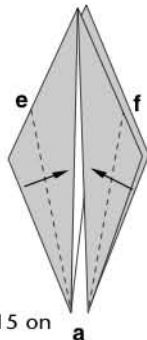
**9** Lift just the top layer of the paper at point a. Think of this as opening a frog's mouth. Open it up and back to line b-c. Crease the line b-c **inside** frog's mouth.

Press on points b and c to reverse the folds along lines a-b and a-c. The trick is to get the paper to lie flat in the long diamond shape shown on the right. At first it will seem impossible. Have patience.



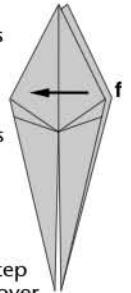
**10 to 13** Turn the paper over. Repeat Steps 6 to 9 on this side. When you have finished, your paper will look like the diamond below with two "legs" at the bottom.

**14 & 15** Taper the diamond at its legs by folding the **top** layer of each side in the direction of the arrows along lines a-f and a-e so that they meet at the center line.



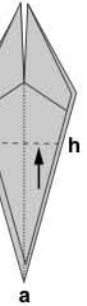
**16 & 17** Flip the paper over. Repeat steps 14 and 15 on this side to complete the tapering of the two legs.

**18** The figure on the right has two skinny legs. Lift the **upper** flap at point f (be sure it's just the upper flap), and fold it over in the direction of the arrow — as if turning the page of a book. This is called a "book fold".



Flip the entire figure over.

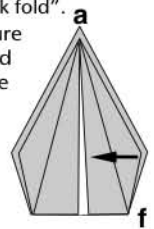
**19** Repeat this "book fold" (step 18) on this side. Be sure to fold over only the **top** "page".



**20** The figure on the right looks like a fox with two pointy ears at the top and a pointy nose at the bottom. Open the **upper** layer of the fox's mouth at point a, and crease it along line g-h so that fox's nose touches the top of the fox's ears.

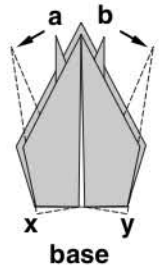
**21** Turn the figure over. Repeat step 20 on this side so that all four points touch.

**22** Now for another "book fold". Lift the **top** layer of the figure on the right (at point f), and fold it in the direction of the arrow.

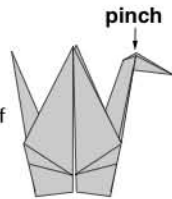


**23** Flip the entire figure over. Repeat the "book fold" (step 22) on this side.

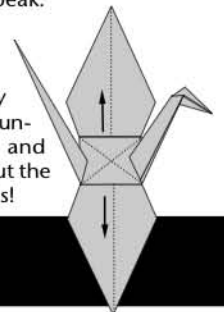
**24 & 25** There are two points, a and b, below the upper flap. Pull out each one, in the direction of the arrows, as far as the dotted lines. Press down along the base (at points x and y) to make them stay in place.



**26** Take the end of one of the points, and bend it down to make the head of the crane. Using your thumbnail, reverse the crease in the head, and pinch it to form the beak. The other point becomes the tail.

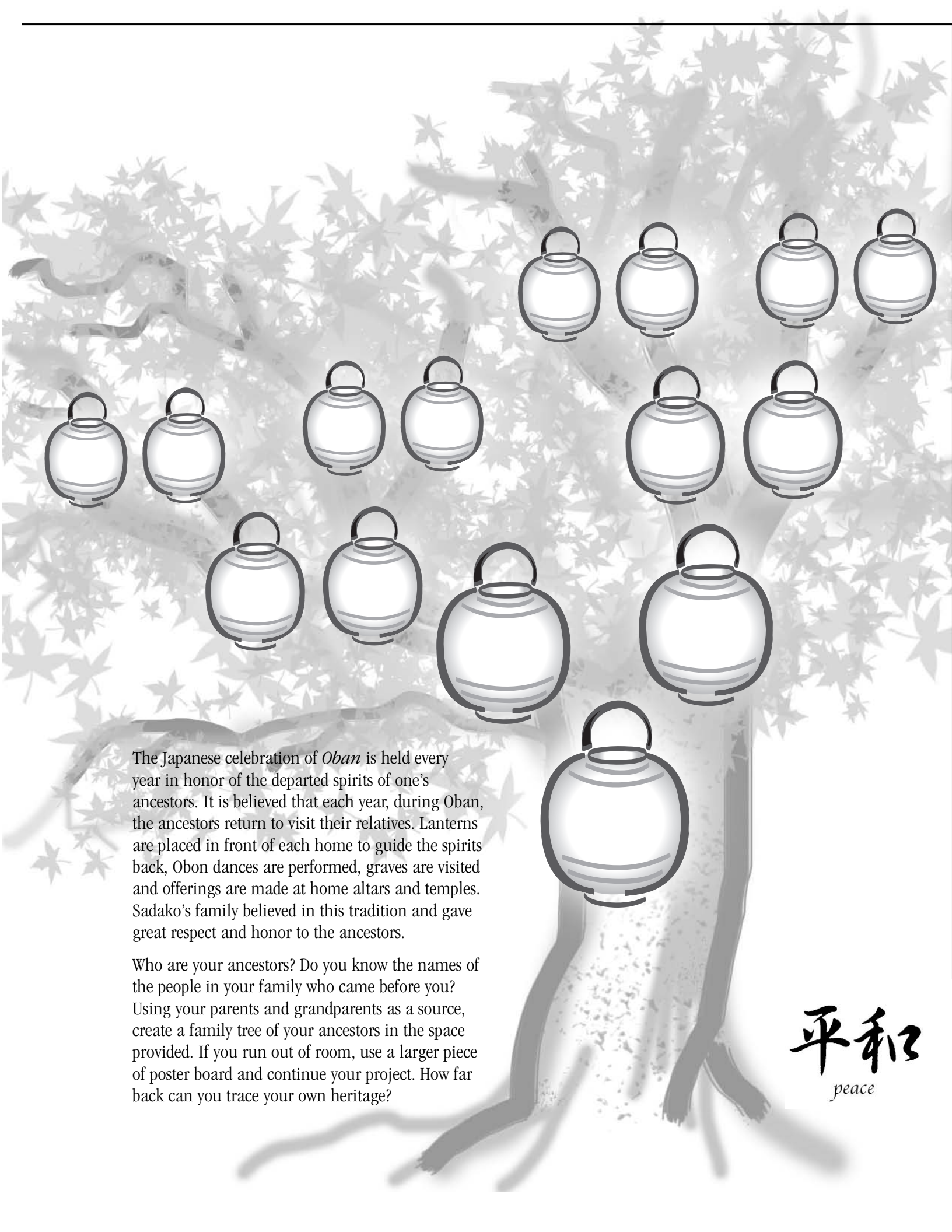


Open the body by blowing into the hole underneath the crane, and then gently pulling out the wings. And there it is!



**"I will write 'peace' on your wings, and you will fly all over the world."**

SADAKO SASAKI



The Japanese celebration of *Oban* is held every year in honor of the departed spirits of one's ancestors. It is believed that each year, during Oban, the ancestors return to visit their relatives. Lanterns are placed in front of each home to guide the spirits back, Obon dances are performed, graves are visited and offerings are made at home altars and temples. Sadako's family believed in this tradition and gave great respect and honor to the ancestors.

Who are your ancestors? Do you know the names of the people in your family who came before you? Using your parents and grandparents as a source, create a family tree of your ancestors in the space provided. If you run out of room, use a larger piece of poster board and continue your project. How far back can you trace your own heritage?

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