



Crafts Around the World Series

Asia: Japanese Origami 4-H Clover

Enjoy learning how to make simple crafts from six of the seven continents: **Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia, North America, and South America.**

Purpose:

Introduce youth to some simple cultural traditional crafts from around the world. Journey around the continents, learning how to make simple crafts and having fun creating.

Objectives:

- ◇ Learn the cultural history and origins of the craft.
- ◇ Inspire global exploration.
- ◇ Develop fine motor skills in paper folding.
- ◇ Increase cultural awareness and creativity.

Education Standards:

- ◇ Understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture.
- ◇ Apply geometric methods to solve design problems.

Experiential Learning:

- ◇ Create a new shape by folding paper.

Encourage thought and discussion with these questions: What happened? What's important? So what? Now what?

Audience: Grades K -12



Photo courtesy of
Janis Brinn, 2020

CONTINENT: ASIA

Asia is the largest of the world's continents. It is home to 48 countries with three of them (Russia, Kazakhstan, and Turkey) having part of their land in Europe. Some areas of the world combine Asia and Europe into one continent called Eurasia.

COUNTRY: JAPAN

Japan is an island country in the Pacific Ocean. Labo is a family-based Japanese youth organization like 4-H in the United States. Labo Party clubs are led and organized by Labo tutors with Japanese youth ages 3 through 18. Both 4-H and Labo share the goal of positive youth development (Brinn, 2015).

LESSON: ORIGAMI: 4-H CLOVER

Origami (*ori* meaning "folding" and *kami* meaning "paper") is the art of paper folding. There is evidence that folded paper creations first appeared as part of Shintō rituals and gifts exchanged among Japanese nobility 1,000 years ago (Powell, 2018). However, the exact history of origami is hard to pinpoint (Koshiro, 2018).

4-H is the nation's largest youth development organization. The official 4-H emblem is a green four-leaf clover with a white "H" on each leaf standing for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.

ORIGAMI: 4-H CLOVER

TIME: 30-45 minutes or multiple days depending upon the interest to learn more.

MATERIALS:

- ◇ Origami paper (printing paper, gift wrapping paper, newspaper, packing paper, and others)
- ◇ Scissors
- ◇ Clear tape
- ◇ Markers
- ◇ Samples (optional)
- ◇ Instruction sheets, origami books (optional)

Note: When working with young participants, use larger pieces of paper and practice folding simple patterns such as a paper airplane, bunny, or dog prior to making a 4-H clover.

INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEO LINK:

View this instructional video to guide you in creating your origami clovers:

https://mediaspace.msu.edu/media/Michigan-State-University-Extension-4-H-Grab-N-Go-Arts-Crafts-Fold-Origami-Clovers/1_rzws8h71

PROCEDURE: How to make an origami 4-H clover

1. Prepare the paper first by cutting it into a square. Fold the square in half, horizontally. Then unfold it, folding in half vertically, then unfold it. Then take each corner and fold to make a triangle. Unfold it to make lines, which will help you make your clover.
2. Fold the four corners of origami paper into the center. The edges of the paper should meet on the lines and the points of corners should meet at the center.
3. Flip it over and fold four corners into the center again. Flip it over again and do the same thing for a third time. Bring the corners into the center one last time.
4. Flip it over and open the four boxes and push them down so that each small box is exposed out of the center square. It now is in the shape of a square cross.
5. Cut the corners of the exposed boxes, and take a little notch out of the center of each box.
6. Using a marker, put an “H” in the formed hearts of the clover. You can add a little tape to keep it together if you wish.

Art and Science — Be creative with your paper folding. Experiment with different types of paper. Try different types of origami folding techniques, try different folding materials such as dollar bills, towels, and napkins. Ask questions and make discoveries!

Research how origami is being applied in science and technology with satellite designs, heart stents, and even self-assembling robots.

Reflection Questions: What surprised you and why? When were you the most creative, and why do you think that is? What made you curious today? What can you do with what you learned today?

REFERENCES:

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Powell, L. (2018, April 10). Last chance to see it: Origami art reaches a whole new level in this Dayton exhibit. *Dayton Daily News*. <https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/local/sneak-peek-origami-art-reaches-whole-new-level-this-dayton-exhibit/rksNAPxBnFg1cwjivHxm4N/>

ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

The activity was developed by Michigan State University Extension Educator Janis Brinn in 2020, adapted in part from “How to Make Origami 4-H Clover” from Japan LABO Tutor Noriko Kato and States’ 4-H International Exchange Programs. It was updated in 2021.