

JOURNEY TO JAPAN

Origami Folding

"Paper folding" is popular in Japan for early childhood development.

Basic Folding - Use the large sheets to practice simple folds. The child can try to line up sides and corners.

Advanced Folding - Help the child master some of the more complicated folds included in the Origami book.

Following Directions - Using the book, you can explain each step for a simple design. Older children can try to use the book alone, following instructions independently. An older child can work on communication by modeling or explaining each step to a younger child.

Fractions - Use paper folding to explain fractions: concepts like half and quarter. The child can also cut pieces of paper into halves, quarters, etc.

Paper Making

Paper was invented by the Chinese and perfected in Japan.

Tissue Paper - Make colorful paper with designs using pieces of tissue paper. This method is easier for younger children and allows them to be creative. However, note that this paper will not be as strong as the recycled paper.

Paper Pulp - Learn how paper is made and recycled. You can use scrap paper at home and a blender. If you do not have a blender, we provided some ready to use pulp.

[See instructions and videos for more explanation]

Sushi Transfer

Sushi is a favorite Japanese meal, made from rice, fish, and other food.

Design a Headband - The "hachimaki" (or headband) is usually made of red or white cloth. It is worn as a symbol of perseverance, effort, and courage. It usually has the red dot (rising sun) and inspirational slogans.

Paper Cutting - Use printables from the resources page to practice cutting with the scissors.

Cut Sushi Felt - Older children can use the template from the resources page to cut out the felt pieces to make sushi.

Assemble Sushi - Use the felt pieces to assemble your sushi. There are two different types. One is simple (laying felt on the cotton, and the other is more advanced (requiring rolling).

Transfer Sushi - Use the chopsticks and helper to transfer the sushi from one plate to another. You can use your homemade paper circles as plates.

Advanced Chopsticks - Once children master using chopsticks with the helper, they can learn to use them without it.

Calligraphy Set

The art of producing decorative handwriting with a pen or brush.

Paint With Water - Use only water and the calligraphy brush. Avoid touching the Magic Board and soaking it. Oil from hands and excess water will damage it over time.

Japanese Calligraphy - Duplicate symbols on the chart.

Experiments - How long does it take to dry? Ask the child what will happen with more or less water.

Bonsai Tree & Japan

Bonsai is the art of growing a tree or shrub to keep it artificially small.

Planting - The seeds are "primed" rosemary, which are more reliable and quicker to germinate than normal rosemary seeds; however, it can still take 14 to 21 days.

Put one soil tablet in the container. Add water slowly so the soil is not overly saturated. Sow 2 to 3 seeds on the surface and gently press them into the soil. Since light is required for germination, cover the seeds with very little soil.

Keep the soil moist, but not soaking wet, until germination occurs. If multiple sprouts grow, select only one to keep.

Care for the Tree - The bonsai must get plenty of sun. Water it once a week (when the soil on top feels dry). Your tree does not like too much or too little water. After the bonsai has sprouted and is strong, you can cover the soil around it with pebbles for decoration.

Bonsai Pruning - The goal of pruning is to shape the bonsai as it grows, so that it resembles a small tree. The bonsai can be pruned after it begins to develop several branches. Typically, bottom branches are removed so the plant has a large, developed trunk. Vertical growing branches are also removed to keep it small.

Learn about Japan - Some basic information is provided on the country card. An authentic silk fan and the beautiful Japanese painting are included to spark an interest in Japanese culture. We hope that your child will want to learn more about Japan and other cultures.