

Madama Butterfly

Elementary School Study Guide

Written by Jennifer Trochez-MacLean



Music by Giacomo Puccini
Text by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica

Premiered on May 1, 1886 in Vienna, Austria

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MADAMA BUTTERFLY AND PUCCINI (1858 - 1924)

Born into a family of professional musicians and composers, Puccini was the fifth generation of church composers and organists at Lucca's Cathedral in San Martino. At six years old, when his father died, Puccini became the new choir master and organist at San Martino Church. Puccini was expected to follow in the footsteps of his father and continue a long family tradition, and he did until one night in 1876. That night Puccini and his friend traveled to the city of Pisa to see Verdi's *Aida*, and, from that point on, Puccini knew his passion was opera.

In his operas, Puccini's life-long fascination with women is apparent. Of his twelve operas, eight are named for their heroines and eight of his major female characters die tragically as a result of their undying love for a naïve or unscrupulous man. *Madama Butterfly* would be no exception. It is the tragic story of little Butterfly that would move Puccini to create one of his most famous operas, epitomizing the fascination he had for women.

During the summer of 1900 Puccini was in London to oversee the Covent Garden premiere of *Tosca*. At his friends' suggestion, Puccini attended a performance of *Madame Butterfly*, a one-act melodrama written by David Belasco, a successful American playwright and producer, based on a novella written by American writer-journalist, John Luther Long (*Century Magazine*, January 1898). Puccini was greatly moved by the tragic story of the little geisha, Cio-Cio-San, particularly by her night-long vigil awaiting her husband Pinkerton's return. The scene was a wordless fourteen minutes accompanied only by lighting effects. The story of Cio-Cio-San, set in the exotic location of Japan, provided Puccini inspiration for his next opera.

Following the play's performance, Puccini supposedly obtained from Belasco verbal permission for the rights to set *Madame Butterfly* as an opera, although it took many months for written permission to come through. During this time, Giuseppe Giacosi and Luigi Illica acquired Long's story and translated it into Italian to begin work.

For the music, Puccini painstakingly incorporated oriental flavors into his score. Several of the melodies he used were authentic Japanese folk songs. He also constructed original tunes for the opera based on the five-note scale (the pentatonic scale) used in Japanese music but adapted for his purposes into his own style. This was the first time Puccini extensively used the whole-tone scale and the harmonies derived from it. Puccini also used voices as instruments in the Humming Chorus heard during Butterfly's vigil, which was innovative. Once composed, Puccini knew he had gold with *Madama Butterfly*.

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Breaking tradition, Puccini set the work into two acts. The first act was the wedding between Cio-Cio-San and Pinkerton and it lasted about an hour; the second act began three years after Pinkerton's departure. This act lasted almost an hour and a half. Despite his librettists expressing concern that the public was not used to acts lasting no more than forty minutes, Puccini did not alter his opera.

Pleased with his opera and cast, Puccini felt the stage was set for a successful premiere. Puccini had an unaccustomed confidence in his work and kept this project under a veil of secrecy. There were no previews of the libretto to the press, nor were there the customary invitations to the final rehearsal. The singers were not even allowed to take the scores out of the theatre, which meant they had to study their roles on site.

Puccini was confident that with his casting, the score, and the singers, his audience would be thrilled and critics would be amazed. However, the premiere turned out to be one of the greatest disasters of operatic history. The audience, though at first apathetic, soon became hostile and interrupted the performance with laughter, shouts, heckling and catcalling.

Although members of the press and many in attendance recognized that the evening's hostility was borne out of envy of Puccini's unparalleled standing, Puccini was devastated and withdrew his opera, paying back the advance he had been paid. Both Puccini and *Madama Butterfly* fell victim to a well-organized attempt to sabotage his career.

Convinced that *Madama Butterfly* was one of his best works to date, Puccini began to make minimal revisions to his opera. Certain scenes were tightened up, such as the wedding scene in the first act. Puccini also added an intermission in the second act, following a request originally made by his librettists to make *Madama Butterfly* a three-act opera. Additionally, an aria for Pinkerton, *Addio, fiorito asil*, was added to the opera. The final encounter between Madama Butterfly and Kate, Pinkerton's American wife, was also reworked.

On May 28, 1904, the revised opera was performed at Brescia, and it was a complete success with seven encores and thirty-two curtain calls. Puccini's determination and faith in *Madama Butterfly* was vindicated. With this performance, the opera began its long-standing run of international fame and success.

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Historical Context and the Evolution of Butterfly

During the Victorian era, it was common practice for gentlemen and ladies of leisure to go on adventurous travels around the world. Because many of these trips were documented with letters, articles and journals, personal interpretations created exotic images for those who were back home. This "opening" up of the world became the impetus for novels, plays, ballets and operettas to be set in foreign and exotic locations, such as Japan.

One of the last countries to be opened to the West was Japan, when Commodore Perry signed his treaty, the Convention of Kanagawa, with Japan in 1854. Japan quickly became a must-see destination for travelers. With the help of the journalist and adventurer Lafcadio Hearn's writings (Japan, an Attempt at an Interpretation, 1904) Japan also became known as a land of aesthetic accomplishment with charming and graceful people and complacent women.

By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, "Japonisme" became the latest trend in Europe. All things Japanese, such as gardens and interior design, were in vogue. Japan's exotic appeal contributed to the popular literature, art and fashion of the time. The Arts and Crafts movement in architecture, for example, drew from Japanese aesthetics, while artists and writers, such as William Butler Yeats, Ezra Pound, Whistler and Van Gogh, drew inspiration from Japanese art and culture.

Certain Japanese customs such as mixed-bathing and Geisha houses also dovetailed into stories of Western man conquering Japanese girl. In the late 1800s, it was the common practice in Japanese treaty ports for girls to be hired or sold to city traders for work as temporary wives, a practice that would bring Cio-cio-san and Pinkerton together in *Madama Butterfly*. Often times, these girls were from rural communities, and there was no romance in this business transaction. Foreign men would look over the girls who were to be temporary wives, make a selection, and negotiate a price. Once the "husband" left for home, the girl was available for the next "marriage."

The common practice of employing temporary wives in Japan contributed to the setting of Madame Chrysantheme (written in 1887 by Pierre Loti, nom de plume for Julien Viaud). In this novel, the main character is Loti, a naval officer who has wants to get a tattoo and find a temporary Japanese wife during his stay in Japan. Loti successfully acquires both his tattoo and O-kiku, Madame Chrysantheme. And when it is time for him to leave Japan, O-kiku cries and begs him to not leave, which he must. However, there is no tragic ending in this story. Madame Chrysantheme is seen counting her money and waiting for her next "husband" when Loti returns to the house for a forgotten object.

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Based on Madame Chrysantheme, John Luther Long's short story Madame Butterfly (1898) incorporates a failed attempt at suicide. In Long's short story, Butterfly falls in love with Pinkerton. Her love for Pinkerton drives her to convert to Christianity and to banish her relatives from her life. When it is time for Pinkerton to leave, he promises, untruly, to return to her when he comes back to Nagasaki. Pinkerton does eventually return, but with Adelaide, his American wife, who shares his disdain for the Japanese. In Long's story, Pinkerton never bothers to see Butterfly. Adelaide, however, does visit Butterfly after learning that she has had a son by Pinkerton. But Adelaide's visit is solely motivated by the wish to take Butterfly's son away from her.

On March 5, 1900, David Belasco premiered his play *Madame Butterfly*, which overall stayed true to Long's original story. Belasco's one act play begins after Pinkerton has been gone from Butterfly for two years, and ends even more tragically with the suicide of Butterfly, and a remorseful Pinkerton embracing Butterfly as she dies. Despite taking some theatrical risks in his play, *Madame Butterfly* scored with great public success.

Later that year, at its London premier, Puccini was moved by the play despite not understanding the dialogue. Puccini knew that he wanted to create an opera of the story and rushed backstage to meet Belasco and receive his verbal permission to set *Madame Butterfly* as an opera.

Working with his librettists, Illica and Giocosa, Puccini made changes to the story of *Madame Butterfly*. Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* begins with Pinkerton's arrival in Japan where he is setting up house with Cio-Cio-San. Pinkerton, true to Belasco's version, is rude, patronizing and coarse, but an extended aria shows a softer side of Pinkerton who is remorseful for having to leave Butterfly.

Between its premier in 1904 and its first production in Paris, many of Pinkerton's slurs against the Japanese and their culture were removed, making Pinkerton a more likeable character. Kate also was softened: Instead of confronting Butterfly, she becomes a more sympathetic and compassionate lady who waits outside in the garden.

The success of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* has made it a well-known staple in opera houses around the world. *Madama Butterfly* is commonly interpreted to reflect current issues and political statements, whether on stage or on film.

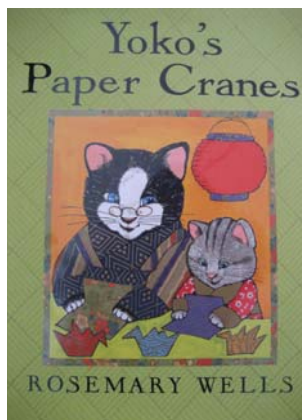
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<http://www.balletmet.org>, Story Origins

Butterfly



BUILDING BACKGROUND:

YOKO'S PAPER CRANES BY ROSEMARY WELLS

Yoko's Paper Cranes
Written by Rosemary Wells

Hyperion Books for Children, 2001
ISBN 0-7868-0737-7 (hc) • ISBN 0-7868-2602-9 (lib. ed.)

About The Story

A little kitten, named Yoko, has a special relationship with her Obaasan and her Ojiisan (her grandmother and grandfather) who live in Japan.

While growing up, Yoko spends time with Obaasan, her grandmother, feeding the cranes in her garden. This is when Yoko learns that the cranes leave for the winter. Yoko does not want the cranes to leave but Obaasan reminds Yoko that the cranes come back to the garden every year. Her grandfather, Ojiisan, then teaches her how to fold paper into cranes, introducing Yoko to the art of origami.

When Yoko is older, her parents decide to sail to America. During their time apart, Yoko never forgets her grandparents. Every week Yoko and her family receive a letter from Obaasan and Ojiisan, who then in turn write back.

Knowing that her Obaasan's birthday was coming up during the winter, Yoko decides to make her a birthday present. Yoko asks her mother for beautiful paper and begins to fold the paper into cranes as taught by Ojiisan. When she is done, she places her cranes and a homemade birthday card into a package and sends it to Japan.

Obaasan opens her package to find the paper cranes made by Yoko with her birthday wishes and the promise that she too will one day return to Japan like the cranes.

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Connections to *Madama Butterfly*

The opera of *Madama Butterfly* takes place in a villa on the outskirts of Nagasaki, Japan. Reading the story of Yoko and using the illustrations can serve as an introduction to Japan that will give students a sense of the time and setting of Puccini's opera, which draws heavily from Japanese culture. Students can be taught about the Japanese art form of origami and introduced to the colors and patterns found in their textiles and prints. By reading and discussing this story, students will begin to recognize similarities and differences between their culture and Japanese culture. Family ties and the importance of family is also introduced in the story of Yoko and her grandparents, which is another set of themes found in *Madama Butterfly*, e.g. Cio-cio San's decision between her family and her love for the American Pinkerton.

Learning About Japan

Origami and Paper Cranes:

Students in Japan are taught the basic concepts of geometry by the example of origami. Origami is an ancient Japanese art practiced since the 700s. The word itself means "folded paper." The art form involves folding paper into animals and objects without cutting the paper itself. It is believed that by not cutting the paper the spirit of the object being made is preserved. Because of this, most origami figures can be made without the use of scissors, tape or glue.

The best known origami shape is the crane. In Japan the crane is a symbol of long life. It is a Japanese belief that making a thousand origami cranes held together by string (known as senbazuru which means one thousand cranes) will help make your most special wish come true.

The Kimono Dress:

Today in Japan the kimono is worn for special ceremonies such as weddings. There are many different kinds of ceremonial kimono. A kimono made of black silk that has five family crests is the traditional ceremonial kimono for married women. Unmarried women wear a kimono with sleeves that are longer than a regular kimono. Older women wear kimono that are dark in color and have small patterns, while young girls wear bright colors and big patterns. Ceremonial kimono are made of silk and are dyed or embroidered with decorations. Today, however, kimono are made with synthetic materials.

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As You Read

As you read the story, ask the students when they think this story is taking place. Does this story take place in a modern time or an earlier time? Ask students to find evidence in the story that supports what they think. Do the illustrations show evidence of modern conveniences such as televisions, cars, microwaves, etc.?

Students can also be guided in a conversation on the importance of family. Questions can focus on the relationship between Yoko and her grandparents, as well as on the role Yoko's grandparents play in teaching her about tradition.

Using the Illustrations

Ask students to look at the illustrations for information about colors and patterns found in Japanese prints. Ask students to find recurring themes in the prints, and then have them explain their significance. Many of the borders and prints are inspired by prints and colors found in traditional Japanese paper. Ask students how the illustrations of this book are different from other children picture books with which they may be familiar.

The inside of the book cover also has a very colorful and whimsical map that shows where Japan is in relation to the United States of America and other countries. This may be a good tool to help students place the setting of this story.

After You Read

Writing Prompt:

Ask students to think about and explain why family is important to them. Encourage students to write about special traditions that they have learned from their family or special activities that their family does. Here's an example of a prompt you might use: "My family is important to me. . ."

When they are done writing, you may ask students to share with others what they have written.

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Making Paper Cranes:

Yoko learns from Ojisan how to make paper cranes following the tradition of origami. Have students learn how to do the same, while reinforcing basic concepts in geometry. A list of materials needed for the activity follows, followed by instructions.

Materials:

- origami paper, one sheet per student (origami paper can be purchased at most craft or stationary stores, or at Japanese grocery markets; gift-wrap pre-cut into squares may also be used)
- "How to Fold a Paper Crane" instruction sheet, downloaded from The Sadako Project (<http://www.sadako.com>). This instruction sheet is included in the student handouts section.
- If you would like to string the cranes your students have made, you will need string, a long needle and plastic straws or coffee stirrers cut into 1/4" pieces.

Instructions:

Have students use the "How to Fold a Paper Crane" instruction sheet to make their own paper crane. For younger students, or students who may have difficulties reading the instruction sheet, it is strongly recommended that adults helping students should make a crane themselves prior to working with the students.

To string the cranes, attach string to a long needle. Then push the needle through the hole in the bottom of each crane, bringing the needle out through the point in the center of the crane's back. Make sure to tie a knot at the end of the string. Next, string a piece of plastic straw or coffee stirrer between the first crane and the next. Repeat this process until you are done stringing the cranes; you may also want to tie a knot above the last crane.

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SETTING THE STAGE: CREATING A PERSONAL SYNOPSIS

Objectives of Engagement

- Students will work in cooperative groups to familiarize themselves with the synopsis of *Madama Butterfly*.
- Students will make a flap book for their personal synopsis of the opera that will demonstrate an understanding of the three acts in *Madama Butterfly*.

Suggested Number of Class Periods: 2

Class Period 1

In the first class period students will work in teams to become familiar with one of the three acts in the synopsis of *Madama Butterfly*, as well as prepare a presentation to share with the class. During the second class period, student groups will present to each the act that they have become the "experts" of to the other students. Using what they have learned from one another, students will then complete a flap book of the synopsis of *Madama Butterfly*.

Materials for Class Period 1

- Student copies of the synopsis of *Madama Butterfly*

Activity

1. Divide the students into three groups, one group per act. Each group will be responsible to work as a team to read their assigned act of *Madama Butterfly*. Each group will also be responsible to present their "act" to the other two groups.
2. Tell the students that their group will become an expert on one of the three acts in the story line of *Madama Butterfly*.
3. Assign each group one of the three acts in *Madama Butterfly*.
4. Hand each student in a group a copy of the act that their group will be responsible to read and understand. Each student should have a copy of the act he or she will be responsible to understand in order to create the group's presentation of that act .

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5. Allot time for each group to read and discuss their assigned act. Within the group students can partner up and "buddy read" the act, or the group can popcorn read the act. Choose the reading technique that you feel will enable all your students to understand what happens in their act and that works best with your class and style of classroom management.
6. Check in with all the groups as they are reading and discussing their act to ensure that all students have access to the information from the synopsis.
7. Allot time for the groups to plan and prepare their 5-10 minute presentation of what happens in their act. The groups should be encouraged to "act" out their assigned act or find another creative way to "teach" their classmates about what happens.

Class Period 2

Materials for Class Period 2

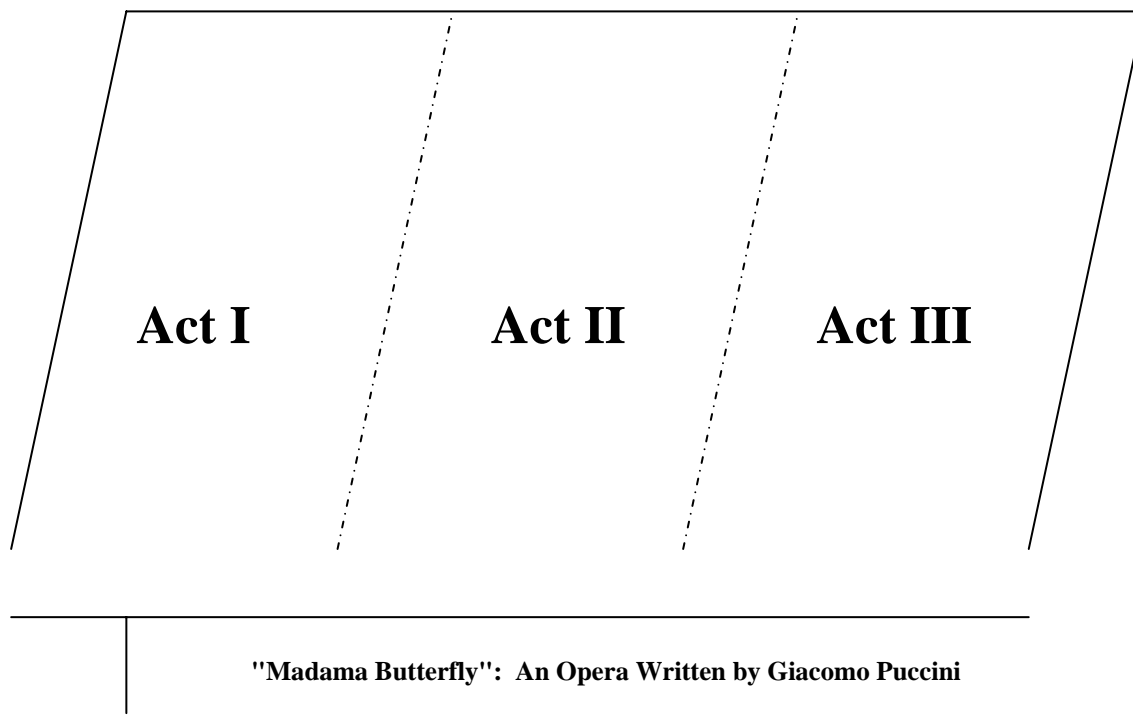
- Student copies of the synopsis of *Madama Butterfly*
- one 12 x 17 in. sheet of construction paper (preferably white, or other light color) per student
- scissors
- pencils, crayons, etc.
- three chart papers titled accordingly: Act I, Act II, Act III

Activity

1. Before the students begin their group presentations, have students make the flap books needed today by following steps 2 through 8.
2. Give each student one 12 x 17 in. sheet of construction paper.
3. Have students fold their sheet of paper, lengthwise (also known as a taco fold), leaving a two-inch tab uncovered along the top.
 4. Have students then fold the paper into thirds.
 5. Have students unfold their paper and then have students cut along the two inside fold lines (see diagram on next page).

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6. Once this is done, the students should be able to lift any one of the three flaps to reveal the corresponding area underneath it.
7. Have students label each flap accordingly: Act I, Act II, Act III. Have students write "Madama Butterfly": An Opera by Giacomo Puccini on the two-inch tab. (You may also want to create separate labels for each act and the title of the opera and hand these out for students to affix to their flaps and tab.)
8. Once the flap books are made, the group responsible for Act I can present to the other two groups.
9. After the presentation, have students volunteer a list of events that happened in Act I. A brief group discussion, guided by the teacher, following the presentation of Act I, may be necessary to ensure that students are introduced to the characters in that act and understand the sequence of events.

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Chart character names and the sequence of events under the chart paper labeled Act I. This will later serve as a reference for students to create their personal synopsis of Madama Butterfly.

MADAMA BUTTERFLY AND TROUBLE DOLLS WITH HAIKUS

Suggested Number of Class Periods: 2

In the first class period students will work independently to create their Madama Butterfly and Trouble Dolls. During the second class period, through a directed lesson and group work, students will learn about haiku poetry and will also write their own haiku. Once students have an understanding of the syllable patterns of a haiku, they will write haikus based on the characters or events of *Madama Butterfly*.

Class Period 1: Butterfly and Trouble Dolls

Materials for Class period 1

- Kimono Template sheet; one per student
- one paper towel tube per student; one end cut at about 4 inches: both pieces will be used to make the Madama Butterfly and Trouble doll
- two small Styrofoam balls per student
- origami paper or wrapping paper; pre-cut pieces of paper measuring 6" x16" (for Madama Butterfly) and 6" x 8" (for Trouble)
- assorted colors of 1/2" ribbon
- assorted small pieces of colored string or yarn
- scissors
- glue
- transparent tape
- markers
- one small shoebox per student
- paints
- construction paper

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Activity

1. Draw and color a face with eyes, nose, and mouth on each Styrofoam ball. One will become the head of the Madama Butterfly doll and the other will be the head of the Trouble doll.
2. For hair on the dolls, color and then glue on cotton balls to each Styrofoam ball. Set aside to dry.
3. Cut out the kimono template from the sheet. This template will be used to make the kimonos for both dolls.
4. Take a sheet of origami or wrapping paper about 6" x 16" and fold it lengthwise in half. Folded, this paper should now measure 6" x 8".
5. Place the top edge of the kimono template along the folded edge of the origami or wrapping paper. Then cut out along the side and bottom edges, remembering to adjust the length of the bottom to fit the tube.
6. Taking the t-shaped piece of folded paper, fold in half from top to bottom and then unfold.
7. On the top half of the "kimono," cut along the fold line to the center. Along the folded edge of the top of the "kimono" (this should be the crease line perpendicular to the cut made along the fold line to the center), cut about 3/4" from the center along each side of the crease line. By doing this an opening of about 1 1/2" will be created to accommodate for the diameter of the paper tube.
8. Make a small diagonal cut under each "arm" of the kimono.
9. Place the larger paper towel tube. The cut along the fold line to the center will become the front of the kimono. Glue or tape the origami or wrapping paper around the tube. Close the kimono at the front by overlapping the origami or wrapping paper and taping, or gluing, it into place.
10. Make the kimono sash, or obi, of the kimono, by gluing a piece of ribbon under the "arms." Then tie a piece of colored string or yarn to make a belt for the kimono.
11. Glue on the Styrofoam ball that is Madama Butterfly's head onto the body. Allow to dry.
12. To make the Trouble doll, use the 6" x 8" sheet of origami or wrapping paper and repeat steps 4 through 11.

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13. While the glue around the dolls' heads is drying, decorate the small shoe box. The dolls will be glued onto the lid of the box for display.

Once the Madama Butterfly haiku poem (day 2 activity) is completed, the poem can be added to the shoebox with the Madama Butterfly dolls.

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Class Period 2: Writing a Haiku

Materials for Class Period 2

- pencils
- lined paper for drafts of poems
- pieces of paper for final versions of poems
- glue

Activity

The Japanese have many ways to express their love of nature. Haiku poems are short poems often written about nature, containing a word that relates to a specific season.

Haikus are three-lined poems. The first and third lines of the poems contain five syllables, while the second line contains seven syllables. The following steps will help guide your students through the haiku-writing process.

1. As a directed lesson, have the class practice writing a haiku. To do this, first have your students pick a word that relates to a specific season such as sand, snow, blossoms, leaves, etc.
2. Now, on the chalk or dry erase board, write down the word, and use it as the title of your group's haiku. Explain to your students the pattern of syllables within the three lines in a haiku.
3. Have students work in groups to write their haiku. After 15 minutes, one student from each group can read aloud their group's haiku, as you write the haiku on the overhead for others to see.
4. Once the groups are done sharing their haiku, assign students to write their own haiku. Instead of the topic being nature, this haiku will focus on the story of *Madama Butterfly* and/or its characters, *Butterfly* and *Trouble*. Another possible topic for this haiku is an emotion evoked in an event in the story of *Madama Butterfly*.
5. Students can print their final version of their haiku on the pieces of paper set aside for this part of the activity. Once the final versions have been printed, they can be glued or affixed onto the decorated shoebox with the dolls.

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JUST FOR FUN: MADAMA BUTTERFLY WORD SEARCH

Students can practice learning the setting and character names from *Madama Butterfly* by completing the following word search. The solution to the puzzle is below. The unsolved word search is included in the student handout section.

C		I					I		P			B		
	O		R			K		I				U		
		M	G	O	U		N					T		
		O	M	Z	D	K			K			T		
	R		U	I	E	A			A		I	E		
O		S		R	S		M		T		N	R		
			T			S		A	E		I	F		
		O	J				A		Y		C	L		
	N			A				R			C	Y		E
					P				I		U			L
S	S	E	L	P	R	A	H	S		O	P			B
B	O	N	Z	O			N							U
														O
														R
			I	K	A	S	A	G	A	N				T

Word (Over, Down, Direction):

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BONZO (1, 12, E)
 BUTTERFLY (13, 1, S)
 COMMISSARIO (1, 1, SE)
 GORO (4, 3, SW)
 JAPAN (4, 8, SE)
 KATE (10, 4, S)

PINKERTON (10, 1, SW)
 PUCCINI (12, 11, N)
 SHARPLESS (9, 11, W)
 SUZUKI (3, 6, NE)
 TROUBLE (15, 15, N)
 YAMADORI (10, 8, NW)

STUDENT HANDOUTS: *MADAMA BUTTERFLY* SYNOPSIS

ACT 1

At the turn of the current century, in the picturesque gardens of a lovely Japanese villa on the outskirts of Nagasaki, a local marriage broker, Goro, explains that he has arranged a marriage with an adolescent Japanese girl for Lieutenant Pinkerton of the United States Navy. Both the marriage contract and the accompanying rental agreement for a home are presented to Pinkerton for his pleasure and convenience during the term of his service in Japan. Both are cancelable upon the same conditions: thirty days' notice.

When United States Consul, Sharpless, comes calling, he warns Pinkerton that such an arrangement invites tragedy. The young lady in question, he says, Cio-Cio-San, is known as Madame Butterfly because of her femininity and sensitive nature. Certainly this sort of cavalier treatment will eventually break her tender heart.

The self-indulgent Pinkerton ignores the older man's advice, making it clear he considers the wedding a game and that he'll be glad to be married legitimately someday in the United States to an American woman.

Butterfly appears, accompanied by her family. She is an innocent girl of fifteen, who arrives carrying her most precious personal treasures in her sleeve—a little jewelry and a dagger her father used to commit suicide on orders from the Mikado. The marriage ceremony proceeds and the assemblage toasts the couple.

In the midst of the happy moment, the Bonze, a Japanese priest, sweeps in with a stern denunciation of the bride. She has forsaken her religion and turned to Christianity in deference to her new husband, he announces. He declares her an outcast and the entire family supports his damning judgment.

Pinkerton sends them all away and proceeds to woo Butterfly. They proclaim their attraction to one another in a love duet and the curtain falls as the couple happily enters their new home.

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STUDENT HANDOUTS: *MADAMA BUTTERFLY* SYNOPSIS

ACT 2

Madame Butterfly has lived alone in the little home above Nagasaki for three years now. The short marriage with Lieutenant Pinkerton ended when he returned to America and he hasn't been heard from since. Her maid and friend, Suzuki, tries to reason with Butterfly about the distinct possibility that this man will never return. The tragically loyal Butterfly answers with the aria "Un bel di Vedremo," describing her vision of the Lieutenant's ship reappearing on the horizon and Pinkerton himself ascending the hill to their home.

The American Consul, Sharpless, arrives with a letter he wishes to read to Butterfly. However, Goro interrupts to present a potential suitor to the young woman, an offer she firmly refuses. Knowing the letter he carries announces the wedding of Pinkerton to an American girl, the Consul asks Butterfly what will happen if her "husband" never returns. She declares that impossible, but if it were to be, she says, she would kill herself. She produces her young son, Trouble.

He has been so-named she explained until Pinkerton comes home. Then the child's name will become Joy. Sharpless realizes he can't reason with her and departs.

A cannon from the harbor announces the docking of Pinkerton's ship. Butterfly and Suzuki happily prepare the house for his arrival. The scene closes quietly as the women and the child settle down to watch for Pinkerton's appearance on the hillside path.

Madama

Butterfly

STUDENT HANDOUTS: *MADAMA BUTTERFLY* SYNOPSIS

ACT 3

Trouble and Suzuki have fallen asleep waiting for the Lieutenant. Only Butterfly keeps the vigil. The sun is rising, but Pinkerton has yet to make himself known.

Butterfly takes her child to his room to tuck him into bed to the tune of a lullaby. At that moment, Consul Sharpless arrives in the garden, accompanied by Pinkerton and his American wife, Kate. Realizing what has occurred, Suzuki is brokenhearted.

Glancing around at the once idyllic hideaway where he lived with the lovely Butterfly, Pinkerton sings a farewell to this home, to the past. Entering the room once more, Butterfly captures the essence of the scene immediately. She tells Kate that Pinkerton may have the child if he will return for him later.

The emotionally shattered Madame Butterfly blindfolds Trouble, steps behind an ornamental screen, and stabs herself to death. Pinkerton rushes into the house calling to her, "Butterfly! Butterfly!" But his concern comes much too late. He kneels beside her lifeless body.

Madama

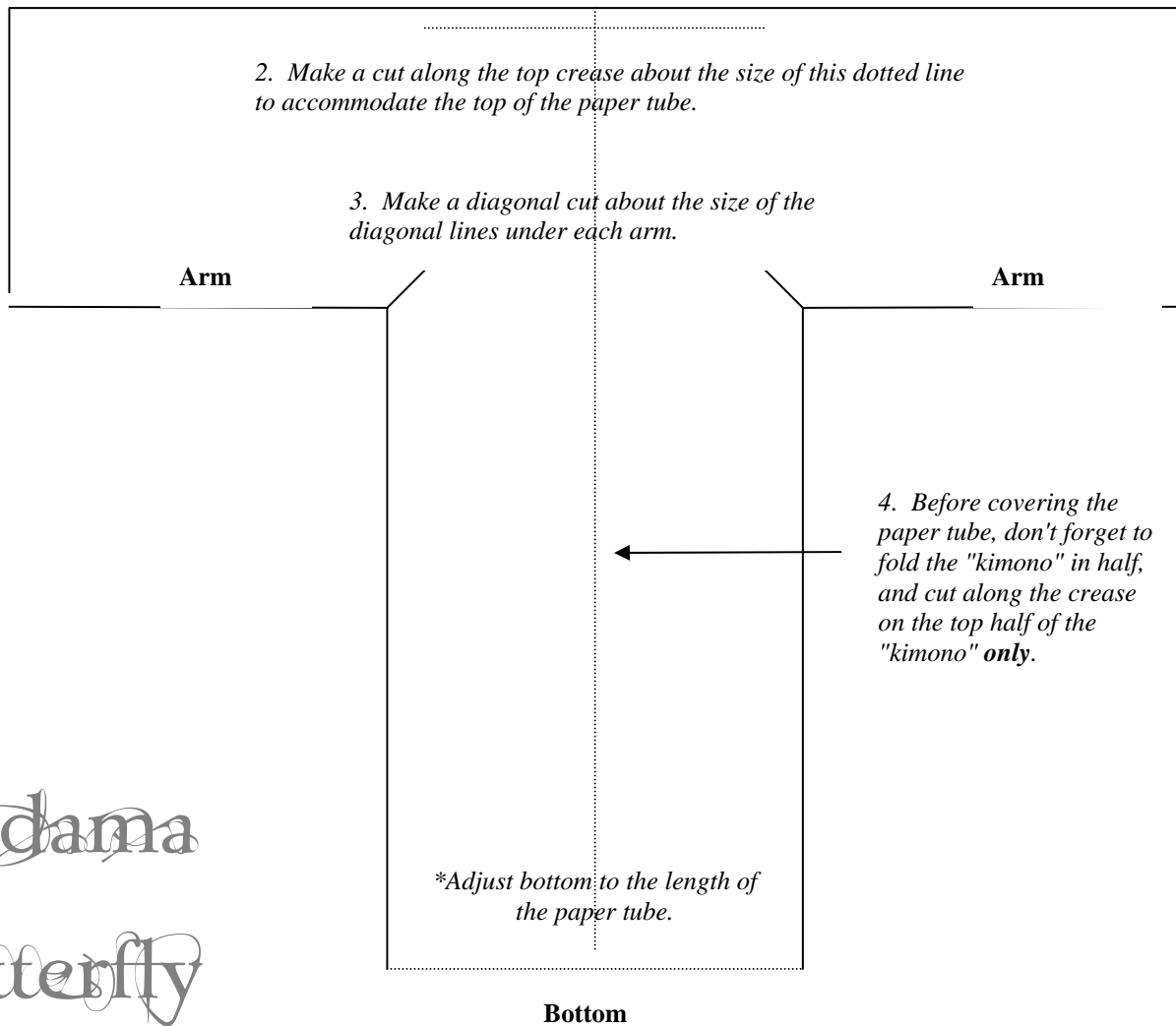
Butterfly

STUDENT HANDOUTS:

KIMONO TEMPLATE FOR MADAMA BUTTERFLY AND TROUBLE DOLLS

Cut out the template on this paper. Once you have folded your origami paper or wrapping paper in half, place the template on top of the origami or wrapping paper. Take care to line up the top of the template to the folded crease of the origami or wrapping paper. Use the template to cut out the "kimono" shape from your paper. Remember to adjust the length of the bottom to cover the length of the paper tube.

Top



HOW TO FOLD A PAPER CRANE

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

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NAME: _____

Madama Butterfly Word Search

C	D	I	X	K	A	B	I	M	P	T	U	B	L	E
J	O	Y	R	G	T	K	S	I	I	R	S	U	N	G
A	S	M	G	O	U	R	N	E	N	O	I	T	A	K
B	A	O	M	Z	D	K	J	A	K	U	P	T	G	O
J	R	S	U	I	E	A	U	Z	A	B	I	E	A	J
O	C	S	Z	R	S	I	M	U	T	E	N	R	S	F
Y	A	B	T	A	J	S	W	A	E	L	I	F	A	A
T	G	O	J	U	Z	G	A	O	Y	X	C	L	K	R
I	Y	N	K	A	N	O	L	R	T	Y	C	Y	E	E
N	O	Z	O	B	P	I	N	K	I	Q	U	A	Y	L
S	S	E	L	P	R	A	H	S	W	O	P	O	Z	B
B	O	N	Z	O	L	Y	N	R	I	A	T	I	W	U
I	N	I	C	U	P	U	H	H	J	Z	U	K	I	O
Y	L	F	R	E	T	T	U	K	A	T	P	S	T	R
K	A	T	I	K	A	S	A	G	A	N	O	R	O	T

**BONZO
BUTTERFLY
COMMISSARIO
GORO**

**JAPAN
KATE
NAGASAKI
PINKERTON**

**PUCCINI
SHARPLESS
SUZUKI
TROUBLE**

YAMADORI