

Japan in focus

SPRING TERM
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memorial stones disturbed by the October earthquake. Photo: Niigata university

We hope you will find lots of useful material in this issue of Japan in focus. The Boxing Day Indian Ocean tsunami is still fresh in everyone's minds and the management of natural disasters is high on the global agenda. In 2004, Japan also suffered badly from typhoons and an earthquake in the Niigata region. Problems for those affected by the earthquake have now been compounded by heavy snowfall. People in Japan are all too aware of their vulnerability, with the threat of a Kanto region earthquake always present. See pages 6, 7 and 10 for KS3 geography materials linked to these events.

Inspired by the festival of setsubun, we have made materials aimed at KS2 based on myths and fairy tales - see pages 4-5.

Japan UK LIVE

We are thrilled to announce that Japan UK

LIVE! has been named among the prize winners of the My Town Map competition. One of 26 winners from over 600 entries, Japan UK LIVE! has been awarded the UNESCO Prize for its contribution to the development of cross-cultural understanding. The current theme, in which students have been turning their attention to the wider world, comes to an end on 4 March. However, new participants are always welcome, with forthcoming themes offering many opportunities to share ideas and experience. Japan UK LIVE! will not only broaden your school's international dimension, but provides links to literacy (writing for a specific audience, writing instructions and reports etc) and ICT (using digital images, sound and movie files, creating simple web pages). For details of forthcoming themes please contact Heidi Potter: heidi@japan21.org.uk



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try the soroban - you might like it!

I tried it and I liked it a lot. The soroban is a Japanese abacus and it is brilliant for primary maths. It caught my attention because I could see its potential for 'physical' maths - the beads require manipulation and the soroban holds those elusive abstract numbers as concrete values. These characteristics can be very useful for some dyslexic children, for example.

I read the article by Kimie Markarian on the soroban in the ATM Mathematics Teaching magazine (Issue 185, December 2003). Further research in Japan in focus (1997) found an offer to loan a teaching soroban and a class set for a period of a half-term. I saw this as an exciting and challenging opportunity to try something new. Heidi Potter at Japan 21 and Kimie Markarian provided me with some worksheets for beginners. I was particularly fortunate to observe Kimie Markarian teaching the soroban to year 5 and year 8 children at Cheadle Hulme Community College.

So now I had a set of soroban, a little expertise and loads of inspiration. I planned a taster session that lasted about one hour and offered my services to local schools. During my half-term loan I taught thirteen "taster" sessions to years two, three, four, five and six in three schools. The programme was similar across all the age groups, with appropriate adjustments to the vocabulary and pace of delivery. The novelty of the soroban and the fast-changing activities held the children's attention in quite intense concentration for the whole session. I was pleasantly surprised by the children's willingness to engage with the challenge of learning something completely new from a visitor.

Confident knowledge (instant recall) of number bonds 5 and 10, and the times tables up to 9×9 allows proficient soroban users to calculate sums faster than using a calculator. The mental agility that can be developed by using the soroban is most impressive. The times table circuit and card games used to encourage known number facts are useful in their own right - even if you don't plan to continue teaching the soroban. However the ultimate aim is to encourage the mental imagery of manipulating the soroban beads, so that the



actual soroban is no longer a necessary tool.

Borrowing the soroban is a fun activity for exploring multicultural maths and the set can be passed around the whole school to take advantage of the loan. Yet I wonder if we aren't missing a much bigger, even more exciting opportunity? I would love to teach one soroban session to my class every week and then see if the children choose to adopt the "soroban thinking" for themselves. Soroban work can be done on paper, so the availability of the class set is not a restricting factor. Should this crossover of

methods prove to have real benefits, then each school should be encouraged to have a class set of its own to pass around.

Have you done any work with the soroban? Do you share my enthusiasm for its potential benefits to primary maths teaching? I would love to hear from you; please email me at vbeagrie@ntlworld.com

Victoria Beagrie

other useful contacts

To borrow class sets of soroban and a teaching soroban contact Japan 21:

tel: 020 7630 8696

email: education@japan21.org.uk

or go to www.japan21.org.uk

Kimie Markarian (pictured here) is an independent soroban teacher. Email: soroban@kmarkarian.f9.co.uk

A version of this article first appeared in the

Introduction to the Soroban: a powerful aid for number

Kimie Markarian, Tandi Clausen-May, Sue Pope; ATM ISBN 1898611289

The ATM has published this revised and extended version of its previous booklet on the soroban. It includes a brief history and rationale for use of the soroban, showing how it can aid the visualisation of number and mental calculation. Clear instructions for using the soroban are provided, together with calculations to give practice. At each step the mathematical concepts being developed are identified so that teachers will know how to devise their own activities. To obtain a copy (£9.75 or £6.83 for ATM members) email admin@atm.org.uk or visit www.atm.org.uk

japan today

Another selection of snippets from recent press about Japan. These can be used as stimuli for discussion with KS3 and 4 pupils, as an extension activity. Please use the websites listed for more detailed information.

China now Japan's biggest trading partner

According to figures released in January 2005 by Japan's finance ministry, China has overtaken the USA as Japan's biggest trading partner. China now accounts for 20.1% of Japan's trade, compared with 18.6% for the US. Japan's exports to and imports from China in 2004 totalled 22.2 trillion yen. Trade with the US in the same year came to 20.48 trillion yen.

It is worth bearing in mind that these figures were affected by certain short term factors. For example, there was a 13 month-long ban on US beef in Japan prompted by a BSE scare in the US at the end of 2003. Nonetheless economists predict that Japan's trade with China will continue to grow in years to come. They make this prediction partly because of lower tariffs and also a better investment climate resulting from China's entry into the World Trade Organisation in 2001. Figures showed that the Chinese economy grew by 9.5% in 2004. They also showed that Japan's worldwide trade surplus grew by 17.9% in 2004 to 12.01 trillion yen. This represented an increase for the third year running.

- who are the UK's top trading partners?
- what makes a country a good trading partner?
- what is a trade surplus?

www.japantimes.co.jp

news.bbc.co.uk

www.washingtonpost.com

a constitutional crisis

There is a crisis in Japan. The Emperor is 71 years old: when he dies his son Naruhito will become Emperor. But after that, nobody knows what will happen, because as yet there are no male heirs. Only men are allowed to rule and it is forty years since a male (Prince Akishino) was born into the imperial family. Prince Naruhito and his wife have had a baby girl but she will not be allowed to rule unless the law is changed. A Japanese government panel has been set up to discuss this: according to surveys, over 70% of the population favour a change but there is a strong minority resisting any change. One constitutional expert was quoted as saying "the first emperor was male and his Y chromosome has been inherited only by the male line. This is the established principle that has been maintained by 125 Emperors. I wonder if it is right to allow modern notions such as sexism to deny the blood principle".

- What do you think? What does "the blood principle" mean?
- How do you think Japan would change if an empress ruled the country?

www.abc.net.au

www.japantimes.co.jp

news.bbc.co.uk

talking plants?

Two toy manufacturers in Japan, Tomy and Takara have recently produced bean plants that carry a personalised message written on one of the leaves.

The plant is set in a white egg which "hatches" soon after being put in water. A message is inscribed on the leaf with a laser beam - you can choose from six messages, such as "I love you" or "good luck". What will they think of next!

news.bbc.co.uk

Toyota's hydrogen-powered bus

Toyota has just unveiled its hydrogen-powered fuel cell hybrid-electric bus which will operate at the World Expo in Aichi later this year. The buses are powered by two different kinds of batteries: fuel cell batteries (which generate electricity through chemical reaction between high-pressure hydrogen and oxygen) and nickel hydride batteries, like those in a laptop computer or mobile phone. The only emission from these buses is water, making them extremely environmentally-friendly. They are also extremely quiet and give a very smooth ride. In Aichi, a hydrogen station will be set up for refuelling.

- what do you think? Is this the transport of the future? Can you foresee any problems?

www.enn.com

www-1.expo2005.or.jp/en/

local heroes

Many towns and cities in Japan are getting their own "action heroes". Imitating a tv series from the seventies which featured groups of young people who protect the earth, these groups are springing up all over the country - now there are over 130 of them. They may take on a variety of roles. The Sugunami Task Force Rangers, for example, work in the Sugunami district of Tokyo trying to persuade people to use their own bags at the supermarket. Dressed in power-ranger style suits complete with balaclava helmets and tall white boots, they are bound to make an impact!

Hirado (in Nagasaki prefecture) boasts the Hirado Defence Task Force Hiradoshiman. This group promotes development of the city and "protects" it from depopulation.

www.web-jpn.org/kidsweb

- Can you imagine this catching on here?

setsubun

the bean throwing festival!

activities for KS1 and 2

Setsubun is an ancient festival still celebrated every February in Japan. It marks a new start, the end of the coldest months and the beginning of spring, when new seeds are planted and things begin to grow. Many years ago, when people in Japan used a lunar calendar, setsubun marked the beginning of the new year. There used to be four setsubun festivals, one at each change of season. Now only the one at the beginning of spring is celebrated.

what happens at setsubun?

There are several ways of celebrating, all based on old folk tales associated with the festival. The most common is *mame maki*. This means bean-throwing, and this is exactly what happens. One member of the family (usually a man, maybe dad or oldest son) dresses up as a devil (*oni*). The rest of the family then throw soya beans at him, shouting "oni wa soto, fuku wa uchi!" This means "demons out, good luck in!" Then each person picks up beans and later eats the number corresponding to their age. (Don't try eating dried soya beans - in Japan they sell special, edible setsubun beans).

People also hang sardine heads and holly leaves on the door of their houses. These are supposed to keep the demons away. Temples and shrines all over Japan hold special celebrations at setsubun. Famous people, often sumo wrestlers, are invited to come and throw beans to the crowds of people who come to watch.

find out more

The person chosen to throw the beans is usually someone who is born under the sign of the same zodiac animal of the coming year. In Japan, each year is associated with

an animal. For example, 2004 was the Year of the Monkey. 2005 is the Year of the Rooster. To find out more about the Japanese zodiac, have a look at this site: <http://japanese.about.com/library/weekly/aa100498.htm>

When people eat the number of beans corresponding to their age, they do this for good luck. And especially if they are aged 25 or 42 (men), and 19 or 33 (women). These years are known as "yakudoshi" - unlucky years. Some people believe that unfortunate events are likely to happen in these years.

activities

1. Make demon masks using the oni picture shown below. Go to www.japan21.org.uk to download a full size picture or make an enlarged copy on to card, then colour it in the most vibrant colours you can find. Cut it out. Now make a hole at each side and thread string or elastic through. Make holes for eyes, and it's ready!
2. Hold your own setsubun festival. Make demon masks, then take it in turns to be the oni, running around while the other children throw beans at the oni. Don't forget to shout "oni wa soto, fuku wa uchi!" When all the beans are gone each child can pick up some beans and, using chopsticks,



put the number of beans corresponding to their age into a cup.

storytelling: the demon and the farmer

There are several stories linked with setsubun. This is one of the most well known.

This story can be used to tie in with the National Literacy Strategy either in year 3 or 5 (see curriculum links, at the end of the article). These activities are designed for year 5, term 2, but may be adapted for year 3.

Tell the story to your class, and talk about it using the points for discussion suggested. Once the story has been read, have the children summarise it in 8 sentences and in chronological order (for lower ability children, children can arrange prepared mixed sentences in the correct order. To download suggested sentences go to www.japan21.org.uk)

Children then use these sentences to create their own comic board version of the myth, remembering the features of cartoon strips (simple drawings, speech/ thought bubbles, onomatopoeia, the use of small connective sentences between pictures). Each sentence represents one picture, so the total comic strip should be eight pictures long. (nb Japanese onomatopoeia is used in this story. Are the sounds the same in English? Or in other languages that the children know?)

At the end, have children present their comic strips to the rest of the class. Which ones have worked well? Why?

the demon and the farmer

Once upon a time there lived a farmer who had a very beautiful daughter. All the boys in the village wanted to marry her. But the farmer said to the boys, "If any of you can lift the millstone with his bare hands, you can marry my daughter!" The millstone was huge and very heavy. Nobody could lift it.

- what is a millstone?

One day, a young man turned up at the farmer's house. His arms were as thick as tree trunks and his body looked strong and sturdy. He said to the farmer, "Is it true that if I can pick up the millstone, you will give me your daughter?" The farmer replied, "Yes, that's right."

So the boy wrapped his arms around the millstone, gave a great roar and lifted the millstone right above his head. The farmer and the rest of his family stood with their mouths open, shocked.

"Now you must give me your daughter as you promised," said the young man. And he quickly hoisted her over his shoulder and ran off into the mountains.

- The farmer is choosing a husband for his daughter. Do you think this is a good idea? What is an arranged marriage? Can you think of any countries or cultures where this happens?
- How does the farmer choose the man? What kind of man would you want for your daughter?

"Wait!" shouted the farmer. "Who are you? Where are you from?" He was shocked and worried. In a panic he chased after the young man and his daughter.

On and on they ran, deep into the mountains. The farmer followed and saw them reach a well-lit cave in the distance. The young man carried the girl inside.

The farmer crept up carefully, and saw that the cave was a demons' lair. The demons were right in the middle of a big party and the farmer's daughter was sitting next to a young demon.

- What is a lair?
- Do you think the girl will escape? How will she do it?

"Ah! that must be the young man who lifted the millstone," the farmer whispered to himself. "But he's really a demon!" Although the farmer was very scared, he was even more worried about his daughter, so he stayed to see what would happen.

Eventually the demons got drunk and began to sing: "Yaa, yareyo! Better not go near sardine heads or your nose will shrivel and fall off! Better not go near



holly leaves or they'll scratch your eyes and make you blind! Yaa, yaa, yareyo!"

- These are funny things to be afraid of. Can you think of any other strange things that demons are supposed to be afraid of? (eg vampires and garlic...)

The demons clapped in time to the beat, accompanying their song. The farmer listened carefully to the words of the song.

One of the demons now turned to the farmer's daughter and yelled "Hey, now you must sing for us!" "That's right" said another, "Sing! Sing!" So the girl sang a song in a most beautiful voice.

"Now it's time for the flies and mice to sleep. Now it's time for the cows and horses to sleep. Now it's time for you, child, to sleep. Goodnight."

- What kind of song is this? Do you know any lullabies? Why do you think lullabies send children to sleep?

The demons listened, entranced, completely absorbed in her song. One by one, they began to doze off, right where they sat. Before long, all you could hear were huge snores: "Gougou, gaagaa". All the demons had fallen asleep. The farmer quickly ran to his daughter. "Come on, let's run away!" The girl said, "Look, this iron club is called a senriba. If you tap it once it will take you anywhere you want. Let's use it to escape." The farmer and his daughter sat astride the senriba and gave it a quick tap.

- What is an iron club?
- How did the girl manage to escape? Did she use her strength or her head?

In an instant they were back at home. They told everyone what had happened, that they had just run away from the demons' lair. Everyone was very worried about what the demons would do when they woke and found the girl gone. "Don't worry," said the farmer, "I know what demons are afraid of. Quick, get a holly leaf, stick a sardine head on top and hang it outside over the doorway."

- How does he know this is what they are afraid of?

The grandmother added, "Let's get some soya beans too. People say that they ward off evil!"

- What are soya beans? Can you think of anything made from soya beans?

Before long they could hear footsteps: DOKA DOKA, GARA GARA. The demons were on their way back to get revenge.

- What is revenge? Do you think revenge is a good thing or a bad thing?

"Where's the girl?" one of the demons shouted. "Give me back my wife!" yelled another. "If you don't give her back I will beat you to a pulp!" shouted another. The demons ran towards the doorway, but then they saw the sardine and the holly.

"Pooh, what a stink!" said one. "Yuck! A sardine head," shouted another. "Ouch! Holly leaves," said another. "It's got me in the eye! I can't see!" The demons couldn't get past the doorway.

"Now it's our turn," said the farmer. The farmer and his family started to throw beans at the demons. "Ouch!" cried one. "Oh no, not beans!" shouted another demon. The demons panicked as they were hit by some beans and slipped on others. "Let's run away!" "We are no match for the beans!" Crying and screaming, the demons fled.

- What kind of story is this? (myth) How do you know? (there's a hero, a problem to be solved, a journey, mythical creatures, special help (senriba), a battle, a happy ending etc)



Curriculum links

Year 5 Term 2 National Literacy Strategy

- Word 11 to explore onomatopoeia. Collect, invent and use words whose meaning is represented in their sounds
- Sentence 6a,d to be aware of the differences between spoken and written language, including conventions to guide the reader and the use of punctuation to replace intonation, pauses and gestures
- text 1 to identify and classify the features of myths (hero, villain, a problem to be solved, journey, help, battle, resolution...)
- text 11 to write own version of a myth in a comic strip style

Year 3 Term 2 National Literacy Strategy

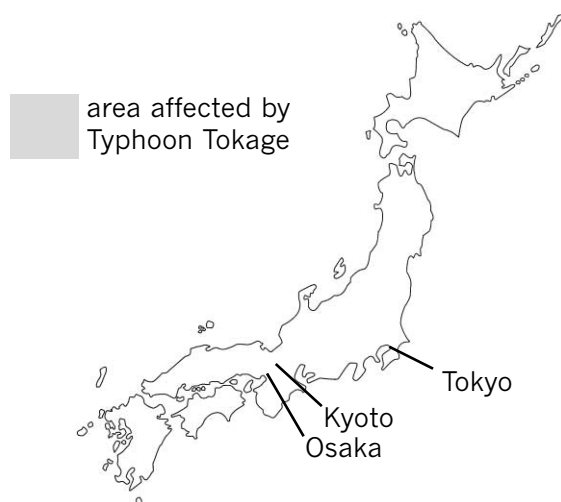
- sentence 1 to use awareness of grammar to decipher new or unfamiliar words
- text 2 to identify typical story themes, eg. good over evil
- text 3 to write a story plan for own myth using story theme

typhoon tokage

coping with natural hazards

a resource for KS3 geography

On October 20th 2004 Japan was hit by Typhoon Tokage, with wind speeds recorded at 229 km per hour. At least eighty people died. This was the tenth typhoon to hit Japan that year. Usually there are three or four, and none as strong as this one. This was the worst typhoon since 1979 when 115 people died. The diameter of Typhoon Tokage was measured as 800 km. Because it was so big it affected large parts of the country - everywhere south of Tohoku suffered in some way. Its size contributed significantly to the high death toll.



transport disruption

The shinkansen (bullet train) was shut down on Wednesday (20th October) afternoon between Tokyo and Osaka because of heavy rain. It reopened later that evening. On other parts of the line more than forty trains were cancelled. Three days after the typhoon, regular train services (not shinkansen) were still suspended. Almost 1000 flights were cancelled, affecting 127,000 passengers. Two containerships and a training ship ran aground.

Question: about a month after Typhoon Tokage hit Japan, another big typhoon hit Manila in the

Philippines. Do you think disruption to transport would have been as bad in the Philippines as it was in Japan? Try to explain why you feel this.

landslides

Most deaths were caused by landslides - a secondary impact of the hazard. Rainfall in October was 570 mm, the highest monthly total since 1945. In Miyazu, Kyoto prefecture, a mudslide engulfed several homes, killing two people. In Tamano, Hyogo prefecture, a massive landslide killed four people. A village in Nagano prefecture was completely cut off after 100 landslides destroyed all roads leading to it. In Ehime, a woman died when her house was buried in a landslide.

Question: what is a landslide? Explain why you think there were so many landslides after this typhoon?

flooding

Flooding was widespread throughout southern and western Japan after this typhoon. In Toyooka, Hyogo

landslip and fallen trees caused by the typhoon in Kayamachi, near Kyoto. Photo courtesy of Mr Hayakawa, Kyoto.



what is a typhoon?

A typhoon is a storm with winds of over 119km/hour, occurring in the west pacific ocean. The same thing in this part of the world would be called a hurricane. The winds are followed by heavy rain.

Typhoons or hurricanes form over a warm sea. The warm water evaporates into the air, creating clouds and lowering the atmospheric pressure of the air. Because air usually moves from areas of high to low pressure, this creates wind. The earth's rotation makes the wind swirl round. If the winds at the top of the atmosphere are a very different speed from those at the bottom, this will cause "wind shear" and the storm will break up. But if they are the same speed, they may continue to swirl and grow to form a typhoon, or hurricane.

prefecture, the embankments of a river flowing through the centre of the city collapsed. Even after the typhoon passed the muddy water didn't subside, so in about 800 houses people were left stranded on the first floor. This was particularly difficult for the very young and elderly to cope with. Many people were rescued from their rooftops but road and rail links were cut so rescue operations were badly hindered. In Maizuru, a coach full of elderly people was almost submerged by floods. Passengers spent a night on the roof before being rescued.

Questions

- Look at the picture above. Try to explain why this house has collapsed.
- One thing that made the flooding worse was that so many houses had been built on river flood plains. What is a flood plain? Explain why people choose to live on them in spite of the risks.
- Hyogo prefecture now has very good earthquake emergency plans, but flood prevention measures were inadequate. Only eleven of the towns in the area had a flood map. What do you think a flood map is? Explain how having one might have reduced the impact of the typhoon.

creative writing

Look at the following statements. Each one gives information about some of the causes and effects of the typhoon. Which of these things could people have done something about? Which were impossible to stop? Discuss and then divide the statements into two separate lists.

- In 2004, ten typhoons hit Japan. The annual average is 2.6 typhoons.
- It is nearly 50 years since two typhoons hit Japan in October, the end of the typhoon season.
- The waves in Muroto, Kochi prefecture, were 17.8 metres high. The normal maximum height during a typhoon is 13 metres.
- The sea embankments in Muroto were built in 1967.
- The ocean between the Philippines and Japan was



Photo courtesy of Mr Hayakawa, Kyoto.

unusually warm, which meant that the typhoon did not weaken as it travelled over the sea, as would usually be expected.

- Many elderly people could not evacuate in time and were trapped in houses. The disabled and very young also had problems evacuating. It was difficult even for able-bodied people to evacuate fast enough at night time.
- A tourist bus was stranded in flood water. The elderly passengers were lucky to escape unharmed.
- It has long been accepted that river embankments in Toyooka are not high or wide enough.
- Rain water tanks and lakes or reservoirs can help to regulate water flow.
- Typhoon 23 coincided with a high tide in Kobe. Drainage pipes were old, could not cope with so much water and so overflowed.

Because of climate change, it cannot be assumed that the typhoons of 2004, particularly Tokage, are freak events. Using what you have learned from discussing the sentences, write a report suggesting preventive measures to be put in place so that the next big typhoon is not such a disaster.

useful websites

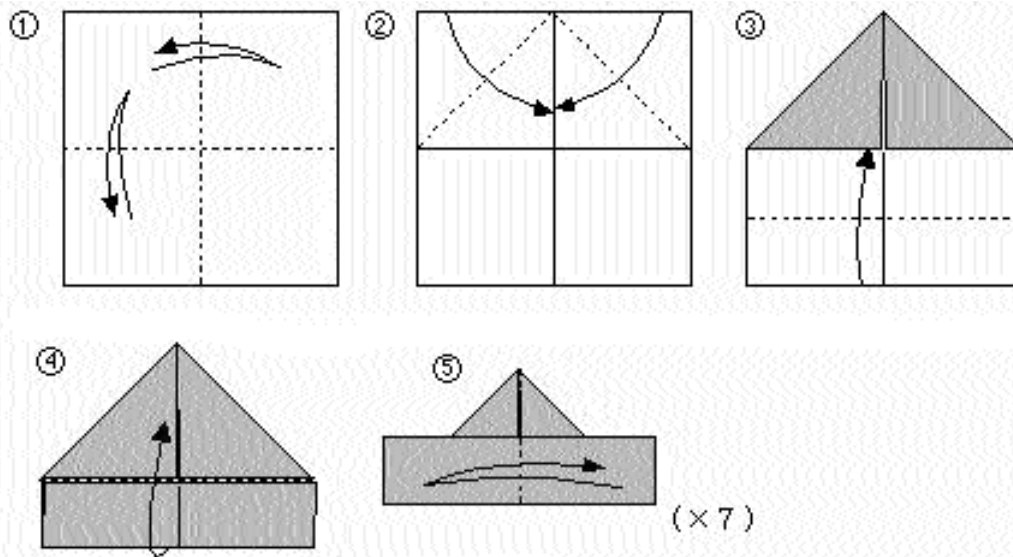
news.bbc.co.uk and www.japantimes.co.jp
 web-jpn.org/kidsweb
 www.aoml.noaa.gov (Atlantic Oceanographic & Meteorological Laboratory: definitions of typhoons etc)

origami for maths at ks 1 and ks 2

These two models were written by origami artist Tomoko Fuse. If you are planning a Japan day, these could form the basis of an origami workshop. You can also use them to support maths at key stage one and two.* Use the crown model to talk about properties of shape. Discuss the shapes that are made after each fold (square, rectangle, triangle) and how many of each make a bigger shape. You can also discuss symmetry. The cat model can be used in the same way but also to introduce different types of triangle. Once the model is finished, ask pupils to count the number of triangles they can see.

*nb: These models are a little complex but simpler origami can be used to support maths at foundation level.

crown paper: 15 cm x 15 cm



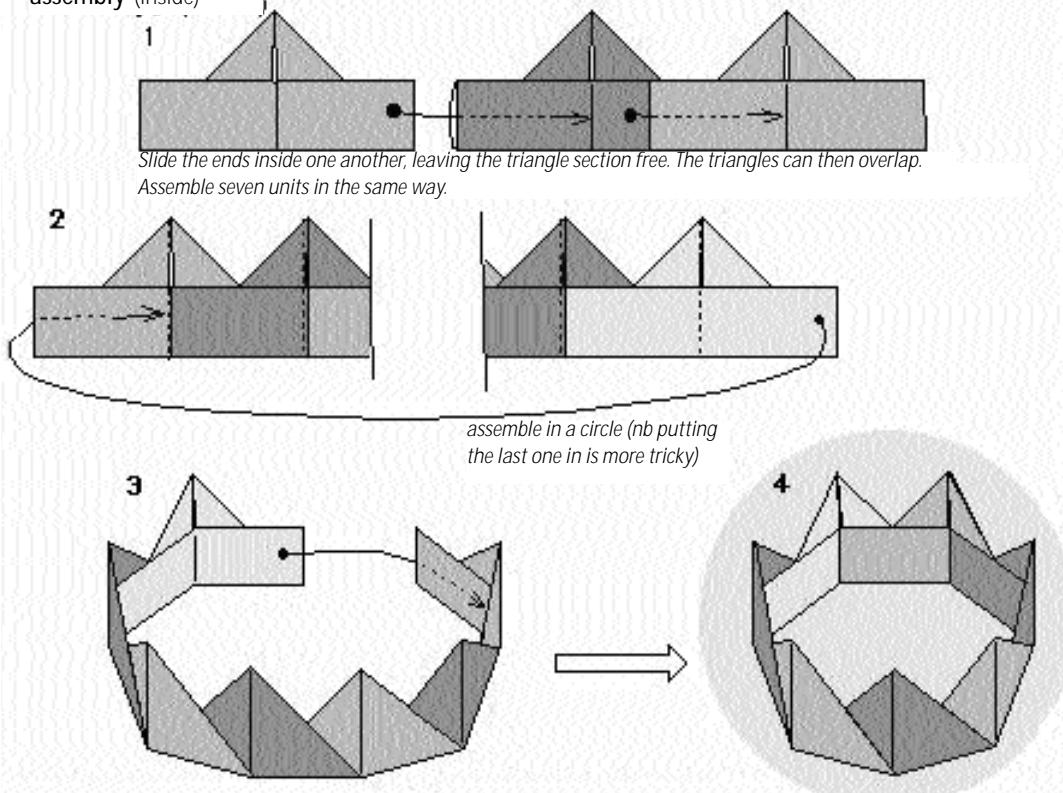
Points to note:

- Dotted lines are fold lines and the arrows show the direction of the fold.
- A hairpin arrow indicates that you fold to make a crease then fold out again.
- A reverse fold means fold in the opposite direction of the crease.

useful contacts

British Origami Society:
www.britishorigami.org.uk
 A fount of origami information, complete with online shop for ordering paper, books and leaflets with folding instructions as well as videos and CDRoms.

assembly (inside)



curriculum links

Shape, space and measures: KS 1

Pupils should be taught to:

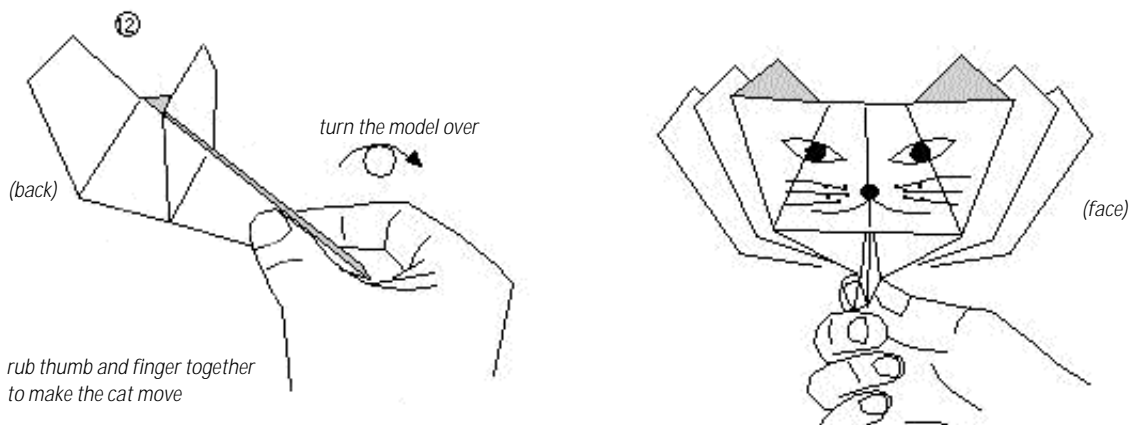
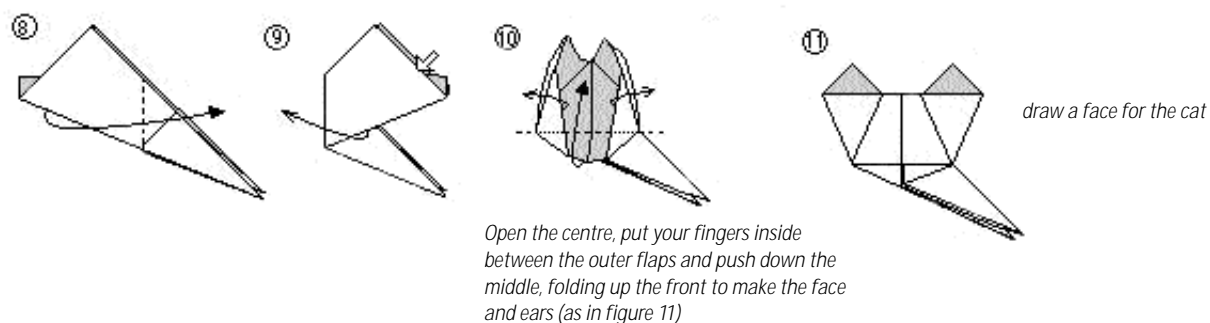
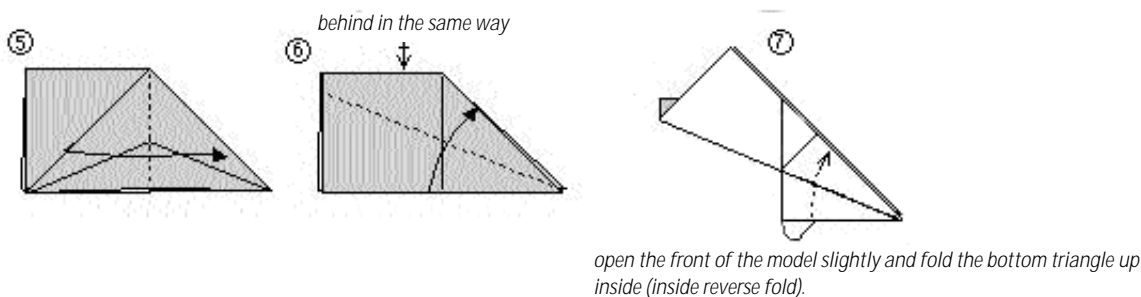
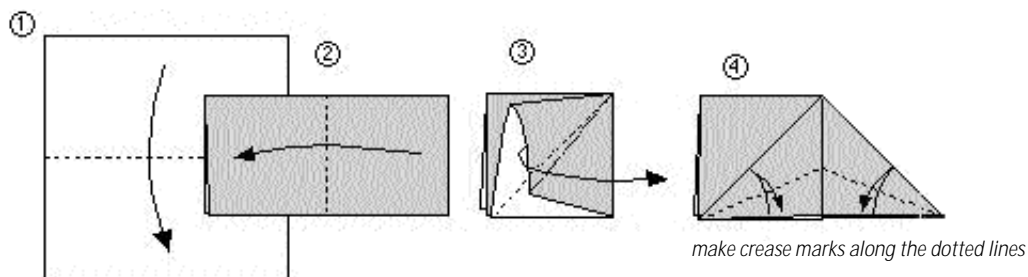
- 1d use the correct language and vocabulary for shapes
- 2a describe properties of the shapes made as they fold the model
- 2b observe, handle and describe common 2D shapes that are made as they fold the paper, including triangles, rectangles, squares
- 2d recognise reflective symmetry as it occurs during the folding process

Shape, space and measures: KS 2

Pupils should be taught to

- 1c approach spatial problems flexibly including trying alternative approaches to overcome difficulties
- 2a recognise right angles, perpendicular and parallel lines
- 2b visualise and describe 2D and 3D shapes and use correct terminology when referring to triangles
- 2d visualise 3D shapes from 2D drawings and use this knowledge to help interpret instructions

inquisitive cat paper: 15 cm x 15 cm



earthquake in Niigata: picture quiz

The following pictures were taken in Niigata just after the earthquake in October 2004. Look at each picture: can you work out what has happened? How would it have looked before the earthquake? Write a short description of what you see, then check the answers at the bottom of the page. (Pictures are courtesy of Niigata University) NB Larger copies of these pictures can be downloaded from japan21.org.uk



secondary impacts

Read out the sentences in bold to the class. Discuss how these factors may have made the impact of the earthquake worse. Use the information below to aid discussion.

- Niigata is a remote area.**
Because it is remote, it was difficult for help to get through after the earthquake and for reconstruction to begin properly.
- Winters in Niigata are severe. This earthquake hit just before the onset of winter.**
Niigata is on the Japan Sea Coast and suffers severe winters. The earthquake hit in October just before winter, so there was no time for people to make their houses safe before the onset of bad weather. Many will be living in emergency accommodation all winter.
- The snowfall this year has been the worst for 19 years**
This year's snowfall has been very heavy - 3-4 metres in the earthquake zone. This is the worst for 19 years, causing additional damage to already weakened structures. As at 3 Feb 2005, 10 people had died shovelling snow.

<http://www.asahi.com/english>

picture answers

picture 1

Along route 117, the road subsided where it joined a bridge.

picture 2

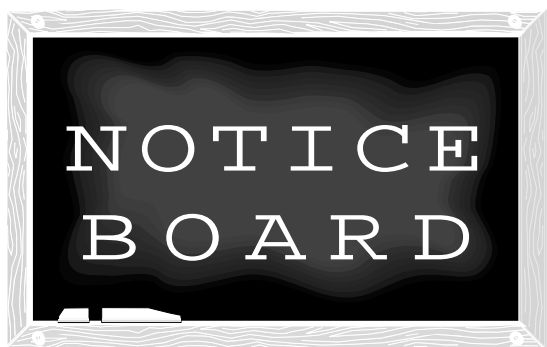
Kashiwazaki city, Nagatori area, a 2 metre-diameter manhole rose about 1 metre. Apparently there were several instances of this happening.

picture 3

Kashiwazaki city, Yasuda area, the road subsided along the water pipe.

picture 4

Between Echigohirota and Nagatori, collapse of rail banking on the Shinetsu line.



Prize in 2000, Takahashi has been commissioned by the Serpentine to make a new work that comprises a series of distinct environments throughout the Gallery.

Further information

from the Serpentine Gallery, tel: 020 7402 6075 or visit the website at www.serpentinegallery.org

gap year in Japan

Project Trust have places for school leavers wishing to spend 12 months in Japan for their gap year. Current teaching placements include Hokkaido, a school in central Tokyo and a commune outside Kyoto. For further details contact: info@projecttrust.org.uk or look at www.projecttrust.org.uk

deai photo essay cafe & competition

www.tjf.or.jp/photoessaycafe

Many of you will be familiar with Deai, having worked with resources detailing the lives of seven Japanese high school students. The Photo Essay Cafe is a website where students from all over the world can communicate through photo essays they create themselves. Create your own photo essay, telling your story and expressing your thoughts.

competition

Seven students who submit essays to the Cafe will be invited to come to Japan and meet the seven Deai students, stay in a Japanese home and travel around Japan. To enter, you must have studied using the Deai materials. Essays should be about 500 words, with about five photos.

For full details of how to enter, go to the website. Closing date: March 31, 2005.

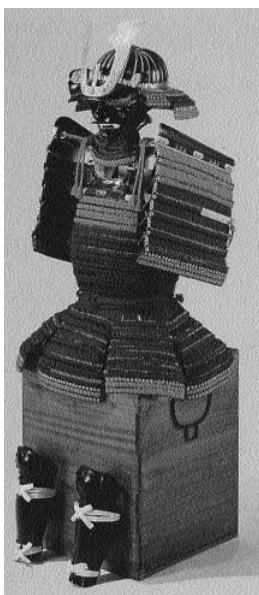
tomoko takahashi

Serpentine Gallery, London
22 February - 10 April 2005

For her first major exhibition in the UK since she was nominated for the Turner

new Japan exhibition at the royal armouries museum in leeds: june - august 2004

Twinned with Toshogu Shrine in Japan since the Japan Festival in 1991, the Armouries and the Shrine have developed their long-term relationship significantly, with exchange of loans and special events. However, this is the first time that the Armouries has planned a major exhibition in its Leeds Museum. Objects never seen in the West before will be on display throughout the months of June, July and August. The education programmes will include new materials for art and design, history and literacy. All activities will be based around the centre's popular interactive handling sessions, dressing up activities and Art Kart programmes. To find out more, call 0113 220 1888 or email: educate.leeds@armouries.org.uk



Book Note

A Guide to the Japanese Stage: from Traditional to Cutting Edge
Ronald Cavaye, P. Griffith, A. Senda

Publisher: Kodansha Europe

ISBN: 477002987X

List price: £11.99

An extremely accessible resource for anyone setting out to find out about Japanese theatre. This book covers traditional and modern genres, with individual chapters on kabuki, bunraku, noh, kyogen and contemporary theatre.

The traditional chapters include a brief history of the genre, a summary of the main categories of play as well as synopses of the most often performed plays. Each chapter also gives insights into the stylised movements used in traditional theatre. The noh and kabuki chapters include line drawings showing some of the most important gestures and what they mean. The bunraku section has diagrams showing how the puppets are constructed and manipulated. Main character types are explained for each genre, and in the noh section some of the most common masks are pictured. There is also a description of the stage in each case and its role within the drama.

The contemporary section features ten selected plays then describes major trends and personalities that have influenced theatre in Japan in recent years.

The book also features a listings section, giving contact details for all major theatres in Japan.

teachers workshops

report: japan 21 teachers workshops autumn 2004

Japan 21 held three workshops for teachers in the autumn term, 2004, in Bournemouth, Leicester and Preston. Workshops continue to concentrate on the key curriculum areas where Japan is taught. Geographers were invited to sessions at Preston and Leicester, both courses focussing on Key Stage 3.

Particularly popular was a session looking at where Japan fits in the KS3 strategy, given by David Weatherly, geography adviser for Devon. Sessions also covered natural hazards, the current economic situation and urban case studies.

In Bournemouth the day tied in with the ongoing "Well Hammered" exhibition at the Russell-Cotes Museum & Art Gallery. The



programme allowed participants to examine Japan-related artifacts and then take part in practical sessions based on what they had seen. Art teachers worked with woodblock printing, sumi-e (ink brush painting) and paper-based projects. Drama teachers used exhibits relating to Noh drama as a starting point, then went on to learn the chant and movement for a section of a play, together with its musical accompaniment.

Drama teachers were also invited to Leicester, and an art course ran at Preston. In Preston, the Japan Foundation London Language Centre provided a taster day for teachers interested in setting up Japanese language courses. Participants learned some basic Japanese and had the opportunity to discuss resources, staffing, accreditation and other issues relating to the teaching of Japanese at primary and secondary levels.

future workshops

Japan 21 is currently rethinking the format of workshops. At the moment there are no definite dates for the coming year, but more information will be available soon. Look out for news in the next issue of Japan in focus and on the website: www.japan21.org.uk

International Day at Kings Norton Girls' School and Language College, Birmingham. 22nd October 2004.

International Day means the school's timetable is suspended for the day, and pupils from all year groups participate in activities and workshops to learn more about particular countries and global issues. Year 7 pupils spent the day learning about Japan. Their day involved reading and writing haiku, origami, learning about the

country, making and eating sushi and sumi-e (ink brush painting). The workshops were mainly run by experts in their field, contacted via Japan 21's 'Access to Experts' list, but also by staff at Kings Norton Girls' School and Katherine and Hiroko from Japan 21.

The day was a tremendous success. The students were given an insight into a culture that until then they knew little about, and it has fired their enthusiasm to find out more about Japan and other countries beyond their immediate sphere of

influence. 'We learnt a lot about how Japanese people live,' said Bethany and Stephanie, Year 7 pupils, 'It was great to use the special brushes for sumi-e and we enjoyed learning to write our names in Japanese.'

From a teacher's point of view, being able to provide the pupils with such high quality workshops was fantastic. These people provided an in-depth knowledge and superb skill level, and it was a privilege to be able to work with and learn from them.

Clare Strong, King's Norton Girls School

If undelivered, please return to:

Japan 21, Swire House 59 Buckingham Gate London SW1E 6AJ