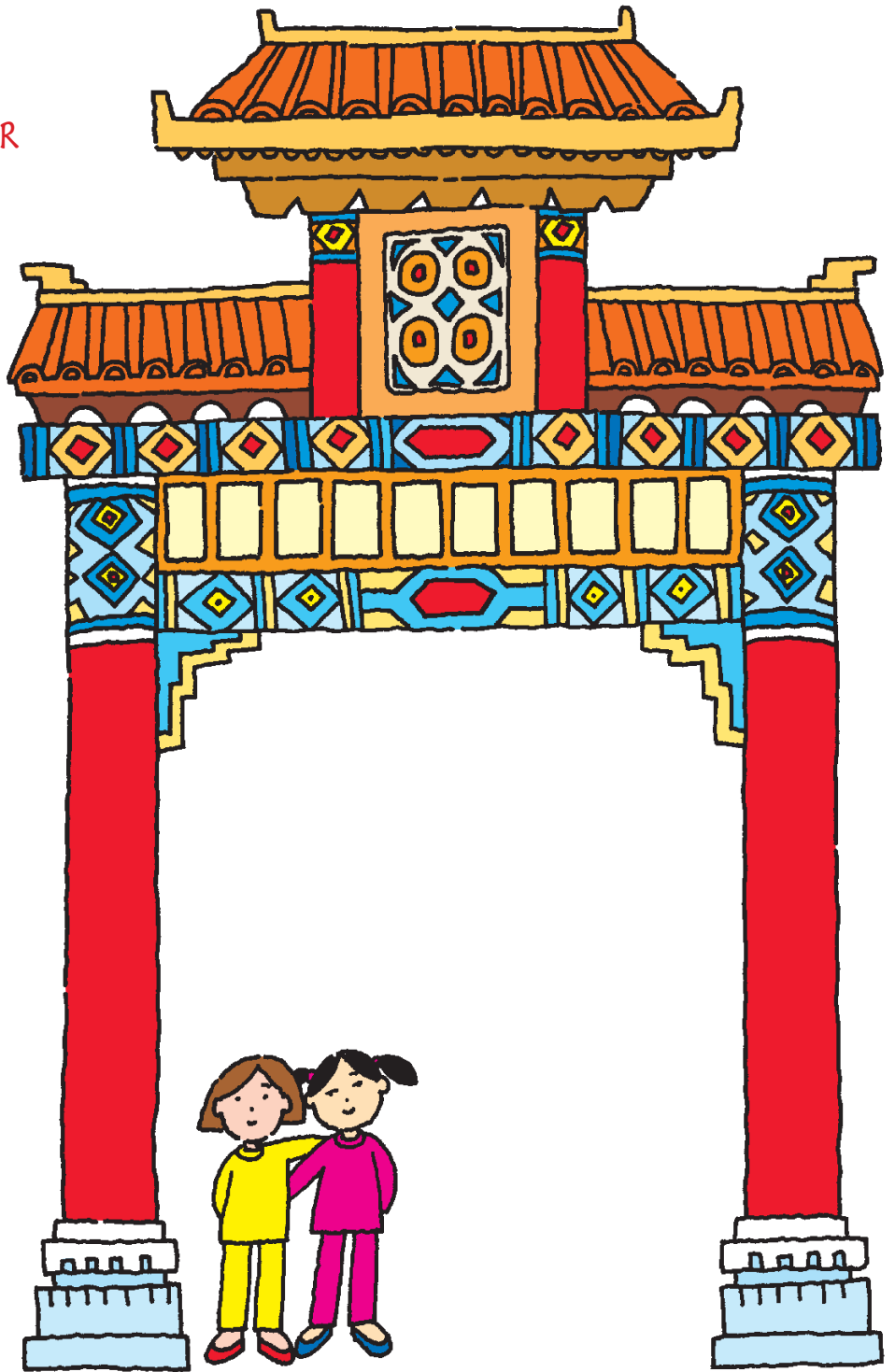


INTRODUCE CHINA WITH ACTIVITIES AND CRAFTS WITH A FLAVOR OF ITS UNIQUE CULTURE. LEARN ABOUT A PEOPLE WHO LOVE NATURE AND HAVE CONTRIBUTED AMAZING INNOVATIONS IN SCIENCE AND ART.

Begin your study of China by locating it on a world map. Children will discover that this huge country, the third largest in the world, is found in eastern Asia. It can't be missed...bigger than all of Europe! Have students follow the outline of China with their fingers and ask if they think, as some say, that China is shaped like a chicken, with its head in the northeast and its tail in the northwest. Locate the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers and follow their paths from the coast inland. Point out China's varied landscape—its plateaus, the Himalayan Mountains (which include Mount Everest), and its deserts. Explain that although China has many very large cities, most of its people live and work in the countryside. China is the most populated country in all the world—1,295,480,400 according to 2004 statistics, or almost 1.3 billion! Write this number on the chalkboard and name the place value of each number—to the billionth place.

WELCOME

Introduce your study of China with a dazzling entrance to your classroom. Create a decorative gate, with distinctive curved roof and pillars, from a

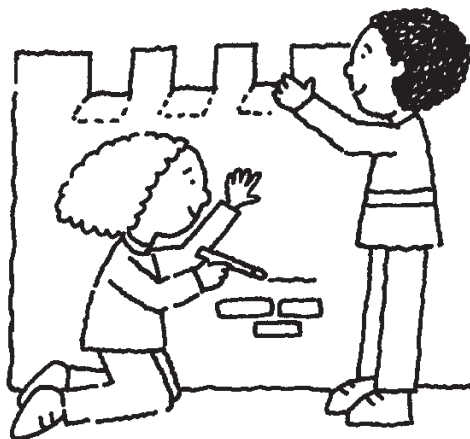


GATEWAY TO CHINA

large sheet of Kraft paper. Paint the gate in bright colors and attach it around your classroom door. Stir everyone's curiosity by surrounding the entrance with objects that relate to China—the Chinese zodiac, kites, compasses, yo-yos, rice paper, giant pandas, and dragons. Gates once served as entrances to entire walled villages. Painted in bright shades of blue, green, gold, and red—a sign of nobility, these gates later marked the entrances to public buildings, courtyards, and parks.

GREAT WALL OF CHINA

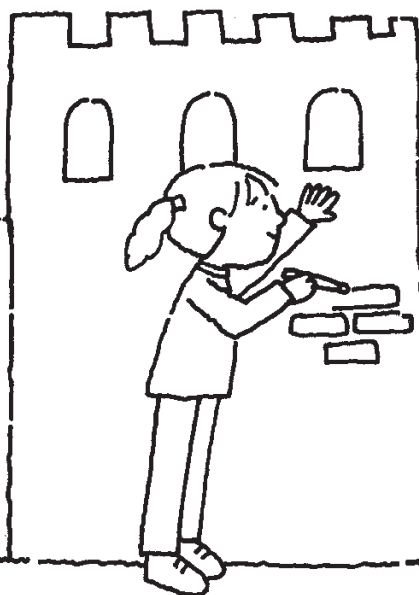
One of the most spectacular structures in the world is China's Great Wall. Over two thousand years ago, King Chen, the First Supreme Emperor of China, decided to build the wall to protect his people from the fierce nomadic tribes that raided farms and villages along the northern border. It took almost ten long years of back-breaking work to build the wall, which winds over 4000 miles, stands 26 feet tall, and is 20 feet wide. One million people labored to build it. You'll find more information to share about this amazing structure in the book *The Great Wall of China* by Leonard Everett Fisher (Aladdin), and kids will remember it when they make a classroom model from lengths of Kraft paper. Have them work in



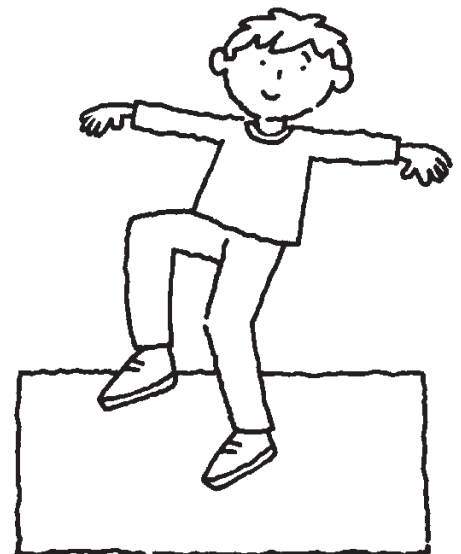
small groups to make sections of the wall, cutting two slits and folding the section down as shown. Draw rectangles to represent the bricks and stones which were used to build it. Create several watchtowers complete with windows by using taller sheets of paper with the same slits and folds along the top edge. Attach the sections and towers along classroom walls to make your own spectacular Great Wall of China!

PEOPLE OF INVENTION

For thousands of years, China had little to do with the rest of the world. With natural borders such as the world's highest mountains, long sea coasts, huge deserts, and tropical forests, China grew into a great civilization without outside influences. In what is called the Middle Kingdom, China enjoyed a great civilization. These ancient Chinese people were the first to create paper, printing, porcelain, silk, fireworks, magnetic compasses, yo-yos, wheelbarrows, earthquake monitors, astronomical clocks, star charts, playing cards, ocean-going boats, ship rudders, kites, umbrellas, abacuses, fishing



reels, parachutes, gun powder, and paper money. Introduce children to several of these inventions through a series of storybooks by Yin Chang...*The Story of Paper*, *The Story of Noodles*, *The Story of Chopsticks*, and *The Story of Kites* (Holiday House). Then introduce your students to the process of making paper with the instructions found at www.bcpl.info/kidspage/kids_flem_papermaking.html. Although the first paper made in China was created from bamboo, the papermaking experience will introduce kids to the idea that the first paper was made by hand.



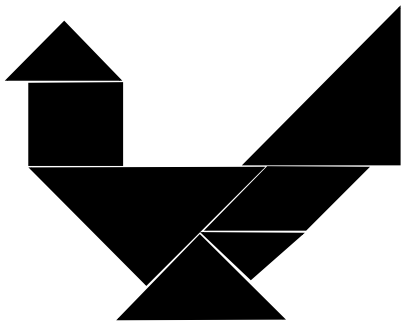
MORNING EXERCISES

Physical fitness is taken very seriously in China, and Chinese people young and old begin each day with a set of exercises known as Tai chi. Originally derived from the martial arts and before that from the natural movements of animals, Tai chi is a sequence of slow movements performed smoothly and gracefully. They are meditative exercises designed to bring calmness and relaxation to the body. Lead your class in practicing exercises which mimic the

motion of birds and animals—a bear, a crane, etc., emphasizing the slow, smooth, graceful flow of the movement. Does everyone feel relaxed?

TANGRAM INGENUITY

Ancient Chinese puzzles known as tangrams challenge the mind to create pictures out of seven geometric shapes. Introduce children to tangrams with the reproducible puzzle pattern. Duplicate a pattern for each child and ask them to cut apart the shapes. Then encourage students to recreate the designs on the page and try to create some designs of their own as well. Older children may enjoy writing an original story to complement the tangram. Students may also enjoy solving the interactive tangram puzzles on the PBS Kids site at <http://pbskids.org/cyberchase/games/area/area.html>.



PAINTING & CALLIGRAPHY

For thousands of years, the people of China have created beautiful works of art using brush-painting and calligraphy. Since the Chinese people love nature, their paintings focus on its beauty. Artists paint landscapes with colored inks and a variety of brushes made out of wolf or rabbit hair. Introduce your class to brush-painting by sharing special books such as *Liang and the Magic Paint-*

brush by Demi (Holt) and *Tye May and the Magic Brush* by Molly Bang (HarperTrophy). Explore this art technique and talk about the “feeling” that brush strokes give to a painting. To complete a painting, an artist writes a few words in calligraphy to explain the work and then adds his seal or “chop.” Since ancient times, Chinese artists have stamped their “chops”—their names or signs—on their work. Like a signature, a chop indicates who created the art.

Calligraphy, the art of writing with a brush and ink, is more than just handwriting. It is a true art form that takes many years of practice to master. The Chinese language does not have an alphabet. Instead, pictures or a combination of brush strokes are used to represent ideas or objects. The Chinese language has about fifty thousand characters, and every written word is a work of art. For further exploration of Chinese calligraphy, check out the useful resource book, *Long Is A Dragon: Chinese Writing for Children* by Peggy Goldstein (Scholastic). Invite kids to try their hand at brush-painting and calligraphy. Provide each child with a sheet of paper, paint, and brushes. Suggest that they paint something from nature such as a mountain, a tree, forest, or ocean, encouraging them to use light strokes as they paint. Copy several Chinese characters on the chalkboard and have children add them to their painting. Then attach chopsticks to the sides of each painting and wind the paper onto the chopsticks to form a scroll.

TREE

MOUNTAIN

MOON

SUN

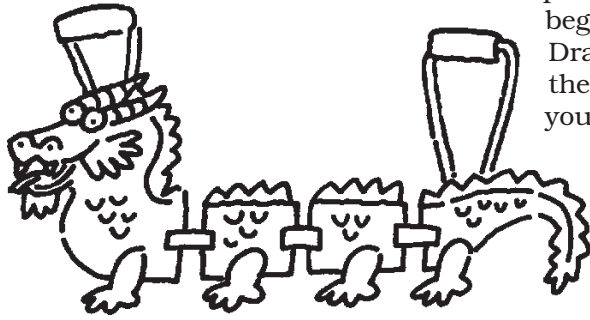
OCEAN

MAKING SILK

Ancient China’s most successful export was silk, and they kept the art of making it a secret for over 3000 years. Mulberry trees and silkworm moths are needed for the production of silk. After mating, the female moth lays hundreds of eggs which hatch within seven days into silkworms called larvae. The ravenous larva eats only fresh mulberry leaves and grows so fast that it sheds its skin four times in the next month. Fourteen days later, the larva spins a cocoon made from a fluid it secretes. The silkworm, now called a pupa, breaks out of the cocoon as an adult moth. At just the right moment, the silk farmer drops the cocoon into boiling water which unravels it into a long thread of silk. The threads are then twisted into fibers of various thickness and woven into a fabric that is light, shiny, and beautiful. Share the life cycle of the silkworm moth with your class and bring articles of silk clothing for children to examine. Then share a folk tale about an Empress who finds a cocoon unraveling in her morning tea—*The Empress and the Silkworm* by Lily Toy Hong (Albert Whitman). The final note of the book provides further information about the history of silk.

CHINESE DRAGONS

For people in China, the dragon represents many positive aspects of their culture...peace, wisdom, and power. It brings happiness and good fortune. A classic Chinese dragon has the head of a camel, the horns of a



stag, eyes of a demon, scales of a fish, claws of an eagle, ears of a bull, and the long whiskers of a cat. It can make itself as small as a silkworm or large enough to cast a shadow on the whole world! Share the book Demi's **Dragons and Fantastic Creatures** (Holt), which beautifully illustrates a variety of dragons and traditional Chinese creatures. Kids will enjoy creating a dragon puppet from the reproducible pattern. You'll need crayons, 1/2-inch-wide paper ribbon, string, and plastic straws. Write the following Chinese Mother Goose rhyme on the chalkboard and read it together as the kids work their colorful puppets!

CHINESE DRAGON

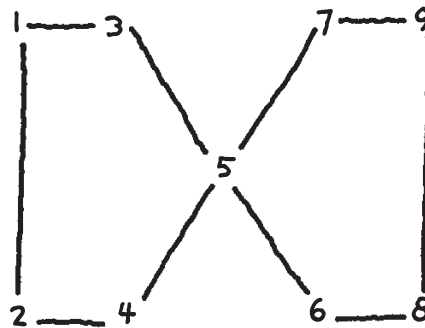
AS THE SUN CAME UP, A BALL OF RED,
I FOLLOWED MY FRIEND
WHEREVER HE LED.
HE THOUGHT HIS FAST HORSES
WOULD LEAVE ME IN A SPIN,
BUT I RODE THIS DRAGON AS
SWIFT AS THE WIND!

MAGIC DRAGON PUZZLE

Legend has it that thousands of years ago, Emperor Fu-his of China was walking along a river bank when he came across magic footprints in the sand. Instantly, he knew these markings were made by a dragon who brought a message from the heavens. Since the

emperor was very smart, he began to solve the puzzle. Draw the figure below on the chalkboard and invite your students to solve the same puzzle. Ask children to add all of the even numbers and then all of the odd numbers, omitting the numeral 5 in the

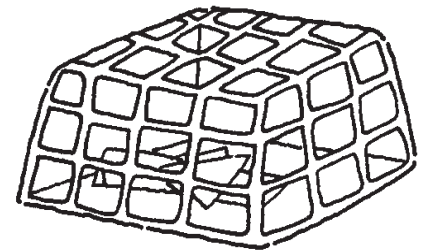
center. Kids will notice that both answers are the same—20. The emperor believed that the dragon's footprints taught a lesson...that all things must be in balance. Discuss the idea of balance with your students as it relates to their life. Enjoying a variety of activities—but not too much of any one thing—can create this balance....activities such as school, play, sleep, television, reading, spending time with family, etc.



CRICKETS IN CHINA

In China, it is not unusual for children to have crickets as pets. They are considered good luck! Thousands of years ago, Chinese royalty kept crickets in golden cages and listened to their singing. In reality, crickets do not really sing but rub their wings together to create a chirping sound. The faster the cricket rubs its wings together, the higher the trill. Next time children hear crickets at night, ask them to listen to the different cricket songs. And be sure to share a few of these interesting cricket books...**Chirping Crickets (Let's-Read-and-Find-**

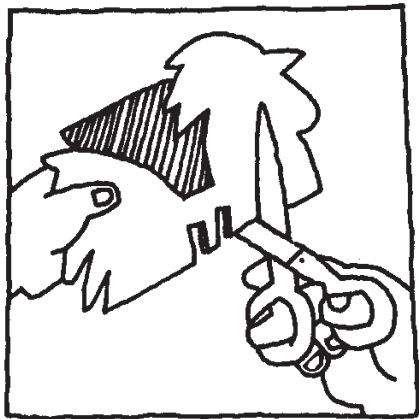
Out Science 2) by Melvin Berger (HarperTrophy), **The Very Quiet Cricket** by Eric Carle (Philomel), and **Old Cricket** by Lisa Wheeler (Atheneum). Older children will enjoy hearing a few pages each day from the Newbery winner **The Cricket in Times Square** by George Selden (Yearling). After sharing a story, kids will have fun making their own pet crickets with a paper-folding technique. Young children in China learn the basics of paper folding at an early age. Invite your students to make a folded paper cricket by following the instructions with the pattern. Ask them to bring a plastic jar, berry basket, or small box so that they can make a special home for their pet cricket. Now, if only they could sing!



CHINESE PAPER CUTS

Papercuts are very popular in China. Designs of animals, flowers, or opera characters are meticulously cut out of paper by artists who work freehand. Having made so many papercuts, they follow a design on paper as it were drawn there. The image in their mind moves the scissors and they cut in one long, continuous motion, never stopping. New Year is a popular time for papercuts, which decorate lanterns, walls, windows, and doorways. Since 2005 is the year of the rooster, children may like to create a rooster papercut. Begin by sharing a rooster readaloud with your class...**How the Rooster Got His Crown** by Amy Lowry Poole (Holiday House), a Miao tale from west-

ern China. After reading the story, give students a papercut experience with the rooster pattern. Duplicate it on various colors of paper and have kids follow the simple steps to make a papercut. Display your "Chinese papercuts" on a bulletin board with the title "Happy New Year—Year of the Rooster."



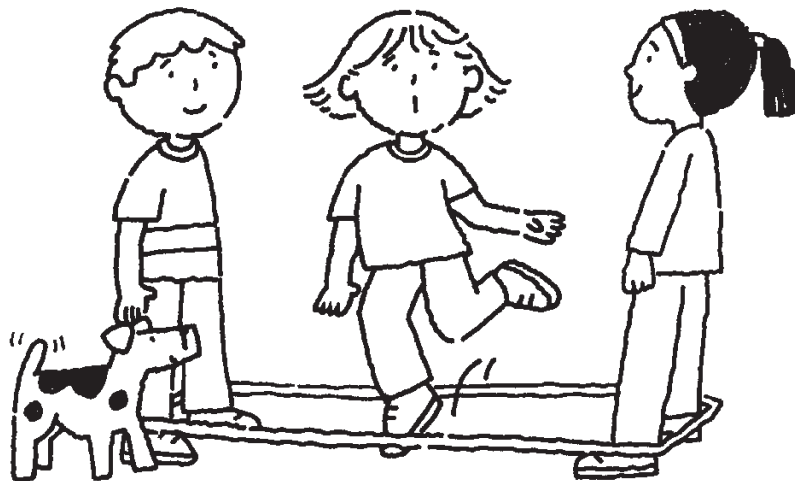
STORYTELLING

Like many cultures, storytelling is an art form in China—entertainment for people of all ages. The storyteller of long ago told traditional folktales and martial art stories, while today, contemporary stories are told. Public storytellers in China attract large crowds and use props to tell their stories. Share two winning fairy tales with your class... **Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China** retold by Ai-Ling Louie (Putnam) and the Caldecott Medal winner, **Lon Po Po: A Red-Riding Hood Story from China** by Ed Young (Philomel). Then have children work in cooperative groups to create a tale for storytelling, perhaps the story of The Three Bears using China's own panda bears in the lead roles. Storytelling is always a winner!

CHINESE GAMES

Games are a favorite pastime in China. Known for their expertise in ping pong, Chinese people enjoy a version of check-

ers popular the world over, a version of chess called elephant chess, basketball, and volleyball. Their acrobatic skills are phenomenal and have been practiced and celebrated in China for centuries. Acrobatics began as a way for farmers to make a living during the winter months. This may explain why the props used are often common household items such as dishes and chairs. Today, acrobatic troupes tour the world balancing precariously on stacks of chairs or bicycles! Challenge your students to balance a pencil or chopstick on the end of their finger to get a feel for the necessary skill used in acrobatics. Then play a game popular with school children in China—"Catch the Dragon's Tail." This game, which honors the beloved Chinese dragon, is fun played indoors or out with ten or more children. Ask kids to stand in a line and place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. The player at the front of the line is the head of the dragon and, upon signal, tries to catch the tail of the dragon—the last person in line. It isn't an easy feat with everyone trying to hold onto each others' shoulders! If the head catches the tail, that person continues as the head. But if the body breaks, the head becomes the tail and the next person in line becomes the dragon's head. Great fun!



CHINESE JUMP ROPE

Most children are familiar with Chinese Jump Rope, a form of rope jumping made popular in China. A Chinese jump rope is an elastic cord with ends tied together. To play, two children hook the rope around their ankles and stand five to ten feet apart. The rope is tightly stretched to make a rectangular shape, and the jumper does a variety of jumps and crosses with the cord. As jump rope rhymes are chanted, the rope is gradually moved higher and higher up the calf to increase difficulty. For complete directions, go to the website www.gameskidsplay.net/games/other_games/chinese_jump_rope.htm. Then teach kids some easy jumps (below) and this popular jump rope chant used in China:

A LITTLE BALL, A BANANA,
A PEAR.

TWENTY-ONE FLOWERS LOOKING
EVERYWHERE.

TWO-FIVE-SIX, TWO-FIVE-SEVEN,
TWO-EIGHT, TWO-NINE, THIRTY-
ONE.

EASY JUMPS

HOP-HOP: Stand on one side of rope; hop on one foot into loop, then out of loop. Try it from the other side of rope.

JUMP-JUMP: Stand on one side of rope and jump into loop with

both feet, then out of loop. Try from the other side of rope. IN AND OUT: Stand with both feet inside loop. Jump out, landing with one foot on either side of loop. Try to jump back in loop.

A TASTE OF CHINA

Eating is one of the joys of life in China. Preparation of Chinese food requires great care and, in almost all cases, longer than does the actual cooking. The most important utensils in a Chinese kitchen are the cleaver to chop the food, the wok to cook the food, a soup ladle, and chopsticks. Display some of these utensils for children to see.

Rice is the mainstay in Chinese meals and treated with utmost respect. Each grain is swept up, cleaned, and cooked. Soy beans, another important crop, are very rich in protein yet inexpensive to grow. They are available in many grocery stores today as "edamame." Growing rice and soy beans is the way China feeds its huge population.

A very special flavor used in many Chinese dishes is ginger. Buy a fresh gingerroot at your grocery store and cut a small slice so that children can see, touch, and smell this Chinese spice. Tea, the most important drink for young and old, is traditionally served without sugar, lemon, or milk. Treat kids to rice and green tea to introduce them to a "taste of China."

TALES OF CHINA

Search your school and public library for these popular books with a Chinese theme. Make them available in your classroom for students to enjoy.

The Empty Pot

by Demi (Holt)

The Story of Ping

by Marjorie Flack (Viking)

Two of Everything

by Lilly Toy Hong (Whitman)

Chin Yu Min and the Ginger Cat

by Jennifer Armstrong (Random House)

Tiki Tiki Tembo

by Arlene Mosel (Holt)

The Dragon's Pearl

by Julie Lawson and Paul Morin (Clarion)

The Dragon's Robe

by Deborah Nourse Lattimore (HarperCollins)

I Hate English!

by Ellen Levine (Scholastic)

Why Rat comes First: The Story of the Chinese Zodiac

by Clara Yen (Children's Press)

The Dragon Prince: A Chinese Beauty & the Beast Tale

by Laurence Yep (HarperTrophy)

Mouse Match: A Chinese Folktale

by Ed Young (Harcourt)

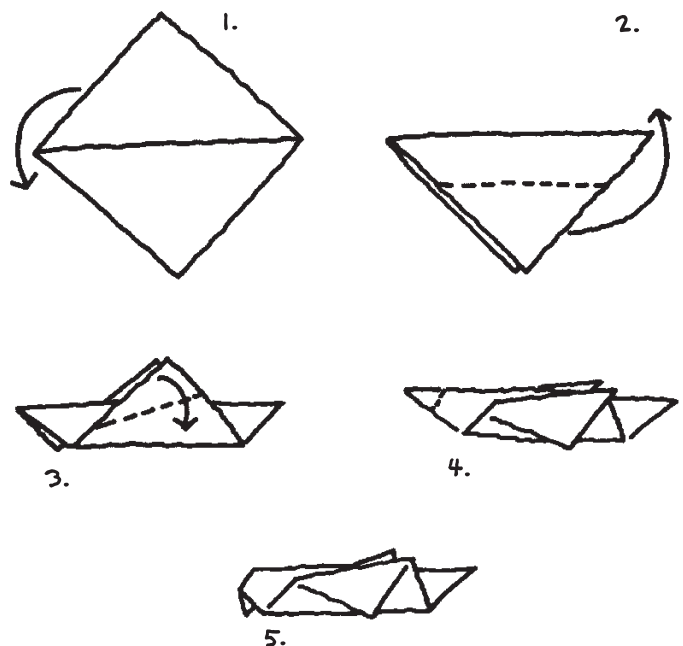
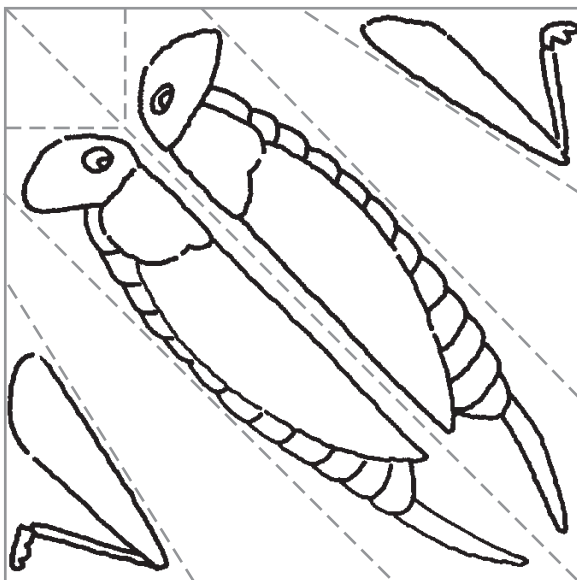
The Magical Starfruit Tree: A Chinese Folktale

by Rosallind C. Wang (Beyond Words)

The Lost Horse: A Chinese Folktale

by Ed Young (Silver Whistle)

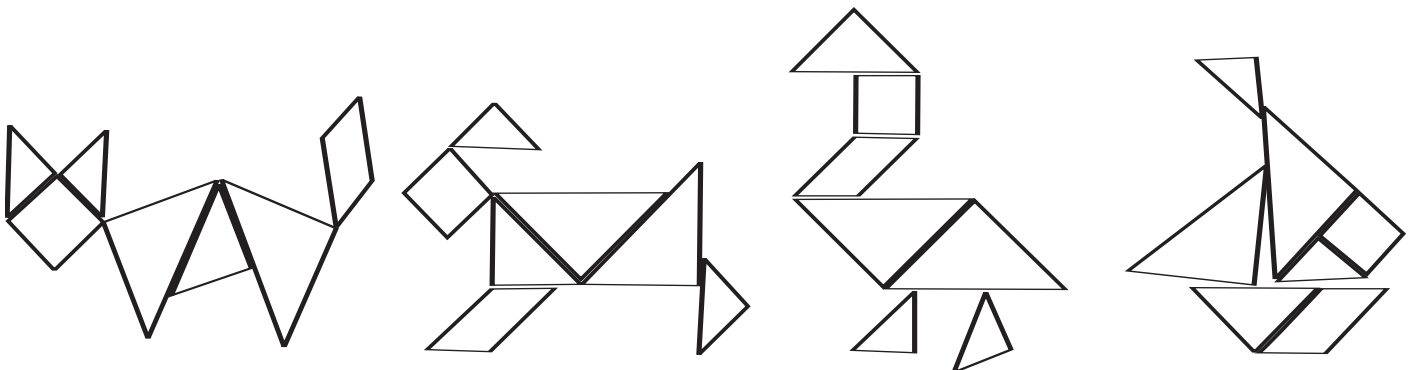
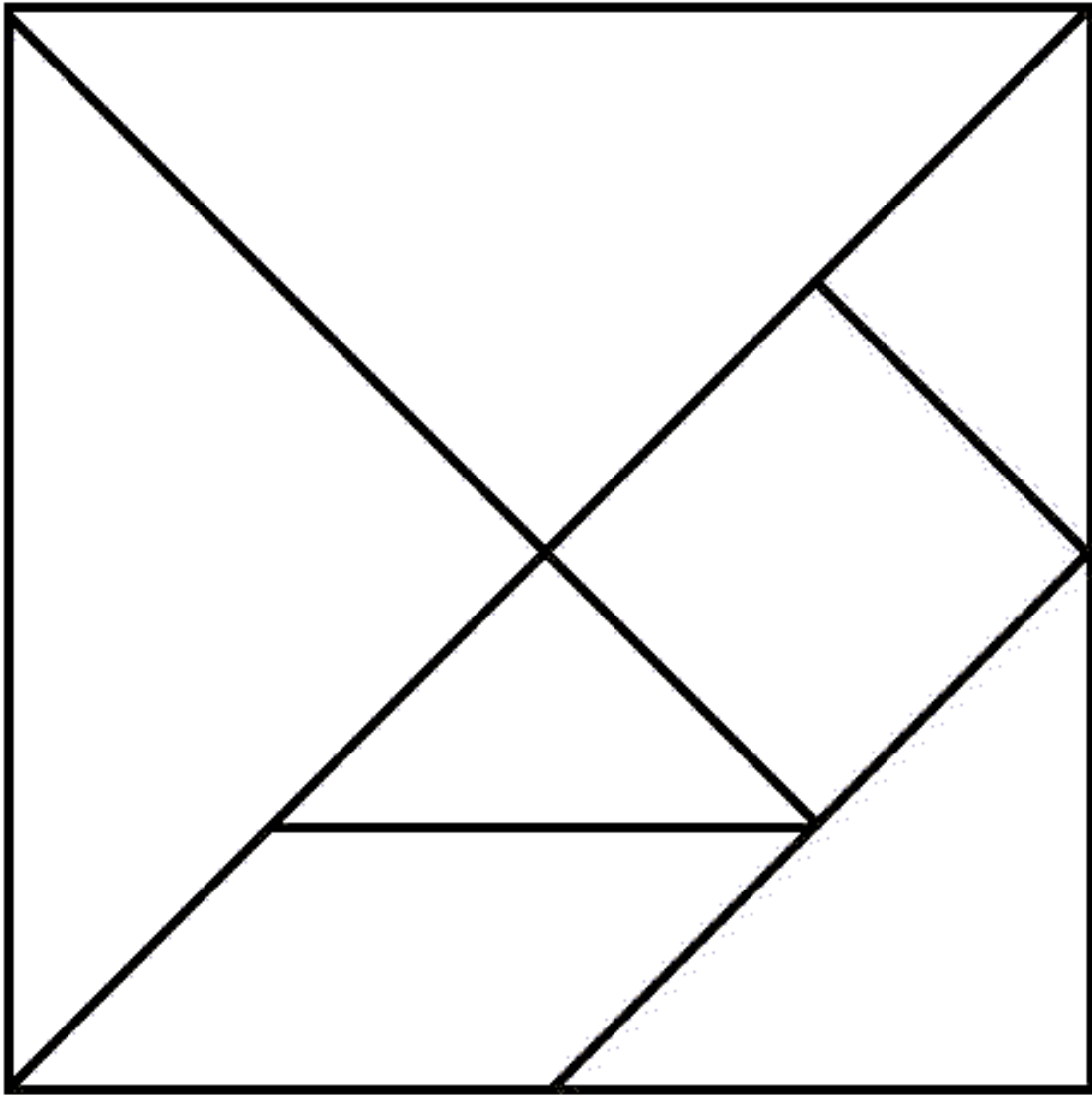
CRICKET PATTERN



Name _____

THE TANGRAM CHALLENGE

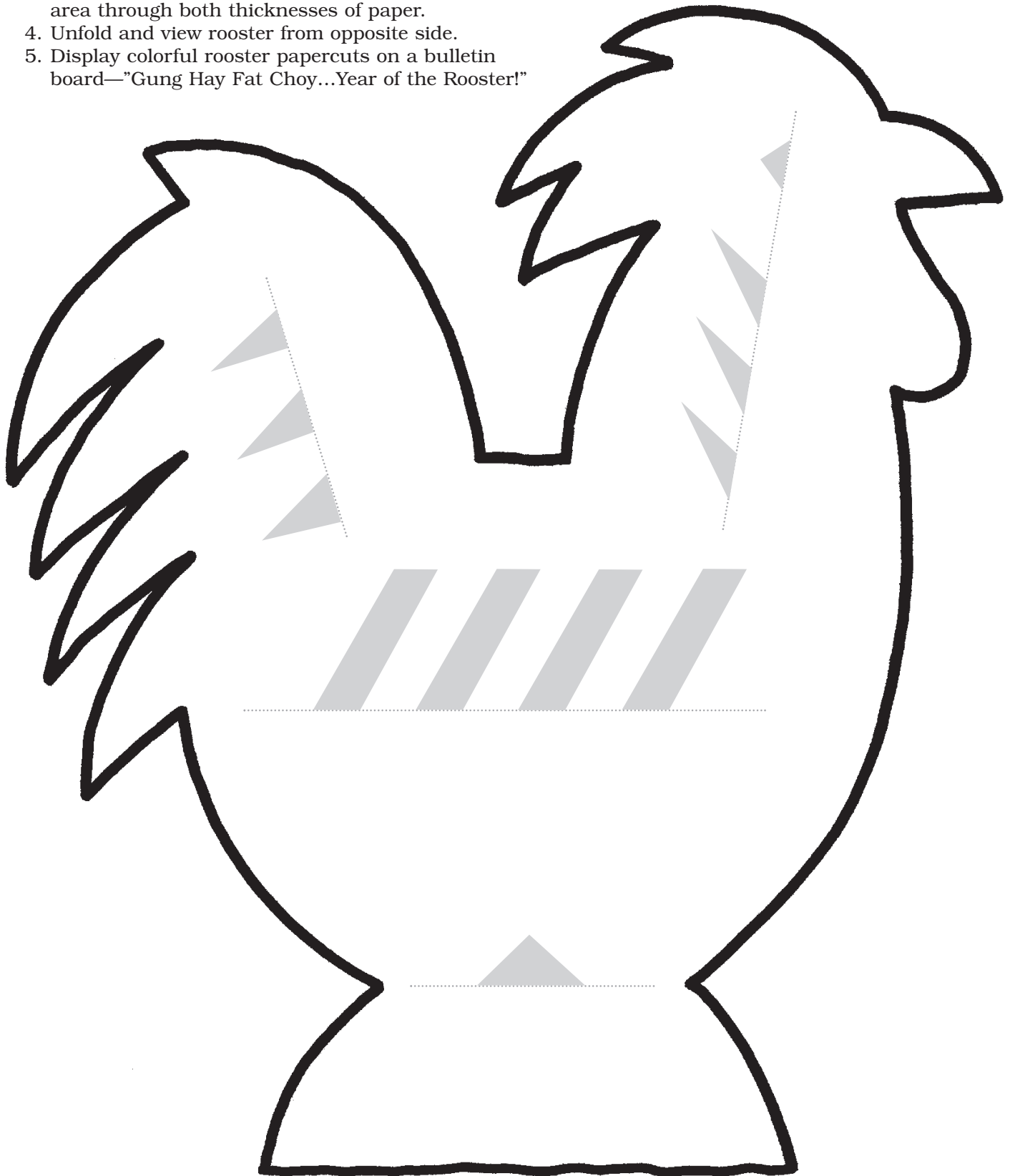
Take the tangram challenge! A tangram is an ancient Chinese puzzle that uses seven shapes to create objects. Carefully cut apart the tangram shapes. Make the cat, the dog, the goose, and the boat. Try other shapes, too.



Now write a story about a cat, a dog, a goose, and a boat.

ROOSTER PAPER CUT PATTERN

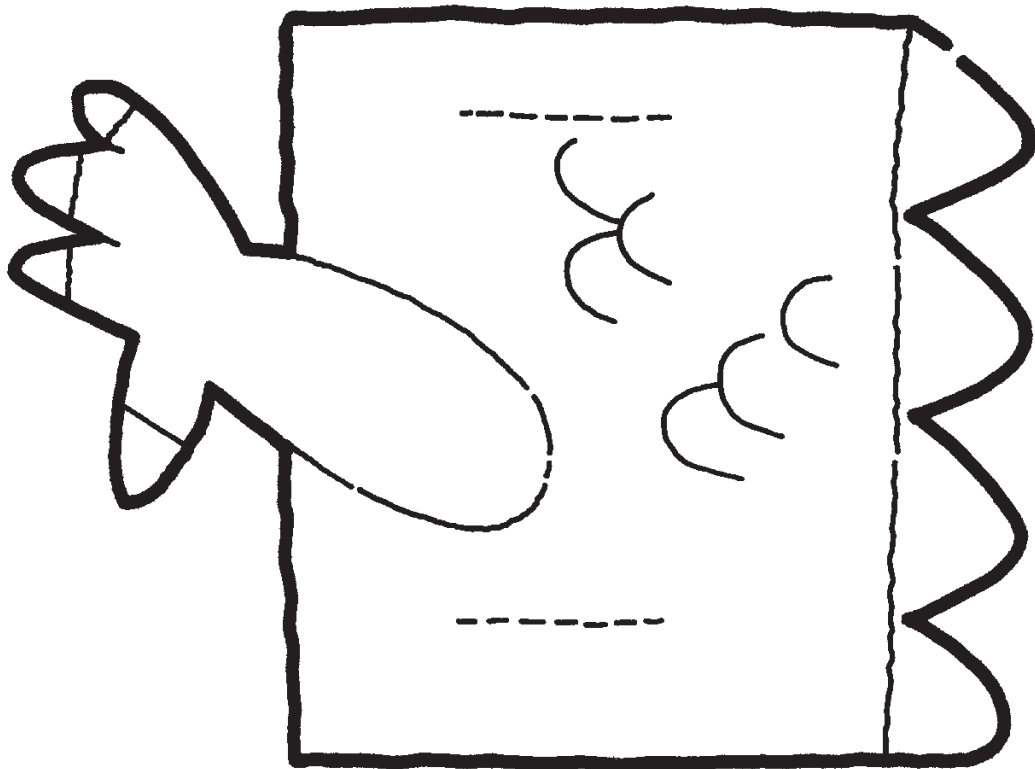
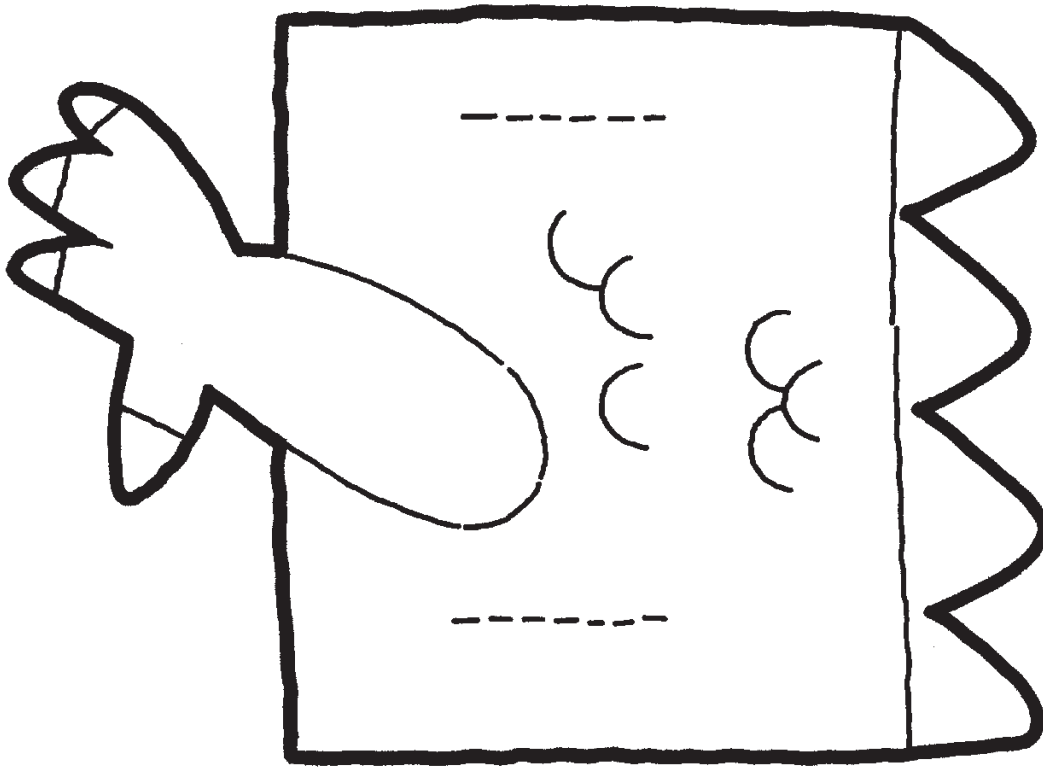
1. Duplicate pattern on colored paper.
2. Cut out rooster on heavy outline.
3. Lightly fold each dotted line and cut out shaded area through both thicknesses of paper.
4. Unfold and view rooster from opposite side.
5. Display colorful rooster papercuts on a bulletin board—"Gung Hay Fat Choy...Year of the Rooster!"



DRAGON PUPPET HEAD



DRAGON PUPPET BODY



DRAGON PUPPET TAIL

