

**Lesson Title**

Suminagashi - The Japanese Art of Paper Marbling/ Origami Cranes

**Class and Grade level(s)**

Art, 5-6<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Goals and Objectives****The student will:**

- learn about the basic beliefs and practices of Shinto in Japan
- discuss the relationship between the beliefs of Shintoism and the art of *suminagashi* or paper marbling
- explore the ancient traditional art of Suminagashi or paper marbling
- create designs and monoprints
- use the printed paper to create origami cranes

**Time required/class periods needed**

3 40-minutes class periods

**Primary source bibliography**

<http://www.religioustolerance.org/shinto.htm>

<http://www.suminagashi.com/>

<http://origami.org.uk/origamicrane>

**Other resources used**

Suminagashi: The Japanese Art of Marbling : A Practical Guide

Religion in Japan and a look at Cultural Transmission

<http://artsmarts4kids.blogspot.com/2008/11/paper-marbling.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J410yQ7PIIE>

**Required materials/supplies**

Water

Sumi Brushes or watercolor brushes

Combs

Small palettes

Sumi ink

Plastic or other suitable trays large enough for paper

9"x9" white drawing paper (at least 2 per student)

Handouts: Question sheet for Shinto video (below)

Origami folded crane instruction sheet (<http://www.origami-fun.com/origami-crane.html> )

**Vocabulary**

*Shinto*

*Kami*

*Suminagashi*

Paper Marbling

*Origami*

*Sumi*

Monoprint

Purification

## **Procedure**

### **Day 1**

Show short video about the Shinto religion in Japan and the ancient art of *suminagashi*, an art form practiced by Shinto priests since the 12<sup>th</sup> century

[http://www.metacafe.com/watch/2024609/what\\_is\\_shinto/](http://www.metacafe.com/watch/2024609/what_is_shinto/)

Hand out question sheet and read together

Show video of *suminagashi* technique

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J410yQ7PIIE>

Demonstrate technique

Show examples of marbled paper, *Suminagashi: The Japanese Art of Marbling : A Practical Guide* and ask students to identify the Shinto beliefs expressed in *suminagashi*

### **Day 2**

Place layers of newspaper, a tray of water, *sumi* ink and brushes on each table. Have paper towels for drying hands. Drying rack should be empty and ready.

Put students in groups of 3 to 4. Have students put on paint shirts and write their names on two pieces of paper and put them aside.

Review procedure and materials with students

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J410yQ7PIIE>

Students will create two sheets each. (More if there is time)

Cleanup

Remind students that Shinto is all about cleanliness and purification so after cleaning up their table, they should wash their hands and get a drink of water.

TEACHERS: When papers are dry, stack and flatten under weight before the next class.

### **Day 3**

Have rulers and pencils and flattened paper ready. Teacher needs also to provide scrap 9x9 paper for first crane folding attempt.

Tell students they will be making origami cranes with their marbled paper

Show Wikipedia page defining Origami

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origami>

Explain that Shinto followers often use origami to create shapes that they leave around Shinto shrines to honor *kami*. Explain that *origami* paper is never cut out of respect for the tree spirit that gave its life to make the paper. *Origami*, in fact, means “folding paper.”

Hand out marbled paper and the handout on how to fold a crane,

Show the animated video “How to make an Origami Crane”

<http://origami.org.uk/origamicrane>

Go through directions once together then let them make one on their own using scrap paper.

Then give them the rest of the period to fold cranes from their marbled paper.

Display cranes in the library or hang them with monofilament from the ceiling.

Remind students that Shinto is all about cleanliness and purification so after cleaning up their table, they should wash their hands and get a drink of water.

### **Assessment/evaluation**

Did students complete the question sheet correctly?

Did students participate in discussions on *Shinto* and *suminagashi*?

Did the student create two sheets of marbled paper and an *origami* crane?

Did the student follow directions?

### **The Basics of Shinto Questions – Possible Answers/Teachers' Guide**

Answer the following questions using the website:

[www.religioustolerance.org/shinto.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/shinto.htm)

**1. In your own words, how would you describe Shinto when it first began in 500 BCE?**

Possible Answers: Focus of followers was on nature, having children, fortunetelling, heroes, medicinal practices

**2. What significant event happened around 700 CE?**

Answer: The ruling family said they came from a heavenly place and Shinto became one of two official religions in Japan.

**3. What makes Shinto unique?**

Answer: No founder, written scriptures, religious law, organized priesthood

**4. What is a *kami* and how is it different from the Judeo-Christian gods?**

Answer: *kami* is a representation of a god and can take the form of a natural object, an exceptional person or something that can't even be explained

**5. What are the similarities between Shinto and Buddhism?**

Answer: General optimistic view of the world and humankind, many Buddhists have Shinto weddings

**6. Describe 3 general beliefs of Shinto followers:**

Possible Answers: Code of Confucianism, respect for ancestors, human life and nature is sacred, desire for sincerity or true heart, morality, desire for peace

**7. List the 4 Affirmations:**

1) **Tradition and the family:** traditions passed down through marriage, birth

2) **Love of nature:** it is sacred and the way to be close to god

3) **Physical cleanliness:** baths, wash hands and mouth

4) **Matsuri:** worship and honor of *kami*, ancestral spirits

## **The Basics of Shinto Questions Handout**

- 1. In your own words, how would you describe Shinto when it first began in 500 BCE?**
  
- 2. What significant event happened around 700 CE?**
  
- 3. What makes Shinto unique?**
  
- 4. What is a kami and how is it different from the Judeo-Christian gods?**
  
- 5. What are the similarities between Shinto and Buddhism?**
  
- 6. Describe 3 general beliefs of Shinto followers:**
  
- 7. List the 4 Affirmations:**
  - 1)**
  - 2)**
  - 3)**
  - 4)**

**Assessment/evaluation**