



# Japanese Book Making Unit

## Grade Level:

Upper Middle and High School

## This unit contains three lessons:

Japanese Stab Binding – a traditional Japanese book-making technique.

Orizomegami – Japanese art of paper dyeing. Dyed papers can be used to cover books.

Haiku – Traditional Japanese poetry. Students can fill handmade books with poetry.



## Japanese Stab Binding

**Background/ Key Ideas:** This book is a traditional Japanese style. It uses a simple stitch pattern that leads to several variations. Traditionally the pages are folded and that is recommended here.

**Materials:** Book Board (or “found” cardboard), 1 piece 5½ “ x 8½ “,  
1 piece 1” x 5½ “, 1 piece 7 3/8” x 5½ “  
Linen tape (or Tyvek or muslin or an old sheet)  
1½ yard waxed linen (or embroidery floss)  
2 decorative papers for covering the assembled book board  
10½ “ x 7½ “ (see **Orizomegami** instructions below or store bought)  
Signature papers 12 each at 16½ “ x 5¼ “ (8¼ “ x 5¼ “ when folded ) (this will make 2 signatures of 6 each)  
End papers - 2 pieces 8¼ “ x 5¼ “  
Glue  
Darning needle

2 bull clips with scrap paper shields  
Either a nail and hammer or hand drill

- Procedure:**
1. Fold each sheet of signature paper in half to measure  $8\frac{1}{4}$ " x  $5\frac{1}{4}$ ". The open end of the folded paper will be bound in the spine of the book.
  2. The back of the book is a single sheet of board measuring  $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $5\frac{1}{2}$ ", a little larger than the signature papers.
  3. The front cover boards are two pieces; a hinge that is  $1$ " x  $5\frac{1}{2}$ ", and one board measuring  $7\frac{3}{8}$ " x  $5\frac{1}{2}$ ". Lay the back board above the two boards that make the front cover, match the outside edges of the front boards to match the back board.
  4. Glue the hinge materials to the small space left between the front boards, press until you are sure the hinge is stuck; flip front cover over and glue the remainder of the hinge to the back of the boards.
  5. Glue the decorative (or **Orizomegami**) papers to the front and back boards.
  6. Glue the end papers to the inside of the boards, make sure the boards are mostly dry before continuing to Step 7.
  7. Assemble the front board, 2 signatures, and back board together with the bull clips.
  8. Make holes where marked with nail and hammer or hand drill, leave bull clips in place for sewing.
  9. Thread darning needle with waxed linen or embroidery floss.
  10. Insert threaded needle into hole 3. Circle around spine and reinsert into hole 3. Cross to hole 4, insert and circle spine to reinsert into hole 4. Cross thread over spine and insert into hole 4 again. Cross to insert hole 3. Cross over to hole 2, insert, circle spine and insert again into hole 2. Cross over to hole 1, insert and encircle spine back through hole 1. Encircle thread around spine and reinsert into hole 1. Cross to hole 2 and insert thread. You are now back at the beginning, tie end of thread to the beginning of thread so the knot will be over hole 3.
  11. You can leave thread hang or tie beads/ephemera to thread ends.

**Enrichment Activities:** Fill books with **Haiku Poetry** (see attached directions).

# Orizomegami

**Materials:** Water containers  
Dye inks \*\*  
Absorbent paper such as mulberry, sumi-e, rice paper, coffee filters  
Rubber gloves (optional: the inks used can stain hands and clothes)  
Paper towels  
Eye droppers  
Pipettes  
Dropper bottles

\*\*A number of inks can be used: drawing inks, Boku Undo, fiber reactive dyes, air brush inks, professional egg dying inks or food coloring (this is what I use for student work)

**Procedure:**

1. You can pleat the paper in a number of ways to prepare it for dyeing. The simple hill and valley is a basic fold. Fold again in half.
2. Accordion fold vertically in half and in half again creating consistent, regular folds.
3. At this point, place bull clips on the sides. OR, open the accordion folds and create a series of triangles and then place clips. OR, fold in many other creative ways not only placing clips on the outside but also the inside using very small bull clips.
4. Dip folded/ clipped bundle into water. This makes the paper receptive to the dye.
5. Carefully blot out most of the water with your fingers and also a towel until the bundle is just damp and not dripping.
6. Apply dye onto corners and/or edges of damp bundle.
7. To preserve some white paper squeeze the paper in the center with fingers to prevent dye from penetrating.
8. Let paper dry somewhat and carefully unfold and let dry.

**Resources:** Maurer-Mathison. Diane. *Collage, Assemblage, and Altered Art* ISBN 978-0-8230-7113-5  
Welch, Nancy. *Creative Paper Art* ISBN 0-8069-9457-6

# Haiku Poetry

- A. Haiku are poems from Japan that have 17 syllables (5- 7- 5). These poems talk about nature.
- B. Go outside. Don't talk, just find a spot and look, listen, feel, smell and hear everything you can. When I call time, come back in and write down all the things you collected in your head.
- C. Use this model for you first tries.  
LINE ONE: write something you observed  
LINE TWO: write something opposite of it  
LINE THREE: write something unexpected
- D. Here are some examples of original HAIKU:

## Traditional Japanese Haiku

### ***Basho***

The wind of Mt. Fuji  
I've brought on my fan!  
A gift from Edo

An old silent pond...  
A frog jumps into the pond,  
Splash! Silence again

The first cold shower  
Even the monkey seems to want  
A little coat of straw

### ***Soseki***

Over the wintry  
Forest, winds howl in rage  
With no leaves to blow

### ***Issa***

O snail  
Climb Mount Fuji  
But slowly, slowly!

Trusting the Buddha, good and bad,  
I bid farewell  
To the departing year

## Non-Japanese Haiku

### ***Edward Weiss***

Dry gray branches  
Surround the robin...  
Winter thaw

Hot June day--  
an otter  
slips into the sea

Student Haiku

Third grader Mrs. Didier's class  
Beaver Lake Elementary Maplewood, MN

The shiniest sun  
was up in very blue skies  
and happiness grew  
**by Cassie D.**

Haiku poems by students from  
Gainesville State School

So glad as a bird,  
I sing and chirp in good mood..  
If I just had wings  
**by David**

Depression is sad  
Like a mighty forest fire  
During a picnic  
**by Larry**

**Lesson prepared by:** Kathy Jevic  
Rabbit on the Moon Art Gallery

