

FOLD ME A POEM

by Kristine O'Connell George
illustrated by Lauren Stringer
Harcourt Children's Books Ages 6 to 10

TEACHER'S GUIDE



Join a young boy as he creates a world filled with origami creatures of all shapes and sizes out of an array of brightly colored paper. From roosters waking up and buffalo pawing the tablecloth to cheetahs racing lions and moths that yearn for butterfly colors, here is a glimpse into the vibrant imagination of a child.

★ ...a dazzling celebration of imagination.
Publishers Weekly, starred review

PRE- and POST-READING

Pre-reading:

Have you ever heard of origami before? What is it?

What do you know about origami?

What do you think the title means?

Have you ever folded origami before?

How can you fold a poem?

Visit Author's Site: www.kristinegeorge.com

Visit Illustrator's Site: www.laurenstringer.com

Questions to consider:

What is your favorite poem? Why?

Which illustration is your favorite? Why?

Does this inspire you to learn origami?

This boy obviously has a great imagination. Do you? How do you develop an imagination?

How do the animals in the story show their personalities?

Why do you think the illustrator chose the palette she did? How would this book be different if it was in all dark tones?

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

LANGUAGE ARTS

- **Reverse Origami**

Students create an origami design for an animal and then write step by step directions so their classmates can create one too. This is a great lesson in process writing and following directions.

- **Verb Review**

FOLD ME A POEM is a great book to review what a verb is and its purpose in a sentence (or poem!). Have students work in pairs to make a list of the verbs found in the book and to decide whether it is an active verb or a linking verb.

- **Haiku Critters**

Students write several haiku about their own origami creations. Remember the 5-7-5 syllable rule is a guideline and that haiku often give clues about the season and focus on the natural world. Encourage students to use their imaginations!

- **Script Writing**

Students create a dramatic puppet show using origami animals as the characters.

- **Bookmark Reading Response**

Students make an origami bookmark like in the poem, "Bookmark." Whenever a student finishes a book, have the student write a description of the book as if having a conversation with the paper giraffe.

- **Vocabulary Activity** (see page 3)

- **Folding and "Poeming"** (See page 4)



ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

MATHEMATICS

- **Finding Patterns**
After reading the book a couple of times, ask your students to brainstorm ways in which the animals can be categorized (four legs, wings, spotted, mammals etc.). Then sort the animals into charts of your own making.
- **Origami and Geometry**
Have students unfold some origami designs. What geometric shapes can they identify?
- **Mathematical patterning**
Have students draw or paint patterns on paper after studying the patterns of origami paper. Use this paper to fold animals or geometric shapes found in books or on websites about origami.

Web See "Math in Motion" for more ideas on using origami in the classroom.
<http://mathinmotion.com/>

ART and MUSIC

- **Understanding Shadows and Shapes**
Create an origami animal and set it in a well-lit situation so shadows are cast. Use this opportunity to draw light and dark, paying attention to shadows and shapes.
- **Origami Folding Song**
Sing this song to the tune "Frère Jacques" (After everyone knows the words then perform it in a round!)

*Origami
Origami
fold and crease
fold and Crease
my imagination
my imagination
brought to life
brought to life!*

SOCIAL STUDIES

- **Geography**
Study different geographies and make large dioramas in the classroom. (ie: rainforest, desert, mountains, ocean, etc.). Create origami wildlife for each environment. Create habitat for each animal using this opportunity to discuss habitat, prey vs. predator, animal relationships to land and each other. Read "Wind Storm" and discuss human impact on animal habitat.
- **History of Origami**
Research the history of origami.

INTRAPERSONAL

Sub-vocalization simply means whispering to yourself when you're trying to figure something out. Kids (and adults too!) often do this when they are reading something that is difficult to understand or when they are trying to follow directions. In a noisy environment like school, sub-vocalization helps keep your brain focused on the task. You probably naturally did this when you were making some of your origami creations. Have students think back over their work and write a brief journal about which parts of the projects made them sub-vocalize most and why. What kinds of things did they say to themselves? Did they realize they did this? When do they do this most? Why? What subjects make them do it most- often? Writing? Reading? Math?

Kitchen Imagination Challenge

The boy in the story has beautiful papers to create animals but he also uses the tablecloth, a fan and the salt shaker to bring his story to life. What if he didn't have any paper? What kinds of things could be used in a kitchen for imaginative play? What would these common kitchen items become? Can you add to the list and what they could be? (Spoon, crock, bowl, tongs, sponge, hot pad, glass, napkin, paper towel, flour or sugar.)



FOLD ME A POEM

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY

	I've heard this word before: Yes/No	I know this word. It means:	I can use this word in a new sentence:
precise			
behold			
attacked			
impatient			
fidget			
flutter			
flank			
sniff			
crease			
passenger			
behave			



FOLD ME A POEM

FOLDING AND "POEMING"

Invite students to fold an origami creature of their choice. (See page 5 for a fast and easy diagram for an origami dog.) Next, have them brainstorm what *kinds* of poems they might write about their creatures. Introduce one or all three of the possibilities below:

Process Poems Students write about folding their creature.

Mask or Persona Poems Students pretend to be their creature.

Apostrophe Poems Students speak directly to their creature(s).

Read lots of examples aloud from FOLD ME A POEM before students begin writing.

Process Poems: Poems about the process of creating their origami creature.

Examples from FOLD ME A POEM: *Possibilities, Pond, Peacocks, Snake, Recycled, Black and White Paper, White Paper, Tub, and A Song.*

Questions students might ask themselves:

*What was it like to fold my creature?
What was easy? What was hard?
Where did I have problems?
What was I thinking about as I was folding?*

Mask or Persona Poems: Poems where the students pretend to become their creature and speak directly to the little boy (or reader) in its own voice.

Examples from FOLD ME A POEM: *Robin's Invitation, Green Dog's Surprise, Cheetah and Lion, Rabbit Complains, and Disappointed Moth*

Questions students might ask themselves while pretending to be their origami creature:

*What is my life like?
What do I wish for? Dream about at night?
What frightens me? What makes me happy?*

Apostrophe Poems: Poems where the students speaks directly to their paper creature(s).

Examples from FOLD ME A POEM: *Camel, Shadows, Warning!, Dragon, Wind Storm, Of Course, Impatient, Finishing, Shining Paper, and Bookmark*

Questions students might consider:

*What do I want to ask my creature?
What do I want to know about my creature's life?
What might I tell my creature?*

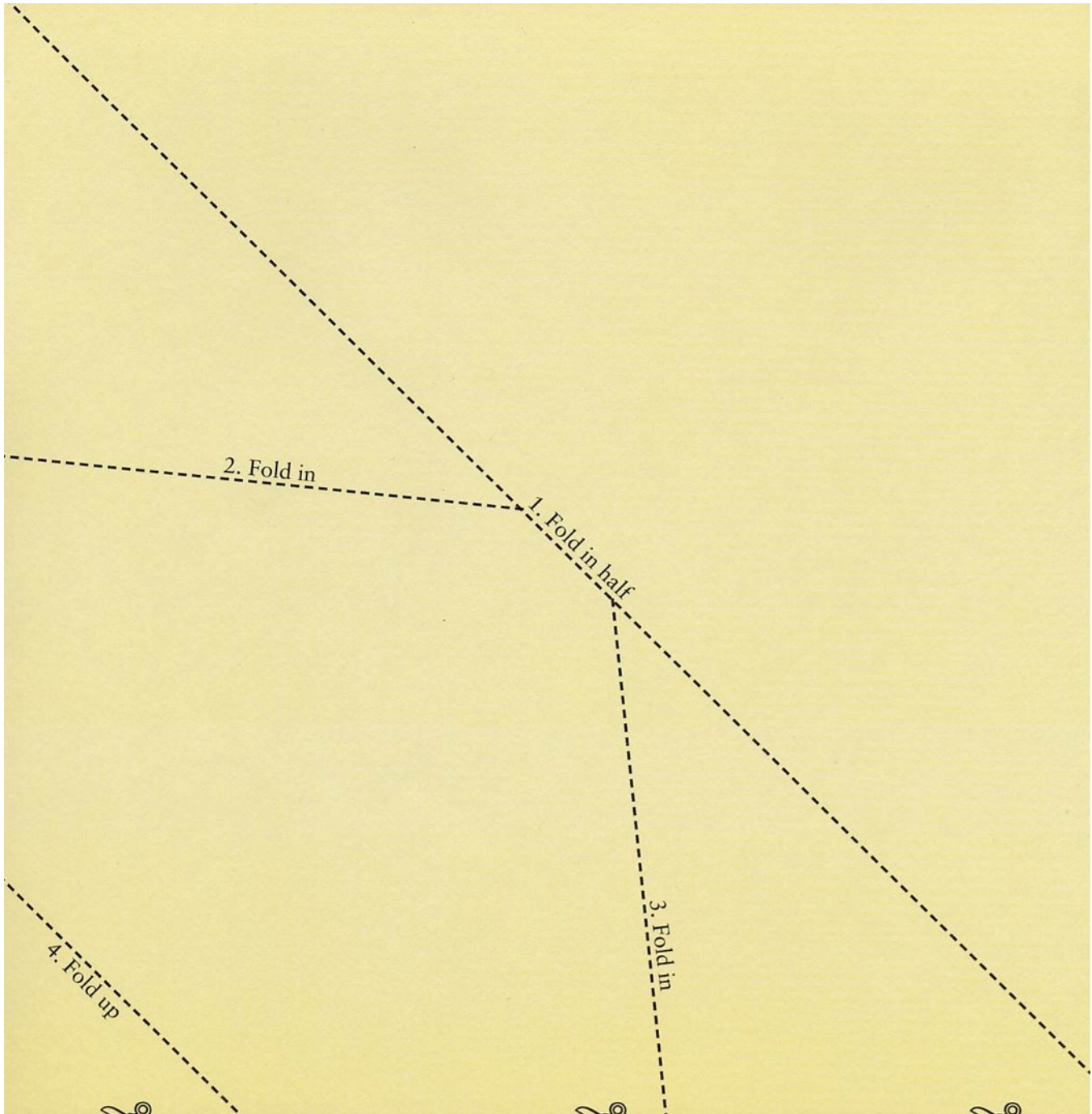
Depending on the kind of origami paper used, students can write their poems directly on their paper creatures, or inside the folds for a "secret" poem. Or, have students copy their final poems onto paper and attach their folded creatures as illustrations. Fold sheets of butcher paper for large display-sized creatures. Invite students to write short poems directly on the origami. Finished poetry and the origami creatures students have folded will make bright and colorful bulletin board displays.

Note: This exercise helps students learn to recognize and identify different speakers in writing passages. See http://kristinegeorge.com/teachers_guide_old_elm_speaks.html for more information on using different "voices" in poetry.



FOLD ME A POEM

WOOF! AN EASY ORIGAMI DIAGRAM



Have students fold an origami dog! Fold colored paper along the dotted lines in the order indicated. Tell students their folded dogs will all be somewhat different—each with its own unique personality!



PAPERS FOR ORIGAMI

Pre-cut packages of origami paper found at your local art supply or paper store are the best for folding, but can be expensive for a large group. Some educator supply companies offer economy packs of origami paper and there are also many other papers that can work beautifully!

Here is a list of papers to consider:

Xerox Paper – colored or white

Plain Xerox paper works well. It comes in sheets of 8 ½ X 11" which can be cut to either an 8 ½ X 8 ½" square or cut in half to a 5 ½ X 5 ½" square. Use a paper cutter and remember the advise of the snake, when folding or cutting, "Be precisssssssssse."

Gift Wrapping Paper

There are wonderful patterns and colors found on gift-wrapping paper. Cutting it into squares could be tricky, but worth it once you are sitting down to fold.

Construction Paper

Construction paper is thick, so I would only fold very simple patterns.

Magazines

Magazine paper creases well and offers a multitude of patterns and colors to fold very surprising animals!

Newspaper

Newspaper cut into squares would fold well, but I suspect the ink would get on one's fingers after too many folds. Some of us do have great memories of our dads folding newspaper hats for us to wear when playing pirates.

Paper Bags

In FOLD ME A POEM the child cuts a square out of a brown paper bag to make an elephant. It works! Brown paper bags fold very nicely. Multi-colored shopping bags would work well too.

Napkins, paper and cloth

Restaurants often fold napkins in interesting shapes when setting their tables. Try using paper or cloth napkins to fold an animal. A fairly simple design would work best.

* Try making a game of finding new and diverse folding materials. Aluminum foil, wallpaper, index cards, and post-it™ notes come to mind. We're certain you and your students can think of more!



FOLD ME A POEM

CURRICULUM SUPPORT

FOLD ME A POEM and the activities above address NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts...
 3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts...
 5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
 6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
 7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
 11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
- source: <http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards/110846.htm>

FOLD ME A POEM supports these extensions and themes from the Houghton Mifflin Reading Program

A World of Animals (K) / Animal Adventures (Grade 1) / Amazing Animals (Grade 2) / Animal Habitats (Grade 3) / Problem Solvers, Nature: Friend and Foe (4)

FOLD ME A POEM and the above activities address various state standards. Examples include:

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

- (14)(A) write to record ideas and reflections (K-3);
(B) write to discover, develop, and refine ideas (1-3);
(D) write in different forms for different purposes such as lists to record, letters to invite or thank, and stories or poems to entertain (1-3).
- (18) (A) generate ideas for writing by using prewriting techniques such as drawing and listing key thoughts (2-3);
(B) develop drafts (1-3);
(C) revise selected drafts for varied purposes, including to achieve a sense of audience, precise word choices, and vivid images (1-3);
- (5) (E) give precise directions and instructions such as in games and tasks (4-5); and
(15)(A) write to express, discover, record, develop, reflect on ideas, and to problem solve (4-8);
(D) write to entertain such as to compose humorous poems or short stories (4-8)
(E) exhibit an identifiable voice in personal narratives and in stories (4-5)
- source: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter110/ch110a.html#110.3>

California Content Standards and Framework (Language Arts)

(3) Literary Response and Analysis

- 3.4 Determine the underlying theme or author's message in fiction and nonfiction text.
3.5 Recognize the similarities of sounds in words and rhythmic patterns (e.g., alliteration, onomatopoeia) in a selection.
3.6 Identify the speaker or narrator in a selection.

Source: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/engmain.asp>