

Make a *Sakura*-viewing Screen 桜

THE JAPANESE HOUSE ACTIVITIES



Learn about the Japanese spring tradition of *hanami* (flower-viewing) and *sakura* (cherry blossoms) and create a *byobu* paper screen.

1. Learn about *Sakura*

The cherry blossom is considered to be Japan's unofficial national flower. If you go to Japan in spring, you will be astonished by the breathtaking views of cherry blossoms. The blooming of the cherry trees is so important in Japan that radio and television stations often give daily reports on local trees. While the flowers are beautiful, people also enjoy *hanami*—a party under the cherry blossoms—both at night and during the day. They bring mats to sit on and have picnics. Friends and family get together, sing songs, share poetry, and play games.

Cherry blossoms are also a symbol of the changing of the seasons. The seasons are a popular subject for Japanese art, so art with cherry blossoms is very common. One unique form of Japanese art is the *byobu*. *Byobu* are folding screens made of several wooden panels covered with paper and joined along the edges, and then decorated. *Byobu* are not only art pieces—they're also used as furniture, doors, stage backgrounds, and more. You can see *byobu* at art museums around the world and in temples in Japan.



TIME:

20 minutes

MATERIALS:

- *Sakura byobu* activity sheet
- Colored pencils, markers, crayons, etc.
- Scissors

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

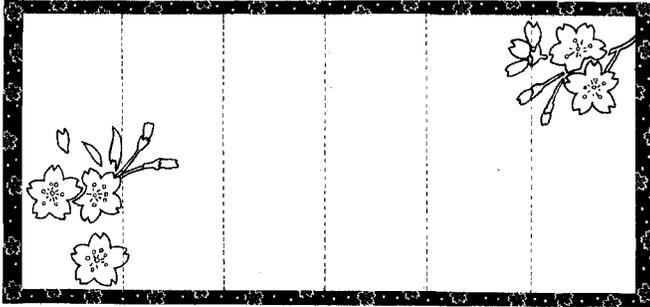
Sakura: *Sah-coo-rah*

Hanami: *Hah-nah-me*

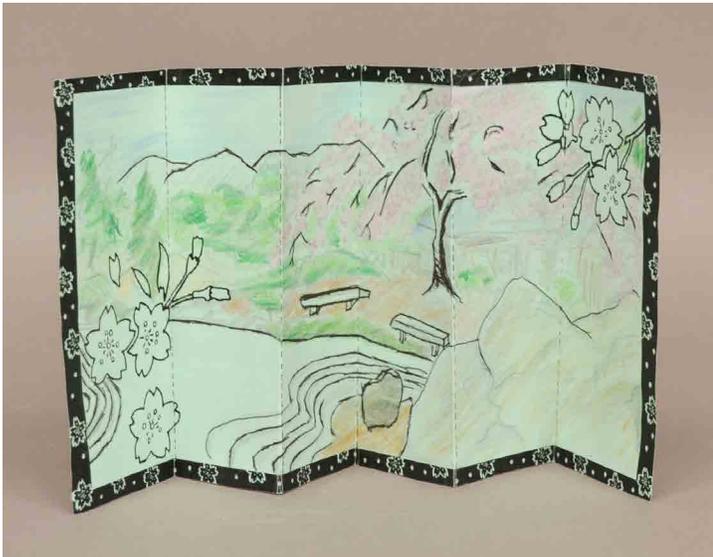
Byobu: *Byoh-boo*

2. Make Your Own *Byobu*

1. Decorate and color the *byobu* screen with some images of spring.

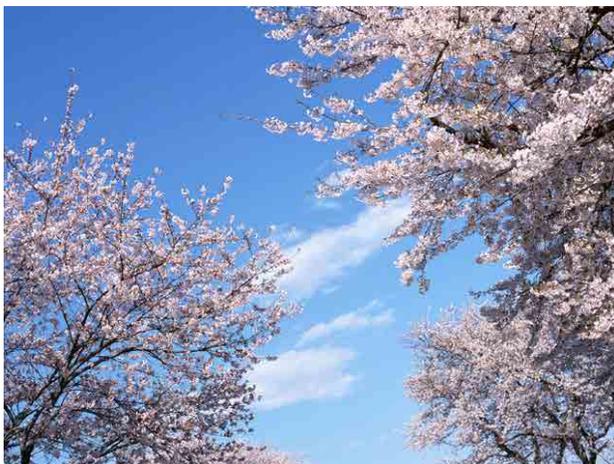


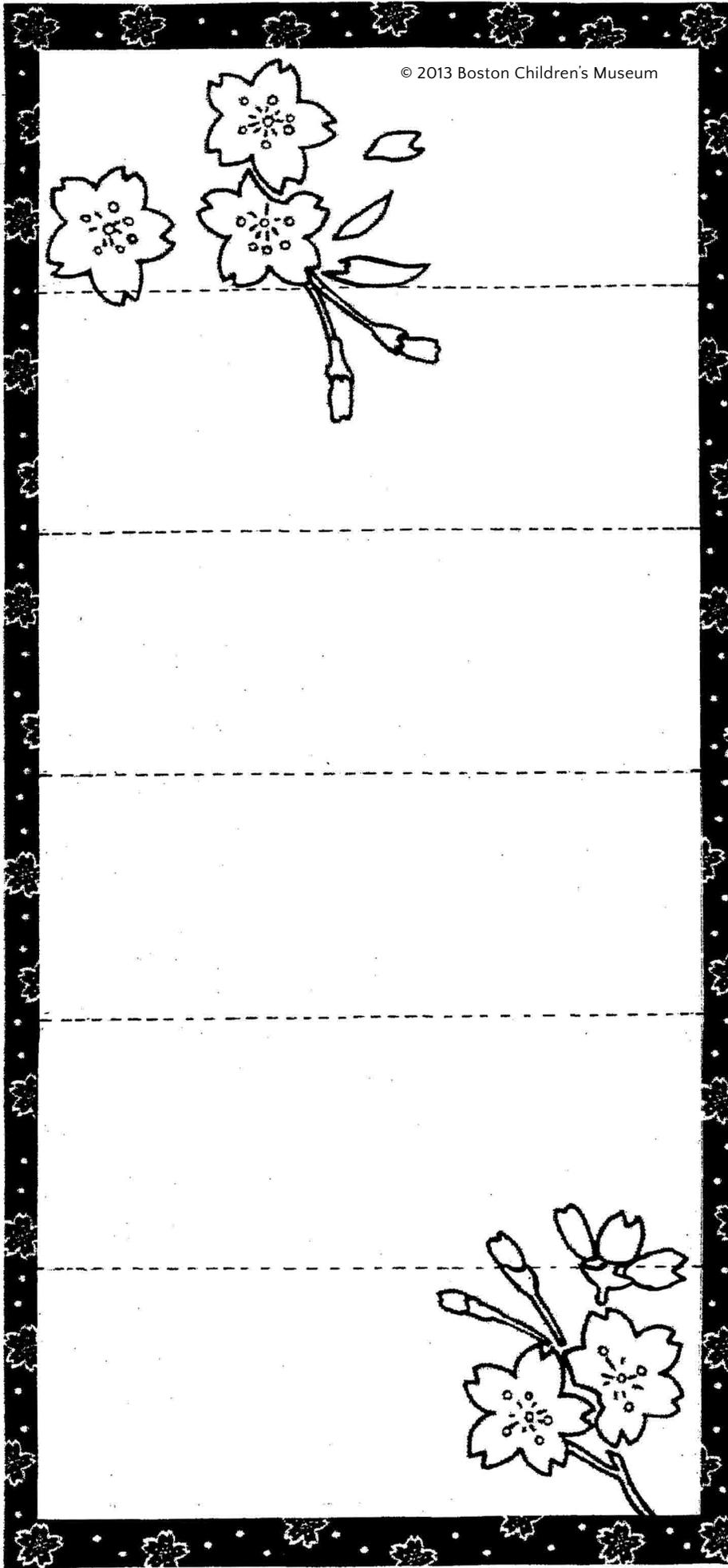
2. Cut out the *byobu* screen.
3. Fold it like an accordion and stand it upright on a flat surface.



3. Things to Talk about

- Cherry blossoms are also a popular subject for *haiku*. Try writing a *haiku* about cherry blossoms and the spring.
- In 1912, Japan gave 3,020 cherry blossom trees as a gift to the United States in honor of the two nations' growing friendship. The trees were planted in Washington D.C. along the Tidal Basin, as well as in New York City and Boston. Are there any cherry trees near you?
- If you'd like, you can write some Japanese words on your *byobu*, too. Some words are provided on the activity sheet.
- If you want to learn more about cherry trees, here is a story you might like!
–The Old Man Who Made Trees Blossom (*Hanasaka Jiisan*)





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English

cherry blossoms
flowers
flower-viewing picnic
spring
spring wind

Japanese

sakura
hana
hanami
haru
haru-kaze

Kanji

桜 花 花見
春 春風

Hiragana

さくら
はな
はなみ
はる
はるかぜ

