THE JAPANESE HOUSE
ACTIVITIES

Make Hina-dolls 雛人形

1. Learn about Hina-matsuri

Hina-matsuri (Girl’s Day, or the Doll Festival) is celebrated on March 3rd every year to honor girls. On this day, families with daughters display special dolls called Hina-ningyo in their homes and wish for health and happiness for their daughters’ future. These dolls represent members of the ancient Japanese Imperial Court. Hina-ningyo are made from a wide variety of materials, such as wood, paper, and cloth. Children do not play with the Hina-ningyo; they are ceremonial dolls only to be looked at.

The origin of Hina-matsuri can be traced back to medieval times. In the olden days, families used the dolls as talismans to keep bad luck away from their daughters. Later on, it became popular for wealthier families to display a set of elaborate dolls for their daughters. This is similar to how Hina-ningyo are displayed today.

Celebrate Hina-matsuri (Girls’ Day) by making a set of origami Emperor and Empress Hina-dolls.

TIME:
30 minutes

MATERIALS:
• Origami paper
• Glue sticks
• Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
• Decorating materials (optional)
• Background sheet (optional)

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:
Hina-matsuri: Hee-nah mah-tsu-ree
Hina-ningyo: Hee-nah nee-n-gyoh
Origami: Oh-ree-gah-mee
Make Your Own *Hina-ningyo*

*Before you start:* You will need 2 sheets of origami paper if you are making both Emperor and Empress.

1. Place the paper with the colored side facing down. Crease the paper down the center, so that you have a triangle shape. Then, uncrease it.

2. Fold the left and right corners of the paper into the center.

3. Fold the top of the paper down.

4. Fold the bottom up.

5. Fold the sides in.

The next steps are different for the Emperor and Empress.

**For the Emperor:**

6. Fold the tip forward and then fold it back upward a little. Turn it over and fold the bottom upward a little.

7. Draw the face.

**For the Empress:**

6. Hold the top point back. Then, turn it over and fold the bottom upward a little.

7. Draw the face.

More fun: Once the dolls are done, glue them onto the background sheet provided on page 4. Then, decorate and display.

**Origami tips:**

- Fold origami on a flat surface to make sure the edges line up and the fold is accurate.

- Sliding your thumb nail across the folded edge will make good crisp creases.
3. **Things to Talk about**

- Is there a Boys' Day in Japan too? There is. Historically, it was celebrated on May 5th. That day is now the national holiday Children's Day. The May activity focuses on Boys' Day.

- Are there special things at home that are just for looking? Do you have special dolls or toys you would like people to just look at but not play with?