

# MAKE Your Own FISH KITE

## Introduction

### Fish Kites

Many Japanese American children responded to life in the internment camps through artwork, such as drawing or painting. People created arts and crafts out of anything they could find—pebbles, cardboard, seeds, and pieces of fence. With a few basic materials, you can create your own work of art, the carp kite.

On May 5th, or Children's Day in Japan, houses are decorated with *koinobori*, or carp kites. The carp is known for its strength and its ability to swim up and over powerful waterfalls. It is hoped that children will grow up to be strong like the carp fish.

The carp kite is attached to a bamboo pole and flown above houses. Often there is a pinwheel and colorful streamers placed at the top of the bamboo pole. The carp is symmetrical and both sides are decorated so that they are exactly the same.



Jordan and Velada Carlisle made this fish kite at an OurStory Program at the National Museum of American History in 1998.

Often, the father in the family is represented by the largest carp on the pole and is placed at the top of the stick, under the streamers. The mother's carp is a bit smaller and flies underneath the father's, and the children are represented by the smallest carps, placed underneath the mother's carp on the pole.

**Continue on to the next page to learn how to make your own fish kite!**

# Materials

## You Will Need to Gather These Things To Make Your Kite

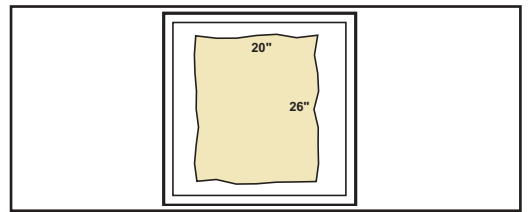
- Tissue Paper or Crepe Paper
- Scissors
- Colored markers
- Glue or Glue Stick
- One-hole punch
- Yarn or string
- 1 stick, or small wooden pole about 2 feet long

# Directions

## To Make Your Fish Kite

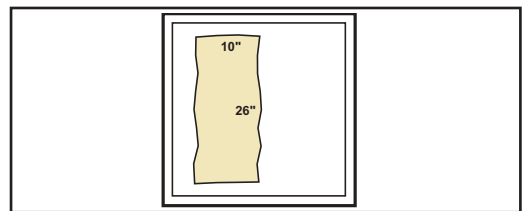
### Step 1:

Cut a piece of tissue or crepe paper with the dimensions of 20 inches by 26 inches.



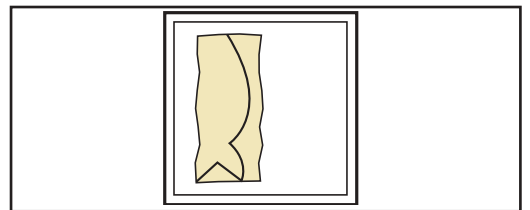
### Step 2:

Fold the paper in half on the longer side (the side that is 26 inches)



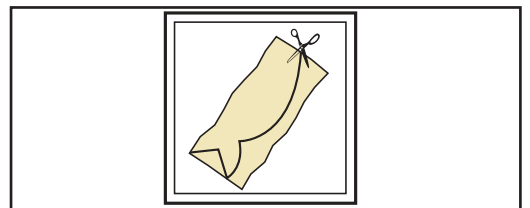
### Step 3:

Once folded in half, use a colored marker to draw an outline of a fish.



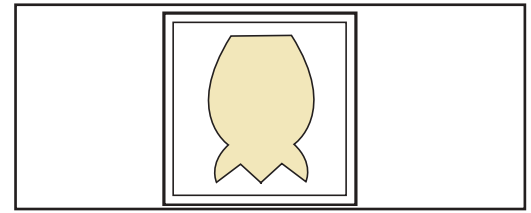
### Step 4:

The paper must still be folded. Using your scissors, cut out the outline of the fish.



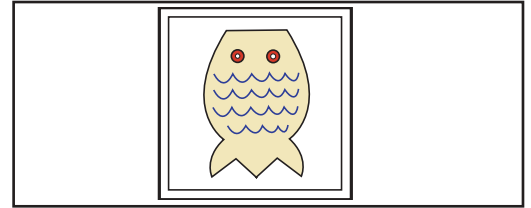
**Step 5:**

Open up the paper. It should look like two carp fish are attached together.



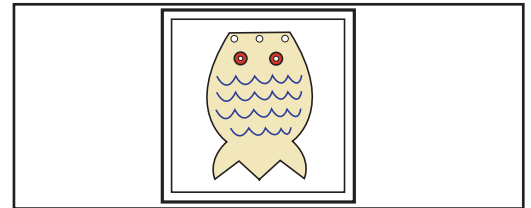
**Step 6:**

Use your markers to draw and color in two eyes. You can use different color crepe paper to add colorful scales to your fish. Each row of scales should overlap the previous row.



**Step 7:**

At the head of the fish (above the eyes), use your hole punch to punch three separate holes so that they are equally distanced from each other.



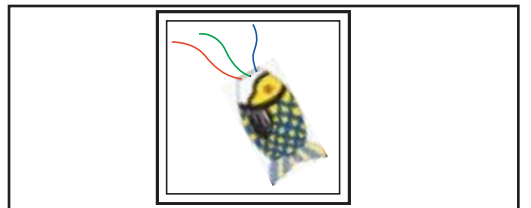
**Step 8:**

Now take your glue stick and glue the two inside open edges of the head of the fish together. Make sure you do not glue the tail edges together!



**Step 9:**

Now cut three 2 foot long pieces of yarn or string. One end of each piece of string or yarn should be tied to a hole of the fish.



**Step 10:**

The other end of strand should be tied and knotted to the stick.



**Congratulations!**

You are Ready to Fly Your Fish Kite!