

From the bestselling author of *Skellig*

David Almond



## Activity Sheets and Teacher's Notes

Explores the following themes:

- Travel
- Japan
- Friendship
- The art of Origami
- Memories
- Culture
- Food

Subject Checklist:

- Literacy
- Art, Design and Technology
- Geography
- PSHE





# Contents



## Activity 1: Discussion questions

### Objectives:

- Consider the significance of the blurb and what it tells you about the story
- Understand key language from extracts from the book and discuss them in small groups and collaboratively as a class

## Activity 2: Writing tasks about a holiday

### Objectives:

- Write a postcard based on your understanding of the text and Mina's description of her bus journey
- Create a list of memories from a holiday or place you have visited, use the list of memories to write your own bus description based on your memories

## Activity 3: Making an origami paper boat

### Objectives:

- Create your own origami paper boat
- Write a secret message in your boat for someone to find

## About the book:

A stunning new story from the bestselling, prize-winning David Almond, unfolding the magic of the everyday. Mina, from the unforgettable *Skellig* and *My Name is Mina*, journeys to Japan and discovers the wonders of the world around her.



*Kyoto, Japan. Mina is on a bus. Everything is strange and beautiful.*

*Mina watches as a woman folds a piece of paper into an origami boat, then floats it over to her.*

*As Mina discovers the magic of origami, her eyes are opened to the wonders of the real city around her.*

Unfold the magic of the everyday, on a journey with one of the world's best-loved authors - with stunning illustrations from Kirsti Beautyman in black and orange throughout.





# Activity 1a: Pre-reading discussion questions

## Prediction Task

*Kyoto, Japan. Mina is on a bus. Everything is strange and beautiful.*

*Mina watches as a woman folds a piece of paper into an origami boat, then floats it over to her.*

*As Mina discovers the magic of origami, her eyes are opened to the wonders of the real city around her.*

## Discussion questions

1. Why do you think the woman makes a paper boat and a paper bird for Mina?
2. Do you know the name for the Japanese art of folding paper?
3. What do you think will happen with Mina in the book? How are the paper boat and paper bird significant in the story?





# Activity 1b



## Page 1

Mina's mum says, *'That's travel, turns the world into somewhere else and turns you into someone else.'*

### Discussion questions

1. Discuss with a partner; what definition can you give to the word *travel*?
2. What does travel mean to you? Can you think of your own experiences of travel?
3. Do you agree with Mina's mum? she says, *'That's travel, turns the world into somewhere else and turns you into someone else.'* Can you think of an example of what She means here?

## Page 13

*The bus is gone. She imagines what it would be like to be a sheet of paper in the woman's hands, to be folded and creased and teased into shape, to become a paper Mina.*

### Discussion questions

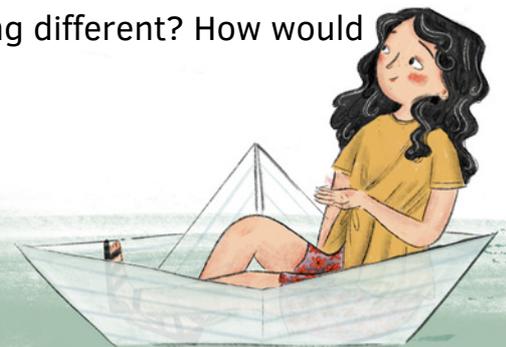
1. If someone could fold you into an origami shape or model that represents you, what would it be? Discuss and share ideas with a partner.

## Pages 38/39

*That evening they eat sushi, and sashimi and flakes of something that's hardly there at all except for the intensity of the taste it leaves on the tongue.*

### Discussion questions

1. Do you know what sushi and sashimi are? Have you ever tried them before?
2. Can you think of a time that you have eaten something different? How would you describe it?





## Activity 1b continued

### Pages 42/43

*When she sleeps, she dreams of the bird and the boat that have been carried away.*

### Discussion questions

Work in pairs or small groups. Imagine you are Mina, dreaming about the paper boat and the paper bird. What do you think would be in your dream? Use the picture on page 43 to help you.

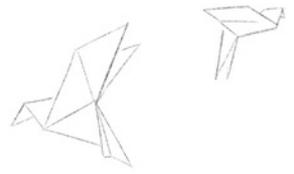
### Page 70

*Mina and her mum love the crowds, the shops, the buses, the food, the temples. They love the silence and stillness at the heart of it all. It's the last day. Tomorrow it's a bullet train to Hiroshima. But they feel that even when they've left this place, they'll still be here.*

### Discussion questions

1. What is a bullet train? Why are they so famous in Japan?
2. Look at the last line in the extract above. Why do you think people still feel part of a place even after they have left it? Do you have a place that holds special memories, and you feel like it will always be a small part of you?





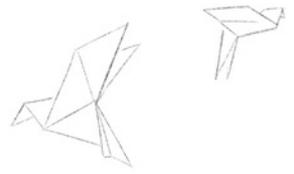
## Activity 2a: Writing task

### Page 18

*The bus continues through the busy streets, through all the noise, past skyscrapers, hotels, flower sellers, flashing lights, cyclists, geishas, sushi shops, punks, cinemas, statues, tourist groups, burger bars, lanterns, panchinko parlours, shrines, road signs, lorries, buses, cars, crowds.*

Read through the description above from Mina's bus journey. Can you write a postcard as though you are Mina writing home from Japan?





## Activity 2b: Writing task

Think about a holiday you have been on or a place you have visited.

Make a list of all the places, sights, food, people, anything you can remember.

Now use the list to write a description. Imagine you are on a bus journey; can you write about all the things you saw along the way?

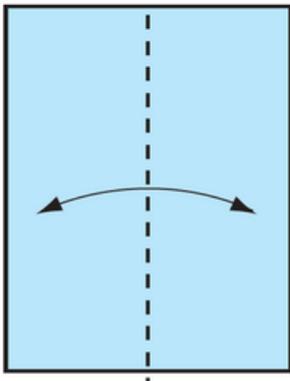




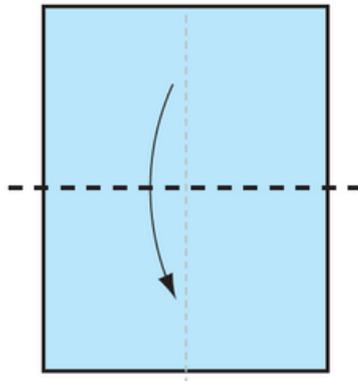
## Activity 3a: Making an origami paper boat

Origami is the Japanese art of paper folding. Can you follow the instructions below to make your own origami boat?

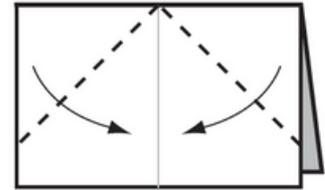
Using a rectangular A4/A5 piece of paper, carefully follow each diagram below to create your own origami boat.



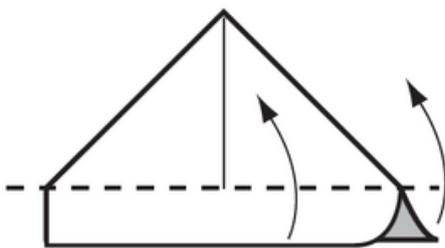
1. Start with an A4 or A5 piece of paper. Fold it in half to create a crease and then open it up again.



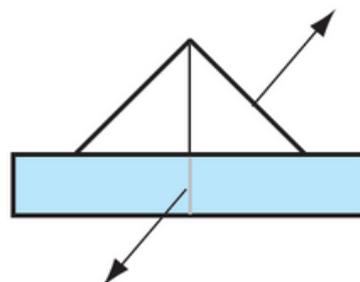
2. Fold it in half the opposite way.



3. Bring the corners to the centre crease to create a point.



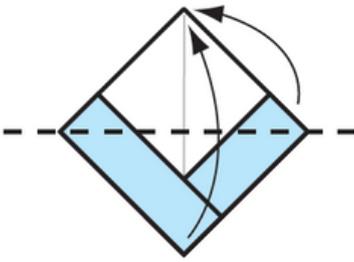
4. Fold the top layer upwards and do the same on the other side.



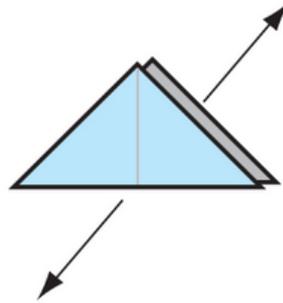
5. Pull the sides out and flatten, so it looks like the next image.



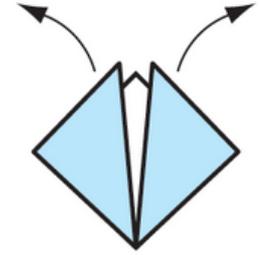
## Activity 3a: Continued



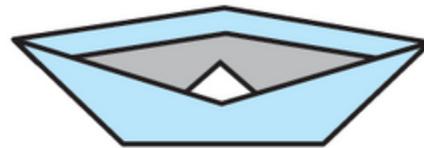
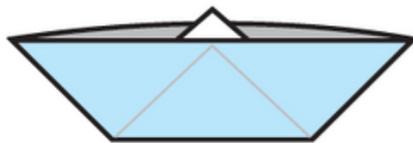
6. Fold the front layer up to the top. Turn over and do the same on the other side, creating a triangle.



7. Pull the sides apart and flatten.



8. Gently, pull apart the top parts to make a boat shape.



9. Flatten to crease all the folds really well. Then open out again to have your finished boat!

## Activity 3b: A message

Think about what secret message you can write in your origami boat. What message would you write in your boat for someone to find?

