

Folding Paper for Peace

Every day people use paper. We write on it and read from it. We use it in books, newspapers, magazines, and letters. It would seem that the uses for paper are nearly endless. Back in the 1950's, a young girl named Sadako Sasaki even used paper as a means of hope and inspiration. Sadako was two when she was exposed to deadly radiation from the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima in World War II. At first she seemed fine, but as the years progressed she became sick from the effects of the bomb. When she was in sixth grade, Sadako was diagnosed with leukemia. In the hope of helping in her recovery, she set about to make one thousand paper cranes. Every day, she folded paper into tiny cranes believing that they would somehow help her recover. Unfortunately, after fighting against the disease for eight months, Sadako died on October 25, 1955. This, however, was not to be the end of her hope as children across Japan decided to continue making paper cranes as a call for peace in a time of trouble. In the end, the children's mission was turned into a special place in Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, Japan. The Children's Peace Monument, also known as the Tower of a Thousand Cranes, contains a large brass monument topped with a young girl with a golden paper crane in her outstretched hands. The monument is covered with bright colors as children from around the world still send thousands of paper cranes in the belief that someday, they will live in a peace-filled world.

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Reading Level: 9.9	Dale Chall: 7-8; 9-10 (2 nd half)	265 words
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Sources:

Paper Cranes and the Children's Peace Monument. Retrieved June 30, 2004 from

<http://www.city.hiroshima.jp/shimin/heiwa/crane.html>

The Children's Peace Monument. Retrieved June 30, 2004 from

<http://www.city.hiroshima.jp/shimin/heiwa/monument.html>

Westminster Abbey – The Home of Kings and Queens

For the past 1,000 years, Westminster Abbey, located in London, England, has been the home to the coronation of every king and queen of England. The first recorded coronation was held on Christmas Day in 1066 and the most recent on June 2, 1953. Kings as young as nine years old (Henry III) and queens too sick to walk (Anne) have all been crowned in Westminster Abbey.

The coronation ceremony has five parts: The Introduction which includes the Entry, the Oath, and the Presentation of the Bible; the Consecration which is when the service begins; the Giving of the Royal Robes and Insignia, ending with the crowning; Enthroning and Homage, which includes the new king sitting on the throne; and Holy Communion. All of this happens in the presence of key dignitaries from around the world.

The Coronation Chair was originally created with the Stone of Scone, a sacred stone captured from Scotland, contained under the seat. As a gesture of good will, the stone was returned to Scotland in 1996 and is now on display at Edinburgh Castle. Other important items used in the coronation ceremony include the royal robes, holy oil with which the new Sovereign is anointed, the Royal Throne, and, of course, the crown.

Over the years, kings and queens have changed parts of the ceremony. In 1553, Queen Mary refused to be crowned sitting on the coronation chair since she was a strict Catholic and the previous king who had sat on the throne was a Protestant. George IV wanted an extravagant celebration so he had a new crown made containing over 12,000 diamonds. Whatever the demands, Westminster Abbey has met them all and has stood the test of time and change.

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Reading Level: 10.3	Dale Chall: 9-10	287 words
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There's No Place Like Home: Cairo's City of the Dead

Home comes in many forms – in Chicago, brick bungalows stand in rows on city streets, New York has apartment buildings that kiss the sky, and Alaskan Inuits may live in igloos. Wherever it is, there's no place like home.

Cairo, home to more than seven million people, the capital of Egypt, and also known as the cradle of civilization, is the largest metropolis in the Middle East. A severe housing shortage has caused millions of poor Egyptians to call the five massive cemeteries adjacent to Cairo home. Known as the City of the Dead, families have taken to living, working, nurturing their children, and creating complete communities among the tombs. The cemeteries of Cairo are dissimilar from American cemeteries as, traditionally, Egyptians buried their dead in larger room-like burial cities where they would mourn their loss for forty days.

Making these tombs into homes has not been that difficult. Electricity is conveyed from local outlying mosques by stringing wires over rooftops. Grave markers are converted to desks and shelves, and rope is strung between gravestones for drying laundry. The problems come with the other creatures with which the residents share living space – cockroaches, mosquitoes, flies, and other vermin. There is also the issue of the stench from garbage heaped up outside their doors.

The main apprehension for the residents is that they are breaking the law so their future is unsure. They maintain, however, that until there is sufficient, appropriate housing, they will stay right where they are. However difficult it is, many of the residents of the City of the Dead will not readily budge. The alternative for many is living on the streets, and they would rather live among the dead where at least they have a home.

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Reading Level: 11.0	Dale Chall: 11-12	290 words
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Sources: Cairo. Retrieved June 30, 2004 from <http://www.ce.eng.usf.edu/pharos/cairo/>
The City of Cairo Egypt. Retrieved June 30, 2004 from <http://www.cairotourist.com/album>

Chicago – The Windy, Fast, Murderous City of the Midwest

Chicago, Illinois is nicknamed the Windy City. Michigan Avenue, home to Water Tower Place, Tiffany's, and multiple Gap stores, can be a wind tunnel with people clutching bags and hair as a mighty wind whips down the street. But it did not gain its moniker for the high velocity of winds – the fact is that back in 1893, during the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, *New York Sun* editor Charles Dana, dubbed the city the Windy City because he was tired of hearing Chicagoans boast about the Exposition.

The history of Chicago is full of oddities. For example, the two lions guarding the entrance to the Art Institute were designed by a dentist turned sculptor, Edward L. Kenrys. The first automobile race ever seen in the United States was held in Chicago in 1895 – the winner, J. Frank Duryea, drove an average of 7 ½ miles per hour. On the more macabre side of life, in 1896, Dr. Herman Mudgett built a home at 63rd and Wallace that was designed expressly for the purpose of murder. It was equipped with gas chambers, incinerators, and other horrific devices. On a happy note, Walt Disney was born in Chicago in 1901 and lived there until he was four. Many of us know about the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 in which 250 lives were lost, but in 1903, the Iroquois Theater caught fire during a performance by Eddie Foy – 600 people died that day.

Here's one last little known fact about Chicago. While it was widely believed that Mrs. O'Leary's cow started the Great Chicago fire, on October 7, 1997, the Chicago City Council approved a resolution exonerating this poor cow of all blame.

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Reading Level: 12.0	Dale Chall: 11-12	282 words
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Source: Chicago Collections. Retrieved June 28, 2004 from
<http://www.corsinet.com/chicago/chicagot.html>
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