

Kentucky 4-H
Japanese Golden Week Script
University of Kentucky
4-H Youth Development Programs

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



Kon'nichiwa!

My name is Rachel Noble, Extension Specialist for 4-H Youth Development at the University of Kentucky. Today I am going to share information about Japanese Golden Week.

Japanese Golden week is a cluster of national holidays at the end of April into May. The celebrations start on April 29th with Showa Day. Showa Day is an opportunity for Japanese people to think about the hardships and recover during the Showa Period and to think about the future of Japan. May 3rd is Japanese Constitutional Memorial Day, on this day in 1947 the current Japanese constitution was adopted. The celebrations of Golden Week conclude on May 5th with Children's Day. Children's Day is set aside to pray for the health and happiness of both boys and girls.

During Kodomo no hi or Children's Day on May 5th in Japan the koinobori or carp streamers are flown outside of businesses and private homes. The carp streamers are believed to bring children good luck. They also symbolize mother, father, and children. In Japanese culture the koi fish, or carp, is believed to be a strong-willed, determined fish because it swims upstream. The koinobori symbolizes the desire for children to grow brave and strong.

To make your own koinobori, or carp streamer, these are the supplies that you need. First, tissue paper. Remember that the different colors symbolize different things. Black symbolizes father, red or pink mother, and any other color and size would symbolize children. A round cardboard tub, you can cut it off toilet paper or paper towel tubs. A piece of string. A marker. Scissors and glue.

To make your koinobori you will take your tissue paper and fold it in half. Then you will cut it out. Remember the different sizes of your koi fish symbolize different things. Father would be the largest, then mother, then children. These are supposed to be hung outside so wind needs to be able to run through them. After you get your fish cut, it will look like this if you have it open, it will look like this if you have it closed. You can decorate your koinobori any way you would like to. This is how I chose to decorate mine. You will take your glue and you'll glue all the way down each side of the koinobori. Leaving the top and bottom open so the wind can blow through. So now you see I have the sides of my koi fish or carp glued. The top is open and the bottom is open. Next, I will take the cardboard tube and I will take the glue and glue all the way around the tub. I will now take this tube and put it at the top of the tissue paper, I am creating a mouth for my koinobori, so now you'll can see, you can see through the fish. This allows the wind to go through. You will then take your scissors and create a small hole on each side of the top. This will allow you to put a string in each side. You may need your parents help for that. You will take your string---if you have a pair of hold punch, you can use that---but you will take your string and you will put it through the hole on the side, just like that, and then you will tie it on the inside. Then you will string the other side, put it through the other hole. Once you do that, now your koinobori will have a small hanger, and you can hang this outside or inside. You can make a large one for your father, medium one for your mother and small ones for all of your siblings and yourself. Remember the black koi represents father, the red or pink would represent mother and, then all the different colors would represent the children.

Thank you for joining me today as we celebrate Japanese Golden Week and Children's Day. If you'd like to learn more about the Kentucky 4-H International Program, please reach out to your local University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Agent for details.

Resources:

<https://web-japan.org/kidsweb/explore/calendar/april/goldenweek.html>
<https://www.tokyocreative.com/articles/19084-the-significance-of-koinobori>

