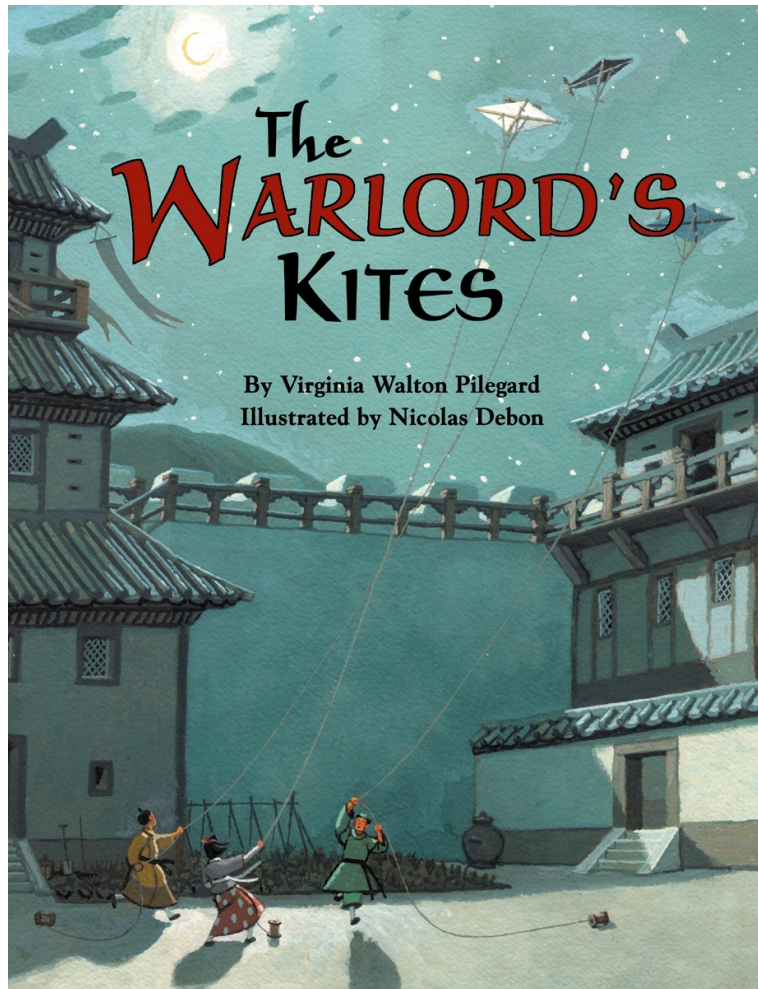


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Study Guide for *The Warlord's Kites*



This Study guide includes:
Comprehension and critical thinking exercises
Measurement--Standard and Otherwise
Kite Safety Collage Instructions
Dragon Kite Making Exercise

Study guide created by
Virginia Walton Pilegard

☞ Work sheets are reproducible ☞

Study Guide for
The Warlord's Kites
by Virginia Pilegard

Comprehension & Critical Thinking

Suggested Materials: brown paper bags, scissors, rulers, scotch tape, crepe paper, kite string or sturdy sewing thread, *The Warlord's Kites*.

Background:

Chinese children are named with special care. It is said boys have names of the "head," words that symbolize bravery and strength such as "sturdy pine." Girls are given names of the "heart" which include words relating to beauty and grace, such as "flower." The heroine in *The Warlord's Kites* is named "Jing Jing" meaning "quiet." The hero's name, "Chuan," may be pronounced "Chwan" and means "river."

(Before the story is read)

1. What are the children on the cover of *The Warlord's Kites* doing?
2. What time does it appear to be? How can you tell?
3. Do you recognize any of the children from previous Warlord books?

(As the story is read)

1. If listeners are familiar with *The Warlord's Puppeteers*, the reader may pause after the first page and ask how Jing Jing, the puppet master's daughter, came to live at the warlord's palace with Chuan. (When the warlord found Chuan and his master the artist, he was so impressed with the puppet show they helped produce, he invited the puppet troupe to live in his palace and present shows for all special occasions.)
2. The picture of the leader of the horsemen at the palace wall is an appropriate place for conjecture about what will happen next.

(After reading the story)

1. Why did the warlord's son call the approaching army "cowards"? What was his plan to save the palace?
2. What did Chuan do when he was too worried to sleep? What did Jing Jing do? What do you do when you are worried?
3. How does the story say paper was made in ancient China? Why would it be important to measure paper carefully?
4. What historic use for kites does the warlord's son suggest? Why did Jing Jing disagree?

5. How did the horsemen outside the wall try to storm the palace? What were the children doing while this went on?
6. Chuan and Jing Jing used their hands to measure. Would each kite be the same size if everyone in our class used their own hands to measure? What else could we use to measure paper?
7. What rule for measuring the area of a square kite had Chuan learned from the *Nine Chapters on the Mathematical Art*?
8. Why did the children fly their whistling kites at night? Why did Jing Jing whisper, “perfect” when a slight breeze blew clouds over the moon?
9. Sometimes modern soldiers blast loud music from their tanks when they go into battle. Do you think modern armies would be frightened by the kites’s strange sounds? Why or why not?
10. How did the warlord feel about the children’s adventure?
11. Following the directions on the craft page of *The Warlord’s Kites*, help children create kites to fly on days with gentle breezes.



Measurement--Standard and Otherwise

Experimentation and Critical Thinking About Measuring as Chuan Did . . .

Suggested Materials: pan of water; smooth cement sidewalk, tape measure, English & metric rulers

Background:

Long before rulers and tape measures, people used hands, fingers, arms, and feet to measure things. Ancient Egyptians measured the length of a person's arm (probably the pharaoh) from elbow to the tip of the middle finger and called this a "cubit." They divided cubits into "digits" (the width of a finger) and "palms" (the width of four "digits.") The English system which we use is based on "feet," and cowboys still measure their horses by how many "hands" tall they are.

Directions:

1. Dip hand in the pan of water and make a square six hand prints wide and six hand prints long on sidewalk.. Don't open fingers too wide. (You want hand prints to be about as wide as they are long.)
2. Are all squares the same size? Use a tape measure to check your answer.
3. Are there big differences? If someone's father makes a square six hand prints wide and six hand prints long, how will it compare to squares made with children's hands? Measuring with different sized hands and fingers is called non-standard measurement. Sometimes this is a valuable way to estimate or guess distance.
4. For estimating purposes, the width of your little finger is about 1 centimeter. The length of your pointing finger between the first and second knuckle is about 1 inch. Measure a hand print using your little finger and then the tape measure. Use the part of your pointing finger between your first and second knuckle and compare with a ruler.
6. What do you think the term "standard measurement" means? Can you think of some times when non-standard measurement, like Chuan used, would be just fine? Can you think of some times when would it be important to have exact measurements?



Ripping Good Kite Safety Collages

Background:

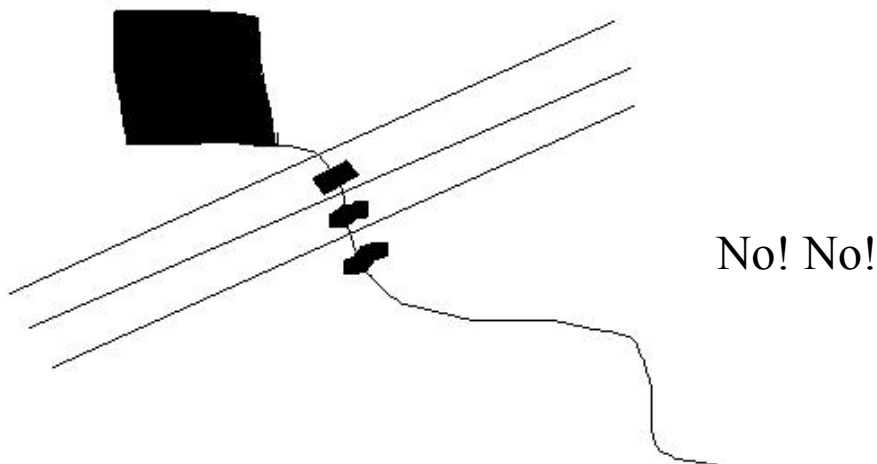
1. Fly kites in open areas away from streets, highways, television and radio antennas, overhead wires, especially electric lines.
2. Should a kite accidentally become tangled, don't try to remove it from overhead wires. Let go of the string!
3. Kites must be constructed of non-metallic materials such as wood, plastic or paper. Never use aluminum foil, wire or Mylar polyester film which conduct electricity.
4. Fly kites in dry weather using a dry string—never a wire.

Suggested Materials: 18 ½ X 24 in. sheets of pale blue construction paper, 8 ½ X 10 colored construction paper, string and marking pens

Directions:

Use large pieces of pale blue construction paper as poster background. Tear smaller pieces of colored paper into kite, tree and power-pole shapes. Paste on pale-blue background to represent the kite safety rule you wish to illustrate. Use actual string for kite string and marking pen to draw electrical lines and antennae. Write kite safety rule with marking pen.

Fly in Open
Areas!



Awesome Dragon Kites Measure Up!

Background:

Because dragons are mythical creatures, everyone has her own dragon. The dragon you imagine isn't exactly the same as anyone else's. Chinese water-bearing dragons with flames coming from their joints are different from European fire-breathing dragons. Dragons in other cultures are different still.

Suggested Supplies: rulers, scissors, bamboo barbecue skewers, masking tape, white garbage bags, marking pens

Directions:

1. Cut rectangles from white garbage bags measuring 31 centimeters by 48 centimeters. (Teacher may want to pre-cut the rectangles to streamline lesson.)
2. Fold rectangle in half (31 x 24).
3. Across the top, measure 13 centimeters from the center fold and place a dot (or point) with marking pen. (See diagram on following page.)
4. Measure down 9 centimeters from the top left corner and place a second point.
5. Measure across bottom, 10 ½ centimeters from the center fold and place third point.
6. Using a straight-edge, draw lines connecting the three points. (See diagram on following page.) Let your imagination fly and draw your own personal dragon on your kite.
7. Cut out the kite. Place small pieces of tape to reinforce holes for the bridle and kite string.
8. This kite flies best in a gentle breeze, but a tail may be added for ballast in brisker winds.

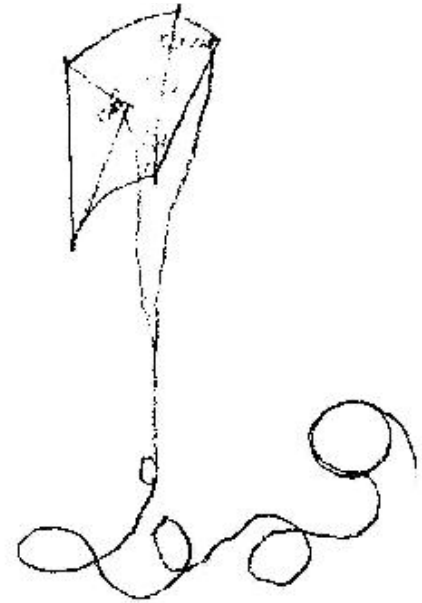
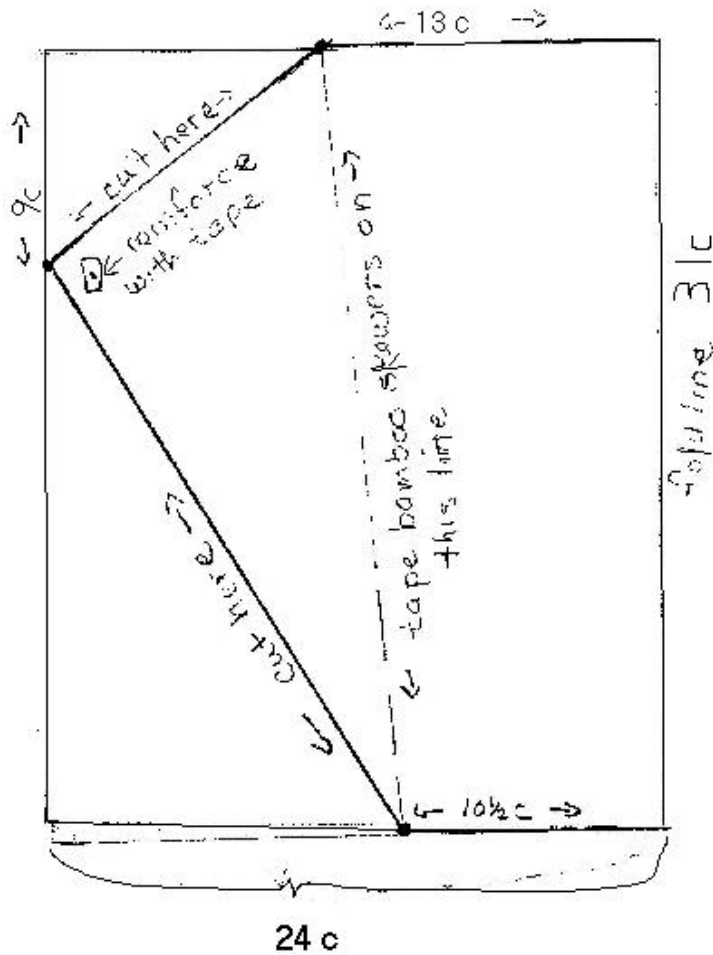




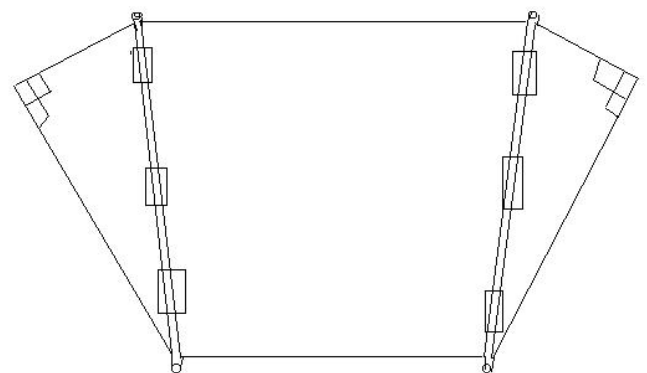
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Finished Kite



Kite Back

CHINESE NEW YEAR'S SONG

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Gung Hay Fat Choy

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THE WARLORD'S KITES

By Virginia Walton Pilegard

Illustrated by Nicolas Debon

“Recommended to libraries that want to increase their multicultural collection.”

--Lupe Callihan, Howard Elementary, Eugene, Oregon School District

All is calm in the warlord's palace, and the artist's apprentice Chuan takes a break from papermaking to sit with his friend Jing Jing, watching the sunset. Suddenly, a cloud of dust rises on the horizon. It is an invading army. The palace gates are closed, but how will they keep the invaders at bay?

As the palace prepares to withstand the attack, Chuan continues making paper, while Jing Jing tries to think of a way to scare away the army. Jing Jing comes up with an ingenious solution, using Chuan's knowledge of calculating area as well as his handmade paper and ink to frighten the troops into leaving.

Children learn about creativity, folklore, and calculating area in a math lesson that's as fun as it is fascinating. Directions for making a kite follow the story.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Virginia Walton Pilegard studied mathematics and completed both a B.A. and M.A. in education and created the *Warlord's Series* to provide children with tales of adventure that illustrate mathematics concepts. Ms. Pilegard is also the author of the acclaimed *The Warlord's Puzzle* (\$15.95), which was selected by the California Department of Education as recommended reading for grades K-12; *The Warlord's Beads* (\$15.95); *The Warlord's Fish* (\$15.95); and *The Warlord's Puppeteers* (\$15.95). She lives with her husband in the foothills of California's central Sierra Nevada Mountains below Yosemite National Park.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

After working in cultural administrations in both Canada and France, Nicolas Debon lives as a freelance illustrator in Versailles, France. In addition to his illustrations for the *Warlord's Series*, he is also the author/illustrator of several other books, including a 2003 Canadian Governor General's Literary Award finalist.

THE WARLORD'S KITES

By Virginia Walton Pilegard

Illustrated by Nicolas Debon

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