



## November Gratitude Practices for Children: UTO and Growing Grateful Children

### Teaching Gratitude as a Lead Up to Thanksgiving

November is a great time to focus on gratitude because Thanksgiving is always a reminder about how important gratitude can be. Below you will find two faith formation options for helping children practice and engage with gratitude during the month of November. You can find additional liturgical resources for congregations and families in our UTO liturgy booklet. These prayers are a wonderful way to make Thanksgiving about giving thanks.

There are wonderful resources online to help children learn about the historical tradition around Thanksgiving and we commend them to you, particularly those that come from the Indigenous Communities. Here is a list of books we've used with elementary aged children that we recommend:

- *Giving Thanks: More Than 100 Ways to Say Thank You* by Ellen Surrey
- *We are Grateful: Otsaliheliga* by Traci Sorell
- *1621: A New Look at Thanksgiving* by Catherine O'Neill Grace
- *I am thankful: A Thanksgiving Book for Kids*, by Sheri Wall
- *Thank you, Thank you, Thank you* by Melissa Peck
- *Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message* by Chief Jake Swamp
- *We are still here! Native American Truths Everyone Should Know* by Traci Sorell

## Option One: UTO Turkey Blue Boxes

### Supplies Needed:

1. Enough Blue Boxes for everyone to have one. (You can also use a lunch bag if you don't have Blue Boxes available, just be sure to write "UTO" on the outside.)
2. Turkey templates – print on cardstock for a sturdier presentation
  - a. You can do a Google image search for crafts: turkey feathers and head or
  - b. use one of the two that follow that we found online (with credit on each page) or
  - c. you can draw your own
3. Tape, glue sticks, and scissors (unless you pre-cut the pieces)
4. Grant stories to share – [www.unitedthankoffering.org](http://www.unitedthankoffering.org) under the stories tab or from our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/UnitedThankOffering](https://www.facebook.com/UnitedThankOffering) or from one of the UTO Grant lists/brochures.

### Background:

Many families have the tradition that when they gather for their Thanksgiving meal, each person says something they are thankful for from the past year. Since the United Thank Offering asks people to do this every day and at all times, this is a great opportunity to have the Blue Box available for thank offerings. We wanted to offer a craft for Sunday School/Faith Formation that would make the Blue Box into a turkey and give teachers, parents and students a way to talk about gratitude, giving and UTO.

### Scripture for Thanksgiving Day:

Joel 2:21-27

Psalms 126

1 Timothy 2:1-7

Matthew 6:25-33

### But we recommend using:

II Corinthians 9:11-12

You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God.

### Lesson:

Read the scripture verse that you've chosen for the lesson. Discuss with the students what the lesson means. If using the recommended lessons some questions might be:

- What are some of the nice things you've done for someone?
- How do you feel when you do something nice for someone else?
  - Does it make you want to do more nice things or less?
  - How do you think the other person feels when you do something nice for them?
- When someone thanks you for helping them, do you want to do more?
- What are some nice things you could do for others?

### Discussion Points:

Some of these points might be helpful or not depending on the age range in your class...

- God gives us the gift of grace freely. We respond, or say thank you to the gift of grace by doing good each and every day.
- The United Thank Offering is a ministry for every Episcopalian. For over 125 years, Episcopalians have taken these little Blue Boxes home from church and put money or a note of thanksgiving into it each time something good has happened in their day. Each year the boxes are collected and all of the money in the boxes go to help people all over the world.
  - This would be a great time to share a grant story.

## Activity:

Today we are going to turn our Blue Boxes into turkeys for Thanksgiving! Many people talk about what they are thankful for on Thanksgiving so you can pass around your turkey Blue Box as people share.

1. Have the children color and cut out their turkey pieces.
2. Glue or tape the pieces onto the Blue Box
3. Have a grant story for each child - it can be as simple as a grant brochure cut up so each child can have a photo and description or you can pull stories from the UTO blog and make panels for the box. (as shown in the photos) Add these to the bottom of the box
4. Give each child a coin and ask them to say what they are thankful for and put it in their new turkey Blue Box.
5. Close by saying how thankful you are for them. Say each child's name as you put a coin in your Blue Box.



## Option Two: Gratitude Turkey

*This project is a great one to do at home, or it could be modified for use with a Sunday School group.*

### Supplies Needed:

1. Brown craft paper (usually found in the mailing section of your office supply store)
2. Construction paper in a variety of colors
3. Tape, glue sticks, and scissors
4. Giant Turkey Feather Template

### Background:

Many families have the tradition that when they gather for their Thanksgiving meal, each person says something they are thankful for from the past year. Since the United Thank Offering asks people to do this every day and at all times, this is a great opportunity to teach children to do not just give thanks one day a year but to make it habit. The gratitude turkey can be modified to be whatever size you want. You can make them giant to fit on the back of a door, or small enough to fit on a poster board, whatever works in your space and can be an easily visible reminder to practice gratitude.

### Scripture for Discussion:

II Corinthians 9:11-12

You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God.

### Lesson:

Read the scripture verse that you've chosen for the lesson. Discuss with the students what the lesson means. If using the recommended lessons some questions might be:

- What are some of the nice things you've done for someone?
- How do you feel when you do something nice for someone else?
  - Does it make you want to do more nice things or less?
  - How do you think the other person feels when you do something nice for them?
- When someone thanks you for helping them, do you want to do more?
- What are some nice things you could do for others?

### Discussion Points:

Some of these points might be helpful or not depending on the age range in your class...

- God gives us the gift of grace freely. We respond or say thank you to the gift of grace by doing good each and every day.
- The United Thank Offering is a ministry for every Episcopalian. For over 125 years, Episcopalians have taken these little Blue Boxes home from church and put money or a note of thanksgiving into it each time something good has happened in their day. Each year the boxes are collected and all of the money in the boxes go to help people all over the world. Did you know that there are some children who do not have enough to eat or need help learning to read? Well UTO has helped in both of these areas from the money people put in their Blue Box.

### Activity:

Today we are going to make a giant turkey and 30 feathers. Each day from now until the end of the month, we are going to write one thing we are thankful for on a feather and add it to our turkey.

1. Have the children pick the colors for their feathers. You can then use the template or just cut strips of paper to make feathers. Each child will need 30.



2. Since every turkey will be unique in size, we do not have a template for the head of the turkey. The easiest way to do this is cut a length of brown craft paper a little smaller than you will want your turkey to be tall. (Feathers will go behind the body so be sure to make room for them.) Fold the brown craft paper in half and draw an outline for your turkey head and body. It should look like an elongated "8" with room for the neck between a small circle and a big tummy circle. Cut it out and shape as needed. Using construction paper, give your turkey eyes, a beak and a waddle as well as legs. Older kids will be able to do much of this themselves, and younger kids will enjoy directing you on the size of things and then will happily build the turkey.
3. Give each child one feather and ask them what they are most thankful for from that day. They can write or draw about it on their feather. Once they are done, encourage them to add it to their turkey.
4. Close by saying how thankful you are for them and put a coin in your Blue Box in their honor. Going forward, be sure to say something you are grateful for so that your children can see that this is an important practice that all of us can do.

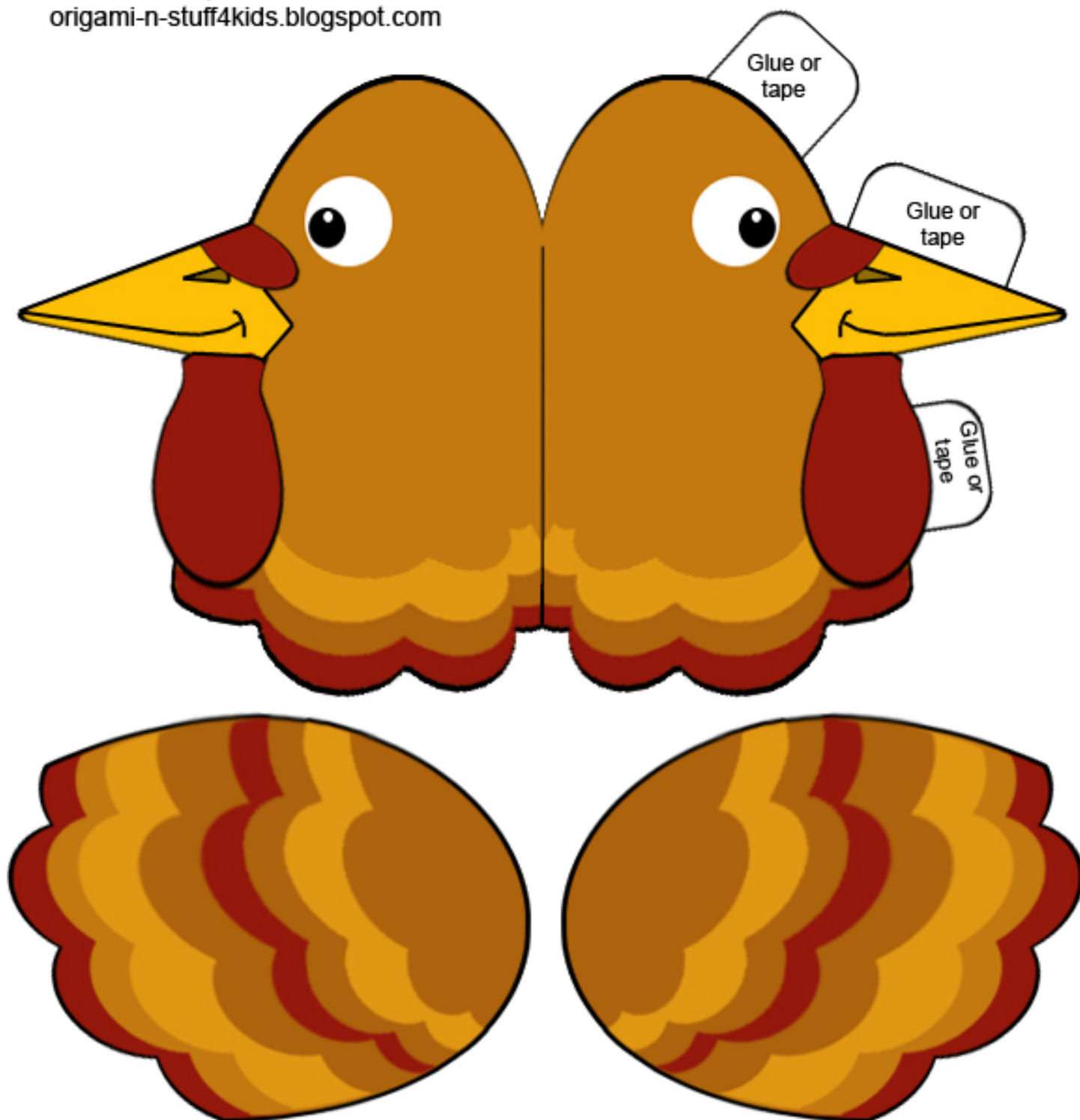
Here's our Turkey in Progress...



# Thanksgiving Paper Bag Turkey Page 1

©2010 Tammy Yee

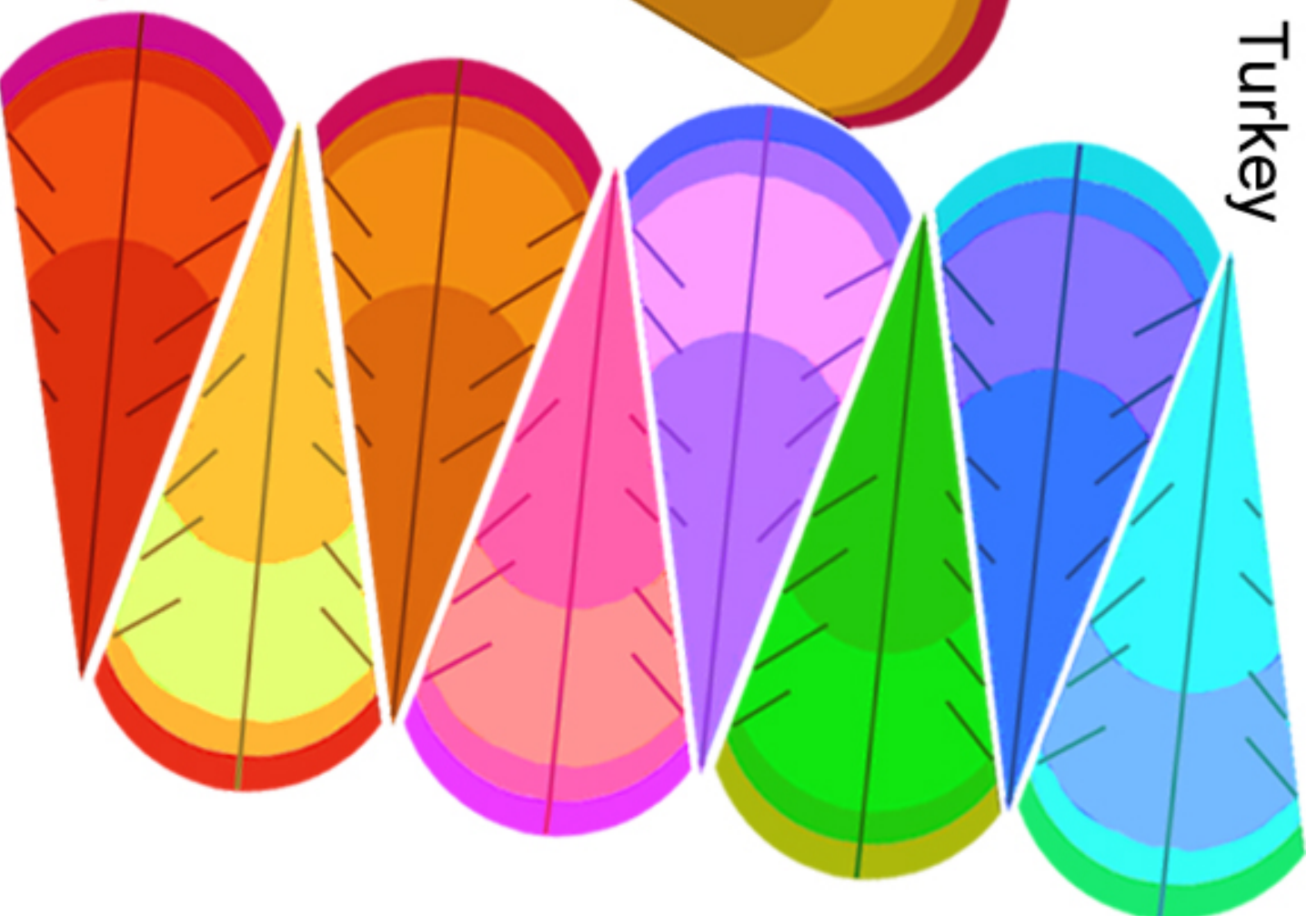
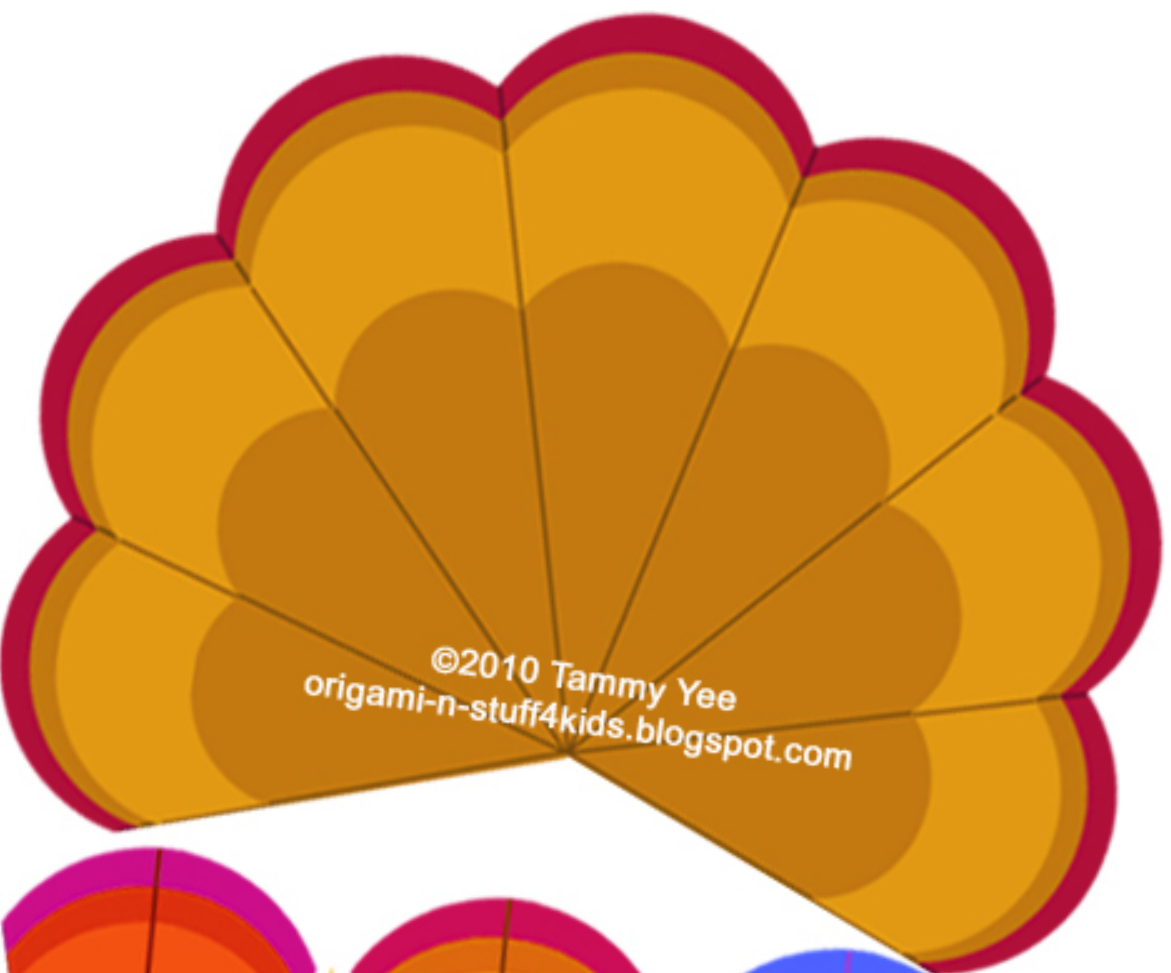
[origami-n-stuff4kids.blogspot.com](http://origami-n-stuff4kids.blogspot.com)



# Thanksgiving Paper Bag Turkey

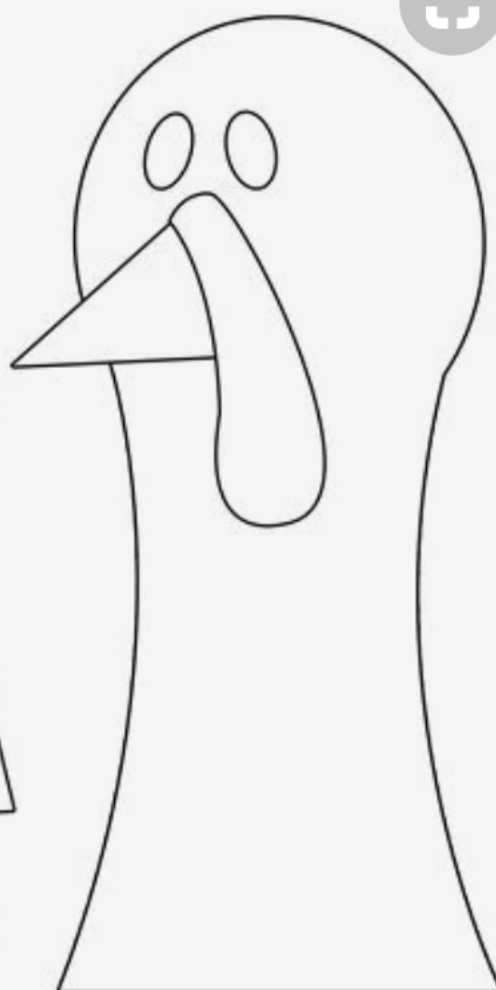
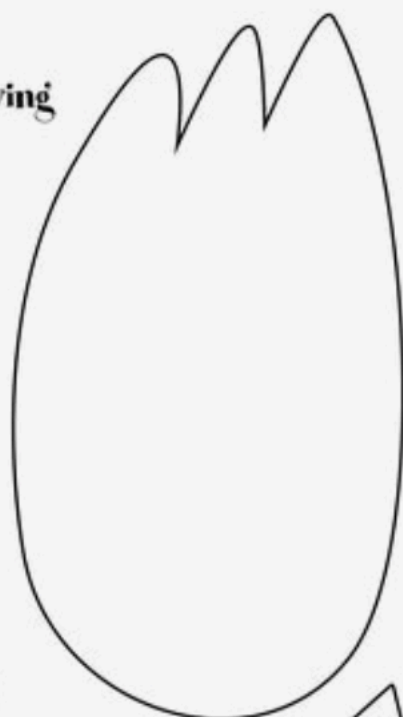
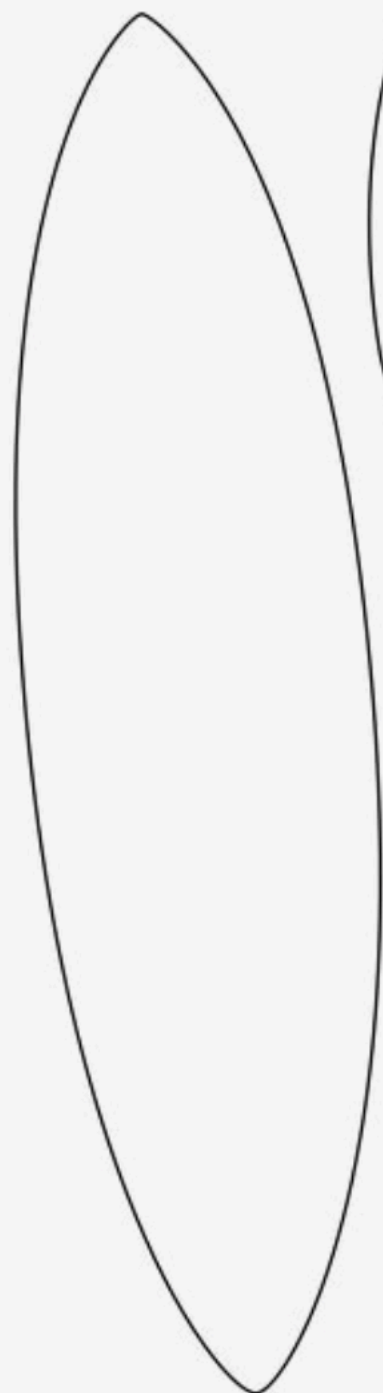
## Page 2

©2010 Tammy Yee  
origami-n-stuff4kids.blogspot.com

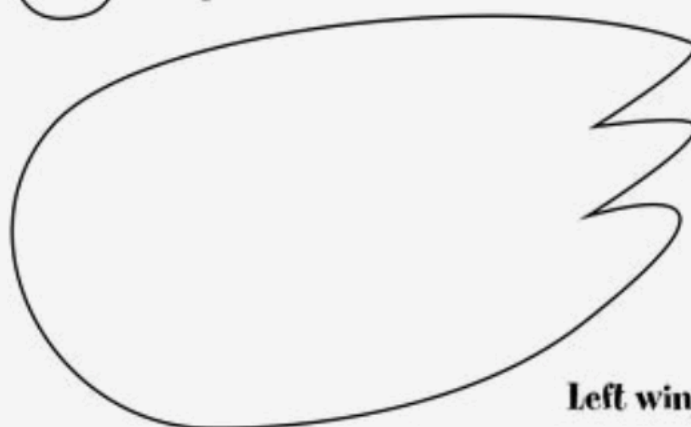




**Right wing**



**Turkey face  
parts**



**Left wing**

**Giant Turkey  
Feather Template**

