

# All Aboard!

## the magazine for kids



# The Race For the White House

by Julie Strand

In only a few months, your mommy and daddy are going to vote for a new President. Even though you can't vote, it's important to understand what is going on because it could affect you.

The President is the most important person in government. He is the head of the *executive* branch, which is responsible for the enforcement of laws in the country. He can also *veto* bills; that is, he can prevent the bills from becoming laws. Because of this, he has some influence over Congress (the people that make the laws).

When people run for President (there's no real race—"running" is a word meaning making oneself a candidate for election) they must do a lot of things. One is to establish a *platform* on the *issues*. A platform is what the

candidate plans to do once he or she is elected. An issue is a problem that concerns the voters.

One issue that comes up each election is education—school. While this is probably not your favorite thing, it is *very* important.

How do the candidates stand (that is, what is their platform) on education? President Williams (our current President) wants tighter standards for education before the states receive federal aid. Senator Gray (the President's opponent) prefers that the states are given the money without conditions. Both candidates make good arguments for their positions. Ask your mommy or daddy to show you newspaper articles that explain their positions in detail. Discuss the issues with your parents. Make sure you are not forgotten!

## In This Issue...

### All about politics

- The Presidential Election
- Science Corner
- Fun with Paper Folding
- Foxes



## Don't Be Late!

Lots of people take the train and do important stuff. Because we have to be fair to everyone, we cannot hold up the train for a passenger. Tell your mommy and daddy to make sure they arrive at the station early. You can help by making sure your suitcase is packed the night before!

# Science Corner: Acids & Bases

Another issue surrounding the President is how to handle acid rain. Acid rain is the result of raindrops mixing with smog to produce a rain that is harmful to plants and animals as well as damaging to buildings.

All chemicals (even those around your house) can be divided into three groups: *acids*, *bases*, and *neutrals*. Everyday acids include things like lemonade and vinegar; everyday bases include soap and window cleaner (ammonia). Both acids and bases are *corrosive* (that is, they dissolve things). For cleaning fluid, that's good; for rain, that's very bad.

**Experiment:** See how corrosive vinegar is! Next time you eat chicken, clean some of the bones and leave them in a dish of vinegar overnight. See how rubbery those bones became?

Scientists use chemicals called *indicators* to detect acids and bases. Indicators change color when the acidity of the sample changes. *Litmus* is probably the most popular indicator. It turns red in the presence of an acid, blue in the presence of a base, and purple when the chemical is neither.

Another curious thing about acids and bases is that they can neutralize each other. For instance, *hydrochloric acid* is a powerful industrial acid used to etch metals. *Sodium hydroxide* is a strong industrial base used to unclog drains. Mixed together, they react and change into salt water (a neutral).

**Experiment:** Ask your parents for some litmus paper. Try to see how much soapy water (a base) is needed to neutralize some lemon juice (an acid). And while you're at it, collect some rain water and see if you too are a victim of acid rain.

## *The Fox vs. The Farmer*

Did you think it was possible for a small woodland animal to affect the Presidency? It has happened before, and it looks like it is happening again.

Late last century, the Park Service ordered the reintroduction of wolves into national parks. Some livestock owners complained, as they feared the wolves would attack their animals. Since everyone felt strongly about this decision, and not everybody agreed that it was right, the decision was considered *controversial*.

The controversy this time is not about wolves but about foxes; specifically, the Pacific Gray Fox.

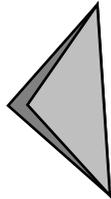


As more and more houses are built in California and Oregon, more and more Pacific Grays are *displaced* (moved out of their homes). The Park Service wants to release the captured foxes into national parks, but the local poultry (egg & chicken) farmers fear the aggressive foxes will hurt their animals. Who is right?

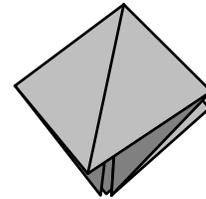
# Make your own paper spider!



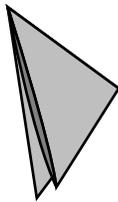
Senator Gray plans to increase cultural understanding with Asia. In Japan, kids amuse themselves with *origami*, the ancient art of paper folding. Try your hand at making a wolf spider!



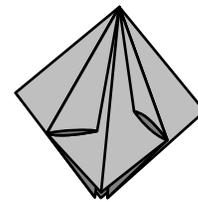
Take a square of paper (the larger and thinner the better) and fold it in half. Make sure your creases are sharp.



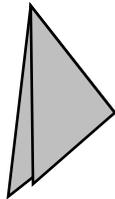
You should now have a square with four points at the bottom. Two-toned paper helps a lot in seeing this.



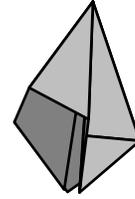
Take the triangle you just created and fold it in half again.



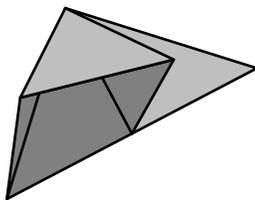
Fold the top edges of the square inward so that the corners meet in the center. Flip the paper and repeat.



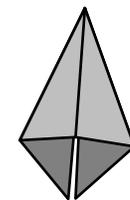
Fold it in half a third time. This time, unfold the crease you just made. Hard creases will give better results.



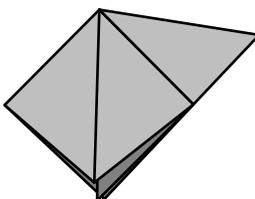
Open one of the flaps and lift the crease. Bring the outer edge to the center. Repeat for the other flaps.



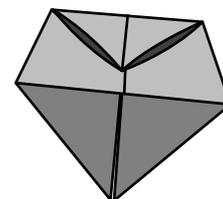
Lift the top layer of the triangle at the center of the long edge, separating it from the other three layers.



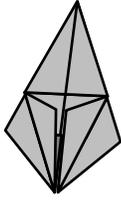
The result should be this inverted-kite shape. You may need to flip flaps to see something like the picture.



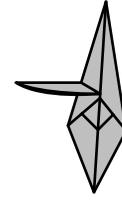
Carefully flatten the upper triangle into a square. Flip the paper over and repeat this procedure for the other side.



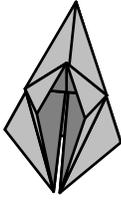
Bring the top point to the bottom point and crease as *hard as possible*. Unfold and repeat for the other flaps.



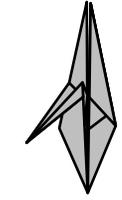
Now things become difficult. Take the side corners of the kite and carefully bring them to the center. Crease hard. The result should be a diamond in front with the inverted kite shape behind. Unfold the flaps you just created. Repeat this step for the other three flaps of the kite.



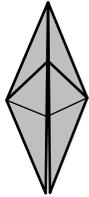
Fold down one of the top points so that it sticks out to the side like in the picture. Crease *hard*. You may need to put the spider down on the table and press down to get a good sharp crease. Once you have done that, unfold the crease. Repeat for the other three points.



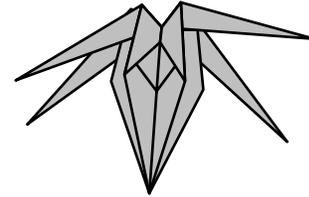
Examine one of the sides of the inverted kite. Notice that there is a flap across the body about a third of the way from the bottom. Carefully lift the center of this flap and bring it towards the top of the kite. This will cause the flaps you just unfolded to move toward the center again.



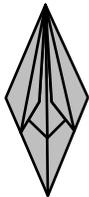
This step is very confusing. Partially lift the top flap on the side of the crease you just made. Carefully pull down the top point so that it goes on the inside. This should cause the “leg” to turn inside out, although you’ll probably have to help it a bit. Repeat for the other points.



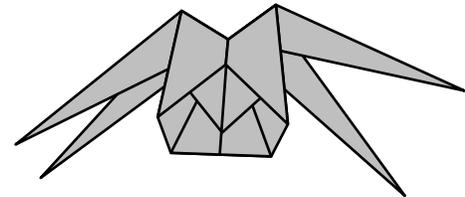
Repeat this procedure for the other four flaps of the kite. This will result in a diamond shape, with an arrow-like flap in the center pointing towards the top of the shape.



What you get should resemble something like the picture. We adjusted the legs slightly so that they are at different angles; this makes it appear more “realistic.” Once the legs are adjusted to your satisfaction, flatten your spider to strengthen your creases.



Turn over the diamond and carefully fold the top outer edges towards the center. Repeat for the other three flaps. You may start having difficulty at this point if your paper is thick. Try to make the creases sharp and the ends pointy—these flaps are the spider’s legs!



The final step is to lift the arrow flap slightly and tuck the bottom point up inside the spider’s body. This will “lock” your creases and keep the figure from unfolding. Now you can draw some eyes and fangs on it, paint it with scary colors, and throw it at your friends! Have fun!

Here at *All Aboard*, we named our spider “Wolfie” (because he looks like a wolf spider) and his job is to guard our computers from bugs! What is your spider’s name?

# “Energy President” to Visit, Reactivate Nuclear Facility

■ **Politics:** Some view it as a coup for the reelection campaign; others a serious threat to the environment.

*From Times Staff and Wire Reporters*

SAN JOSE—Four years ago, President Williams announced to Congress that this administration’s goal was complete independence from foreign oil by the end of his term of office. To accomplish this, he set forth eight points, of which was a stronger reliance of industry on electric rather than petroleum-based machinery.

Unfortunately, electricity requires power to generate, and power plants are already overtaxed, as anyone who has experienced the city’s all-too-frequent brownouts knows.

Enter nuclear power.

The Escondido Nuclear Facility has been idle for the last five years, following public outcry after a series of

accidents at facilities all across the country. Escondido was infamous for lax security policies and inaccurate reporting of accidents. Following the release of radioactive waste water into the ocean, the NRC report suggested that operations at the Escondido facility be halted.

Enter the “Energy President.”

As the need for electrical power in Southern California hits a new high—a combination of an unprecedented immigration combined with a resurgence in the native aerospace industry—the desire for additional generating plants became overwhelming, to the point that Congress, at the

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urging of President Williams, authorized the reactivation of Escondido.

Williams will be present at the reactivation ceremony, as the launch point for his reelection campaign. From Escondido, a special train carrying the President, Mrs. Williams, and the campaign staff will take a two week tour across the country. Emphasis will be on establishing a rapport with voters in the South, which have been critical of Williams’ concentration on the support of existing industry at the expense of establishing new industrial centers.

Not everybody is pleased with the plans for Escondido. Mark Wilson, head of the Nuclear Free Zone Coalition in Orange County, has filed a class action lawsuit attempting to block the reactivation, with the hopes that a sympathetic court would issue an injunction before Friday.

“Escondido is both a blight on the landscape and on the history of this

country,” Wilson said in a press release. “We cannot allow such a poorly-maintained facility to be reactivated. One nuclear accident could result in the deaths of tens of thousands that make South Orange County their home.” Wilson then proceeded to describe graphically the aftereffects on the local citizens near the failed nuclear reactors in Chernobyl and Three Mile Island.

Unfortunately for Wilson, South Orange County is hailed by many as “the new Silicon Valley.” Technology leaders, strong supporters of Williams, have been quick to rally behind the President in his effort to bring nuclear power back to Southern California.

In the wake of the US intervention in ongoing Russian/Georgian conflict, issues of domestic vulnerability has been raised. In a public statement, the FBI warned that “any and all suspicious activities near the President” will be met with immediate response.