



UNIT #5 – READING SECTION #2

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1 Listen and read. TR: 5.4

Chinese Paper Art

Paper cutting or tearing is a cultural tradition in China. For centuries, it has been passed down from one generation to the next, especially from mothers to daughters. This beautiful art created by skillful artists is used to decorate doors, ceilings, and beds in people's homes, or at celebrations such as birthdays and weddings. At Chinese New Year, *window flowers* are glued to windows, creating beautiful patterns of light and shadow.

The two main techniques used are cutting the paper using a knife or scissors, or tearing it by hand. If the paper is cut, the edges are very smooth. Paper cutting can produce very fine and delicate work. This type of work is typical of southern China. If the paper is torn by hand, the edges are more simple and natural. Tearing is used more in northeast China. In addition, different parts of China have their own motifs—or pictures. These motifs can express many stories, ideas, and emotions.

It can be hard to hold on to traditions like these because young people don't know much about traditional art. Often they prefer spending their time on newer pastimes. The experts are getting older. If young people don't learn the traditions, they won't be able to pass them down to their own children. But recently there is a change. There are more exhibitions of traditional art. Artists are going into schools to teach children how to do paper cutting. Children enjoy working together with artists and talking to them about the meaning of their art. In this way, they are becoming proud of their culture and traditions.



Activity Windows
Continuación de la página 8

2 Read. Check T for True or F for False.

1. Chinese paper art is a very old tradition.
2. Paper art is only used to decorate people's bedrooms.
3. Paper cutting is the same in every part of China.
4. Children in schools now like learning how to do paper art.

T	F
T	F
T	F
T	F

Activity Windows
Continuación de la página 8



3 Label the pictures.

a paper cutting artist torn paper art a window flower



4 Write. Complete the chart. What are the differences?

Cut paper art	Torn paper art

5 Read and answer. Then work with a partner. Compare and discuss your answers.

1. In the past, paper art was mostly done by women and girls. Why do you think this was?

2. How much equipment do you need for paper cutting or tearing? Is it an expensive hobby?

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3. Do you think Chinese paper art is difficult or easy to do? Why?

4. Do you think the tradition of paper art will continue in China for future generations?