# Activity: Create Your Own Sword Guard (Tsuba)

**Objectives:**

Use the templates or create your own shape and design a sword guard.

**Grades:** [Elementary School (K-3)](http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/no-keys/30), [Elementary School (4-5)](http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/no-keys/102), [Middle School (6-8)](http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/no-keys/31)

**Duration:** 45 minutes

**Standards:**

**Content Standards (California):**

[VPA/VA](http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/no-keys/35) k.2.2: Demonstrate beginning skill in the use of tools and processes, such as the use of scissors, glue, and paper in creating a three-dimensional construction.

VPA/VA k.2.6: Use geometric shapes/forms (circle, triangle, square) in a work of art.

VPA/VA1.2.3: Demonstrate beginning skill in the manipulation and use of sculptural materials (clay, paper, and paper maché) to create form and texture in works of art.

**Materials:**

Template copied on cardstock or tag board, glue, metal foil, permanent marker, and scissors; *Template: Sword Guard; Instructions: Create Your Own Sword.*

**Overview:**

Sword making is a refined and highly scientific art that is revered in Japan. A sword guard (*tsuba*) is a metal guard on a samurai sword between the handgrip and the blade. It protects the hand from sliding onto the sharp edge of the blade. Sword guards vary in shape and design and were carved or molded. Use the templates or create your own shape and design a sword guard.

**Procedure:**

1. Choose a shape from the sword guard templates (above).
2. Cut out the front and back pieces from the template.
3. Trace the template onto metal foil. Cut out both shapes.
4. Decorate your foil using permanent marker. Dry.
5. Assemble both sides of your sword guard with glue. Press firmly.
6. Use the point of scissors to punch a hole in the center.
7. Smooth any sharp edges. Be careful as the foil may be sharp.
8. Create a samurai sword for your sword guard (See: *Visual Instructions Create Your Own Sword* (PDF) (above)).