A guide to designing, populating and using a Paku Paku in an educational setting

A Paku Paku, sometimes called a paper fortune teller or chatterbox, is an origami game that uses questions and answers. You might have played with one at school although you probably didn't know its Japanese name (パクパク), which describes the action of a mouth opening and closing. It's the same term that gave Pac-Man its name!

As it's based on asking questions, it can be used as a prompt to get people talking – either as an icebreaker or for a longer discussion session. They are inexpensive to produce and fun to use.

As part of the 2017–20 Enhancement Theme (Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience), QAA Scotland designed a Paku Paku for use at events and to promote the Theme.

We have created this pack of materials to help you use the version we have created or design and use your own Paku Paku activity. Along with this guide, you will find:

- a blank design template
- a customisable Word document with tables for planning your activity
- customisable PowerPoint slides with folding instructions.

Designing your Paku Paku

Let's start with the visual design. All the text you need for your exercise will appear on one side of the paper.

You will need guidelines as shown below (there is a downloadable template of this in this pack).
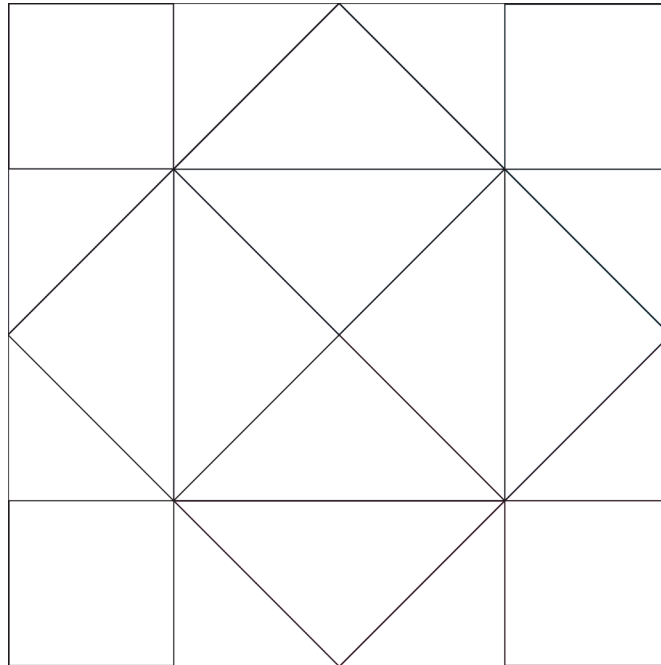

You may wish to add colour to your Paku Paku. This might simply be your organisational colours, but you might want to make the colours part of the exercise. Some suggestions as to how you might do this are included below. (If colours are critical to how your Paku Paku will be used, it is good practice to think about accessibility – will a person with limited colour perception be able to participate as intended?)

We opted to add the Enhancement Theme colours – pink, purple and blue – and to arrange them so that, when it was folded, each corner was a different colour. If you wish to do the same, you will need to arrange the colours as follows:
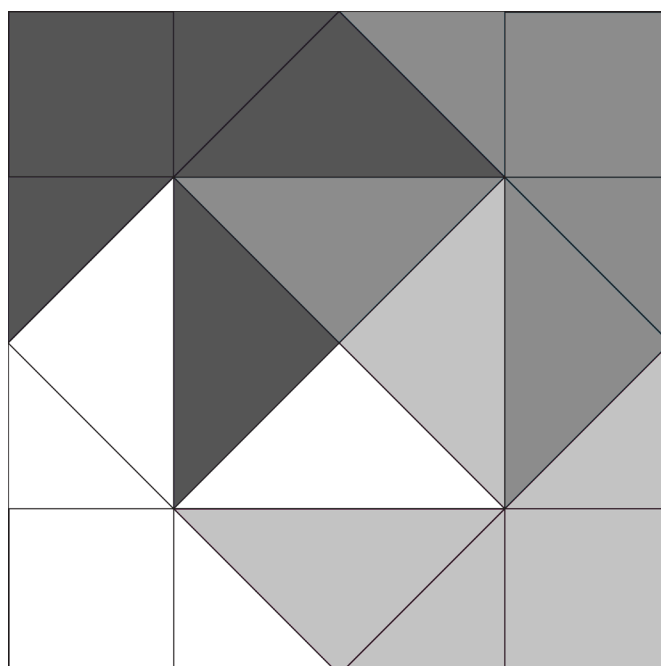
The unfolded version of our Paku Paku looked like this:
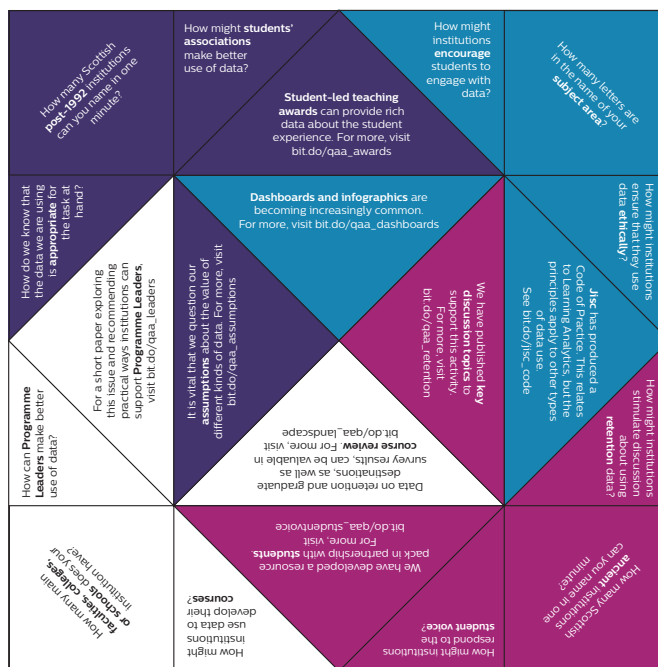
Once ours was folded, it looked like this:

You might want to make use of the back of the Paku Paku – we used ours to include folding instructions (see below) and a little bit of promotional text. It's a good idea to include the guidelines on the back to help people fold the item.

If you're including folding instructions, bear in mind that once your participants start folding, these instructions will become obscured. You might want to put the instructions on a PowerPoint slide. If any of your questions have factual answers, you might want to include these on your slides too. We have included some customisable slides in this package.

Populating your Paku Paku with text

The text direction is a matter of preference. Play around with the design to see what you think works best.

The Paku Paku has 20 individual panels that can be grouped into three levels as shown. When you are designing your activity, you might find it useful to think about it as having three stages, each using a different level of questions.
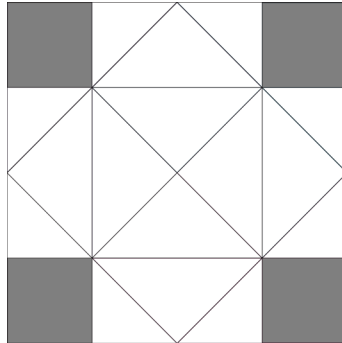

Figure 1: First level

The first-level panels appear at the four corners of the paper. When the Paku Paku is folded and held closed, only these four panels will be visible. The answers to these questions need to have a numerical answer, but needn't be numerical questions – for example, 'how many letters are in your name?'
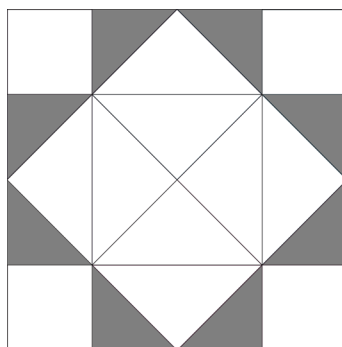

Figure 2: Second level

There are eight second-level panels. When the Paku Paku is folded and held open, four of these eight questions will be visible – the other four will be visible when you open the Paku Paku in the opposite direction.
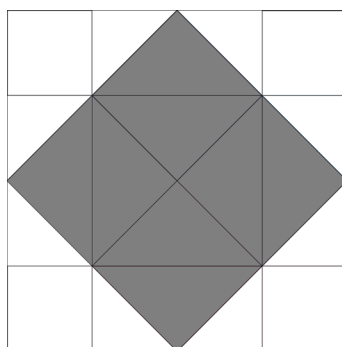

Figure 3: Third level

There are eight third-level panels. In order to see these, you need to open the Paku Paku and lift the flaps.

When you are thinking about how you might populate your Paku Paku, you will need to determine the purpose of each level. This will depend on how you plan to use your Paku Paku.

We recommend that you plan this according to the time you have available. It might be helpful to use a table to plan your activity. You'll find a blank template of this table in this pack. This is how we structured our activity.

Level	Purpose	Questions/tasks	Time allocated
1	Getting to know you	1. How many Scottish post-1992 institutions can you name in one minute?	One minute
		2. How many letters are in the name of your subject area?	
		3. How many Scottish ancient institutions can you name in one minute?	
		4. How many main faculties, colleges, or schools does your institution have?	
2	Main points for discussion	1. How might students' associations make better use of data?	Five minutes
		2. How might institutions encourage students to engage with data?	
		3. How might institutions ensure that they use data ethically?	
		4. How might institutions stimulate discussion about using retention data?	
		5. How might institutions respond to the student voice?	
		6. How might institutions use data to develop their courses?	
		7. How can Programme Leaders make better use of data?	
		8. How do we know that the data we are using is appropriate for the task at hand?	
3	Takeaway points – further questions and information	1. Student-led teaching awards can provide rich data about the student experience. For more information: bit.do/qaa_awards	None
		2. Dashboards and infographics are becoming increasingly common. For more information: bit.do/qaa_dashboards	
		3. Jisc has produced a Code of Practice. This relates to Learning Analytics, but the principles apply to other types of data use. For more information: bit.do/jisc_code	
		4. We have published key discussion topics to support this activity. For more information: bit.do/qaa_retention	
		5. We have developed a resource pack in partnership with students. For more information: bit.do/qaa_studentvoice	
		6. Data on retention and graduate destinations, as well as survey results, can be valuable in course review. For more information: bit.do/qaa_landscape	
		7. For a short paper exploring this issue and recommending practical ways institutions can support Programme Leaders: bit.do/qaa_leaders	
		8. It is vital that we question our assumptions about the value of different kinds of data. For more information: bit.do/qaa_assumptions	

The first-level of questions can act as an icebreaker, so if you are using the Paku Paku as part of a longer session, you may wish to use this activity at the beginning.

Because the time we had for our activity was very limited, we decided to use the second-level panels for the key questions we wanted participants to discuss, and we used the third-level panels for 'takeaway points'. If you have more time for your activity, you might want to use the third-level panels to prompt another round of discussions.

If you populate your second-level panels with questions that have factual answers, you could include these answers on the third-level panels - but you'll need to fold the Paku Paku beforehand, so your participants don't see them!

Making your Paku Paku

We printed our Paku Paku on to 210mm^2 paper. Printing onto A4 and cutting off the excess will result in a Paku Paku of roughly this size.

To fold:

- Starting with the paper 'front side down'; fold all four corners into the centre.
- Turn the paper over and fold all four corners into the centre again.
- Turn the paper over one last time and work your fingers into the four pockets.
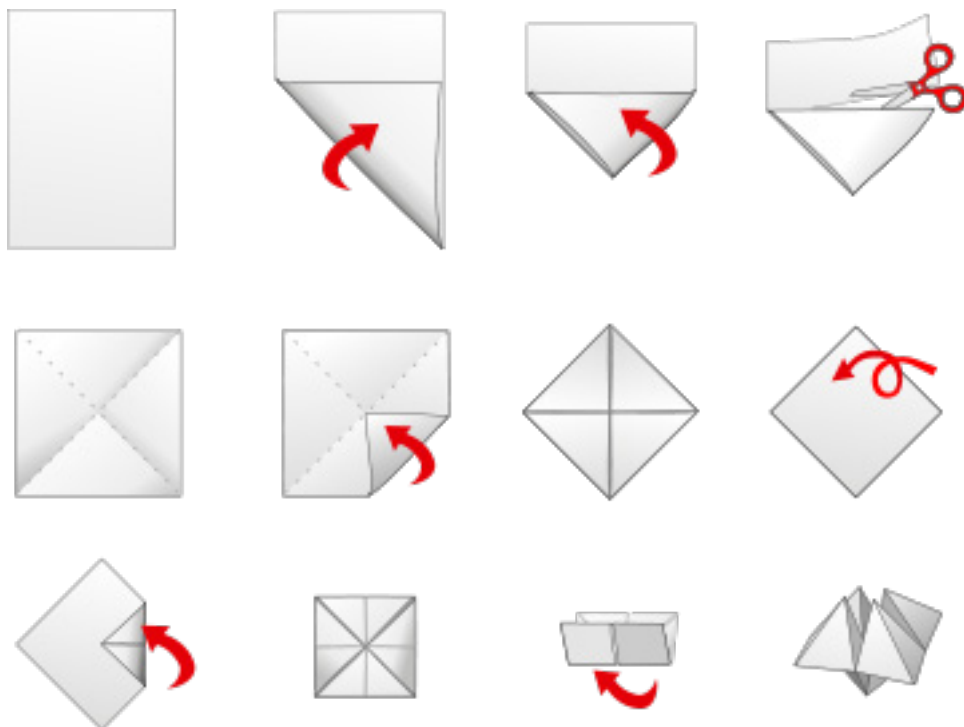
Using your Paku Paku

How you use your Paku Paku will depend on the purpose and structure of your activity. Here is how we used ours:

1. Person A holds the Paku Paku closed so that Person B can see the four first-level panels.

2. Person B chooses and answers one of the questions on these panels.

3. Person A uses the answer to open the Paku Paku on alternating sets of second-level panels. (For example, if person B chose to answer the question 'How many letters are in the name of your subject area?' with 'Music', Person A would count to five – or spell out the word 'Music' – while opening the Paku Paku in alternating directions on each number or letter.)

4. When stage 3 is completed, Person B chooses from the questions that are visible, and this forms the basis of discussion.

5. After five minutes, participants open the flap. Inside, they find a panel of a matching colour to the question they have been discussing, with signposts to further information.

In the example above, two participants are working in a pair. This works well for question selection, as one person holds the Paku Paku and the other picks the panels. However, there is no reason why the discussion element of the activity can't include more people.

If it is important that all questions are discussed, you could put participants into groups of eight – each person has one opportunity to hold the Paku Paku and one opportunity to pick the question, and discussions involve the whole group.

We would love to hear about how you've used your Paku Paku. What did you find worked well? What advice would you give to other people who are designing a Paku Paku activity? Share your thoughts with us: ETadmin@qaa.ac.uk