Floatplanes – originally called *hydroaeroplanes* – first took off in France in 1910. Shortly after that, floatplanes were found everywhere. By 1911, the U.S. Navy was testing a floatplane for landing and takeoff from ships. In 1914 the first floatplane appeared on Lake Union with the first passenger being Seattle Mayor Hiram Gill, and in 1916 William Boeing established a seaplane company on Lake Union. Boeing’s business was to deliver mail using his B-1 airplane, which hangs from the ceiling of Seattle’s Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI). Boeing also started building seaplanes for WWI and commercial uses. A replica of the first plane he designed and built, the B&W 1, is in Seattle’s Museum of Flight. By the 1980’s, there were five floatplane companies operating from Lake Union. Today, five have been reduced to two—Seattle Seaplanes which has been around for about 30 years, and Kenmore Air which started in 1946 on north Lake Washington. Today, Lake Union is the busiest seaplane base in the United States, if not the world.

**TERMINOLGY**

**Floatplane** – A fixed wing plane with one or two pontoons or *floats* mounted under the fuselage to provide buoyancy for operation on water. The pontoons/floats can be removed and replaced with fixed landing gear, limiting the plane to land-based operations.

**Amphibian** – A fixed-wing airplane that can take off and land on both land and water. An amphibious airplane is a floatplane or seaplane outfitted with retractable gear designed to extend for runway landings and retract for water landings.

**Flying Boat** – A fixed-wing airplane with the fuselage built into the shape of a water proof hull capable of creating buoyancy when resting on water and hydrodynamic lift when taking off and landing on water. These planes usually have small pontoons at the wing tips to keep the plane balanced in the water. A flying boat cannot be reconfigured as a land-based plane.

**Seaplane** – Any boat or airplane that lands and takes off from the sea. Because fresh water and salt water are different, seaplanes require specialized pilots who can take off and land on salt water.
INSTRUCTIONS

1. Color water, mountain and sky.
2. Cut out floatplane on the dotted line. Color floatplane.
3. Fold the card in half with the drawing on the inside. Cut on dotted lines at fold to make a flap.
4. Fold the flap back and forth.
5. Open card and pop up the cut out section to form a step.
6. Tape the plane to the step.