Japanese Art Program

Grades 3rd to 6th
East Asian Studies Center
Indiana University
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Japanese Art Program for Grades 3-6  
Developed by Kazuyo Nakamura

Features of the Japanese Art Program

1. It is designed primarily for 3rd to 6th graders.
2. It facilitates understanding of Japanese culture through art in relation to American culture.
3. It has correlation to the National Standards for Arts Education.
4. It provides interdisciplinary materials and can be integrated into school curriculum.

Goals of the Japanese Art Program

Children will:

1. Become aware of Japanese culture through art in relation to their own lives.
2. Become familiar with Japanese traditional art.
3. Develop a cross-cultural perspective that respects differences and similarities between American and Japanese cultures.

The Overview of Lesson Plans

1. Painting and Folk Art (Mingei): Daruma Doll
   *Daruma* dolls are traditionally used as good luck symbols. Not only children but also adults use a *Daruma* doll when they want a wish to come true. People fill in one eye of a *Daruma* doll when they have a wish, and they fill in another when the wish comes true. Through knowing the legend of *Daruma* as well as creating and using a *Daruma* doll, students will become familiar with the meaning and use of a *Daruma* doll.

2. Graphic Design: Family Crest (Kamon)
   In Japanese culture the ties of family (*Ie*) is highly considered, and the design of family crests (*Kamon*), which are helpful in identifying the roots of a family and connecting family members with each other, are well developed. Such a family crest is often stamped on commodities, such as *Kimono*. The objects used for that design include animals, plants, and symbolic images, which often reflect Japanese aesthetic taste. Students will become aware of aesthetic elements of Japanese family crests and create a family crest in relation to their own families.

3. Graphic Design: Traditional Clothes (*Kimono*)
   *Kimono* is Japanese traditional clothing and is often decorated with traditional symbolic images and a combination of patterns. Nowadays Japanese wear *Kimono* only in ceremonial occasions, such as a coming-of-age ceremony, marriage ceremony or funerals. In this lesson, students will become familiar with these traditional clothes through knowing how Japanese use *Kimono* and what kinds of images and patterns are used for *Kimono* design. Through creating an original design for *Kimono*, students will become aware of patterns and visual symbols that are unique to Japanese art.
4. Sculpture: Seal Stamp (*Hanko*)
   Japanese use a seal stamp (*Hanko*) as well as writing a signature in order to verify important documents. On *Hanko* are inscribed personal names, which are written in *Kanji*, one type of the Japanese characters developed from Chinese characters. Through creating their own *Hanko*, students will become familiar with the use of *Kanji*, which indicates meanings and has usually two different readings.

5. Collage: Japanese Garden (*Niwa*)
   Japanese have developed unique forms and ideas about gardens. In contrast with traditional Western gardens, where geometrical forms and symmetry are considered beautiful, Japanese gardens emphasize organic forms and asymmetry appearing in nature. Japanese regard gardens as places not only for relaxation but also for meditation and worship. Students will become aware of Japanese aesthetics expressed in gardens and will design an original garden by applying some of the aesthetic elements.

6. Drawing: Cartoons and Japanese Idioms (*Kotowaza*)
   Cartoons that express ideas humorously are often created in Japanese art. Ideas used for cartoons include Japanese wisdom, which remains as *Kotowaza* (Japanese idioms). Through creating a cartoon based on Japanese idiomatic expression, students will become familiar with Japanese wisdom.

7. Drawing: Scroll Pictures (*Emaki*)
   *Emaki* (scroll pictures), which was derived from China, became highly developed in Japan. The pictures of *Emaki* show Japanese lives and customs in the various periods. *Emaki* is considered not only as a form of art but also as a visual reference to Japanese life style in different times. Through studying *Choju Giga* (Frolicking Birds and Animals), one of the representative *Sumi-e* scroll pictures, students will not only become familiar with Japanese customs, but also learn how to draw with a bamboo brush and India ink.
Painting and Folk Art (Mingei): Daruma Doll

A Student’s Work (3rd Grade)

Purpose/ Rationale
Daruma dolls are traditionally used as good luck symbols. Not only children but also adults use a Daruma doll when they want a wish to come true. People fill in one eye of a Daruma doll when they have a wish, and they fill in another when the wish comes true. Through knowing the legend of Daruma as well as creating and using a Daruma doll, students will become familiar with the meaning and use of a Daruma doll.

Objectives
Students will:
1. know the legend of Daruma and how Japanese use a Daruma doll in the society.
2. create a Daruma doll and use it by filling in one eye and setting up a goal.

Time Allotment
1 class session

Materials
A whole eggshell which has a weight on the bottom/student
Pencils
Oil-based black markers
Water-soluble liquid wax (Staedtler’s Karat Liqua is a best product.)
Glitter glue
Brushes
Three pennies for a weight of a Daruma doll
Tapes for having three pennies together
Super glue for fixing a weight on the bottom of an eggshell

Visuals
Pictures or videotapes showing how Japanese use a Daruma doll in the society
A Daruma doll
A drawing of a Daruma doll as a visual reference (See Appendix 2)

Vocabulary
Culture: Daruma, Mingei (Folk Art)
Art: Symbol, Folk Art
Procedure

Preparation
A teacher will:
Prepare a whole eggshell with a weight on the bottom.
- Empty an egg (5 min.)
- Dry the egg (one night)
- Put three pennies on the inside bottom of the egg and glue them together (3 min.)

Setup (5 min.)
A teacher will:
1. set up a slide projector and slides or VCR.
2. put painting materials, brushes, markers, and glitter glues on the table.

Look at and Talk about Art (10 min.)
Students will:
1. look at a *Daruma* doll and talk about what it is used for in Japanese society.
2. look at how a *Daruma* doll is used as a good luck symbol in pictures or through watching a videotape.
3. listen to the legend of *Daruma* and discuss why *Daruma* became a good luck symbol for success (See Appendix 1).

Create (30 min.)
Students will:
1. receive eggshells and try if their *Daruma* dolls return right side up when they are rolled.
2. draw the face of *Daruma* on the eggshell with a pencil and trace it with a black marker.
   *Notes:*
   - Ask students not to fill in the eyes of a *Daruma* doll.
   - Ask students not to paint on the face of a *Daruma* doll.
3. paint the eggshell and decorate it with glitter glues.

Assess and close (10 min.)
Students will:
1. review how a *Daruma* doll is used in Japanese society.
2. talk about their wishes and fill in one eye.

Extension and Enrichment

Social Studies
*Daruma* is a good luck symbol for success. Compare and contrast the notion of success between Japanese and American cultures. Japanese “success” often emphasizes “efforts” and “patience,” while the American “talents” and “luck.” Discuss how such a difference would make people’s attitudes toward living.

Resources
Appendix 1: The Legend of Daruma

Daruma is a short name for Budhidharma, a Buddhist priest from India who lives in the sixth century. Daruma sat absolutely still and mediated for nine years. He did not move at all, and after nine years he had lost the use of his arms and legs. In fact, they had withered away. So, Daruma is made with no arms and legs. They have weighted bottoms so that no matter how you roll them, they will always return right side up. It is said that it symbolizes the spirit of patience necessary for success.
Appendix 2: Drawing of a *Daruma* Doll
Purpose/ Rationale
In Japanese culture the ties of family (Ie) is highly considered, and the design of family crests (Kamon), which are helpful in identifying the roots of a family and connecting family members with each other, are well developed. Such a family crest is often stamped on commodities, such as Kimono. The objects used for that design include animals, plants, and symbolic images, which often reflect Japanese aesthetic taste. Students will become aware of aesthetic elements of Japanese family crests and create a family crest in relation to their own families.

Objectives
Students will:
1. know how and why Japanese use family crests.
2. become aware of particular and simplified objects used for Japanese family crests.
3. create a family crest in relation to their own families.

Time Allotment
2 class sessions

Materials
Color markers
Drawing papers, 959,” 1 per student
Paper for sketches, 9512,” 1 per student
Pairs of Compasses
Rulers

Visuals
Examples of Japanese family crests.
Pictures of objects, such as animals and plants, which may be useful for creating family crests.

Vocabulary
Culture: Kamon (a family crest)
Art: Simplified, Repeated, Organic, Geometric

Procedure
Preparation
A teacher will: (20 min.)
1. create an example of family crests. (15 min.)
2. prepare a story that explains the design of the example.
3. prepare 9 5” drawing paper per student.

Students will:
(As a homework) find one object that is strongly related to their own families.
*Notes: This homework can be done with their family members.

Setup (5 min.)
A teacher will:
1. prepare a slide projector and slides.
2. place color makers and papers on the table.

Look at and Talk about Art (15 min.)
Students will:
1. look at Japanese family crests and identify objects used for the design.
*Notes: Plants are more often used than animals in Japanese family crests.
2. talk about how the objects used for the crests are simplified and why they should be so.
*Notes: Students may compare and contrast the simplified objects with the real objects.
3. identify repeated, organic, and geometric elements in the crests.
4. talk about why they chose a particular object for the family crest.

Create (75 min.)
Students will:
1. on the sketch paper, develop a simplified form from the specific object that they chose for the family crest.
2. draw an original family crest using color makers.
*Notes: Rulers and pairs of compasses can be used for drawing circles and squares.
3. write why they chose a particular object for the crest on the back of the paper.

Assess and close (10 min.)
Students will:
1. identify relations between the crest and their own families.
2. look for the evidence of abstract forms developed based on specific objects.

Extension and Enrichment

Social Studies
Compare and contrast ideas and images about a family between the U.S. and Japan. Explore the concept of **Ie** (family) in relation to the Feudalism in Japanese society.

Resources
Appendix 1: Examples of Japanese Family Crests

十一割り四つ目
丸に梅鉢
三つ追い茄子
増山雁金
後ろ向き三つ兎
三つ寄せ月星
Appendix 2: Examples of Students’ Works

“My family is a family of four. The four blocks of squares means that two of our family is the same, the other two are different.” (3rd Grader)

“This is related to my family because we always wanted a pet and I hunt this frog. So we finally got our pet.” (3rd Grader)

“My families are busy. Bees are always busy. That relates to my family.” (3rd Grader)
Graphic Design: Traditional Clothes (*Kimono*)

A Student’s Work (4th Grader)

**Purpose/ Rationale**
*Kimono* is Japanese traditional clothing and is often decorated with traditional symbolic images and a combination of patterns. Nowadays Japanese wear *Kimono* only in ceremonial occasions, such as a coming-of-age ceremony, marriage ceremony or funerals. In this lesson, students will become familiar with these traditional clothes through knowing how Japanese use *Kimono* and what kinds of images and patterns are used for *Kimono* design. Through creating an original design for *Kimono*, students will become aware of patterns and visual symbols that are unique to Japanese art.

**Objectives**
Students will:
1. become familiar with Japanese traditional clothes, *Kimono*, through knowing how Japanese use the clothes nowadays.
2. become aware of the images and patterns used for *Kimono* design and create an original design for *Kimono*.

**Time Allotment**
2 class sessions

**Materials**
*Kimono*-shaped construction paper (poster size), 1 per student
Color construction papers
Paper glue
Scissors
Color construction papers with Japanese traditional patterns

**Visuals**
*Kimono*
Pictures or videotapes that show how Japanese wear *Kimono* nowadays
Pictures of *Kimono* that is decorated with traditional patterns and visual symbols

**Vocabulary**
*Culture: Kimono*
*Art: Pattern, Unit, Symbol, Organic, and Geometric*

**Procedure**
**Preparation** (20 min.)
A teacher will:
1. cut out a poster-sized construction paper into *Kimono* shape (1. min. per paper).
2. make copies of Japanese patterns onto colored construction papers (See Appendix 1).

**Setup** (5 min.)
A teacher will:
1. prepare a slide projector and slides.
2. put colored construction papers, the construction papers with traditional patterns, scissors, glues, and *Kimono*-shaped papers on the table.

**Look at and Talk about Art** (10 min.)
Students will:
1. look at the pictures or watch videotapes that show how Japanese use *Kimono*.
   * Notes:
   - A teacher should let students know that in Japan today they wear *Kimono* only on special occasions.
   - A teacher may demonstrate how to wear *Kimono* to students.
2. look at *Kimono* and find typical images and patterns used for *Kimono* design.
   - Find the units of patterns.
   - Find what kinds of and how many of patterns are used in one piece of *Kimono*.
   - Find both geometric and organic elements used in images and patterns.

**Create** (55 min.)
Students will:
1. create a basic pattern, such as a check and vertical or horizontal stripes, by using two kinds of colored construction papers and pasting them onto a *Kimono*-shaped paper.
2. choose and cut out one or two kinds of units from the copied papers (See Appendix 1).
3. combine these units with the basic pattern and create an original design for *Kimono*.
   * Notes:
   - Help students to become aware of the harmony of different colors or shapes when creating a combination of patterns.

**Assess and Close** (10 min.)
Students will:
1. review how *Kimono* is used in Japan today.
2. identify the planned elements of the patterns in relation to color, forms, and arrangements.

**Extension and Enrichment**

**Social Studies**
Different types of *Kimono* were developed according to social statuses and classes in the old times of Japan. Through knowing the differences in *Kimono*, students will learn the system and structure of the old Japanese society.

**Resources**
Appendix 1: Examples of Units and Patterns
Appendix 2: Examples of Students’ Works

(4th Grader)

(3rd Grader)
Sculpture: Seal Stamps (*Hanko*)

**Purpose/ Rationale**
Japanese use a seal stamp (*Hanko*) as well as writing a signature in order to verify important documents. On *Hanko* are inscribed personal names, which are written in *Kanji*, one type of the Japanese characters developed from Chinese characters. Through creating their own *Hanko*, students will become familiar with the use of *Kanji*, which indicates meanings and has usually two different readings.

**Objectives**
Students will:
1. know the use of a seal stamp in Japanese society.
2. become aware of the use of *Kanji* as one type of Japanese characters.
3. create a seal stamp with a sculpted handle that stands for the meaning of their Japanese names.

**Time Allotment**
1 class session

**Materials**
Air-dried clay (*Model magic*)
Japanese word processor, such as *Japanese kit*

**Visuals**
Signed and sealed documents that show the use of seal stamps
Pictures of several kinds of seals from different times
*Hanko* Vocabulary

**Vocabulary**
*Culture*: *Kanji* (Japanese Characters), *Hanko* (Seal)
*Art*: Modeling, Symbol Procedure

**Preparation**
A teacher will:
1. find a Japanese name for each student by using a Japanese word processor or ask some Japanese to do so (30 min. for 20 students)
   *Notes: Find easiest *Kanji* for students’ names. The fewer strokes *Kanji* has, the easier the names are inscribed on *Hanko*.
2. make a card for each student, which indicates his or her Japanese name in *Kanji* and the meaning of the name (See Appendix 1) (10 min. for 20 students).
3. make the base of *Hanko* and on the base inscribe the name with coils made out of clay in a different color (10 min. for each *Hanko*).

**Setup** (5 min.)
A teacher will:
1. prepare a slide projector and slides.
2. place air-dried clay and the Japanese name cards on the table.
Look at and Talk about Art (10 min.)
Students will:
1. look at the documents that are signed and sealed and become aware of how a seal is used on the documents.
2. receive their Japanese name cards from a teacher and talk about the meanings of their names in Kanji.

Create (30 min.)
Students will:
1. make a group of 4 to 5 students in order to share air-dried clay.
2. model a handle that stands for the meaning of the Japanese name.

Assess and Close (10 min.)
Students will:
1. try out the seal stamp on a piece of paper.
2. talk about how effectively the modeled handle expresses the meaning of their names in Kanji.

Extension and Enrichment

World History
Japanese imported Chinese culture into their culture and converted it for the further development. Japanese language that consists of three types of characters, Kanji, Katakana, Hiragana, shows this fact. Students will find other facts that show China’s influence on Japan in the old times and learn what both cultures share with each other.

Resources
Appendix 1: An Example of the Japanese Name Card

Nathan
(Student’s Name)

南
(Japanese Name)

(South)
(The Meaning of the Name)
Collage: Japanese Garden (Niwa)

Shinjuan, Kyoto, Japan

Purpose/ Rationale
Japanese have developed unique forms and ideas about gardens. In contrast with traditional Western gardens, where geometrical forms and symmetry are considered beautiful, Japanese gardens emphasize organic forms and asymmetry appearing in nature. Japanese regard gardens as places not only for relaxation but also for meditation and worship. Students will become aware of Japanese aesthetics expressed in gardens and will design an original garden by applying some of the aesthetic elements.

Objectives
Students will:
1. become aware of unique objects to Japanese gardens.
2. make a collage of an original garden design by applying some elements of Japanese gardens.

Time Allotment
2 class sessions

Materials
Paper for collage background, 9512, 1 per group
Choice of drawing media
Scissors
Glue
Old magazines about natural objects, such as plants and stones
Scraps of colored paper
Newspapers for tables

Vocabulary
Culture: Ishidoro (stone lantern), Kakei (a bamboo pipe), Tobi-ishi (stepping stones)
Art: Asymmetrical, Symmetrical, Organic, Geometrical

Visuals
Pictures of Japanese gardens
Pictures of traditional Western gardens
Procedure

Preparation
A teacher will:
1. find old magazines, from which students can cut out pictures for creating a collage.

Setup (5 min.)
A teacher will:
1. place magazines, glues, scissors, and drawing media on the table.
2. prepare a slide projector and slides.

Look at and Talk about Art (10 min.)
Students will:
1. talk about their own images and ideas about gardens.
2. compare and contrast Japanese and Western gardens.
3. identify typical objects or plants used in Japanese gardens.

Create (70 min.)
Students will:
1. make a group of three to five in order to design a Japanese style garden for their school.
2. sketch their ideas in three ways:
   • draw a map like view.
   • draw one view.
   • draw another view from a different direction.
*Notes: ask students to use at least three elements found in Japanese gardens.
3. cut out objects, such as a river and a stone lantern, from old magazines and create a collage of Japanese garden.
* Notes: if desired objects are not found in the magazines, ask students to add the objects to the collage by drawing them on the paper.

Assess and Close (10 min.)
Students will:
1. review the unique elements in Japanese gardens.
2. identify the elements of Japanese gardens applied for creating their original gardens.

Extension and Enrichment

School Projects
Students will work with the community members and parents and develop this project into a garden design project in the community.

Resources
Drawing: Cartoons (Manga) and Japanese Idioms (Kotowaza)

Purpose/ Rationale
Cartoons (Manga) that express ideas humorously are often created in Japanese art. Ideas used for cartoons include Japanese wisdom, which remains as Kotowaza (Japanese idioms). Through creating a cartoon based on Japanese idiomatic expression, students will become familiar with Japanese wisdom.

Objectives
Students will:
1. become aware of the expression of Japanese wisdom in cartoons.
2. create an original cartoon based on a Japanese idiom.

Time Allotment
1-2 class sessions

Materials
Sketching paper
Drawing paper, 9512, " 1 per student
Pencils
Color makers
Examples of Japanese idioms (See Appendix 1)

Visuals
Japanese cartoons, such as Kuniyoshi’s Manga (See Attached Slides)

Vocabulary
Culture: Manga (Cartoons), Kotowaza (idioms)
Art: Cartoon

Procedure

Preparation: (30 min.)
A teacher will:
1. make an example of cartoon.
2. make Japanese idiom cards (See Appendix 1).
*Notes: select Japanese idioms that are easily expressed visually.

Setup (5 min.)
A teacher will:
1. prepare a slide projector and slides.
2. place Japanese idiom cards, markers, and papers on the table.

Look at and Talk about Art (20 min.)
Students will:
1. look at Japanese cartoons that are meant to be humorous and talk about how effectively an
artist conveys ideas by using visual elements.
2. make a small group of three to five, receive a Japanese idiom card, and talk about the meaning of the idiom on the card with group members.
3. explain as volunteers the meaning of each idiom with class members.

Create (30 min.)
Students will:
1. develop preliminary ideas on the sketching paper.
2. obtain the drawing materials they wish to use, including paper size and shapes, and create an original cartoon based on the meaning of a Japanese idiom.

Assess and Close (10 min.)
Students will:
1. explain as volunteers the theme and message of their cartoons.
2. talk about the cartoons in relation to effective use of exaggeration, ideas, and media.

Extension and Enrichment

Literature and social studies
Though comparing and contrasting Japanese and American idioms, students will find differences and similarities in thinking between the two cultures.

Resources
Appendix 1 Examples of Japanese Idioms

1. 虻蜂取らず(abu hachi torazu) = To fall between two stools.
   If you run after both the horsefly and the bee, you will end up catching neither.

2. 出る杭は打たれる(deru kui ha utareru) = Great winds blow on high hills. = The highest branch is not the safest roost.
   Too tall a pile is hit on the top; too excellent man invites envy.

3. 花より団子(hana yori dango) = Pudding before praise.
   Dumplings are better than cherry flowers.

4. 百聞一見にしかず(hyakubun ikken ni shikazu) = Seeing is believing.
   One picture is worth a thousand words.

5. 石橋を叩いて渡る(ishibashi o tataite wataru) = Forewarned is forearmed. = Good watch prevents misfortune.
   Strike the stone bridge for defects before crossing it.

6. 一寸の虫にも五分の魂(issun no mushi nimo go bun no tamashii) = Tread on a warm and it will turn.
   Even an inch-long insect has a half inch mind.

7. 壁に耳(kabe ni mimi) = Fields have eyes, and woods have ears.
   Walls have ears.

8. 口は禍の門(kuchi ha wazawai no mon) = Better the foot slip than the tongue.
   The mouth is the gate of evil.

9. 烏合の衆(ugo no syuu) = The mob has many heads but no brains.
   A mindless mob, like a multitude of crows.
Drawing: Scroll Pictures (Emaki)

**Purpose/ Rationale**

*Emaki* (scroll pictures), which was derived from China, became highly developed in Japan. The pictures of *Emaki* show Japanese lives and customs in the various periods. *Emaki* is considered not only as a form of art but also as a visual reference to Japanese life style in different times. Through studying *Choju Giga* (Frolicking Birds and Animals), one of the representative *Sumi-e* scroll pictures, students will not only become familiar with Japanese customs, but also learn how to draw with a bamboo brush and India ink.

**Objectives**

Students will:
1. become familiar with Japanese customs depicted in *Choju Giga*.
2. know how to read *Emaki*.
3. try out *Sumi-e* and practice drawing with a bamboo brush and India ink.

**Time Allotment**

3 class sessions

**Materials**

- Bamboo brushes
- India ink
- Paper of drawing, 9512," 1 per student
- Paper of drawing with a bamboo brush and India ink, 9512," 2 per student

**Visuals**

- Pictures from *Choju Giga*
- Western-style drawings for students to compare with *Sumi-e*
- A teacher-made *Choju Giga* that lacks a couple of pictures

**Vocabulary**

**Culture:** *Emaki* (Scroll Pictures), *Sumi-e*
Art: Bamboo brushes, India ink

Procedure

Preparation
A teacher will:
1. make *Choju Giga* that lacks a couple of pictures (1 hour).

Setup (5 min.)
A teacher will:
1. prepare a slide projector and slides.
2. place bamboo brushes, drawing papers, and India ink on the table.

Look at and Talk about Art (30 min.)
Students will:
1. look at some pictures from *Choju Giga* and identify Japanese customs, such as *Sumo*.
2. look at a teacher-made *Choju Giga* and talk about how to read scroll pictures.
3. compare and contrast Western drawings with *Sumi-e*.
4. look at the teacher-made example of *Choju Giga* missing a couple of pictures and imagine the content of the missing scenes.
4. make a group of three to five and create a story for the missing scene.

Create (100 min.)
Students will:
1. practice drawing with a bamboo brush and India ink.
2. sketch ideas about the missing scenes.
3. draw a picture of the missing scene with a bamboo brush and India ink.

Assess and close (20 min.)
Students will:
1. display some of the drawings and talk about how the imaginary story was depicted in the final drawing.
2. discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the use of a bamboo brushes and India ink.

Extension and Enrichment

Social Studies
Explore Japanese life styles and customs in the various periods depicted in scroll pictures.

Literature
Explore the stories based on which scroll pictures are created. These stories include *Genji Monogatari, Makurano Soshi*, and *Heiji Monogatari*.

Resources
