

Ceremonies - A Glimpse at Japanese Society

Summary

Students will examine cultural characteristics influencing different aspects of Japanese society. This lesson is created as part of a series of lessons to compliment the Center for Documentary Expression and Art's exhibit "Ceremonies: A Tale of Sister Cities", however this lesson can also be used independently of that exhibit.

Lesson 2 should precede this lesson, but this lesson can be executed independently with some modification.

Materials

- [Who? What? Why? Survey/Questionnaire for students](#)

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- [Who? What? Why? Japanese Responses to the same questions](#)

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* Note: The survey question and the Japanese responses came from a lesson plan by Elaine Magnusson.

* Note: The same idea can be applied by having students explore videos on the website, [Contemporary Japan: Culture and Society](#)

- [Who? What? Why? Follow Up assignment](#)

Graph paper (to graph results)

Background for Teachers

Teachers should familiarize themselves with the websites and preview the questions and videos. Be sure to inform students that the survey they take is meant to be anonymous and that it represents a sample of how our society as a whole may answer the same questions. Teachers may want to explore with students how students in different communities may answer the same questions differently. For example, how might students in rural areas answer the same questions differently from students who live in urban areas? How might answers of students living in developed countries differ from answers of students living in developing countries?

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will examine characteristics that shape Japanese culture and society. Students will analyze how culture influences a place and shapes the quality of life in Japan. Students will make comparisons and identify similarities and differences between Japanese cultural attitudes with the cultural attitudes of their community. Students will strengthen critical thinking skills.

Instructional Procedures

Explain to students they will take a brief and anonymous survey to get an idea of the different attitudes that influence their society. The results of their survey will be compared to the prevailing attitudes found in Japan regarding the same issues.

Have students fill out survey/ questionnaire anonymously

Students will cut out each question with the answer and put in a different pile for each question asked (11 piles)

When students have completed step 1, divide class into groups of 3 - don't have more than 11 groups (one group to analyze each question) and give each group one pile of questions to tabulate

Instruct students to calculate how the classes responded to the question (i.e. how many

people answered the question, and how many answered a, b, or c).

Graph the responses to offer a visual format to show how the class responded

Be prepared to present the results to the class

Pass out the Who, What, Why Follow Up assignment

Instruct students to chart notes in the appropriate category when they hear relevant information during the presentations

Each group will present the results for their question followed by the teacher reading the corresponding results from the Japanese perspective. Instruct students to listen carefully and write notes in the appropriate categories. The teacher may have to emphasize some of the cultural characteristics relayed in the Japanese responses and how they may differ from the classes responses. Follow this format until each of the questions have been analyzed.

Discuss the influences shaping Japanese culture (family, honor, education, loyalty, etc.)

How accurate were students' predictions they made at the end of lesson 2? Discuss student responses.

Students should complete Part Two of the follow up assignment.

Discuss students thoughts

What we could learn from Japanese society?

What do they agree/disagree with about Japanese society? Why?

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