

Japanese Week

The Shanti Niketan School

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Introduction

- ▶ *Japan is a land of incredible contrasts - from neon skylines and ancient castles to serene shrines and speeding bullet trains, a tour of the Land of the Rising Sun never fails to fascinate.*
- ▶ *The Japanese are a mixture of northeast Asians with others from the China coast, Southeast Asia, and Polynesia.*
- ▶ *Japan has the world's third-largest economy, having achieved remarkable growth in the second half of the 20th Century after the devastation of the Second World War.*



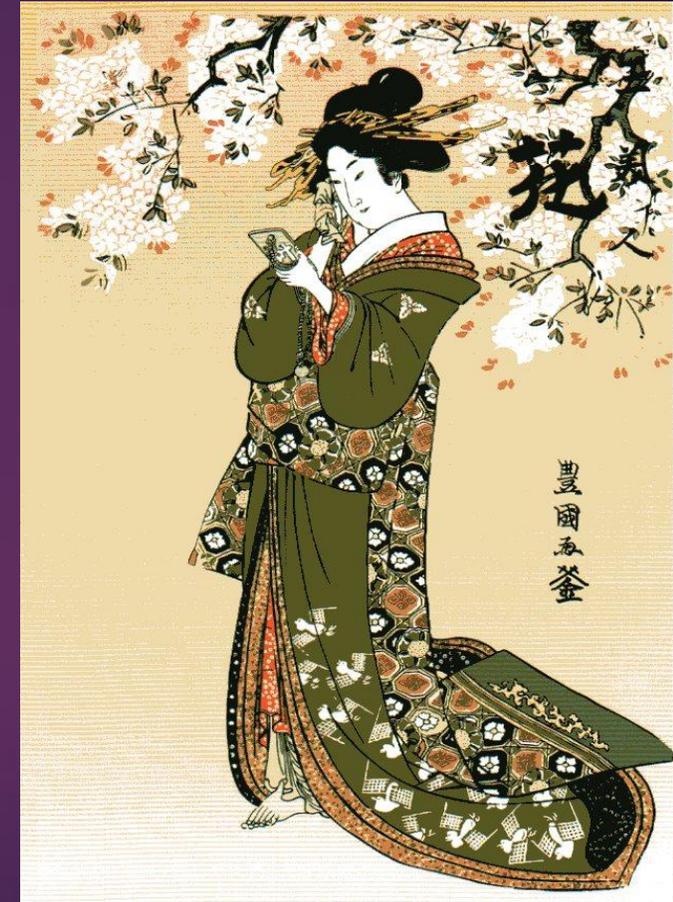
Japanese History

- ▶ *The Japanese islands have been inhabited by humans since Paleolithic times. Archaeologists there have discovered some of the oldest pottery known to exist.*
- ▶ *Throughout Japan's history, the government has been dominated by emperors, whose authority has decreased in modern times. During various historical periods, the Japanese government has been in the hands of the military(bakufu), with power shifted to warriors(samurais).*
- ▶ *Japan suffered an economic crisis following World War I (1914–18). Tokyo and Yokohama were devastated by an earthquake in 1923. During World War II (1941–45), Hiroshima and Nagasaki were destroyed by atomic bombs.*



Art and craft

- ▶ *Japanese art evolved unique techniques, traditions and aesthetics as the country's artists were isolated from the rest of the art world for centuries at a time. When Japanese art finally exploded onto the world stage in the 1860s, it changed everything.*
- ▶ *The following are a few major Japanese arts and crafts.*
 - 1.) **Shodo** is the Japanese art of calligraphy that's created with a brush. It's highly stylized and often almost illegible. The art mostly evolved at temples and has been greatly influenced by Japanese Buddhism.
 - 2.) **Ukiyo-e** is a genre of Japanese art that thrived from the 1600s to 1880s. They were printed in great numbers using wood block printing methods.



Ukiyo-e Painting

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- ▶ ***Manga** are Japanese comic books. Japan began producing dark, irreverent, sensual, violent graphic novels as early as the 1760s that were essentially comic books.*
- ▶ ***Origami** is the Japanese art of folding paper to create decorative art. The classic origami that every school child in Japan learns is the crane. According to myth, anyone who strings together 1000 origami cranes is granted a wish.*
- ▶ *Japanese **sculpture** is traditionally associated with religion. Wooden sculptures of protectors of Buddha such as Nio and Shitenno guard the gates to many temples.*



Origami art

Japanese Cuisine

- ▶ *Japanese cuisine (washoku) offers an abundance of gastronomical delights with a boundless variety of regional and seasonal dishes as well as international cuisine.*
- ▶ *Restaurants range from mobile food stands to centuries old ryotei, atmospheric drinking places, seasonally erected terraces over rivers, cheap chain shops and unique theme restaurants about ninja and robots. Many restaurants are specialized in a single type of dish, while others offer a variety of dishes.*



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- ▶ ***Sushi** is, without doubt, one of the most famous foods to come from Japan. A dish that was born in ancient times, sushi originated from the process of preserving fish in fermented rice. Today it's made with vinegared rice and fresh fish, presented in a number of ways and shapes.*
- ▶ *Centuries before Japanese people were eating sushi, they first enjoyed raw fish without the rice. While the name "**sashimi**" refers to any thinly sliced raw food, including raw beef (gyuu-sashi), chicken (tori-zashi), and even horse (basashi), fish and seafood are the most popular varieties.*



Sushi

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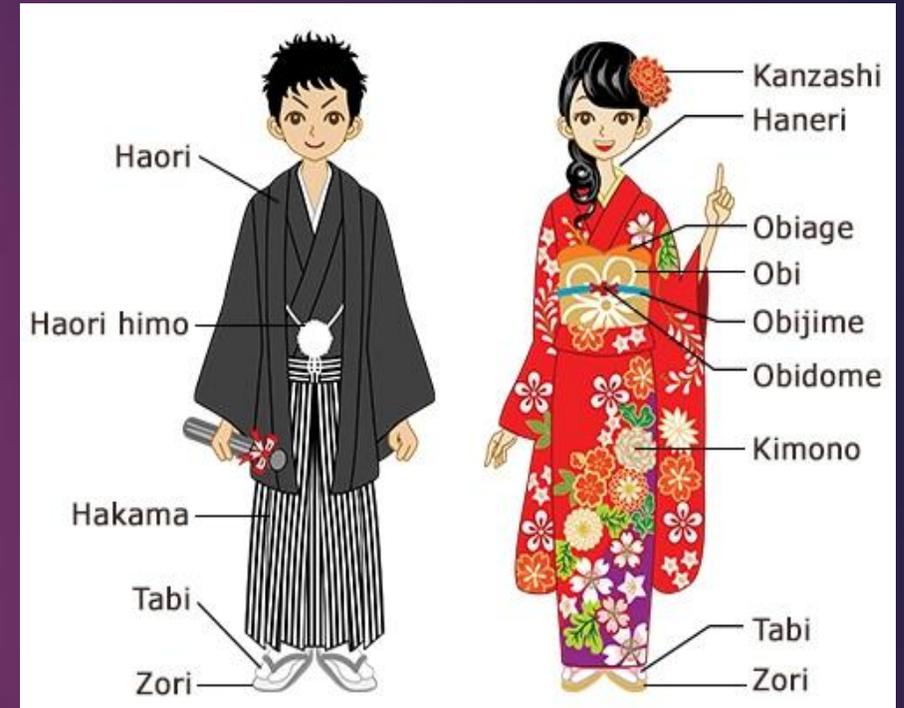
- ▶ **Udon** is a dense and chewy noodle made from wheat flour. It's one of the most popular foods in Japan due to its delicious taste, inexpensive price point, and versatility — *udon* can be eaten hot or cold and customized with any number of toppings.
- ▶ The ultimate in Japanese fine dining, **kaiseki** is a tasting course comprised of small, seasonally themed dishes crafted with the utmost precision and attention to detail. *Kaiseki* was born from the traditional tea ceremony, where small morsels of food were offered alongside the bitter green tea, and over time these offerings evolved into a multi-course haute cuisine meal.



kaiseki

Traditional Costumes

- ▶ *The kimono is the traditional dress of Japan, and it is worn nowadays on formal occasions. It is sometimes accused of being an impractical form of dress, but it has the advantage of giving the wearer a graceful and elegant deportment.*
- ▶ *Women's kimono include the furisode and tomesode for formal wear, the hōmongi for paying calls, the tsukesagé, and the komon.*
- ▶ *Men's kimono include the montsuki hakama for ceremonial occasions and the haori for going out visiting.*



Dance and Music

- ▶ *Japan has held on to many of the traditional dance styles which have developed over centuries. You can find them in various festivals and events during the year and all over Japan, and they may differ slightly depending on the area of the country.*
- ▶ *Here are four of the main dance styles which are still celebrated today in Japan, and differ greatly from dance style you may see in other parts of the world!*
- ▶ ***Bon Odori** is a traditional Japanese dance which is usually performed at summer festivals (Matsuri), people usually wear beautiful kimono dress and dance to the traditional music with various steps.*



Bon Odori

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- ▶ ***Nihon Buyo** is a very traditional Japanese dance, performed by dancers wearing kimonos and using traditional accessories and items such as fans and ropes.*
- ▶ ***Noh Mai** is a unique dance style with Japanese background music which is performed with traditional lutes and drums. Sometimes vocals are incorporated, too. This dance is often choreographed to tell a story, and usually, these are traditional and well known Japanese fables.*
- ▶ ***Kabuki** is perhaps one of the most famous dances within Japanese traditional entertainment. Specifically, Kabuki is a 'dance drama', incorporating dancing, singing, acting, and art.*



Kabuki

Conclusion

- ▶ *In conclusion Japan is a nation that is primarily in the information age. The Japanese government believes in sharing advanced medical technology with it's general population to prolong their lives which in turn lengthens their time to help produce for the nation. In the area of economics Japan's result's speak for themselves, they went a non factor nation to a economic world leader in a short amount of time. In the area of education Japan continues to move forward, they take education extremely serious because it is the foundation for your future success in your career, socially, and life. Japan is a strong nation of team players who are all on the same page. Many nations could learn a lot from the Japanese and the U.S. is definitely one of them. The capital of Japan is Tokyo, in Japanese this translates to the land of the rising sun, and it seems fitting that the capital of a rising country bares such a name.*