

Japanese Artefacts - Designing Dogu Figurines

This Scheme of Work for KS3 is designed around an ancient Japanese artefact, dogu*. Dogu means ‘earthen figure’, and they were made in Japan a long time ago during the Jomon Period (14,500–500 BC). The surviving dogu are something of a mystery to archeologists and researchers because their specific purpose, believed to be of a spiritual nature, is unknown.

The Jomon people were sophisticated potters and used rope or cord to make textures and patterns in the clay. Dogu feature many different designs and unique facial expressions and personalities. Over the course of four lessons, students will learn about Japan and the dogu figurines, and design their own dogu, working with either clay or salt-dough and experimenting with a range of mark-making techniques.

*Dogu is pronounced with an extended ‘u’ at the end. (e.g. IPA: **dogu** / *doh-goo*)

RESOURCES

- Lesson Plans x 4
- PowerPoint Presentations to accompany lessons x 4
- Reference materials for teachers including: background notes and video, photographs of student outcomes
- Worksheets: Comparing Ancient Artefacts (lesson 1), Dogu Figurines (lesson 2), Dogu Template (lesson 3; optional handout), A Dogu Story and Dogu Reimagined (lesson 4; extension activities)
- Additional materials are required: pencils and coloured pencils or pens for drawing, clay or salt dough, tools for mark making.

Keywords

Dogu, Jomon, pattern, shape, form, design, sculpture, clay, mark-making, culture, emotions, characteristics.

Lesson	Learning Objectives	Suggested Activities
<p>1</p> <p>Introduction to Dogu</p>	<p>Learn about dogu and its significance in Japanese culture and history.</p> <p>Compare dogu to other ancient artefacts from around the world.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starter task – display the image and questions for students to think about. • Discuss what class already know about Japan and Japanese culture, art, and history. Explore a simple timeline of Japanese history to further develop understanding of Japanese history and the context of the dogu figures. • Introduction of the dogu figure • Compare and contrast activity, looking at other artefacts from other prehistoric periods across the world (Mesopotamia, Indus Valley, Minoan Civilisation).
<p>2</p> <p>Dogu Patterns</p>	<p>Recognise the key features of a dogu figurine.</p> <p>Create your own design on a clay tile, inspired by the patterns on dogu figurines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starter task – display the image and questions for students to think about. • Using the worksheet, annotate the dogu figurines, closely observing form and pattern. • Design a draft tile on paper/in sketchbooks which uses the patterns and mark making observed on the Dogu figures. • Create a clay tile applying marks using different techniques, inspired by the dogu figurines.
<p>3</p> <p>Design a Dogu</p>	<p>Develop your own personal interpretation of dogu figurines by producing four draft designs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starter task – display the image and questions for students to think about. • Reflection on the success of the making process from the tile work. • Design a dogu figurine and decide what characteristics it will have. • Students should create 4 designs of which one will be chosen to make. • Outline key points or demonstrate techniques.

4 Create a Dogu	Construct a 3D figurine and apply the pattern according to your design, inspired by your research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recap any demonstrations or key points prior to making.• Students use clay or salt dough to construct their dogu figure designed in the last lesson (potential to use twisted rope or paper as part of the mark-making).• Extension activities include creating a back story for their dogu, or redesigning it as a Pokémon character.
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