

Japan: Seasonal Series

August Obon

The Japan Society with Katy Simpson (2020)

<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To learn about the traditions and customs associated with Obon, one of the most important annual festivals in Japan. <p>Learning Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will be able to explain the main events/activities of Obon in sequential order. Students will make a paper lantern representing the Chochin lamps used at the festival. 																			
<p>Curriculum Links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MFL: Broaden their vocabulary and develop their ability to understand new words (KS2). Art and Design: Use a range of materials creatively to design and make products (KS1), develop an increasing awareness of different kinds of art, craft and design (KS2). 																			
<p>Keywords:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>obon</td> <td>The Bon Festival</td> <td>bon odori</td> <td>Bon dance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>chochin</td> <td>Paper lantern</td> <td>shoryo uma</td> <td>"Spirit horse"</td> </tr> <tr> <td>mukaebi</td> <td>Welcome fire</td> <td>yukata</td> <td>Summer kimono</td> </tr> <tr> <td>okuribi</td> <td>Sending fire</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>				obon	The Bon Festival	bon odori	Bon dance	chochin	Paper lantern	shoryo uma	"Spirit horse"	mukaebi	Welcome fire	yukata	Summer kimono	okuribi	Sending fire		
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<p>Resources:</p> <p>Video: Obon (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcNnWgeFJvo)</p> <p>Video: Chochin paper lantern (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miB-NOnga6M&t=14s)</p> <p>Activity Cards: Obon Sequence Cards</p> <p>Additional Resources:</p> <p>Video: Uchiwa paper fan (https://www.japansociety.org.uk/resource?resource=22)</p>																			

Task 1: What is 'Obon'?

- Discuss any summer celebrations or festivals in the culture/country/community of the children. What kind of festivals are there? Do people wear traditional dress? What food is eaten at festivals?
- Explain what Obon is and how it is celebrated in Japan using the **Obon Presentation**.
- Watch the [Obon video](#) to recap and allow students to see the festival in action.
- Return to the Obon presentation to complete the short true or false quiz. Students can be split into pairs or small groups to confer.

Estimated Time: 15 - 20 minutes

Task 2: Identify parts of the festival

- Students should now be familiar with some of the activities that take place during the Obon. Asking pupils to arrange the **Obon Sequence Cards** in the order that they might happen in Obon celebrations. Put students into pairs or small table groups and hand out the cards. You may wish to pre-cut the cards to save time.
- Call on students for their answers.

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Task 3: Make Chochin

- Can students remember why lanterns are used at Obon? Remind them of their significance.
- Using the [chochin paper lantern video](#) for guidance, make paper lanterns decorations together and hang them up for display.

Estimated Time: 10 -15 minutes

Extension Activities

1. Students can follow the video to make an [origami uchiwa](#) (paper fan). These are often used in the summer heat in Japan and many people will take one to festivals with them.