

Winter Food in Japan – KS3

Lesson Plan

Learning Objectives:

- To learn about popular foods and seasonal dishes associated with winter and winter celebrations in Japan.
- To learn about the significance of New Year in Japan and the foods eaten at this time.

Key Words:

- Winter – 冬 (fuyu)
- Dish/cuisine – 料理 (ryori)
- New Year – お正月 (oshogatsu)
- Osechi – おせち/おせち料理 (osechi/osechi ryori - special meal eaten at New Year)
- Christmas – クリスマス (kurisumasu)
- Season – 季節 (kisetsu)

Resources:

Video: Japanese Food - Winter <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1NsZwgThpZk>

Worksheet: Winter Food Video Worksheet (to fill in whilst watching video)

Worksheet: Winter Food Match-Up

Additional Resources:

See our New Year and Osechi Foods resource to learn more about how New Year is typically celebrated in Japan as well as the meanings/significance of the dishes.

<https://www.japansociety.org.uk/resource?resource=107>

STARTER

- **Slide 1:** Ask pupils to discuss with a partner or in a small group the following questions on the slide. Feedback and share ideas as a class.
- **Slide 2:** Introduce the topic of today's lesson.
- **Slides 3 and 4:** Introduce the lesson's Learning Objectives and Key Words.

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

INTRODUCE LEARNING

- **Slide 5:** Click on the slide to reveal where Japan is on the map of the world. First, looking at the map and comparing where the UK and Japan are, ask pupils to consider whether they think the

weather/climate in Japan is similar to the UK. Ask pupils to feedback their ideas and share their reasons for why they think so.

- **Mini task:** Check the weather forecast for Tokyo right now and compare it to the forecast for your town/city. Is it similar or different?
- Remind pupils that, similar to the UK, there are climactic variations in the north and south of Japan. Northern Japan can experience very cold and snowy winters; however, in southern Japan (such as in Okinawa), winters can be very mild and warm, even!
- Ask pupils if they can identify where Japan is on the world map. Is it in the northern or southern hemisphere? Then, based on their answers, ask pupils what they think the weather in Japan might be like; is the weather in Japan similar or different to the UK? **Slide 6** will show you an image of what winter is like in some parts of northern Japan.
- **Slide 7:** Show the image of a kotatsu to pupils. Before revealing the arrows, ask pupils if they know what a kotatsu is or if they can guess what it might be. Many Japanese households have kotatsu which they use especially during the wintertime to keep warm.

Estimated Time: 5 – 10 minutes

ACTIVITY 1

- **Slide 8:** Watch the Winter Food in Japan video (link: [youtube.com/watch?v=1NsZwgThpZk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1NsZwgThpZk)).
- Watch the video once without taking notes.
- **Slide 9:** Hand out the worksheet. Ask pupils to watch again and take notes, answering the questions on the worksheet based on what they see in the video.
- **Slides 10-22** have photos of each of the dishes and food featured in the video, including explanations as to what they are. You could go through each slide after watching the video a second or third time, and allow pupils to finish answering the questions on their worksheet.
- **Slide 11** talks about chankonabe (not mentioned in the video) – another example of hotpot/nabe that is commonly eaten by sumo wrestlers!
- **Slides 16-18** further explain some popular osechi dishes (not included in the video) that people often eat during New Year in Japan. See our New Year and Osechi Foods resource to learn more about this.
- **Slide 23:** Check answers together as a class and get pupils to feedback their ideas.

Estimated Time: 15 – 20 minutes

ACTIVITY 2

- **Slide 24:** Hand out the Winter Food Match-Up worksheet. Pupils must match the name of the food to the definition on the right. They should attempt to do this without looking at their prior notes.
- Once complete, check answers together as a class and get pupils to feedback their ideas. You can use slides 10-21 to provide images/definitions onscreen whilst doing so to remind pupils.

Estimated Time: 5 – 10 minutes

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- **Slide 26:** Create a tourism poster to promote winter and winter food in Japan to tourists who might be planning a trip to visit. Within their poster, pupils should include examples of popular attractions that tourists might be interested in, based on what they have learned within today's lesson or from previous learning.
- Their poster could include things like: New Year's food and celebrations (such as hatsumoude – first shrine visit of the year), snow and winter sports (such as skiing and snowboarding), winter illuminations, Christmas and Christmas cake, hotpot dishes (such as shabu shabu and oden), hot snacks and drinks (yakiimo, nikuman, amazake), mochi and mochitsuki (mochi making).