

Undokai: Japanese Sports Day

Lesson 6: The Sports Day

Helen Kerray with The Japan Society (2020)

Learning Objectives:

- Apply knowledge of Japanese culture and enjoy a fun filled Sports Day/ afternoon

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the differences between a typical Japanese Sports Day and Sports Day in the UK and identify the different cultural activities included within the Sports Day
- Complete the games with good humour and effective teamwork
- Understand how individual performance impacts the team

Curriculum Links:

Physical Education

Resources:

- Video: [Radio Taiso \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xfDmrcl7OI\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xfDmrcl7OI) or a pre-recorded version of the students' performance
- Japanese Sports Day Pack
- Field Set-up Instructions
- Japanese Sports Day Background Notes
- Video explaining Sports Days in Japan (see: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x7mnenm>)
- Maru/Batsu Quiz Game Questions
- Demonstration of Hurricane Game (see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7zt_7kRpTA)
- Demonstration of Down the Line Game (see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7K5KPjSch2U>)

Combine all the individual elements from previous lessons and hold an Undokai (Sports Day) for a class, year group, or a as whole school event.

Tips for organising Undokai

When choosing activities from the Games Pack:

- Make sure to choose humorous and silly activities as well as traditionally competitive events.
- Adapt games as necessary according to available equipment and the level of the students.
- Include a mixture of individual, paired, small group and whole team events.
- Use the pack as inspiration for adapting traditional events or UK games. You might try humorous adaptations like a giant egg and spoon race, or a fancy dress relay, for example.

Other considerations:

- Fostering team and community spirit is one of the most important aspects of undokai so try to maximize the opportunities to work with students from outside of normal classes.
- Undokai includes athletic events such as the 100m race in addition to the games in the pack. Have these running concurrently to some of the field events.
- Consider making smaller 'sub teams' within the larger teams to encourage maximum participation. So you may have 3 red teams and 3 white teams taking part in different activities.
- Incorporate some of the following non-competitive elements to heighten the undokai experience: a Radio Taiso warm-up, an opening ceremony, dance or gymnastic performances, cheerleading, eating lunch together.
- Each team at an undokai will have a student leader. You may wish to appoint students to certain roles and make the day more student-led. This could include: group leaders, cheerleading teams, equipment set-up groups, announcers and commentators etc.
- At undokai, older students will usually help and support younger students. Ask the older year groups to assist with events for younger students.

Sample Timetable

Participants	Event
All Students	Opening Speech & Welcome
All Students	Radio Taiso
All Students	Bean Bag Toss
Select Students	Obstacle Course
Select Students	Late for School
Select Students	What a Racket!
Parents & Teachers	Bean Bag Toss
Select students	Cheerleading or Dance Performance
Select Students	Caterpillar Race
Select Students	UFO Race
Select Students	All aboard
All Students & Teachers	Tug of War
Lunch Hour	
All Students	Maru/Batsu Quiz
Parents & Teachers	Obstacle Course

Select Students	Hurricane Game
Select Students	Giant Jumps
All students	Speed Clean
All Students	Relay Race
All Students	Closing Ceremony