

## Japanese Culture & Wellbeing

These resources have been designed for teachers to promote positive mental health and wellbeing through the exploration of Japanese culture. From September 2020 Health Education became statutory for all state-funded schools in England. This includes both mental and physical health education and links to the governments Childhood Obesity: a plan and Chapter 2, as well as 2017's green paper 'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health'. **Using the NHS '5 Ways to Wellbeing' (Connect, Be Active, Keep Learning, Take Notice and Give) pupils will explore the concept of wellbeing and how it might be improved through engagement with the events, customs and celebrations of Japan.** This scheme of work promotes increased cultural awareness, as well as highlighting features of Japanese culture which promote positive mental health and wellbeing. The suggested age group is **Upper Key Stage 2** (years 5 and 6) but activities can be easily adapted for KS1 or KS3. Each module includes a detailed lesson plan, a PowerPoint presentation and student worksheets and resources. Teachers do not need any prior knowledge of Japanese culture or language. The lesson plans may be supported by the **video and loan resources** provided by The Japan Society; you may also refer to the lessons related to **Festivals and Seasonal Events** to find extension activities.

### CURRICULUM LINKS & ASSOCIATED GUIDANCE

This scheme can be used to cover some of the topics identified in the government guidance for teaching primary school pupils about mental wellbeing and physical health and fitness, including:

- that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life
- that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations
- how to recognise and talk about emotions
- the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness
- simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests

Government Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education/physical-health-and-mental-wellbeing-primary-and-secondary>

Governments plan for childhood obesity:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action-chapter-2>

Government Consultation on Children and Young People's Mental Health:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-provision-a-green-paper>

### RESOURCES

There are 6 presentations and detailed lesson plans accompanying the scheme (an introduction to the scheme and one for each of the ways to wellbeing). Worksheets, activity templates, video links and other accompanying materials are available for each lesson and listed in the lesson plans. Visit the Japanese Culture and Wellbeing page to access individual lessons and download resources: <https://www.japansociety.org.uk/resource?resource=78>.

**See also:**

NHS information on the '5 ways to Wellbeing': <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/>

What are the 5 Ways to Wellbeing video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yF7Ou43Vj6c>

Keywords		
Wellbeing, mental health, physical health, happiness, Mount Fuji, connect, festivals, community, exercise, active lifestyle, mindfulness, take notice, haiku, cherry blossom, manga, learning, skills, expressions, emotions, feelings, personality, giving, thank you, arigato, consideration, thoughtfulness.		
Assessment		
<p><b>Formative assessment:</b>                      What do pupils understand about the customs of their own cultures/countries?                      Do they have any prior knowledge of Japan? Are they able to compare and contrast with those of Japan?</p> <p><b>Assessment during activities:</b>                      Circulation during written tasks, card matching tasks and drawing tasks to guide pupils and gauge understanding.                      Taking feedback from written tasks and checking answers.                      Peer assessment – asking pupils to feedback on each other’s responses and work.</p> <p><b>Summative assessment:</b>                      Feedback from the class during the plenary tasks to check understanding of lesson objectives.                      Presentations by pupils demonstrating their understanding of the lesson objectives or showcasing their work.</p>		
Lesson	Lesson Objectives	Suggested Activities
1	<p><b>Title:</b> Health and Happiness in Japan (Introduction to Wellbeing)</p> <p><b>Theme:</b> An introduction to the concept of wellbeing and the country of Japan.</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learn what wellbeing is and how moods change</li> <li>learn about the importance of Mount Fuji as a national symbol in Japan</li> </ul> <p><b>Students will be able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discuss how they feel</li> <li>explain what wellbeing is</li> <li>illustrate what makes them happy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Starter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show students the image of sunrise over Mount Fuji. Students discuss the questions on the slide with a partner.</li> </ul> <p><b>Class Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reveal it is a picture of Mount Fuji in Japan. Assess students’ knowledge about Japan.</li> <li>Discuss how Mount Fuji is special and ask students to think of other national symbols.</li> <li>Explain significance of dreaming about Mt. Fuji on New Year’s, you will be happy and healthy. Check understanding of wellbeing and introduce the concept using the slide.</li> </ul> <p><b>Main Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce other lucky dreams via the mini quiz in the presentation. Then students think about what wellbeing means to them in pairs and discuss the questions on the slide.</li> <li>Students complete one of the activities to draw their dreams.</li> <li>Volunteers share their dream. You could also use peer-assessment here.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reflection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Just as the sun comes up and down over Mt. Fuji, so does our mood. Acknowledge that we can’t have good wellbeing all the time.</li> <li>Watch the ‘What are the 5 ways to Wellbeing’ video and explain you will be looking at each ‘way’ over the next 5 lessons.</li> <li>Finish by signposting school specific provisions for wellbeing.</li> </ul>

<p>2</p>	<p><b>Title:</b> Friends, Family, Festivals</p> <p><b>Theme:</b> exploring the importance of connecting with other people using the Japanese festival of Obon</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• think about home and relationships with others</li> <li>• learn about customs and traditions associated with festivals in Japan</li> </ul> <p><b>Students will be able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe what home means to them</li> <li>• create a symbol of their home/ family</li> <li>• explain why connecting with others improves wellbeing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Starter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show students the picture of a traditional-style Japanese house and ask ‘What is this picture showing?’ ‘Where do you think it is?’ Then reveal it is in Japan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students to write down three things they think of related to ‘home’ and discuss in pairs.</li> <li>• Show the Japanese character for home and explain the meanings. Discuss links with what pupils wrote.</li> </ul> <p><b>Main Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students about festivals they celebrate and then introduce some festivals in Japan using the slides.</li> <li>• Focus on Obon and watch the Obon video. Use the mini quiz to check understanding.</li> <li>• Students make a paper lantern decoration to represent the lanterns used at Obon.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reflection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students for volunteers to talk about their lantern (alternatively discuss in pairs)</li> <li>• Ask which of the ‘5 Ways to Wellbeing’ is important for Obon and discuss why students think connecting with others is important for our wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<p>3</p>	<p><b>Title:</b> Feeling Good, Moving More</p> <p><b>Theme:</b> Exploring the links between physical and mental health</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• experience the Radio Taiso exercises</li> <li>• understand how physical activity can improve wellbeing</li> </ul> <p><b>Students will be able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe a healthy person</li> <li>• identify activities that make them feel good</li> <li>• develop ways to become more physically active within school</li> </ul>	<p><b>Starter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose a physical activity to start off a conversation e.g. wake up shake up.</li> </ul> <p><b>Class Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students how they feel and lead a discussion after the physical activity. Follow the prompts on the slides and go through the effects that exercise can have on the body.</li> </ul> <p><b>Main Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce students to Radio Taiso and have a go as a class.</li> <li>• Choose one of the two activities (bodyboard or diamond 9 for a higher level task) which students will complete in small groups. If time, both activities can be done.</li> <li>• Ask each group of students to feedback to the class about the main task.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reflection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead reflection about the importance of physical activity using the questions on the slide and discuss ways to be more active at school and in the classroom.</li> </ul>

<p>4</p>	<p><b>Title:</b> Being Mindful</p> <p><b>Theme:</b> Exploring the idea of mindfulness by noticing the beauty of nature</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand the significance of cherry blossom in Japan</li> <li>To learn what a haiku is</li> </ul> <p><b>Students will be able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describe cherry blossom using a range of adjectives.</li> <li>explain why cherry blossom is so important in Japan.</li> <li>create a Haiku/take notice of the world around them.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Starter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the slides, show students the three images of cherry blossoms. Give them two minutes to write down as many adjectives as they can to describe the cherry blossom.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the importance of cherry blossom in Japan and show the O Hanami Video.</li> <li>Pair students and ask “What lessons can we learn from the Cherry Blossom?”</li> <li>Take feedback and emphasise we need to appreciate the good in each moment.</li> </ul> <p><b>Main Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce students to haiku using the information on the slide and show examples.</li> <li>Students can discuss the haiku activity in pairs, or write down their individual ideas.</li> <li>If time, students write their own haiku on one of the suggested topics or brainstorm together and write a single haiku as a class.</li> <li>Volunteers read their ideas, or completed haiku to the class.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reflection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask students why they think taking notice improves wellbeing. Tell students that, like the cherry blossom, we should appreciate the good things when we have them.</li> <li>End with the cherry blossom relaxation activity. Pupils close their eyes and relax as the teacher reads out the script.</li> </ul>
<p>5</p>	<p><b>Title:</b> Magnificent Manga</p> <p><b>Theme:</b> Exploring links between positive wellbeing and new skills and knowledge through the Japanese art of manga</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learn what manga is</li> <li>explore emotions and consider why learning new skills improves wellbeing</li> </ul> <p><b>Students will be able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explain what manga is</li> <li>explore emotions and create a manga character</li> <li>consider why learning new skills improves wellbeing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Starter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give students a few minutes to complete the short drawing activity of a plant.</li> </ul> <p><b>Class Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go through the information on the slides about manga and manga cafes, then complete the second drawing activity.</li> <li>Use the slides to start a general conversation about why facial expressions are important. Relate this to manga and how the reader can understand the characters’ feelings.</li> <li>Ask students to identify the emotions on the slides.</li> </ul> <p><b>Main Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the idea of giving their drawings expressions and give the students time to make their plant character.</li> <li>Students share their character and other students try to guess the personality. This can be done in pairs, small groups, or in front of the whole class.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reflection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>End the lesson with reflection and facilitate a class discussion on why learning is good for wellbeing. E.g. we can find new passions or things we enjoy.</li> </ul>

6	<p><b>Title:</b> Giving to Others</p> <p><b>Theme:</b> Exploring the links between giving to others and positive wellbeing through the customs and culture of Japan</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• identify different ways of giving</li><li>• understand how acts of giving can improve wellbeing</li></ul> <p><b>Students will be able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• identify different ways of giving</li><li>• create a 'Thank you' card for someone</li><li>• consider why giving can improve wellbeing</li></ul>	<p><b>Starter and Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Think, pair, share about different types of giving and motivations for giving.</li><li>• Take feedback focusing on answers about giving thanks and showing appreciation.</li></ul> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Watch the Osoji video about students cleaning their classrooms in Japan. Use the worksheet for a longer task.</li><li>• Learn the word for thank you in Japanese and practice saying it as a class.</li></ul> <p><b>Main Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduce the other customs around saying thank you/sending cards in Japan.</li><li>• Students make a thank you card for a friend or family member. Different templates are available.</li></ul> <p><b>Reflection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students to identify which of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing they have been practising.</li><li>• Explore why giving is positive for wellbeing. Students can bring in their personal experiences here. Ensure an emphasis not just on gifts but on the other things individuals can do to help and 'give' to others.</li></ul>
---	--	--