

Introducing Manga to the Art Classroom

The Japan Society with Tim Wightman & Chie Kutsuwada (2019)

Learning Objectives:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of Manga and its key characteristics.
- Compare and contrast drawing styles of different Manga artists.

Learning Outcomes:

- Improved understanding of Manga and its status in the wider field of Art.
- Development of illustration techniques through production of a composition based on Manga drawing styles.

Curriculum Links:

- Develop ideas through investigations, discussion and demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
- Record ideas and insights relevant to intentions as students' own Manga drawing progresses.

Keywords: Manga, Graphic Novel, Narrative, Reproducibility, Mass Consumerism, Popular Culture, Style.

Lesson 1 Resources:

- Manga: Key Questions [Teachers' Notes]
- Manga Style [Student Worksheet & Teachers' Notes]

Lesson 2 Resources:

- 3 Videos: Chie; Inko, Fumio
- Manga: Teacher-led Q&A [Teachers' Notes]

Optional Resources

- Basic Manga Face Template 1
- Manga Faces Template 2
- Facial Expressions Template 3
- Ukiyo-e Template 4
- You may wish to purchase the books, but you can also look at the free sample images of storyboards on Amazon preview:
 - Chie Kutsuwada, 2008, *As You Like It* SelfMadeHero.
 - Fumio Obata, 2014, *Just So Happens* Jonathan Cape.
 - Inko & David Blandy, 2008, *Enter the Barefoot Lone Pilgrim* published on the occasion of the exhibition *Far West* (28 June - 31 August 2008) Arnolfini.

Further reading:

- For example of serialised Manga, see <https://www.viz.com/shonenjump>
- Helen McCarthy, 2014, *A Brief History of Manga* Ilex Press.

Lesson 1

Task 1

1. Before introducing or discussing Manga in any way, ask the students to spend a short time (perhaps 10 minutes) to choose a character and illustrate this character. You may wish to pick a theme to focus their activity, such as: draw a character from a play, or text they are reading in English classes (e.g. Shakespeare); or do a self-portrait/portrait of a member of their family, etc.

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

Task 2

1. Before your class, read the Manga: Key Questions and try to think about what points your students would be particularly interested to learn about. You don't necessarily have to cover all the questions, but if your students are particularly enthusiastic, you may think about printing the document off for them and distributing it as homework to read before the class.
2. During your class, ask students what the term 'Manga' means to them, and use information from **Manga: Key Questions** to summarise some key points and highlight some of the key features of Manga.

Estimated Time: 15-30 minutes

Task 3

1. Hand out the **Manga Style Worksheet**
2. Ask students to compare these styles, and discuss the differences between Japanese Manga, and Western style comic drawing. Use the annotated teacher's version to assist students to highlight some of these differences.

Estimated Time: 5-10 minutes

Lesson 2

Task 1

1. Explain that there is a common misconception in the West that Manga style means big eyes, 'cute' characters, and that Manga is not a 'serious' art form. Emphasise that there is a great variety of artistic styles in Manga; as Manga has become a global phenomenon, its style and reception is often influenced by different cultural and individual artistic traits.
2. Choose one or two of the videos provided on the Japan Society YouTube channel, and use **Teacher-led Q&A discussion** to look at a few points:
 - **Chie:** Watch the film to listen to Chie introduce her Manga Shakespeare *As You Like It*
 - **Fumio:** Watch the film to listen to Fumio introduce his work, *Just So Happens*.
 - **Inko:** Watch the film to listen to Inko introduce *Enter the Barefoot Lone Pilgrim*
3. If you have time, you might want to compare the difference between Manga produced for UK audiences, with publications produced in Japan. **See website, [Shonen Jump](#).**

Estimated Time: 30 minutes

Task 2

1. Tell students they will now re-design their character from Lesson 1: Task 1 which can include some of the stylistic elements discussed in the lesson. Focus on **Manga: Key Questions, 8)**
What important things do you need to consider when designing a Manga character? (p5-6)
2. For students who are less confident drawing, you may provide them with optional resources, such as **Introduction to Drawing a Manga Face**.

Estimated Time: 30 + minutes (can be continued to Lesson 3 or finished as a homework)

Extension Activities

- 1) Inspired by the theme of Fumio Obata's introduction to *Just So Happens* students research Japan and illustrate the experience of visiting Japan for the first time. What do they imagine the streets to be like? What are the people like? Try to encourage the students to do detailed research on Japan and discourage them from simply drawing stereotypes. You may direct

them to YouTube; or to look at testimonials of foreigners living in Japan, such as the JET Programme, <https://www.jet-uk.org/life-on-jet.html>

- 2) You might want to look at woodblock printing (Ukiyo-e) to highlight it as an early example of 'mass produced' visual media that came to be considered 'art'. Students could draw their character designs on the, **Ukiyo-e template**. Then, you may wish to try making your own woodblock prints.