

Japan in focus

SUMMER / AUTUMN
TERM 2004

PRODUCED BY JAPAN 21

CONTENTS

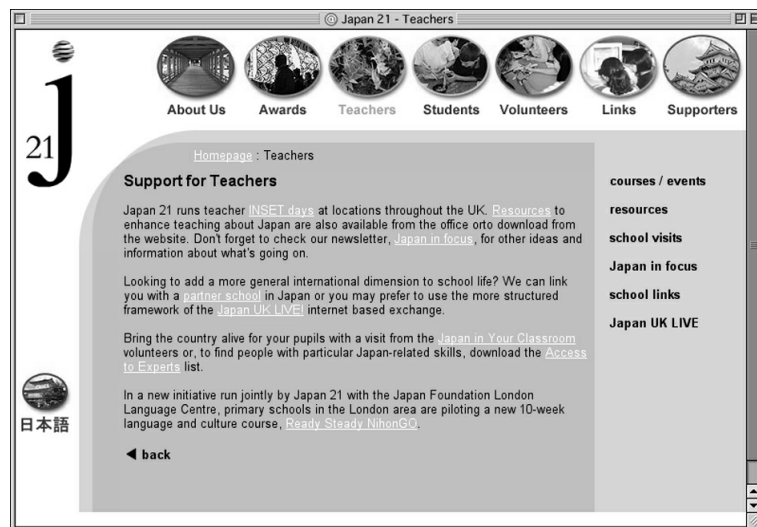
Japan Today.....	2
Japan 21 Awards Update.....	3
Regional Japan Projects.....	4
Where to Find Funds.....	5
Sumie: brush and ink painting ..	6-7
Photo inquiry: Farming in Japan.....	8-9
Japanese agriculture: an overview	10
Noticeboard.....	11
Teachers Workshops	12
Ready Steady NihonGO!	12



Japan21
Swire House
59 Buckingham Gate
London SW1E 6AJ

Tel: 020 7630 8696
Fax: 020 7931 8453

E-mail: info@japan21.org.uk
Website: www.japan21.org.uk



Having changed our name to Japan 21 some time ago, our website is at last catching up! We have been working for some time on the new website, which will be launched in August.

The new design, with its seven colour coded areas will make it easy to tell where you are in the site. There are separate sections for Awards applicants, teachers, students and JIYC volunteers as well as general background to Japan 21, links to useful organisations and details of our supporters. Our aim is to create a site which is quick to download, easy to navigate and, of course, full of useful information.

You will be able to:

- download resources or request they be posted to you (including the latest issue of Japan in focus)

- book a place on a course, or reserve loan resources
- apply for a school link and browse or download our school link guidelines
- apply online for Japan 21 Awards and find out about previous grants made

.... and much more!
Before you can download some of this information, you may be asked to register on the site. This is a new feature. It does not cost anything to register, but it gives us some idea about who is using the different resources on the site. This will help us as we develop new resources and teaching materials in the future.

Please visit our new site from August. If you have any comments or suggestions for improving it further in the future, please let us know.

<http://www.japan21.org.uk>

japan today

Read on for snippets of recent news about Japan. Use them as a stimulus for informal discussion to supplement curriculum-based study of Japan.

SDF in Iraq

Japan's Self Defence Force is currently deployed in Iraq as part of the coalition forces. This has sparked some heated debate in Japan. Why? What is the self defence force and what does it do?

Article 9 of the post war constitution renounced war and the use of force to settle international disputes. However, with the onset of the Cold War, it was deemed impractical for Japan to have no means of defending itself. So a self defence force was established. It began as the National Police Reserve in 1950, which replaced the American Occupying Forces, and this became the SDF in 1954. There were large public demonstrations: many people felt that the SDF went against the new constitution.

Now the SDF is in Iraq and many Japanese wonder why. Under its constitution, its members cannot undertake any military action, defensive or otherwise, so its work is limited to humanitarian aid. A recent article in The Japan Times reported how the Japanese government has funded an outside organisation to go to Iraq and assist with supplying water, a job also being undertaken by the SDF. This organisation is supplying seven times as much as the SDF. The money spent on keeping the SDF there is 1000 times as much the money granted to the outside agency.

- What should the SDF role be? It seems it cannot provide humanitarian aid effectively and it is not allowed to fight. Why do you think Japanese people are opposed to it being in Iraq? Is it because there is still conflict happening there and they feel the

SDF may be drawn into tasks other than providing humanitarian aid?

news.bbc.co.uk

www.solon.org/Constitutions/Japan/English/english-Constitution.html

www.japantimes.co.jp

economic recovery continues

The economic recovery in Japan looks set to continue according to recent news reports.

Several factors contribute to this prediction:

- GDP is continuing to rise, beating the analysts' estimates, says a BBC report. The annual rate of expansion for the year ending March 2004 was 5.6%, instead of the analysts' predicted 3.6%
- Unemployment is falling. The figure for the year ending March 2004 showed a fall for the first year since 1990. (nb this is due in part to a falling birth rate)
- The fall in consumer prices is slowing.
- The yen has fallen against the dollar.

- Why do these factors give cause for optimism? And why do some urge caution because of high oil prices and high interest rates in the US?

news.bbc.co.uk

www.japantimes.co.jp

first export of the bullet train



photo: JNTO

Japan is exporting the shinkansen for the first time. An old model sits in the National Railway Museum in York, but this time new working trains are travelling to Taiwan.

Transported by ship, 360 trains are

scheduled to arrive in Taiwan by September 2005. Huge cranes are required to load the carriages onto the ship. One ship can carry 12 carriages so there will be 30 shipments. The first shipment is on its way!

www.japancorp.net (go to transportation)

experimental nuclear fusion plant destined for Japan?

A group of countries (the EU, the US, Russia, Japan, South Korea and China) are sponsoring a project researching the possibilities of fusion power. The siting of the fusion reactor has not been decided, but Japan has offered to spend \$897million more if it is sited in Japan rather than France, the other main contender. Fusion power is produced in a reactor when tiny atoms collide at high temperature and pressure. When the atoms fuse, they release energy which can then be harnessed to produce electricity. Fusion power produces no greenhouse gas emissions and only low levels of radioactive waste.

www.enn.com/news/2004-05-27/s_24296.asp

hello kitty is 30!

The small white cat with a red ribbon on its ear has been adorning fashion accessories, stationery and an ever increasing range of goods since 1974. How has she kept her popularity? One suggestion is that her designers have continually modified her to suit the changing times. So, for example the first ever picture of Hello Kitty showed her at a piano - a pastime every mother wished her daughter to pursue in the 1970s. In the eighties, when teddy bears were popular in Japan, she was depicted with a teddy for a best friend. Nowadays she is often shown out shopping or at the sushi bar, checking out the local delicacies!

www.sanrio.com

japan 21 awards: update

In the first year of the Japan 21 Awards, 70 applications were received, of which 55 were awarded grants. Priority is given to projects with an educational or community base, with an element of participation or exchange, and where relatively small injections of funds can make a real difference. Application forms and guidelines can be obtained from: awards@japan21.org.uk tel: 020 7630 5552 Forms are also available online at www.japan21.org.uk See page 5 for details of other sources of funding.

activity weekend: gonenkai youth club, bury st edmunds

Ten Japanese students spent a weekend at an activity centre in Edale with British partners from the Gonenkai youth club. The aim was to forge friendships between the different nationalities and develop awareness of cultural differences, at the same time increasing self confidence, negotiating and decision making skills. Activities included caving, abseiling and a night hike. Judging from comments made by those taking part afterwards, conquering fears in participating in these physical activities was an important part of the weekend. "When I went abseiling I



The Narberth Nebuta. Photo: Gwen Griffiths.

screamed, but thanks to the team's encouragement I did it, and I was happy that I did. The feeling afterwards was fantastic!"

But it was not just the extreme sports that made an impact. Favourite activities included "playing cards with Callum and Akira" and "watching Adam and Hiroki's karate demonstration". All participants seemed touched by the strength of the friendships they had made during the weekend. Mary Grace Browning, the organiser, said afterwards that the weekend "exceeded our wildest expectations in cementing Japan UK friendship".

japan and geography day for talented, able and gifted: tamarside community college

Organising a school Japan Day is a challenge. One of the problems is planning a day that will have lasting impact as well as being enjoyable. By incorporating Japan into a geography curriculum extension day, Tamarside Community College addressed this problem. Talented geography students in year 9 were invited to apply to

participate. They were asked to write a paragraph about why they should be selected, and staff chose the best. Forty students took part.

Specialists came in to help with the day, making sushi with the students, teaching them calligraphy and ju-jitsu, as well as other aspects of Japanese culture. But in addition, there were geographical exercises - solving the mystery of why Mrs Endo died in the Kobe earthquake, and memorising maps of parts of Japan to describe to classmates who then had to draw the outline without seeing it.

building a nebuta float: sand palace arts, Narberth

Children in Pembrokeshire worked to make a giant nebuta, or Japanese float for the Winter Procession in December last year. The float itself was built, based on a koi no bori (carp banner) design, at a series of community workshops. Children also made lanterns for the procession. A local musician composed music with a Japanese theme to accompany the float as it moved through the streets of Narberth.

regional japan projects

This article gives a brief insight into some large scale Japan projects which have taken place recently, or are currently in progress.

taiko to achieve

The Achievement Zone in Stoke-on Trent is a team working with a group of eight schools (two secondary, five primary and one special school) looking for new and exciting ways to develop and improve learning. This year they have received a Japan 21 award to help fund the Taiko to Achieve project.

Taiko to Achieve will take place over two terms, culminating in a performance in the Victoria Hall, Stoke, on 26th January 2005. This hall has recently been refurbished and has a spacious foyer which will allow for large displays of artwork completed during the project, to accompany the performance.

At the centre of the project are the taiko workshops which will take place in the autumn term. Drummers from Mugenkyo will work with all eight schools over two separate weeks. Children will be taught in age groups, each group creating its own piece of music. These individual pieces will then be linked into one performance piece containing drumming, dance, drama and verse.

To begin the project, schools used loan resources such as the activity chests and poster sets from Japan 21 to spark interest and enthusiasm. Now pupils are working with visiting experts exploring activities such as mask and kite making, costume, traditional folk song and calligraphy. All these strands will contribute something to the performance in January, whether it be auditory or visual. Papermaker and artist Elaine Cooper worked with pupils at

participating schools in June 2004, creating fabulous artworks that will be on display at the concert in January.

As well as the support from Japan 21, Sheila Pye, director of the Achievement Zone, is looking for help - not necessarily financial - from local Japanese companies. Two of the visiting workshop leaders are local Japanese women who are willing to go in and teach writing. Ms Pye hopes that companies may help recruit other Japanese nationals to go into schools and talk about everyday life in Japan, and perhaps provide resources such as maps or posters. She is also hoping to involve celebrities with a local link to raise the profile of the event and to help children see the value of their personal contributions.



photo: Bristol Evening Post

drumming up a storm

Nearly three hundred young people in North Bristol had lessons in Japanese drumming from internationally renowned musician, Joji Hirota. Joji is not only one of the UK's top Taiko drummers, he is also internationally recognised for his remarkable percussion skills, playing WOMAD and creating soundtracks for film and TV.

The workshops were organised by the City

Council's Arts service to widen and enrich pupils' learning experiences in the arts. During the first week Joji presented drumming workshops for primary schools that feed into Henbury Secondary School as well as year seven, eight and nine music students at the school.

On Friday of the first week, Joji acted as artist in residence at Fonthill Primary School in Southmead, Bristol. He worked with every pupil, including infants. In total, nearly 600 children had a wonderful time. Previous workshops involved links with Japan 21, the Japanese Embassy and the South-West Anglo-Japanese Society.

japanese studies in northern ireland

The Japanese Studies project has been running since 1991 but in recent years there has been a decline in the number of schools maintaining effective links, largely due to changes in the sixth form curriculum (the project focussed on sixth form students). Now that this curriculum is established, there has been increased interest from schools and students keen to enlarge their learning experience by once again including Japanese studies in their curriculum.

Eight or nine schools in each country will be involved. The Japanese schools are all in Toyama, in north-west Honshu. Teachers from the UK are travelling to Japan this summer to liaise face to face with their partners and plan the content of their links. A website is being set up and video conferencing is likely to play a part in communications.

As well as an award from Japan 21, the project has also received generous funding from The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation.

where to find funds

If you are planning a Japan-related project and need funding to realise it, the Japan 21 Awards may be the answer (page 3). But they are not the only source of funding available; other grant-giving organisations are detailed here.

daiwa anglo-japanese foundation

The Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation awards funding through three programmes: Daiwa Foundation Small Grants, Daiwa Foundation Awards and Daiwa Adrian Prizes. The next deadline for funding will be 30 September 2004 for Daiwa Foundation Small Grants. Individuals and institutions in the UK and Japan may apply for grants of £1000 - £5000 for travel bursaries, conferences and symposia, individual academic research and educational exchanges.

Examples of recent awards in the field of education:

- An educational exchange between Toyama National College of Maritime Technology and Ballyclare Secondary School through a Japan-Northern Ireland video conference link. Initial contacts were established during the Japan Festival 1991 and several educational activities carried out by video conference during 2001-2003.
- Osaka Association for Youth Development was funded for an educational exchange between UK and Japan junior and senior high school pupils with problem backgrounds.

Further details and downloadable application packs are available on the website or by contacting:
The Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation

Daiwa Foundation Japan House
13/14 Cornwall Terrace
London NW1 4QP
Tel: 020 7486 4348
Email: grants@dajf.org.uk
Website: www.dajf.org.uk

great britain sasakawa foundation

The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation offers small grants in the range of £500 - £2000 as partial funding for projects. Evidence of core funding is required before applications can be considered. Grants are given to institutions or organisations rather than to individuals. Emphasis is put on projects involving groups of people in both countries. Awards are offered to encourage schools and students in the UK and Japan to develop an awareness of each other's culture and society. The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation Japan Experience Study Tour enables young people from one inner city school in the UK each year to gain an insight into aspects of contemporary Japanese society. The Foundation also offers modest support for students selected to spend a gap year in Japan with either The Project Trust or GAP.

All applications should be made on the email form provided by the Foundation on request. An on-line application form is also available on the website for all UK applications. Enquiries and applications should be addressed as follows:

Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation
Dilke House, 1 Malet Street,
London WC1E 7JN
Tel: 020 7436 9042
Email: grants@gbsf.org.uk
Website: www.gbsf.org.uk

japan foundation

The Japan Foundation has a range of grant programmes, some of which are available to schools teaching Japanese language. These include:

- The Materials Donation Programme: educational institutions can apply for Japanese language teaching resources (textbooks, dictionaries, cassettes etc)
- The Training Programme in Urawa, Japan: intensive courses for teachers of Japanese, to improve their language skills and teaching methodology whilst deepening their knowledge of Japan. Varying in duration from three weeks to six months.
- Japanese Speech Contest support: grants for non profit groups to cover part of the cost of hall rental and prizes.
- Japanese Language Education Fellowship: for educational institutions and publishers wishing to develop Japanese language materials, devise new teaching methods or curricula. The fellowship will fund an 8 month stay in Japan for one author, or up to 3 months for two.
- Assistance for Japanese language teaching materials: for publishers or educational institutions producing new resources, offering up to a quarter of total publishing costs. Materials must be completed before an application is made.
- Secondary Teachers Study Tour: a two week study tour to Japan normally in the autumn term. Application forms are usually available from April.

The Japan Foundation
6th Floor, Russell Square House
10/12 Russell Square
London WC1B 5EH
Tel: 020 7436 6695
Email: info@jpf.org.uk
Website: www.jpf.org.uk

sumi-e: brush & ink painting

In sumi-e painting, the artist uses only a brush and black ink. Subtle gradations of tone are achieved by varying the thickness of the ink, while altering the angle of the brush and the pressure exerted on it allows a great range of expression. In sumi-e, the aim is to capture the essence of the subject and translate it onto paper, leaving out unnecessary detail.

Japanese artist, Takumasa Ono, currently lives in Gloucestershire. Over the past three years, his exhibition 'Henro' has toured to National Trust properties, where he has also held public workshops for adults and children. Here, he presents a guide to the basics of sumi-e.

tools

sumi ink stick: the soot of burnt pine is moulded into a hard stick with a binding agent.

suzuri ink stone: the sumi is rubbed on the surface of the ink stone with water to prepare a thick ink. Different shades of ink can be made by varying the amount of water used.

fude brush: Japanese fude are made from a variety of natural hairs including tanuki (a kind of racoon), rabbit, deer and weasel.

washi Japanese paper: for sumi-e, it is best to use paper which is fairly absorbent. Different effects can be produced depending on the level of absorbency and the thickness of ink used.

sumi-e techniques

Originally, there was no classification of techniques used to produce different kinds of brush stroke. However, over the years, people have studied the work of great sumi-e artists and given names to different ways of using the brush. Although it is certainly possible to pass on tips about how to



achieve different effects in sumi-e, there is no reason why you should not experiment and develop your own techniques. Here, Takumasa Ono starts you off with a guide to painting koi carp, demonstrating some of the basic brush strokes.

koi carp

Here the carp are painted using the *mokkotsu* technique. The basic form of the carp is drawn with simple brush strokes and no outline. This contrasts with the *koroku* technique, where an outline is drawn and later filled with lighter shading.



The key to successful sumi-e painting is your control of the changing colour within a stroke or within the painting as a whole. This may be achieved through using first light ink, then slightly darker ink and finally



the darkest ink (or vice versa). However, it is also possible to produce gradations in colour within a single brush

stroke (see above). First dip the brush into water or light ink, then dip just the tip of the brush into some dark ink before drawing your stroke. This *sanboku* (literally '3 sumi



ink') technique allows you to combine dark, medium and light tones in a single stroke. The basic shape of the fish is drawn using a slanted brush (*sokuhitsu* technique). Pressing the whole brush head onto the paper at an angle creates a bold, vigorous stroke. Here, details are being added using the tip of an upright brush (*chokuhitsu* technique). The tip of the brush draws the centre of the line, allowing delicate strokes to be created.





As you are painting, experiment with the amount of ink you put on the brush. A 'wet' brush, fully filled with sumi ink, will produce a rich bold stroke or a blotting effect. Try painting with a wet brush filled with light ink or dark ink as well as the *sanboku* (3 ink) technique.

On the other hand, when using a 'dry' brush, you will apply a minimum amount of ink using a quick brush stroke. This produces scratchy, narrow strokes.



Having added the detail using the tip of your brush, it's time to add the water. Finally, when you are satisfied with your



painting, use your seal or write your name in Japanese to 'sign' it.



Sumi-e paintings often take their subjects from nature, but there is no reason why you should not try other subjects. Takumasa Ono



frequently uses sumi-e as a 'sketching' medium when visiting a place he is going to paint. After reducing the view being painted to the bare essentials, he returns to his studio to add colour and detail to his screen prints, for example.

School based workshops

In tandem with the Henro exhibition, Takumasa Ono has been visiting schools in the vicinity of National Trust properties to conduct workshops. More than 600 children, aged 5 - 13, have participated in sumi-e workshops so far and, encouraged by their response to working with brush and Japanese paper, he plans to undertake further school visits.

A day of workshops will start with a demonstration lasting about 30 minutes to all the pupils who will be taking part in workshops. The pupils are then divided into groups of up to 30 children for the practical workshop session. Alternatively, Takumasa



can work with a single class for a 60 - 90 minute session.

During the workshop itself, Takumasa will demonstrate again briefly, after which the children will be handed paper and fude pen (a pre-inked brush) and asked to have a go. After practising on rough paper, they will then be handed washi paper on which to paint their 'best' picture. When they are satisfied with their work, they will take it to Takumasa who will write the pupil's name in Japanese and place a seal on the painting. It is also possible to create collaborative pieces, where Takumasa adds a few brush strokes of his own to the pupil's work. If you would like to arrange a visit to your school, please contact Takumasa Ono by email: ono@gd6.so-net.ne.jp (If you do not have access to email, messages can be forwarded via Japan 21.)

During the Henro exhibition tour, visits should be within reach of the relevant National Trust property. There are a couple of venues still to come in this year's tour:

19 Aug - 5 September: Polesden Lacey
8-19 September: Standen, West Sussex

Henro 2005 venues will be announced later in the year. See the National Trust website (www.nationaltrust.org.uk) or Ono-san's website at www.asahi-net.or.jp/~HH5Y-SZK/ono/onoOe.htm

At other times of the year, visits to other parts of the country are also possible, particularly in the south and west of the UK, within reasonable distance of Gloucester.

● For details of sumi-e classes in London (taught by another teacher) see page 11.

farming in Japan

There are changes ahead for Japan's farmers: in 2002, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) undertook a review of paddy field farming and published a Framework for Rice Policy Reform. The Ministry's aim is to implement major changes in systems by 2010. Naturally, this has sparked heated debate within the Japanese farming community. But what are the current issues? What factors have influenced the state of agriculture in Japan? And what kind of future faces the industry and those who work in it?

These activities encourage students to draw conclusions using a range of sources: photographic, statistical and text. Use them together or as stand-alone exercises to supplement existing schemes of work. All the photos on these pages, plus additional images and resources, are available to download from our website www.japan21.org.uk Or, to obtain a CD of these resources from Japan 21, email: education@japan21.org.uk or tel: 020 7630 8696.

curriculum links

KS3 Geography

Pupils will:

- 1a ask geographical questions and identify issues
- 1d analyse and evaluate evidence and draw and justify conclusions
- 2d use secondary sources of evidence including photographs to understand farming in Japan
- 3c describe and explain the physical and human features that give rise to the distinctive character of places
- 3d explain how and why changes happen, relating to the development of agricultural land and the issues that arise from these changes

5 - 14 Environmental Studies Understanding People and Place

The Human Environment

- level D for a developed area or country, describe main features of economic life and how they are changing, eg farming

Human- physical interactions

- level C describe the main features of agricultural land use
- level D for a selected land use change, describe possible effects, good and bad, on the landscape / environment

what do photographs tell us about farming in Japan?

resource: photo set 1 (shown below)

- Give each student a different picture and ask him/her to jot down key words and adjectives to describe what they see. They should also write a statement about farming in Japan based only on the evidence provided by their picture.
- Pin up or project the set of photos for

the whole class to see. Ask a few individuals to read out their key words and adjectives to the class, who then have to decide which picture is being described. Then ask a few other students to read out their statements - is it still possible to work out which picture they were working with?

- Put students in groups so that each group has a full set of pictures. Students pool their information and produce a brief



summary of what they now know about farming in Japan to be presented to the rest of the class. While doing this they should consider how accurate their findings are likely to be, based only on pictures, and consider what other sources of information would confirm their conclusions.

using statistics to find out about farming

resource: statistical tables and supporting information (note: additional statistical tables are available on line)

Continuing to work in groups, distribute the tables among the class, one for each group. First, students should each make a graph (or

Farming population by age group
(unit: thousands of people)

	15 - 64	65 Et over	TOTAL farming population*
1980	5262	1711	6973
1985	4507	1855	6362
1990	3222	1597	4819
1995	2342	1799	4141
2000	1834	2058	3892
2002	1672	2079	3750

Source: Statistics and Information Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries
* refers to 'commercial farmers' ie workers on farms of over 30 ares of land and with an annual income of at least ¥500,000 from farm produce.

Rate of self-sufficiency in various foodstuffs
(unit: percent)

	1965	1975	1985	1995	2000	2001	2002
Rice	95	110	107	104	95	95	96
Wheat	28	4	14	7	11	11	13
Soya beans	11	4	5	2	5	5	5
Vegetables	100	99	95	85	82	82	83
Fruit	90	84	77	49	44	45	45
Beef	95	81	72	39	34	36	39
Pork	100	86	86	62	57	55	53
Fish	100	99	93	57	53	48	46
Seaweeds	88	86	74	68	63	62	64
Oils Et Fats	31	23	32	15	14	13	13
Self-sufficiency by calorific value	73	54	53	43	40	40	40
Self-sufficiency in monetary terms	86	83	82	74	71	70	69

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Agricultural earnings as a percentage of GDP

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Brazil	8.4	7.2	7.2	6.1	6.1
China	18.6	17.6	16.4	15.8	15.4
France	3.2	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.7
Germany	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.2
India	27.7	26.2	24.6	25.0	22.7
Japan	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.4	...
Kenya	26.3	23.4	19.7	18.6	16.4
Tanzania	44.8	45.1	45.0	44.8	44.4
United Kingdom	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.0
United States	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	...

Source: World Development Indicators database



photo set 2: picture B



photo set 2: picture A

graphs) to illustrate the data. Then, as a group discuss what the graph shows: what does it mean for farming in Japan? Try and explain the reasons for changes shown in the graph. Each group should prepare a short report to feed back to the whole class.

evidence for changes in farming

resource: photo set 2 (shown above); hints card (on line)

Compare the two pictures. Both show rice being grown on terraced fields, but in very different styles. One is using much more traditional farming methods than the other. In picture B, changes have been made to convert the land from terraces very like those in picture A. What changes? And what effect have they had? Discuss as a class. Now ask each student to make two lists, one of positive and one of negative impacts which the changes have made. extension: look again at picture A. Imagine there is a plan to convert to larger scale farming here. Make a case for *either* the farmer, supporting the changes *or* a local resident who is opposing them. Use the Hints card to help make your case.

case study: a farming area near Himeji

Yamada is a small faming district in the west of Japan. The 100 farm households in Yamada set up an agricultural co-operative

in 1980. This means that although each farmer is still responsible for farming his/her own land, they benefit in various ways from being part of a larger group, as you will see. All their rice fields were grouped into three

blocks, and the fields in each block grow three crops over a two-year cycle. Planting is staggered so that the different blocks are always at different stages of the cycle, growing rice, wheat and azuki beans. There are various advantages to this system:

- because the same crops are grown on all the land, the system is fair to everyone.
- crop rotation means that they do not have problems from repeatedly growing the same crops on the same piece of land.
- the co-operative can buy newer and larger farm equipment than individuals could. It trains a few people who operate the equipment and they will train others in the future.

The co-operative has total responsibility for farming the wheat and azuki beans, as well as 10% of the rice. 60% of the farms ask the co-op to give some help with rice production, for example planting out the seedlings. In the future the co-op will probably do even more as the population ages and the number of people who can't do farm work increases. In the future, it plans to start greenhouse cultivation as well.

- Compare this case study with the conclusions you have drawn from the picture and statistics sources you have already looked at. Do they agree? Does it answer any of the questions you had?

japanese agriculture: an overview

The Japanese climate is ideal for rice growing, with a warm rainy season followed by a hot summer. Rice is grown throughout Japan, but most is produced in the Tohoku region in the north of Honshu. Hokkaido is the centre of the beef and dairy industry and its farms also produce much of Japan's wheat and barley. Oranges are a common sight in the warmer south, while fruits such as apples and grapes are grown in the northern regions.

In land reforms in the 1950s, much of Japan's farmland was redistributed. Land owned by a few large landowners was given to the people who actually farmed it. Most of these farms were small units, below 3 hectares per household. Individual fields were often much smaller. In hilly areas, narrow fields or terraces have been cut into steep slopes. In urban areas, it is still common to see fields dotted among the buildings.

decline

The farming population continues to decline. The number of people living in farm households fell below 10 million for the first time in 2002. This is due to the decrease in the number of farms as well as the continuing trend towards nuclear families. 35% of people in farm households are now aged 65 and over. 55% of farm workers are over 65 and 60% are women. Over 67% of farm households earn most of their income from work other than farming.

Agricultural production has declined from 9% of GDP in 1960 to 1.4% in 2001. Japan's overall food self sufficiency on the basis of calories is 40%, the lowest of any leading industrial nation. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries has identified the drop in consumer demand for rice as one reason for this. Campaigns to promote rice as part of a healthy diet and

to increase the number of rice-based school meals are trying to change consumer attitudes. Producers are being urged to improve quality, eg of wheat and soya beans and to develop further production of fruit and vegetables. The '200g of fruit a day' campaign is designed to encourage people to eat more fruit.

policy changes

After the war, farmers were encouraged to produce lots of rice, but a glut of rice in the 1970s led to a change in policy. The



government tried to control the amount being produced and prevent a slump in rice prices. Since 1971 there has been a programme to reduce the amount of land being farmed for rice. Subsidies have been paid to farmers for setting land aside and for growing other crops. High rice prices mean that small scale farms have been able to survive. 36% of rice output (by value) comes from business-scale farms; this compares to 70-90% for other commodities.

As part of the Framework for Rice Policy Reform, announced in 2002, government control of rice output will end by 2008. Farmers and farming organisations will

decide how much rice to grow and the government will just advise them about production needs and check overall yield plans. Producers will sell rice through various channels which give them more direct contact with consumers. Subsidy programmes are also being reformed.

Instead of a standard rate paid directly to the farmers, the subsidy will be paid to local farming groups who will decide how it is shared among members. This will help them plan farming strategy for their area.

future plans

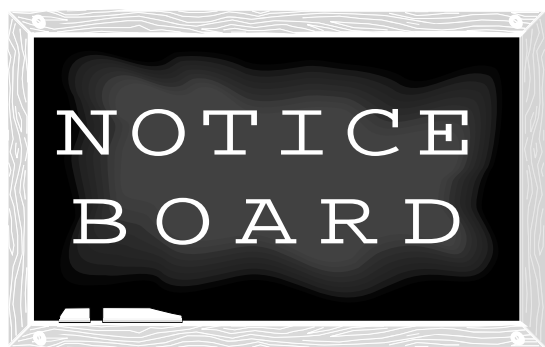
Looking to the future, it is clear that Japan's farming industry will have to make some changes. Rural areas are losing population and farm owners are aging, so it will not be possible to continue to run an industry based on many small farms. Farming needs to become larger scale and this is happening in various ways. Some farm owners contract out their land to be farmed by large farming companies while, in other areas, groups of farm owners have formed co-operatives which enable them to share the work and capital costs. Many small fields are being put together to make single larger fields.

However, moving to larger scale farming operations brings problems. Most families are reluctant to sell their land so any changes need to be agreed by many people. There are also financial costs. Fields need to be re-sized, then the irrigation, drainage and farm road infrastructure needs to be changed. The government provides some funding for this. In the long term, these moves will reduce the amount of labour needed to farm the land and make it easy to use fewer large machines instead of many small ones, thus cutting costs.

www.stat.go.jp/english/index.htm

www.maff.go.jp/index.html

www.usda.gov



courses and workshops

NEW! joint workshops at the japanese embassy and the british museum

The Embassy of Japan has been offering workshops to schools for several years under its Club Taishikan scheme. Workshops are led by Japanese nationals or embassy staff, covering activities such as calligraphy, origami, tea ceremony etc. Now schools can extend their visit to London, going on to the British Museum to work with artifacts from the Japanese galleries. They will be offered a themed workshop followed by a gallery activity. Themes for the workshops are:

Heroes in Japanese Arts

Changing Fashions and Accessories in Japan

The Natural World in Japanese Arts

The Culture of Performance in Japan

The visit to the museum will last approximately 90 minutes.

There is no charge.

For more information about this opportunity, please contact the education officer at the Embassy: 020 7465 6573
email: education@jpembassy.org.uk

japanese black ink painting (sumi-e)

Hampstead School of Art, London NW3
Ongoing classes on Mondays, 11:30-13:30 and 18:00-20:00.

To register call: 07967 970 129

For further information, check the website: www.TaliaLehavi.com

oriental painting course

The Kaetsu Educational & Cultural Centre, Cambridge
Peter Cavaciuti is running a course in Nihonga and Nanga, traditional Japanese

painting, on Wednesdays from 2.30-4.30pm.

For further details telephone: 01223 376600 or email Admin@Kaetsu.co.uk

the elephant vanishes

2-25 September 2004

Barbican Theatre, London

COMPLICITE - Directed by Simon McBurney.

After the incredible success of this production in BITE:03, Complicite return with their sell out show based on the collection of short stories by Haruki Murakami.

Further information: www.barbican.org.uk

Box Office: 0845 120 7500

well hammered: the art of japanese metalwork

until July 2005

Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum, Bournemouth

Tel: 01202 451812

This exhibition illustrates the skills of Japanese metalworkers and the various objects they produced including swords, armour, bronze sculpture, cloisonne and fine examples of export ware such as a silver elephant by Nakagawa Yoshizane and three works by Komai of Kyoto.

Further information from:

shaun.garner@bournemouth.gov.uk

www.russell-cotes.bournemouth.gov.uk

NB: a teachers workshop to tie in with this exhibition is planned for October 18th: see page 12 for full details.

puppet rakugo for schools

Shofuteki Kakusho, a rakugo performer is in the UK for a year offering performances and workshops to schools.

Kakusho is a professional comedian trained in the art of rakugo. He has toured worldwide as well as performing in Japan. In 2003 he was awarded the Minister of Education's Art Encouragement Prize.

Until March 2005, Kakusho is based in the UK and is keen to work with schools. He does not require a fee, just travel expenses (and accommodation if required).

about rakugo

Rakugo is the art of Japanese comic storytelling. It is performed by one person sitting on a cushion, telling the story with a fan and a handkerchief for props. There are always several characters in a rakugo story. To portray these, the performer will change their voice, facial expression and mannerisms. In most cases the characters have strong stereotypical personalities so it is easy for the audience to tell the difference between them.



puppet rakugo

Kakusho has created a new style of rakugo by adding puppetry and slapstick to the traditional rakugo style. This is called Puppet Rakugo.

For further information, look at the websites: <http://www.kakusho.com> or www.kakushocomedyworks.com

If you are interested in having a show, contact Kakusho:

email: media@themission.com.sg
mobile: 07979 986700 or
tel/fax: 020 7374 5050

teachers workshops

russell-cotes museum & art gallery, bournemouth

Monday 18 October 2004

In conjunction with the Well Hammered Exhibition (see page 10) this is a workshop for art and drama teachers. While reflecting themes within the current exhibition, the practical workshops will provide stand-alone ideas for classroom activities.

Art teachers will view the Museum's Japanese collection and look at how such a resource can be used to inspire cross

curricular activities. Practical sessions will introduce paper-based art projects, hanga and sumi-e.

Drama: an introduction to noh drama. Teachers will learn how to read and chant a section from a play and practise some of the basic

movements. Noh-related objects in the museum's collection will also be on display.

groby community college, leicester (to be confirmed)

Saturday 13 November 2004

A day offering separate courses for geography and drama teachers, as well as cross curricular options for primary and secondary teachers.

Geography teachers will look at Japan at Key Stage Three, focussing particularly on

earthquakes and urbanisation.

Drama teachers will explore Noh theatre and ways of introducing it into the classroom.

Options for those following either of the cross curricular courses will include language, citizenship, papermaking, woodblock printing, haiku and food.

University of Central Lancashire, Preston (to be confirmed)

Friday 19th November 2004

A course for geography, art and language teachers. More information to follow.

Further details are available from Japan 21. tel: 020 7630 8696, fax: 020 7931 8453 email: education@japan21.org.uk Go to www.japan21.org.uk to book online.

ready steady nihonGO!

Japan 21 and the Japan Foundation London Language Centre (JFLLC) have been working together to produce a unique scheme of work to teach Japanese at KS2. The scheme will comprise 10 structured lesson plans, all with relevant National Curriculum links and a set of accompanying Culture Notes. Photocopiable resources are also included.

From September five lucky schools in the London area will be piloting the scheme, working closely with a Japanese teacher to deliver the lessons. As a pre-cursor to this trial, staff from Japan 21 and JFLLC spent four days at Meadlands Primary School, Richmond in June and delivered a selection of the lessons to years 3, 4 and 5. None of the children had any prior experience of Japanese, so they all set off on an equal footing. Both children and staff showed

amazing enthusiasm and, by the end of the week, pupils were able to give simple self-introductions and count up to 100! They also learned some origami, how to hold chopsticks and investigated the Tanabata festival.

Language learning at primary level doesn't need to be confined to the boundaries of the usual European languages on offer. Clearly Japanese really can provide a new and refreshing alternative.

After the September trial the course will be revised and then trialled again at a further selection of schools from January.

If your school would be interested in joining the project from the Spring term, please contact Katherine Donaghy on 020 7630 8696 or email: katherine@japan21.org.uk



If undelivered, please return to:

Japan 21, Swire House 59 Buckingham Gate London SW1E 6AJ