

## Undokai: Japanese Sports Day

Helen Kerray with The Japan Society (2020)

### Lesson 5: Evaluating Self-Performance

<p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To understand how reflecting on our own performance can lead to improvement and a sense of achievement</li></ul>
<p><b>Learning Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Understand that self-reflection leads to taking positive action</li><li>Describe how you have reflected using <i>kaizen</i> in order to improve within the sports/activity context</li><li>Demonstrate self-reflection by competing with an improvement in a chosen area.</li></ul>
<p><b>Curriculum Links:</b></p> <p>Physical Education</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <p>Radio Taiso, Undokai (Sports Day), Kaizen (Improvement)</p>
<p><b>Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Japanese Sports Day Pack</li><li>Kanji Flashcards: Kai (改) and Zen (善)</li></ul> <p><b>Additional Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Video: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xfDmrcl7OI">Radio Taiso</a> (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xfDmrcl7OI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xfDmrcl7OI</a>)</li><li>Radio Taiso Movements Card</li></ul>

### Task 1

- Begin the lesson by warming up using Radio Taiso. If the students are confident, you may wish to experiment with different formations.
- Reminds students that although the emphasis is not on individual attainment at undokai, each individual tries their best for their team. Explain that it is an important part of Japanese culture to try one's best. This lesson will focus on self-reflection and improving personal performance.
- Ask students about their Radio Taiso performance – have they improved? Why do they think that?
- Now show students the two kanji flashcards and explain that each character has an individual meaning: *kai* (改) means 'to change' and *zen* (善) means 'good'. Tell students they can be combined to make the word *kaizen*; can they guess what it means?
- Tell the students it means 'to improve' (lit. 'good change') and the concept of 'kaizen' is to try to make small continuous adjustments in order to improve previous work or efforts.

**Teacher's Note:** The concept of kaizen is especially relevant in business settings, however children in Japanese schools are routinely encouraged to self-reflect and review their performance/work.

**Estimated Time: 10 minutes**

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## Task 2

- Set up the obstacle course elements from the game card in the **Japanese Sports Day Pack** and ask students in pairs to have a go at one of the tasks (e.g. dribbling, throwing bean bags into a target, sack jumping). Ask them to time each other.
- After each pair has an initial time for getting the task done, ask them to reflect and use the kaizen approach to set a small concrete target for a positive change.
- Repeat the same task and see if the mindful practice has made a difference in the speed, the quality of movement, or the harmony of the pair's work.
- Repeat other challenges in the same way rotating round the equipment.

**Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes**

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## Task 3

- Use the Relay Race from the resource pack. Tell students they are competing individually, but also doing their best to win points for their team. Adapt the equipment depending on what you have.
- Ask teams to complete the race with no other detailed instructions for the first attempt. You may wish to time it or record the quality of movement /level of teamwork.

**Estimated Time: 10 minutes**

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## Task 4

- Students will evaluate their performance again using the kaizen approach by thinking of one small thing they could do better and writing it on a post it note. Ask several students to share their idea. You may like to give examples of Olympic athletes striving to shave even 1 or 2 seconds off their PB.
- Students should try the relay again focusing on this goal.
- Students to discuss in pairs whether they achieved the change and decide what they could improve next time.

**Estimated Time: 10 minutes**

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## **Extension Activities**

1. Students to design their own obstacle course using the game card included in the Japanese Sports Day Pack. They could use other equipment you have available and incorporate some of the other elements of Japanese Sports Day from previous lessons (i.e. Humour, Pair activities, or Team Work).
2. Play another game from the resource pack. Ask students to evaluate their performance and try again thinking about the kaizen approach. Depending on time, repeat the process again or with another game from the pack.