

Spark Art Lesson: How Do Children in Japan Celebrate Children's Day?

ART, SOCIAL STUDIES

Get curious

Video/ Slide show

Watch a short film about Children's Day in Japan.

Ask: what unusual event takes place in the spring in Japan?

Get going

Listening

Read a Japanese short story linked to Children's Day aloud to the students.

Sit in a circle, preferably on the floor (e.g., on a carpet, or on mattresses or a blanket). Children listen to a short story that refers to the traditional decorations, which they will later make themselves in class.

Talk

Discuss the story you listened to.

You can ask:

Where, according to short story, does the tradition of hanging colored strings on masts originate? Who came up with this idea first? What wishes do parents express for their children when hanging colored carp on masts? What traits does a carp symbolize? Do you think such a tradition still exists in Japan?

Video/ Slide show

Watch a film to find out how the Japanese decorate the streets on Children's Day in present-day Japan.

Creative expression

Students make koinobori – traditional Japanese carp – from paper and decorate them using any technique of their choice.

Show instructional photographs, which will help students with making koinobori.

Presenting results

Hang up your carp in a desired location in the classroom, at school or in the backyard/courtyard of the school.

You can hang a rope/line between two points in the classroom and attach strings with carp to it.

OPTIONAL Listening

You can also listen to a traditional song sung by Japanese children on Children's Day.

In the video, there is a translation and a phonetic transcription of the text, so students can try to sing the song in Japanese.

Get practicing

Creative expression

Students get to know what traditions and customs are linked to Children's Day in their country – they choose a person who will tell them about these traditions and customs, and draw a picture about it.

Students find out what special things happen on Children's Day in the country that they come from. How was this holiday celebrated in the past and how is it celebrated nowadays? Children ask parents or other older people about it and then draw a picture depicting a traditional Children's Day.



Perhaps they will be able to hear about legends, folktales or historical narratives linked with Children's Day in their country.
