

Lesson 7: Japan

Getting Started

? Big Ideas

- How are Japanese and American cultures similar and different?
- How can differences among countries lead to negative outcomes?



Facts and Definitions

- Japan and America were enemies during World War II.
- The Japanese bombed an American ship at Pearl Harbor.
- The Americans dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima.



Skills

- Read from a variety of genres to acquire information. (LA)
- Conduct research by gathering information from a variety of sources. (LA)
- Use written language to report information on a topic. (LA)
- Share written, oral, and constructed projects in a variety of ways. (LA)
- Read independently to build background knowledge. (LA)
- Read orally from familiar texts with fluency (accuracy, expression, appropriate phrasing, and attention to punctuation). (LA)



Materials

- ✓ *A Kids Guide to Japan* by Moving Beyond the Page
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils* (Activity 2 - Option 2)
- ✓ globe or world map
- ✓ shallow plastic storage container (about 4" x 6")
- ✓ silicon baking cups* (Activity 1 - optional)
- ✓ cookie cutters* (Activity 1 - optional)
- ✓ fresh fruits and vegetables
- ✓ journal
- ✓ sharp knife
- ✓ timeline

Introduction

Encourage your child to locate Japan on a globe or world map. Ask him what he knows about the country of Japan. Explain to him that tomorrow he will begin reading a novel about a young girl who lives in Japan.

Reading and Questions

Ask your child to read the book *A Kids Guide to Japan*. Ask him the following questions when he has finished.

1. What is the climate of Japan?

- It is warm and dry in the spring, rainy and then hot and humid in the summer, cool and breezy in the fall, and cold and sunny in the winter (and it snows in some areas).

2. What kinds of food do Japanese people eat?

- Rice, fish, and vegetables are common. (Your child may also mention soup, fruit, or other items pictured on p. 5.)

3. What are some traditions of the Japanese?

- Answers will vary. Your child may mention art traditions (painting on silk, calligraphy, bonsai, or origami), teahouses and the tea ceremony, wearing kimonos on special occasions, or traditional celebrations (Japanese New Year or the Shichi-Go-San Festival).

4. How is the culture of Japan similar to the culture of the United States?

- Answers will vary.

5. How is the culture of Japan different from that of the United States?

- Answers will vary.

A Kids Guide to Japan

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/4417/

If you do not have the hard-copy book, you can access the online version using this link.

Activities

Activity 1: Make a Bento Box

Page 4 of *A Kids Guide to Japan* (page 5 in the online version of the book) shows a picture of a bento box, a traditional lunch for both children and adults. For this activity, you and your child will create a bento box for his lunch. The box does not have to contain any Japanese food, but it should feature a variety of healthy foods that are presented in fun or attractive ways. The box can be a shallow plastic storage container (with or without dividers). Your child can use small cookie cutters (or you can use a knife) to cut creative shapes out of vegetables, cheese, or bread. Your child should help choose the ingredients for the box and help you assemble it. The following website has some good suggestions for packing a bento box.

Bento Box Basics

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/3731/

Activity 2: About Japan

Let your child select one of the following activities to complete based on the information he has learned about Japan.

Option 1

For this option, your child can write an acrostic poem about Japan. In an acrostic poem, each line of the poem begins with a letter of the word being described. For this option, line 1 would begin with "J," line 2 with "A," line 3 with "P," and so on.

Option 2

Make a travel poster for Japan that could be hung in a travel agent's office. The poster can include some of the major sights in Japan and other cultural elements that might influence people to visit.

Activity 3: Japan and America

Explain to your child that, historically, relations between the Japanese and Americans have been tense. Between 1930 and 1945, the world was involved in a major war that changed the course of history. This war was World War II. Many different countries fought against one another, including Japan and America. Japan bombed American navy ships in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Locate Pearl Harbor on a map. Many Americans were killed in this attack, so America decided

to fight back. At the end of this terrible war, America dropped a bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945. This atomic bomb was different from other bombs and released poison in the air that killed many innocent people. Years after the bomb was dropped, people were still dying from cancer caused by the radiation poison. Let your child record the dates of the attacks on his timeline.

Ask your child to brainstorm reasons to go to war with other countries. Discuss some of the causes of wars — economic, freedom, land, and discrimination.

On "Japan and America" let your child describe ways that Japan and America are similar and different. The Venn diagram can include words and pictures. Discuss how America's relationship with Japan is improving. Ask your child to think of ways that the culture of Japan has influenced America, such as food, martial arts, clothing, and home décor.

Note: Your child will learn more about World War II in future years of the curriculum.

Activity 4: Map of Japan

Give your child the "Map of Japan" page and ask him to locate the places listed in the box and label them on his map.

Wrapping Up

Ask your child to explain why Japan and America were at war during World War II. Review some of the negative outcomes of the war. Discuss why the atomic bomb was such a deadly weapon.

Life Application

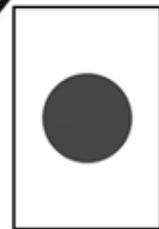
If a local museum has exhibits of Japanese art, take your child there to view the artwork. Also encourage your child to try some Japanese food like sushi or miso soup.



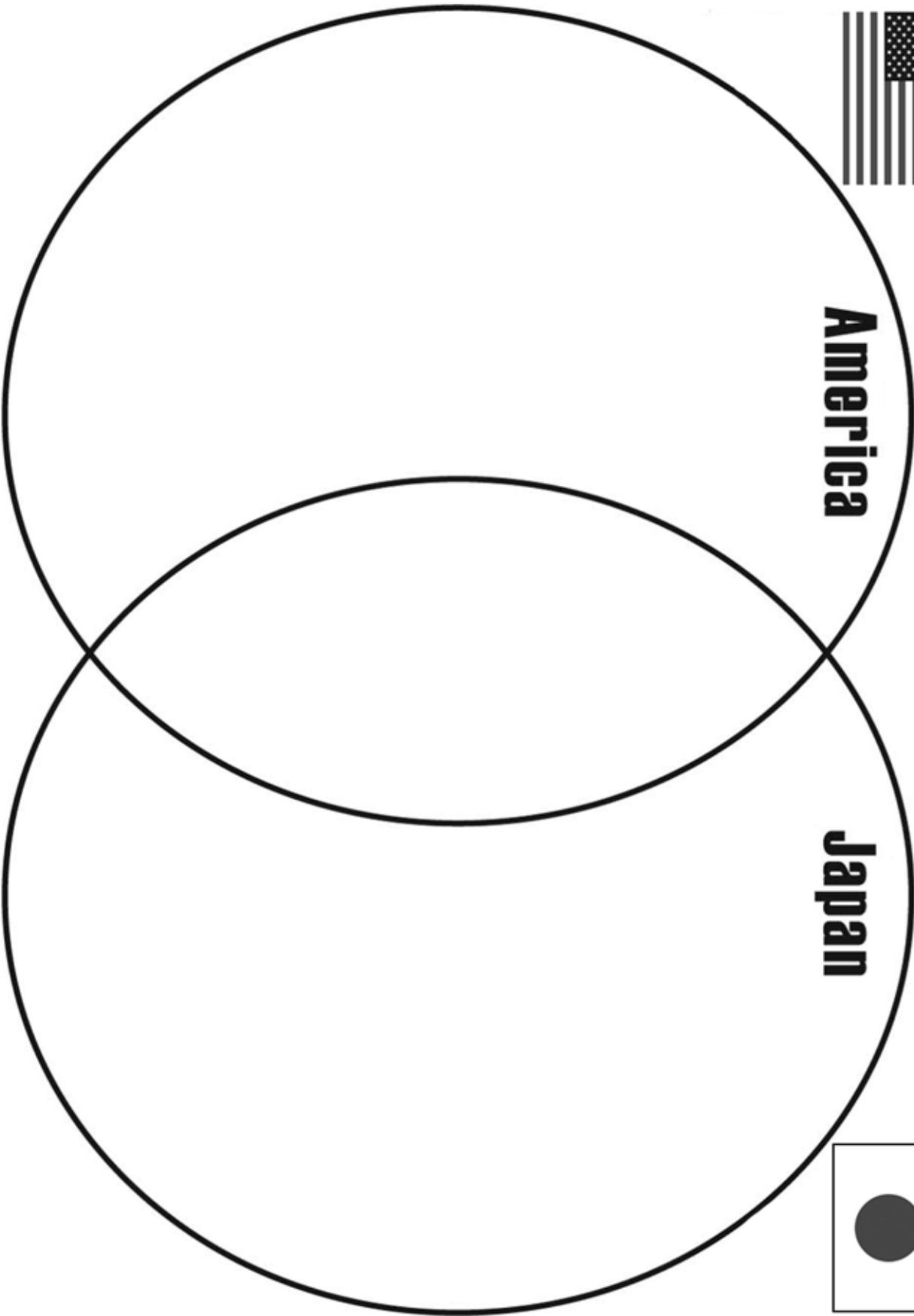
Japan and America

America

Japan



Directions: Describe ways Japan and America are similar and different. You may use both words and pictures to complete the Venn diagram.



Map of Japan

Directions: Locate the places listed in the box and label them on the map.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Hiroshima | Tokyo |
| Sea of Japan | Mt. Fuji |
| Kyoto | East China Sea |
| Shinano River | Pacific Ocean |
| Nagasaki | Philippine Sea |

