



Japan-in-a-Suitcase Curriculum Grades 6-8 • Five Week Lesson Plan

Week 1 – The Nation of Japan: geography & people, self introduction, school life, chopstick challenge

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- Start the class like a Japanese class by having everyone stand up and bow.

2. Geography of Japan (10 minutes)

- Discuss basic facts about Japan along with the weather and geography.

3. School in Japan (20 minutes)

- Compare and contrast a day in the life of a Japanese middle school student with that of an American student.
- Pass around authentic Japanese school supplies. Practice using chopsticks.

4. Japanese Customs 101 (20 minutes)

- Quiz game show on what's good manners and what's taboo in Japan.
- Teach the students to give a self introduction in Japanese.

5. Conclusion (5 minutes)

- Q&A with the students



Week 2 – Japanese Language: history of the language, numbers, months, birthday, hiragana

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- Start the class like a Japanese class by having everyone stand up and bow.

2. Japanese Language - What is it? (10 minutes)

- Overview of Japanese language.
- Pass around sample Japanese texts.

3. Numbers (20 minutes)

- Teach numbers 1-10 in Japanese with song and dance. Discuss how to count from 11 to 99.

4. Months and your birthday (20 minutes)

- Practice saying birthday month in Japanese and asking when someone was born.
- Play the birthday quest in Japanese, asking classmates.

5. Hiragana

- Guide the students in learning to write the first 5 letters of the Japanese alphabet.



6. Conclusion (5 minutes)

- a. Q&A with the students

Week 3 – A Year in Japan: holidays, seasons, nature/animal vocabulary, "I like"/"I don't like" grammar

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- a. Start the class like a Japanese class by having everyone stand up and bow.

2. Seasons and weather in Japan (10 minutes)

- a. Discuss the four distinct seasons in Japan and typical weather.

3. Japanese holidays (20 minutes)

- a. Using PowerPoint, introduce the main holidays in Japan to students.

4. Seasonal craft (OPTIONAL - if time allows)

- a. Introduce one holiday in depth and do a related craft or game.

5. Season/nature/animal vocabulary (20 minutes)

- a. Learn new vocabulary in Japanese and practice with an interview game.
- b. Learn how to say "Do you like ___?" in Japanese for the interview game.

6. Conclusion (5 minutes)

- a. Q&A with the students

Week 4 – Historic Japan: Japanese history, wearing kimono & yukata, traditional games

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- a. Start the class like a Japanese class by having everyone stand up and bow.

2. Ancient Japan - Ties with Mainland Asia (10 minutes)

- a. Talk about Japan's historic interactions with China and Korea

3. Medieval Japan (10 minutes)

- a. Overview of Japan's medieval era (including samurai, castles, etc)

4. Fashion Show - Japanese Traditional Clothing (15 minutes)

- a. Try on various traditional Japanese clothing



5. Traditional Games (15 minutes)

- a. Play kendama, fan toss, rock-paper-scissors or other games in Japanese

6. Haiku - Simple Poetry (OPTIONAL - if time allows)



- a. Teach English haiku writing

7. Conclusion (5 minutes)

- a. Q&A with the students

Week 5 – Modern "cool" Japan: Japan overseas, pop culture, kanji, origami, other games

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- a. Start the class like a Japanese class by having everyone stand up and bow.

2. Japan Overseas

- a. Discuss Japanese food, cars, martial arts, games, etc

3. Youth culture

- a. Discuss cellphones, video games, anime, comics, pop music

4. Cool Kanji - Writing Practice (20 minutes)

- a. Review the three writing systems for Japanese and teach how to write several pictographic kanji characters.

5. Origami - The Art of Folding Paper (15 minutes)

- a. Practice making various cool origami

6. End of Program Discussion (5 minutes)

- a. Review.

