



## **Traditions and Customs: Exploring Multiculturalism in the Blevins Japanese Garden**

*Focusing on the Japanese Garden (90 minutes) – Grades K-2*

### **About**

During this lesson, students will be learning about what elements are needed to make a traditional Japanese Garden, and then get a chance to create their own Japanese garden incorporating all the essential elements. Students will also learn about Japanese culture, including learning about a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. Students will also get to make their own tea incorporating some of the traditional steps of a Japanese tea ceremony. While their tea is steeping, students will talk about Japanese culture and traditions comparing and contrasting them with their own family traditions and others around the world. Students will also learn about how to write a haiku, write one as a class, and then as their post visit write their very own back in their classroom.

### **Objectives**

1. Students will learn about the design of a Japanese Garden and get to design their own making sure to incorporate all the essential elements of a Japanese Garden.
2. Students will learn about the Japanese culture and traditions.
3. Students will learn about a traditional Japanese tea ceremony and then make their own tea while incorporating different aspects from a traditional Japanese tea ceremony.
4. Students will be learning about how to write a haiku and get a chance to write a haiku as a class.
5. Students will complete a post visit activity where they get to write their own haiku.

### **Background on the Japanese Garden**

In 1970 a small Japanese-style Tea Garden was created near Botanic Hall. Seven years later Betty Weesher, former president of Ikebana International (Ikebana is a Japanese art form of flower arrangements that follows strict rules) generously gifted towards the creation of a Japanese Garden. Groundbreaking for the garden was August 14, 1977, which included a Japanese tea ceremony, with the garden opening to the public in 1990.

David Harris Engel was chosen to design the garden, which he named *Shōmu-en*, which translates to pine mist forest. The garden was designed as a meditative journey with different areas, all of which leads the visitor into the peaceful center of the garden, a mountain retreat. At the start of the path leading to the garden is a gate that leads to a *roji*,

which means transition zone. This is a narrow path that includes uneven steppingstones. The unevenness of the stones is designed to force the visitor to focus on their footsteps, and to start leaving the outside world behind.

The next part of the path leads through a bamboo forest. This area is a darkened enclosure designed to further separate the visitor from the outside world. Once through the bamboo forest the visitor will enter the courtyard that holds the Viewing Pavilion. The view from the pavilion is a composed 3D “painting” of the mountains meeting the ocean using a dry creek bed made of raked gravel and large rocks to imply calm water. On either side of the courtyard are castle walls, which are placed to add a geometric component to the setting. Six stone lanterns are placed throughout the gardens to not only light the path at night, but also as a philosophical concept of enlightenment.

In 2012 Melba and Bill Blevins generously supports and commissioned a master plan for the renovation and restoration of the Japanese garden, with a focus on the aging horticulture and accessibility. Famed landscape artist Sadafumi (Sada) Uchiyama (garden curator at Portland Japanese Garden) was hired to create a more polished enclosure and added accessibility. At this time, Cheekwood was selected to receive support from the Japanese government’s Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism.

### **Vocab**

**Haiku** - an unrhymed verse form of Japanese origin having three lines containing five, seven, and five syllables respectively; usually has a seasonal reference

**Culture** - a pattern of behavior shared by a society, or group of people. Many different things make up a society’s culture. These things include food, language, clothing, tools, music, arts, customs, beliefs, and religion.

**Community** - the people living in an area; a group of people with common interests especially when living together, shared ownership or participation

**Tradition** - the handing down of information, beliefs, or customs from one generation to another

**Custom** - the usual way of doing things; the usual practice of a person or group

**Multiculturalism** - of, relating to, reflecting, or adapted to diverse cultures

**Syllable** - a unit of spoken language that consists of one or more vowel sounds alone or with one or more consonant sounds preceding or following; one or more letters (as *syl*, *la*, and *ble*) in a word (as *syl\*la\*ble*) usually set off from the rest of the word by a centered dot or a hyphen and treated as guides to division at the end of a line

**Meditation** – a practice of mindfulness and self-awareness

**Native plant** -plants that grow naturally in a particular area or ecosystem

Climate - the average measurements of temperature, wind, humidity, snow, and rain in a place over the course of years.

Docent - a person who leads guided tours especially through a museum or art gallery

### **Standards Covered**

Culture K.02 Compare and contrast family traditions and customs, including food, clothing, homes, and games.

Culture 1.02 Define multiculturalism as many different cultures living within a community and state.

Culture 1.02 Compare and contrast family traditions and customs among different cultures withing a student's community and state.

Culture 2.02 Compare and contrast the beliefs, customs, ceremonies, and traditions of the various cultures represented in the U.S.

Culture 2.03 Distinguish how people from various cultures in the community and nation share principles, goals, and traditions.

Language Arts 1.FL.PA.2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

- a. Distinguish long from short vowel sounds in spoken single-syllable words.
- b. Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds (phonemes) in spoken single-syllable words.
- c. Isolate and pronounce initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in spoken single-syllable words.
- d. Segment spoken single-syllable words into their complete sequence of individual sounds (phonemes).

Language Arts K.FFL.PA.2 Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

- a. Recognize and begin to produce rhyming words.
- b. Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words.
- c. Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words.
- d. Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in two- and three-phoneme (VC or CVC) words, excluding CVC words ending with /l/, /r/, or /x/.  
Add or substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words.

**Pre-visit:** For the pre-visit, there will be a virtual meeting that will happen between a Cheekwood staff member and the class. There will be a PowerPoint that is shared about Cheekwood's history, and a brief introduction on what student's will be learning during their Cheekwood visit. There will also be pictures of the various important elements in the Japanese Garden to start to orient students to these elements.

## **Overview of the Day**

1. Students will start off at the First Learning Center where they will have just gotten off their bus. As soon as students are off the buses, a movement activity will be lead. Then, there will be a quick overview of the guidelines we ask students to follow while they are here.
2. Teachers will already have students preassigned to 3 different groups. After the movement activity, students will separate off into those assigned groups.
3. One docent will be placed with each group. This docent will be with that group the entire time. (Groups will be ~15 students each)
4. Docents will already be preassigned to different starting points for the field trip. The docents will be assigned to one of the starting points listed below. (two activities will be 15 minutes and one will be 30 minutes with 3 minutes for transitions between stations. During transition periods, students will be lead through a walking meditation sequence.):
  - a. What is a Japanese Garden & design your own Japanese Garden (30 minutes)
    - i. Students will get an overview on Japanese gardens. Then, students will learn about the history of the Japanese Garden here at Cheekwood. From there, students will learn about the different parts of the garden and what they mean, along with why they are important. This includes the stone path that wonders, the lanterns, the raked rocks, the number of gates, bamboo path, pavilion, etc. After students have learned about Japanese Gardens, the Cheekwood Japanese Garden, and the important aspects of a Japanese Garden, they will get a chance to design their own Japanese Garden. This garden will incorporate the different elements they just learned about.
  - b. Learning about and practicing a traditional Japanese tea ceremony, making tea, and talking about our personal family traditions and customs in our culture and family (15 minutes)
    - i. At this station, students will learn about a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. They will watch a video on a traditional Japanese tea ceremony to see all the different steps. Then, students will follow some of the steps of a traditional tea ceremony and make their own herbal tea. Herbal tea vs matcha will also be discussed since a traditional tea service would use matcha instead of herbal tea. While everyone's tea is steeping, students will talk about how a tea ceremony in Japan is a custom that they follow. Students will also briefly discuss how drinking and sharing tea throughout the world is a custom that many cultures share. Then, students will get a chance to share some of the customs and traditions from their families with their class. Then, students will drink their tea and use their five sense to observe and enjoy it.
  - c. Learn how to write a haiku and write one as a group (15 minutes)

- i. At this station, students will be learning about what a haiku is, and how to write one. They will practice clapping syllables of different words. Then, they will get a chance to write a haiku as a group using seasonally relevant words.

**Post Visit:** For the post visit activity, students will be asked to write their very own haiku using everything they learned from their field trip! Teachers are asked to share haikus with Cheekwood when they are finished.

**Post Visit Book Suggestions:**

*Ojichan's gift*, By: Chieri Uegaki and Genevieve Simms

*Teatime Around the World*, By: Denyse Waissbluth

*\*\* A waiver for each student will need to be filled out and signed by a legal guardian regarding the consumption of the herbal tea. \*\**