

MINIATURE JAPANESE ROCK GARDEN

THE ARTS (VISUAL ART) AND MINDFULNESS YEAR 4-8

Objectives	
<p>Achievement outcomes</p> <p>Students will gain knowledge, skills and experience to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice mindfulness through designing and creating a miniature Japanese rock garden. Explore traditional <i>karesansui</i> garden conventions, and apply knowledge of materials, processes and principles to create their own artwork. Share the ideas, feelings and stories communicated through their miniature Japanese rock garden and use of the <i>karesansui</i> style. 	<p>Learning area: The Arts (Visual art) and mindfulness</p> <p>Years: Year 4 -8</p> <p>Curriculum level: Level 1-3</p> <p>Unit duration: 4 lessons</p> <p>Note: The three-step guide is suitable for people of all ages to follow to create a miniature Japanese rock garden.</p>

Integration into other learning areas		
<p>Technology - Technological practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline a general plan to support the development of an outcome, identifying appropriate steps and resources. 		
Values:	Key competencies:	Principles:
Innovation, inquiry, and curiosity Diversity	Thinking Using language, symbols, and texts Managing self	Cultural diversity Learning to learn

Unit focus	
<p>Learning focus</p> <p>In this mini-unit students practice mindfulness while creating a miniature Japanese rock garden. Students record the process of designing their garden, describe the different features and reflect on their own learning.</p>	<p>Context</p> <p>Students have the opportunity to learn about traditional Japanese rock gardens by exploring the <i>karesansui</i> style of traditional Japanese dry landscapes.</p>

Lesson sequence	
Lesson	Activities/resources
<p>1. Students will be introduced to the concept of a traditional Japanese garden by following instructions to draw a rock garden. Students will compare their drawings to images of Japanese rock gardens, then learn about the <i>karesansui</i> style and gain tips for creating a Japanese inspired garden.</p>	<p>Resource: Japanese rock gardens</p> <p>Your class can begin with the drawing activity, or you may wish to start with one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Japan country poster to provide students with some basic facts about Japan. • General discussion about gardens, what features or elements students believe belong in gardens etc.
<p>2. Students will gather objects and material to design and create their own miniature Japanese rock garden, while photographing each step.</p> <p>Students will have the opportunity for contemplation and mindfulness while looking at their garden creation and mimicking water patterns or rearranging the design.</p>	<p>Resource: Three-step guide to creating a miniature Japanese rock garden</p> <p>Students write a list of all the materials required to create their garden and then go on a scavenger hunt. Once all materials are gathered students follow the three-step guide.</p>
<p>3. First students will record the steps they took to create their miniature Japanese Garden. Following on, students will reflect on their learning and the process they embarked on.</p>	<p>Resource: My miniature Japanese rock garden</p> <p>Two activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording the process • Personal reflection
<p>4. An opportunity for students to share work with classmates.</p>	<p>Students can share their completed work from lesson 3 with classmates and provide constructive feedback on each other's work.</p>

Assessment opportunities

The garden steps and reflection worksheet can be collected in for summative assessment. Students also have the opportunity to peer assess the rock garden drawing activity and the garden steps and reflection worksheet.

Extending learning

To focus more on level 3 of the curriculum, students can compare and contrast traditional Japanese gardens with their own gardens or backyards, as well as popular landscape styles in New Zealand. Students can further investigate Zen Buddhism, or explore mindfulness through different Japanese cultural activities such as the Tea ceremony, Bonsai or Ikebana (art of flower arrangement).

Additional resources

[Japan country poster](#)

[Food in Japan: Year 3-4 English unit](#)

Kahoot: [Fun facts about Japan](#)

Paul Morris, '[Diverse religions - Forms of Buddhism](#)', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand

Asia Media Centre article, [NZ-Japan ties: 5 things to know](#)

Niponica - Discovering Japan, No 26 '[Welcome to Japanese gardens](#)'.

Teacher notes

Students could create their own miniature Japanese gardens in the classroom using sand and start or end the day with contemplation time interacting with their garden to practice mindfulness.