

Sakura Tree Lesson Plan

thanks to the Japan America Society of Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh Sakura Project

Grade level:

1st Grade; 2nd Grade

Length of Lesson: 30 minutes

Learning Goal:

The students will have a beginning of an appreciation for Sakura tree and Japanese culture.

Objectives:

After listening to the docent's presentation on the Japanese Sakura tree and the story, the students will be able to orally answer the following questions: "Why is the Sakura important to Japan?" and "Why did Japan give 2000 Sakura trees to Washington D.C. in the year 1912?"

Materials:

- Artifacts of Japan (map, flag)
- Collage of Sakura trees
- The Sakura Tree by Carol McTighe
- Handouts

Procedures:

Review:

Ask students if they have ever heard of Japan.

Introduction:

1. Explain to the students that Japan is an island in the Pacific Ocean by showing them a map or a globe.
2. Tell the students that people there are Japanese and speak Japanese.
3. Tell the students that the Japanese national flower is the Sakura.
4. Tell the students that Sakura grows on trees.
5. Explain to the students that the English word for the Sakura is cherry blossom.
6. Point to the collage of Sakura trees to give students a visual of what the Sakura looks like.

Activity:

1. Read the book *The Cherry Tree* by Carol McTighe

Also:

- Explain to the students that in the year 1912 Japan sent 3000 Sakura trees to Washington D.C. as a measure of good friendship.
 - Tell the students that now in Washington D.C. Americans celebrate the blooming of the Sakura trees with parades.
 - Tell the students that Americans celebrate to acknowledge Japan's friendship by holding parades that last for days.
2. **Ask** the students, "Do you think that Sakura is important to Japan?" The answer should be "Yes"

"Why do you think it's important?"

The **answer** would be "Because the Sakura is Japan's national flower".

Ask the students, "Why did Haruko bring three Sakura tree seeds to Canada?" The **answer** would be "She wanted to plant the seeds and cherry trees will grow. Each spring when they bloom, she will smell their sweet perfume and be reminded of her two sisters and her home far away"

Ask the students, "Why did Japan send 3000 Sakura trees to Washington D.C. in the year 1912?" The answer should be because it was a measure of good friendship.

3. Ask each student to write down a sentence on a Sakura-shaped paper and stick it onto a board. Together the class makes a Sakura Tree.

