



Art

Japanese Art

Year 4 Unit 2

Key Vocabulary:

Core Knowledge

Contemporary Art

Contemporary art is the term used for art of the present day. Usually, the artists are alive and still making work. Contemporary art is often about ideas and concerns, rather than solely the aesthetic. Artists try different ways of experimenting with ideas and materials.

Traditional Art

Art that is a part of the culture of a group of people, skills and knowledge of which are passed down through generations.

Technical Vocabulary

Mono printing (plexiglass printing)

The monoprint is a form of printmaking where the image can only be made once, unlike most printmaking which allows for multiple originals.

Architecture

The art or practice of designing and constructing buildings.

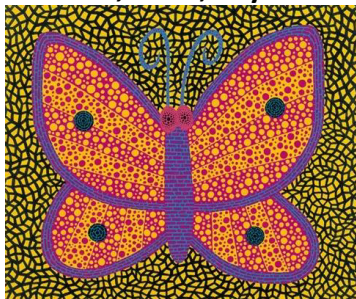
Textile

Textile art is art that uses varying materials and fibres to produce decorative, artistic objects.

Key Works of Art



Mushrooms, 2005, Yayoi Kusama



Butterfly, Yayoi Kusama



The Great Wave, 1831, Katsushika Hokusai



Traditional Japanese Architecture

Cultural Knowledge

Diverse Genres

Japanese classic art covers a wide variety of genres. From ancient pottery and sculpture to ink painting, woodblock prints, calligraphy on silk and paper, as well as origami, its large amount of styles and influences are why Japanese art remains so popular today. Yet, much of Japan's classic art pieces, many of which are paintings, are locked away because curators believe they are much too fragile to be on display in art museums.

Chinese Influences

Japanese art was dominated by Chinese art in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries. It wasn't until the ninth century that Japanese artists started turning away from Chinese influence and doing their own thing.

Western Influences

The opening of trade routes with America and Europe in the Nineteenth Century, transformed Japanese art as it began to be influenced by and influence western artists. Japanese painters—such as Ando Hiroshige—influenced European artists such as Edouard Manet and Vincent Van Gogh.

Types of Japanese Painting

According to the Virtual Museum of Japanese Art, there are five most popular types of classic Japanese paintings. The following have remained popular throughout history: Buddhist Temple painting (Butsuga), ink painting (Suibokuga), scroll painting (Emaki), literati painting (Bunjinga), and wall painting (Shoeiga).

Not Realistic

Japanese artists commonly moved away from realism and preferred to look into the inner essence of the subject. Imaginative techniques in the depiction of common life are displayed in paintings known as The Tale of Genji of the Twelfth Century.

Owned by the Wealthy

In Japan, artwork is not so common in every household. Typically, it is only owned by wealthy people and then shared or transferred from one owner to another. The value of art is often overlooked by the Japanese people only to be discovered by overseas collectors.

Exhibitions

As classic Japanese art is so rare, Tokyo art exhibitions draw some of the largest crowds in the world. An exhibition of late 18th century Edo period painters once drew almost 7,000 people at the Tokyo National Museum. At the same museum, Hokusai's work drew almost 10,000 people, the highest since figures on exhibitions have been recorded.

In America, one of the world's most extensive and best displays of Japanese art is kept at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Many Japanese citizens are against their art being held in foreign museums and deem the pieces national treasures and of the upmost cultural importance. In 1932, a system was put in place by the national government in Japan to prevent art objects from being exported.

Art is Passed Down the Generations

Skills such as screen painting and the Japanese art of lacquerware require extensive skills of trained craftsmen and painters. For that reason, many traditional arts and crafts have been passed down from generation to generation from family members or from a master or teacher to the student. Some Japanese artists and craftsman are so talented and highly skilled in their art form that they are respected as Living National Treasures.

Concepts

The beauty of Japanese art is expressed in the concepts of *sabi* ("elegant simplicity"), *miyabi* ("refined elegance"), *wabi* ("quiet taste") and *mono no aware* ("pathos of nature"). The more traditional Japanese art

forms tend to emphasize things like tradition, stillness, line, colour, purity, form, value, inner calm, and texture.