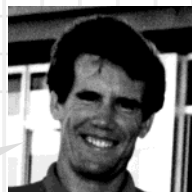




SUGAHARA PRIMARY SCHOOL

—The School Day in Japan—

In teaching Japanese language and culture it is always useful to begin with some point of comparison that is relevant to the experience of the children. Many children are shocked and amazed to learn that school life in other countries is different from their own. This lesson employs a process approach to teaching Japanese culture. It involves the use of a procedural problem-solving strategy used in other curriculum areas. The teacher's role in this open-ended approach is to guide children through the process with as little intervention as possible. Questions that arise as a product of the lesson should form the basis of further group or independent investigations.



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ELEMENTARY

SECONDARY

BEGINNING

INTERMEDIATE

OBJECTIVES

LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES

- To memorize and use classroom expressions associated with beginning and ending of lessons

TARGET FUNCTIONS	TARGET EXPRESSIONS	TARGET VOCABULARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Addressing teachers ❖ Understanding classroom instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ みなさん、おはようございます ❖ せんせい、おはようございます ❖ きりつ、れい、ちゃくせき ❖ みなさん、さようなら ❖ せんせい、さようなら 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ きりつ、れい、ちゃくせき ❖ みなさん、せんせい

CULTURAL OBJECTIVES

- To identify ways in which school life at Sugahara Primary School is both similar and different to the target school
- To critically analyze these differences and similarities
- To construct hypotheses to explain different behaviors
- To pose questions for future investigation

LESSON PLAN

SOURCE MATERIALS

Handout*

PROCEDURE

Preparation

Prepare and distribute the Handout for the beginning of the lesson.

1. Handout (10 mins.)

Read the Handout with the children and role-play classroom greetings

2. Group activity using the Handout (15 mins.)

Children form groups of three or four. One child acts as recorder, one as spokesperson, and one as manager (with the power to seek clarification about the learning task from the teacher) in each group. Groups are asked to reread a particular paragraph of the Handout (lessons, uniform) and answer the questions on it.

3. Report answers (15 mins.)

Have the spokesperson from each group report answers to the whole class. Summarize answers on board. Accept all answers and help children to clarify statements. The following instructions relate to the Handout questions:

Q1. If children offer generalizations such as "Japanese schools are very big," assist them to change the statement into a question (e.g., Do all Japanese school have enrollments larger than 400?). This question may form the basis for further investigations.

Q2. By having children list their feelings you can discourage them from making impulsive decisions about the information based on emotions alone. Challenge the children to reflect on the reasons why they are experiencing these emotions.

Q3. Accept all answers but ask the children to justify their opinions.

Q4. Ask the children to think what the difficulties and dangers are with the information that has been supplied to them (e.g., danger of unqualified generalizations such as "Japanese children have lunch at 12:10").

Q5. In this question children have the opportunity to think creatively about how they can improve their own school as a result of learning about how another schools function.

Q6. "Why is it so?" Have the children explain why they believe the school has been organized in a particular way. Assist the children to form their explanation into a hypothesis that can be tested through further research (e.g., Japanese teachers do not let children eat sweets at school).

Q7. This question helps children to summarize their thinking and decide on a future course of action.

Future lessons may involve children in group work or learners negotiating individual contracts with teachers. The teacher's role is one of manager, offering guidance, and providing access to information technology and other resources.

REMARKS

Developing Positive Attitudes and Curiosity About Japan

Teachers are always obliged to respond to changes taking place in society. Australia is currently undergoing significant cultural and economic change. Australia is increasingly becoming a multi-cultural society and Australians are being asked to see their country as part of Asia rather than the Commonwealth. Presently the economy displays an over-reliance on primary exports but recent trends suggest that Australia's economic future will be dependent upon growth in the service, tourism, and education sectors with the main markets for these being in Asia. In line with these changes and pressures exerted by the global economy, many organizations in Australia are restructuring the workplace and replacing vertical patterns of decision making with team approaches. The new emphasis is on shorter business cycles and flatter management structures. It is no longer the case that workers can expect to remain in the same job for their entire working life. The pace of technological change means that it is becoming increasingly difficult for educators to ascertain what specific skills the future workforce will require. It seems that workers will need to be innovative, collaborative problem solvers who possess generic rather than specific skills.

The Australian education system is responding to these changes in a number of ways. The most obvious being an increased number of students studying Asian languages. Primary schools have a very important role in this process. In the case of

Japanese language, the role of the primary school should not only be to develop communication skills, but to develop positive attitudes and encourage lifelong curiosity about Japanese language and culture.

Some primary schools are responding to work-place demands by employing new techniques aimed at developing expansive, higher order thinking skills. These approaches encourage students to think critically and creatively. The introduction of information technology is also leading to the use of different teaching styles. As the amount of information that students are exposed to increases, information management skills are seen to be more important than the memorization of facts. This has meant a change in the role of teachers from lecturer to facilitator. These process approaches may be used in Japanese language and culture education. Students are encouraged to take more responsibility for their learning and work collaboratively. Tasks are relevant, meaningful, and open-ended.

Australian children are naturally curious about the lifestyle, ideas, and aspirations of their peers in Japan. It is important that learners become personally involved in searching for answers. In seeking answers they develop important generic skills and at the same time develop a personal interest in Japanese language and culture.

COMMENTS

This lesson plan is well-organized. The plan is also commendable for its learner-centeredness. The learner-centeredness of this plan provides students with information and helps students develop their thinking skills. The use of cooperative learning techniques is effective. Furthermore, the teaching points are well thought out and have the potential to guide other teachers.

Try including vocabulary throughout the lesson: not just the first ten minutes.

Greetings alone are not sufficient even after only 20 hours of Japanese. The children could be encouraged to use these words during their discussions.

すがはらしょうがっこう, あるいて, バスで, せいふく, きゅうしょく, やすみじかん, やきゅう, ゴムとび, ドッジボール, サッカー

SUGAHARA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sugahara Primary School is located in Nara prefecture in Japan. It has an enrollment of 800 students.

TRAVELING TO SCHOOL

Children who have to walk a long way to school form groups with other children in the neighborhood. The eldest child in each group is given the job of group leader and it is their responsibility to ensure the group arrives safely at school. Other children may walk on their own, be driven to school or go by buses.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Children wear a blue and white uniform and a bright yellow hat. They also wear a badge on their chest displaying their name and school. School bags have bright yellow covers on them.

CLASSROOM CUSTOMS

When the school day begins the teacher will ask students to stand (たってください) Then the teacher will say "good morning students" (みなさん、おはようございます) and bow. The students will reply by saying "good morning teacher" (せんせい、おはようございます) and bow. At the beginning and end of every lesson one child commands their classmates by saying: "stand, bow, sit down (きりつ、れい、ちゃくせき)

PLAYGROUND AND PLAY

The school playground's surface is a mix of sand and soil. Popular games are baseball, skipping, elastics, dodgeball, and soccer. Children have a 20-minute break between lessons during which they may play. Children may choose to stay in the classroom and draw, read, or write during this time.

LESSONS

● TIMETABLE FOR TUESDAY

8:30	CLASS MEETS TO DISCUSS THE DAY'S PROGRAM
8:50 — 9:30	MORAL CULTURE
9:40 — 10:20	JAPANESE LANGUAGE
10:20 — 10:40	20-MINUTE RECESS
10:40 — 11:20	MATHEMATICS
11:30 — 12:10	PHYSICAL EXERCISE
12:10 — 12:50	SCHOOL MEAL
12:50 — 1:10	CLEANING
1:10 — 1:50	SCIENCE
2:00 — 2:40	MUSIC
2:40 — 2:50	MEETING BEFORE GOING HOME

Children use a textbook for every subject that they learn. Children take some textbooks home and do homework every night. Many children have private lessons after school in Japanese, mathematics, music, or sport.

FOOD

Children don't eat snacks during lesson breaks and don't bring food to school with them. Children cannot buy food at school. Soft drinks and sweets are not permitted at school. Children sit down for a meal at lunchtime that is provided by the school. Each day the menu is different. It may be a combination of rice, noodles, chicken, vegetables, fish, or beef. All children eat the same meal. A group of children in each class are responsible for serving food and cleaning tables in the canteen.

————— Pick one paragraph of the text and answer the following questions about it. —————

1. What information did you find interesting?
2. What are your feelings about what you read?
3. What good points can you find in the paragraph?
4. What concerns do you have about the information?
5. What new ideas does the information give you?
6. What explanations can you offer about the information?
7. What have you learned and what new questions do you need to answer?