

## **“East Meets West”—Using Friendship Gardens to Build Understanding and Appreciation for Cultural Differences.**

Naomi Oyadomari—October 2019  
Lucerne Valley Middle High School  
Lucerne Valley, California  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts/ History

**Suggested Timeline:** Approximately 2 months

### **Key Vocabulary:**

Issei, Nissei, Sansei, Inu, Shikata ga nai, Banzai, Samurai, Geisha, Kabuki, Bakatate, kimono, arigato, Hiroshima, Fujiyama,

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Identify various aspects of Japanese culture through the reading of the novel, Farewell to Manzanar by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James Houston
- Differentiate Japanese traditions from other cultural traditions such as American, Hispanic, European, etc
- Demonstrate knowledge of similarities between the two cultures
- Disseminate information learned through various mediums such as writing, power point presentations, videos, art, display boards, garden design
- Define key Japanese vocabulary terms pertinent to the reading
- Develop a deeper understanding for Japanese culture.

### **Focus Questions:**

1. How is Japanese culture similar to American culture?
2. How can differences bring two cultures together?
3. Can one have National pride and loyalty towards ones' adopted country, while still holding onto ones' original heritage?

### **Instructions:**

1. Students will complete the novel Farewell to Manzanar by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James Houston in their English Language Arts class.
2. Students will identify the difficulties and hardships Japanese Americans had to endure during WWII internment, while still holding onto their traditional Japanese customs and traditions through journalizing and class discussions.
3. Students will develop a deeper understanding of the Japanese culture through the reading of the novel and through further research of Japanese customs.
4. Students will create a vocabulary bank of significant Japanese terms used in the novel to further understand the Japanese culture

5. Students will create a group slideshow showing their understanding of similarities and differences of the two cultures and present their two slides and script on a timed presentation.
6. Students will read Mitoko and the Friendship Garden for further extension of this unit and the personal stories of other individuals affected by the war.
7. Upon completion of the novel, students will create a power point presentation, display board, video or demonstration to disseminate their learning of Japanese culture. They will choose from the following topic suggestions:
  - History of Ancient Japan
  - Geography of Japan
  - The Samurai Warrior Class
  - Religions of Japan
  - Japanese Language and Writing
  - Zen/ Meditational gardens
  - Traditional customs
  - Internment camps in California
  - Manzanar Internment Camp
  - Video: A Day in the Life of a Japanese Student / A Day in the Life of a Lucerne Valley Student
8. The final culmination of this unit will be the combined efforts of students in designing and creating a Friendship Garden/ Meditational Garden on the Middle School campus, that will display the blending of both cultures of Japan and Lucerne Valley. The end result is to instill an appreciation of how meditational gardens can bring comfort and a sense of calmness, as it did for so many Japanese Americans who were interned at Manzanar.

Extensions:

- Japan Fair showcasing the students' final projects
- Paint Party on a Japanese painting
- Fieldtrip to the Japanese American Museum in Los Angeles & the Huntington Library in Pasadena to visit the Japanese Garden.
- Link up with a school in Japan, ie Takehaya High School as pen pals

**Summative Assessment:**

Students will be assessed on the completion of their final project as outlined in the project rubric. They will also be required to create an original thesis statement for their project while addressing the focus questions to demonstrate their understanding of their research as it relates to the unit.