

San Jose Taiko



Applause Series CURRICULUM GUIDE
CIVIC CENTER OF GREATER DES MOINES

APRIL 12, 2010

San Jose Taiko

Dear Teachers,

Thank you for joining us for the Applause Series presentation of San Jose Taiko. We are very pleased that you have chosen to share this special experience with your students and hope that this study guide helps you connect the performance to your in-classroom curriculum in ways that you find valuable.

In the following pages, you will find contextual information about the performance and related subjects, as well as a wide variety of discussion questions and activities that tie into several curriculum areas. Some pages are appropriate to reproduce for your students; others are designed more specifically with you, their teacher, in mind. As such, we hope that you are able to “pick and choose” material and ideas from the study guide to meet your class’s unique needs. As a final note, we have indicated grade level ranges on each of the included Activities and Discussion Question sections, but you should also feel free to adapt any of the activities in this study guide as you feel will be appropriate and meaningful for your students.



See you at the theater,
Civic Center Education Team

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This study guide was compiled and written by Karoline Myers; edited by Emily Gruis and Eric Olmscheid.
Based on 'San Jose Taiko School Outreach Curriculum Guide' by San Jose Taiko and
'San Jose Taiko Study Guide' by the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts.

ABOUT THE CIVIC CENTER OF GREATER DES MOINES



The Civic Center is a private, nonprofit organization and is an important part of central Iowa's cultural community. The institution is a cultural landmark of central Iowa and is committed to engaging the Midwest in world-class entertainment, education, and cultural activities. The Civic Center has achieved a national reputation for excellence as a performing arts center and belongs to several national organizations, including The Broadway League, the Independent Presenters Network, International Performing Arts for Youth, and Theater for Young Audiences/USA.

Four performing arts series currently comprise the season—the Willis Broadway Series, Prairie Meadows Temple Theater Series, Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield Family Series and the Applause Series. The Civic Center is also the performance home for the Des Moines Symphony and Stage West.

Through its education programs, the Civic Center strives to engage patrons in arts experiences that extend beyond the stage. Master classes bring professional and local artists together to share their art form and craft, while pre-performance lectures and post-performance Q&A sessions with company members offer ticket holders the opportunity to explore each show as a living, evolving piece of art.

Through the Applause Series—curriculum-connected performances for school audiences—students are encouraged to discover the rich, diverse world of performing arts. During the 2009-2010 season, the Civic Center will welcome more than 28,000 students and educators to 11 professional productions for young audiences.

.....
Want an inside look? Request a tour.
.....

Group tours can be arranged for performance and non-performance dates.
Call 515-246-2355 or visit civiccenter.org/education to check on availability or book your visit.
.....

DID YOU KNOW?

More than 250,000 patrons visit the Civic Center each year.

The Civic Center opened in 1979. We just celebrated our 30th birthday!

The Civic Center has three theater spaces:

- *Main Hall, 2735 seats*
- *Stoner Studio, 200 seats*
- *Temple Theater, 300 seats (located in the Temple for the Performing Arts)*

No seat is more than 155 feet from center stage in the Main Hall.

Nollen Plaza, situated just west of the Civic Center, is a park and amphitheater that is also part of the Civic Center complex. The space features the Brenton Waterfall and Reflection Pool and the Crusoe Umbrella sculpture.

The Applause Series started in 1996. You are joining us for the 14th season!

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE



The Music

San Jose Taiko fuses the traditional art form of Japanese taiko with rhythms from around the world, creating a fresh and empowering experience for audience members. Their performance introduces the audience to Japanese culture through the company's use of traditional Japanese instruments such as the **Chappa** and **Atarigane** (see page 8 for further information about these instruments). The company's performance expresses the values of dedication and cultivating a collective spirit that lie at the heart of Japanese philosophy. Ultimately, the company's propulsive rhythms and sounds have the power to transport the listener into another space and time—demonstrating that all cultures can relate through music.

The History

San Jose Taiko's performance will include information about the history of taiko in Japan and a demonstration of the instruments that the company uses to create music. The performers will also introduce the audience to the four principles of the San Jose Taiko Learning Philosophy—including **Ki**, Attitude, **Kata**, and Musical Technique (see page 7 for more information.)

While you listen...

As you listen and watch, think about the variations in style and the inspiration for the different pieces performed by San Jose Taiko. For instance...

- ◆ *Free Spirit* features drummers playing together, against each other, and as soloists.
- ◆ *Gendai Ni Ikiru* (Living in the Present) takes a simple traditional taiko rhythm and blends it with other modern rhythm patterns.
- ◆ *Ei Ja Nai Ka?* (Isn't It Good?) is a piece that was inspired by the music and dance of traditional Japanese festivals and is dedicated to the first Japanese immigrants who came to the United States over one hundred years ago.

What do you notice about the different techniques? What do the titles of the different pieces suggest about the company's relationship with their cultural heritage?

*ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE information is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts' San Jose Taiko study guide materials.

“By playing Japanese American music we honor our cultural roots. We draw from a traditional source, yet still express ourselves as Americans. By sharing our music we take pride in our heritage, and hope to encourage others to have pride in their own cultural backgrounds.”

ORIGINS OF TAIKO



‘Amaterasu and the Cave’



The legend of taiko’s creation begins with Amaterasu, who was the sun goddess of Japan. She was responsible for spreading light and warmth to the people and land. Her brother, Susanu-O, was the storm god.

His short temper and fondness for picking fights often disturbed the calm and quiet country.

One day, Susanu-O decided to visit his sister up in the sky so that he could bask in her light and radiance in order to gain strength and courage for his journey to the underworld. In his hurry to see his sister, Susanu-O traveled through the sky with crackling thunder, shaking the mountains and frightening all the living things below.

Amaterasu was also frightened by the horrible sounds Susanu-O made as he traveled through the sky. She was afraid that he was coming to fight her. To prepare for their meeting, she armed herself with her bow and quiver. However, when Susanu-O arrived, she learned that he had come to visit her, not to fight her. She put aside her bow and arrows and welcomed him into her presence.

It was not long, however, until Susanu-O began to cause trouble. As he lounged in his sister’s kingdom, he began to feel underappreciated and decided to cause trouble to regain some attention. When he and Amaterasu quarreled, he released the wind and rain he held in his arms and sent his horses to destroy Amaterasu’s rice fields.

Amaterasu tried to be patient with her brother’s behaviors. She made excuses for his actions, saying that he couldn’t help his troublesome nature. Her patience and pity, however, only infuriated Susanu-O further and he engaged in even worse behavior to try to make her lose her cool.

One day, he frightened Amaterasu to such an extent that she ran away from her kingdom. She hid herself in a cave and blocked the entrance with a huge boulder. When she left, the world became dark and cold and the land of Japan began to die away. Susanu-O, feeling that he had won the fight, finally departed on his journey to the underworld.

As the dark days passed without Amaterasu, the other gods grew very worried. One day, they gathered outside Amaterasu’s cave and formed a plan to draw her out. They planned to catch her, make her stand up to her brother, and force her to return to her kingdom to spread her light and warmth back across Japan.

The gods decorated the trees outside the cave with mirrors and bright banners. They began to sing songs and to dance, but nothing seemed to work. Amaterasu stayed inside the cave. Then, Uzume, the goddess of mirth, stepped forward with an idea all of her own. She climbed onto a hollow log and began to dance a joyous dance like no one had ever seen. She stomped her feet, beating out wild and inviting rhythms. Everyone around her began to fill with joy as they listened to the new sounds coming from the hollow log.

Inside the cave, Amaterasu grew curious. When she peeked outside the cave to see what was making the sounds, she saw her reflection in the mirrors hanging from the trees. As her ears filled with the sounds of the drumming, her eyes were filled with a great pure light. Her fear of her brother disappeared, and she was filled with strength and joy. She was so happy the gods did not have to catch her. As soon as she saw her reflection in the mirror, Amaterasu recognized her fear and was no longer afraid to face her problems. She willingly returned to her kingdom, once more spreading joy and light across the land of Japan.

Since that time, this drum—the taiko—has been used to spread joy and courage to the lands of Japan.

TAIKO HISTORY



The Japanese word “taiko” (tye-koh) simply means drum. The drum has been an important musical instrument in many cultures, but taiko holds a unique place in Japanese culture.

Ancient History

It is difficult to know when taiko began exactly in Japan, but scholars believe the taiko drum was introduced to Japan through trade sometime before 600 A.D. Around this time, **Buddhism** was also introduced to Japan. Thus taiko became associated with Buddhism and was first used in temples and shrines for many religious ceremonies. Priests used the taiko to chase evil spirits and to protect rice fields from insects. In Buddhism, taiko was associated with the voice of Buddha, with its ability to spread wisdom, compassion, truth and beauty through its rhythms.

The earliest written documentation of the drum and the art form is from the 700s A.D. The tale of “Amaterasu and the Cave” (see page 5) is one explanation of how the taiko drum came to exist.

After 900 A.D., Japanese culture became almost entirely closed to the outside world. So while the drum was originally introduced to Japan from other countries, its technique and physical form evolved solely in Japan.

*TAIKO HISTORY information is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts’ San Jose Taiko study guide materials.

Uses

Throughout its history, taiko has been associated with all the major parts of life in Japan, including the changing of the seasons and the cycles of nature. For this reason, Japanese people from all classes used taiko in their daily lives for both practical and spiritual purposes.

- ◆ One of the earliest uses of the taiko was to determine the boundaries of a village. A village was considered to be as large as the booming sound of the drum would carry.
- ◆ The taiko was used in battle to give courage to samurai warriors and to intimidate the enemy. There is some evidence that armies used taiko to communicate to each other across the battlefield as well.



A painting depicting a taiko drum being used in battle.

Image courtesy of bowdoin.edu

◆ Farmers played the taiko believing that its thunder-like sound would bring rain for their crops. At festivals, the drum was played to ward off sickness and give thanks for prosperity.

◆ Taiko was used in the Imperial Court by the rich and powerful.

Modern History

Modern-day taiko techniques are largely attributed to a jazz drummer named Daihachi Oguchi. Daihachi’s creative process included taking a traditional drum song, changing its rhythms, and adding taiko drums. He and his fellow players also contributed the sense of speed, fluid movement, and choreography found in the modern-day taiko technique.

The first North American taiko ensemble was founded in San Francisco in 1968 with the idea that it would give Japanese Americans a chance to learn more about their culture.

Since the 1960s, more taiko groups have been founded across America by Japanese Americans wanting to experience their traditional culture and to redefine the Japanese American experience. Taiko is often showcased at Asian American festivals, and the growth of the art form in the United States owes much to the visibility that taiko groups, such as San Jose Taiko, have enjoyed at these celebrations.

ABOUT SAN JOSE TAIKO



Beginnings

In 1973 a group of third-generation Japanese Americans, or **Sansei**, were searching for a way to learn more about their cultural history. Looking to Japan for inspiration, the young Sansei decided to form a **taiko** drum group, calling themselves San Jose Taiko. The taiko drum has held strong spiritual and cultural meaning throughout Japanese history and gave these Sansei a chance to connect with their cultural heritage.

Evolving Style

In Japan, taiko is traditionally performed by men at spiritual or ceremonial gatherings. As taiko has gained popularity across the world, more women have become involved in taiko, especially in America. All compositions performed by San Jose Taiko are written or arranged by members of the group. San Jose Taiko is known for infusing rhythms from other cultural traditions into their playing. They are described as having a world beat, as they often use elements from African, Balinese, Brazilian, Latin and Jazz percussion. In addition to composing the group's pieces, members create choreography, design and produce costumes, and hand-craft many of the drums for the group's performances.

Training

The audition process is strenuous as participants must complete a year-long training program that consists of rigorous exercise, taiko basics and lessons about the group's history, philosophy, and process. Physical endurance is very important, and running and exercise continue to be requirement at every practice session once performers become members of the group.

Philosophy

There are four important aspects to the San Jose Taiko style of taiko drumming: **Kata**, attitude, musical technique, and **Ki**. Together, these elements form the unified spirit that reaches from the artists and the instruments to their audience.

Kata: In some forms of Japanese martial arts, such as karate, "kata" refers to your form or stance and style of movement. In taiko, kata refers to the way the drummers stand, how they hold their arms when they approach the drums, and how they move when they play. For taiko players, good kata consists of a strong low stance and moving the arms and body in a manner that is both flowing and powerful. Kata requires stamina, strength, and coordination.

Attitude: Respect is a keyword for San Jose Taiko. The members must respect each other, their teachers, the drum, and the art form of taiko. For them, an attitude of respect begins with an open mind and an open heart. No matter what your abilities are, there is always something you can improve. Every time they practice they strive to improve and better themselves, pushing themselves to play their instruments to the best of their physical and mental abilities.

Musical Technique: Musical technique refers to the "how to's" of playing a musical instrument. In taiko, players concentrate on the wrist snap to get the proper sound out of the drum and how to hold the *bachi* or drumsticks. Members also train for coordination and concentration to perfect their timing, dynamics and speed.

Ki: Ki refers to the energy or life-force that flows through all living things. When one attains Ki, they feel a spiritual unity between the mind and body. One of the ways the performers express Ki is through "Kiai," or the encouraging shouts that members of a taiko ensemble give each other while they play. This is one of the reasons taiko is such fun to see in person. Not only can you feel the vibrations of the drum, but you can also feel the energy or Ki from the taiko players.

*ABOUT SAN JOSE TAIKO information is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts' San Jose Taiko study guide materials.

THE INSTRUMENTS



The Drums

Traditional Japanese drums are made from a hollowed out tree trunk. Taiko makers in the United States often use oak wine barrels to form the body of the drum. Cow hide is stretched across the top and tacked down with nails to create the head of the drum. The larger the drum body, the deeper the sound becomes.



Odaiko (oh-dye-koh)/
Chudaiko (choo-dye-koh)/
Josuke (joh-zoo-keh):
The largest of

the taiko drums, which are made as described above. Odaiko is the largest, Chudaiko is mid-size, and Josuke is the lead or melody drum.



Okedo (oh-keh-doh): a cylindrical shaped drum. Its head is attached by lashed rope

instead of nails. The size of okedo drums vary from extra large to hand-held.



Shime (shee-meh): a smaller drum whose heads are tied tightly together to

create a high pitched sound. These drums require a two-person pulling system to lace and must be retied each time before they are played.



Uchiwa (oo-chee-way): This hand-held drum is shaped like a fan. It was originally

used by temple monks who would beat the *uchiwa* to keep time while they chanted.



Bachi (bah-chee): sticks of varying sizes, used to play the drum. Large sticks are used for large drums,

and small sticks are used for smaller drums. These sticks are often made with a dense wood like oak.

Other Instruments

San Jose Taiko uses a variety of other instruments in their performances, such as the...



Chappa (chahp-pah): small hand cymbals made of metal. The small size of

this instrument allows their player freedom of movement.



Shinobue (shee-noh-booeh): although it

is not a percussion instrument, this small bamboo flute is heard at most festivals because its melodies blend so well with taiko.



Atarigane (ah-tah-ree-gah-neh): a small hand-held gong made of brass and struck with a mallet made of antler bone. Hitting different

parts of the gong produces different tones.

Hyotan (hee-yoo-tan): gourd shaker with seeds usually placed inside the gourd. Most taiko drum groups use a style of hyotan modeled after the African chekere with the seeds/beads on the outside, which creates a louder sound.

*THE INSTRUMENTS information is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts' San Jose Taiko study guide materials.



"Drums from all traditions have a spirit that is alive and vibrant. This spirit comes alive through the joining of wood, skins, metal and other materials that come from the trees, plants, animals and the earth."

-Philosophy of drum-maker Miyoshi Daiko, seen here with one of his Odaiko drums.

COSTUMES AND FAMILY CRESTS



Costumes

The members of San Jose Taiko wear costumes that have their roots in traditional Japanese dress.

Happi (hahp-pee): A simple jacket that is patterned after those worn at Japanese festivals. They come in a variety of styles and colors. Usually a symbol called a *mon* is placed on the back of the happi. A *mon* is a family crest (see next column).

Hachimaki (hah-chee-mah-kee): a rectangular piece of cloth that is twisted to make a headband. This is used to keep the sweat out of the performer's eyes. The *hachimaki* is said to have derived from a strip of cloth used by warriors to secure their helmets to their heads. This developed into a simple strip of cloth, usually printed with a bright color, that was tied around the forehead before engaging in any kind of strenuous work or activity.

Obi (oh-bee): a long piece of fabric that wraps around the performer many times and is tied off at the end. The obi serves as a belt to keep the happi from coming undone.

Tabi (tah-bee): cotton socks with a separate space for the big toe. Japanese carpenters used to wear tabi while they worked on roofs of houses. When they finished with work, they would put on their slippers while still wearing their tabi and walk home. Tabi are worn in martial arts and traditional dances. The tabi worn by taiko players have rubber soles on the bottom so that players don't slip when they play.

Can you spot the different costume elements during the performance?

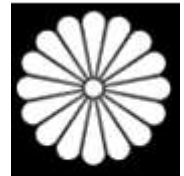
Family Crests: Mon

The tradition of the Japanese family crest, known as the *mon*, dates back to the 11th century. The ruling families of the Imperial Court designed family symbols to put on their formal clothing. The crests they designed often incorporated flowers and birds as a way to represent the elegance of court life.

When the samurai class took over the Japanese government in the 12th century, they began to use similar emblems on their banners, flags, and weapons. They chose designs such as arrows, dragons, and bats. There were many wars during this period, and the warriors used their family emblems to identify their camps and positions on the battlefield.

By the 17th century, family crests were adopted by the common people as well. The symbols they chose included familiar objects such as rabbits, mountains, and tools. Popular designs were often symmetrical and enclosed in a circle.

The *mon* design tells something about the Japanese economic use of space. Because Japan is a small island where many people have learned to live together without wasting space, it makes sense that Japanese design is very simple. Many *mon* are created to fit inside a small circular space, and every shape and line has a purpose.



jūrokugiku
16-petaled
chrysanthemum



agehachō
butterfly with
raised wings



chūrin ni torii
shrine gate
in circle



sumi tategumi izutsu
corner-constructed
well curb

Images courtesy of
britannica.com.

VOCABULARY



Japan: string of islands east of Asia extending 1,300 miles between the Sea of Japan and the western Pacific Ocean. More than 127 million people currently live in Japan.

Left: Map of Japan. Image courtesy of worldatlas.com.

Taiko: In Japanese, it literally means “great drum.” Outside of Japan, the word is often used to refer to various types of Japanese drums and to the ensemble taiko drumming (which is also referred to more specifically as “kumidaiko”).

Sansei: third generation of Japanese in America. For example, the American born grandchild of Japanese immigrants would be referred to as a Sansei.

Ki: the energy that flows through living things. Ki also refers to the unity of the mind and body.



Kata: also known as form. In taiko, the body is in a low stance and arm movements are fluid and strong.

Left: A taiko player demonstrates good kata. Notice his strong, low stance.

Percussion: the sound or vibration that is produced when one strikes objects together. Percussion instruments all make sounds in this way.

Rhythm: the recurrence or pattern of contrasting sounds.

Buddhism: a belief system held by many groups, especially in Asia. Buddhism is based on the teachings of the Buddha, with the basic principle that suffering is caused by desire, that suffering ceases when desire ceases, and that enlightenment can be obtained through correct conduct, wisdom, and meditation.

Samurai: directly meaning “to serve,” this term is used for Japanese military nobility who followed a strict code during their popularity in pre-industrial Japan. They were both greatly feared and greatly admired.



A samurai warrior.

Myth: a traditional or ancient story which was told to answer serious questions about how important things began or occurred. Myths often feature supernatural beings, ancestors, or heroes.

Underworld: a term used in myths to refer to the afterlife or the place where dead souls go.

Mon: a Japanese symbol that traditionally represents a family.

*VOCABULARY is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts’ San Jose Taiko study guide materials.

GRADES 4-6: ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Activity: Rhythm Exploration

Goal: To understand the concept of rhythm and to hear the rhythm that exists around us.

Curriculum Connection: Music

Explanation: Rhythm and sounds are a part of life in every culture. Taiko drummers use a variety of drums and movements to create new rhythms. Students will create their own rhythms with their bodies and other instruments they find in the classroom.

Activity:

1. Create a simple clapping rhythm for the class to echo. As they master each rhythm, make a new complex rhythm for students to repeat. You can expand from just clapping to stomping your feet, snapping your fingers, or gently slapping the knee or chest.
2. See if you can make a class song using these different rhythms. Divide the class into groups and have each group come up with their own rhythm. Have them perform them in varying orders or all together.
3. Next, have your students look around the classroom for ordinary objects that can be used to create new sounds. For example, scrunching or shaking a trashbag, opening and closing of a pencil box or backpack, tapping a pen on the desktop, etc.
4. Have students create a short rhythm that they would like to make with their chosen "instrument" and write out a notation that they can read corresponding to their rhythm.*
5. Arrange these notations in different orders to create a class musical piece.
6. See discussion at right for follow up questions on this activity.

***You may want to collaborate with your school's music specialist for this part of the activity.**

Discussion:

Before the Show/After Activity:

1. What is rhythm?
2. Where can you find rhythm? Do you have your own rhythm?
3. Can you see rhythms? What do they look like?
4. How can you recreate the sounds you hear in everyday life (rain falling, walking over a bridge, brushing your teeth) with percussion instruments? How do these sounds differ?

After the Show:

1. Could you follow the different rhythms throughout the show? Which piece was your favorite and why?
2. Do you remember any of the rhythms that were played during the show? Were these harder or easier than the ones you made up in class?
3. Do you remember the different instruments used? How did each instrument sound? How did their unique sounds contribute to the overall feeling of the piece?

**Activity is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts' San Jose Taiko study guide materials.

GRADES 4-6: ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Activity: Japanese Mon

Goal: To understand the Japanese mon as a symbol for family.

Curriculum Connections: Social Studies, Culture, Visual Arts

Explanation: Every culture has symbols that communicate meaning to its members. In Japan, family crests known as mon are symbols which have been used for centuries for identification purposes and to show family pride. Using Japanese design elements, students will create a mon representing their family.

Activity:

1. Show students a number of well-known symbols and logos and have them identify the meaning of the images (ex. Yellow triangle = Yield, Golden Arches = McDonald's). Ask them to provide other examples of well-known logos and symbols. What do they think of when they see these symbols?
2. Explain to students that families once used images, or crests, to represent themselves. In Japan, these family crests were called 'mon' and were often worn on clothing.
3. Ask students to create a list of characteristics of their family, considering their family's name, interests, business, or other characteristics. They will use this list as a starting point for designing a symbol to represent their family.
4. Encourage students to sketch several design ideas. Remind students that Japanese design uses space very deliberately and that every line and element of their symbol should have meaning.
5. Provide students with a paper circle (at least 8" in diameter) on which to execute their final design using marker, pen, colored pencils, or paint.
6. Encourage students to write a paragraph or two explaining the elements of their design to be displayed next to their completed mon.

Discussion:

Before the Show/After Activity:

1. What makes an image, such as a symbol or logo, instantly recognizable?
2. Why do you think families in Japan used family crests?
3. Was it difficult come up with a symbol to represent your family? What would strangers be able to learn about your family from your symbol? What things about your family would they not be able to discern just from your symbol?

After the Show:

1. What did you notice about the costumes worn by the performers? Were you able to identify the happi, hachimake, obi, and tabi? Did you see a mon on any of the costume pieces?
2. Why do you think wearing traditional Japanese costumes is important to the performers?
3. What did the costumes add to the performance?



Want to know more?

See page 9 for additional information and examples of Japanese mon.

GRADES 7-9: ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Activity: Hara Breathing

Goal: In order to better understand different cultures we can become familiar with their spiritual thoughts and practices. In this activity, students will gain an understanding of meditation—a common practice in Eastern cultures and for the San Jose Taiko drummers.

Curriculum Connections: Social Studies, Culture

Explanation: The use of breathing and meditation is present in most Eastern religions. Zen Masters, martial artists, and taiko drummers are just a few of the groups that work on becoming stronger at their trade through cultivating their *ki* (or vital life energy). Your *ki* is stored in the *hara* (a central harmonizing place in the body located two index fingers below your navel.) In this activity students will practice *Hara Breathing*, which is a form of meditation.

Activity:

1. Practice *Hara Breathing* or meditation. Start by having students find a comfortable position on the floor, sitting cross-legged or on their knees.
2. Make sure hands are resting on knees or in a relaxed position.
3. Stretch your head and shoulders to the sky while taking a deep breath in. As you exhale, feel your body relax and sink into the floor while maintaining good posture.
4. Close your eyes, keeping them closed throughout the entire meditation. Try to release any thoughts that arise during the meditation by concentrating on the following breathing pattern. Repeat pattern at least ten times.
5. INHALE- through the nose, filling the *hara* (or your stomach with air) as you count to five.
6. HOLD- for a second count of five, accumulating *ki* in the *hara*.
7. EXHALE- through the mouth for a slow count of ten.

Discussion:

Before the Show/After Activity:

1. How do you feel? Do you feel different from how you felt before the meditation exercise?
2. Did you like the activity? Was it hard to stay focused on your breath?
3. What have you done that is similar to this exercise?
4. How do you think you may be able to use this in your everyday life? (e.g. when you are angry, stressed, nervous, etc.)

After the Show:

1. How did what you learned about Eastern Philosophy connect with the performance? Did you learn anything else about meditation or breathing practices during the show?
2. Taiko is a common instrument for the people of Japan and is used in many everyday settings. Can you think of any instruments or forms of music that have a similar presence in mainstream U.S. culture? What other cultures do you know of that have a distinguishing style of music or instruments? What do these instruments or music tell us about the cultures they originate from?

*Activity is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts' San Jose Taiko study guide materials.

GRADES 7-9: ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Activity: Writing Myths

Goal: To understand how myths were used to explain how important things began or occurred.

Curriculum Connections: Social Studies, Culture, Language Arts

Explanation: Myths are a part of every culture and were used to explain how important things began or occurred. The art form of taiko is so central to Japanese culture that a myth was developed to explain taiko's creation. Students will study the myth 'Amaterasu and the Cave' and then write explanatory myths of their own.

Activity:

1. Ask students to brainstorm a list of myths and legends that they are familiar with, thinking about the elements that the stories have in common.
2. Have students read the 'Legend of Amaterasu' on page 5 of this guide. Use questions 1-4 of the 'Before the Show' discussion section, at right, to guide students' exploration of this myth and its place in Japanese culture.
3. Invite students to generate a list of questions that people may have had in ancient times (Why are the stars scattered across the sky? Why do dogs have tails? How was the wheel invented?) Students will use one of these questions as the starting point to write their own myth.
4. Students should choose a setting for their myth and write about two or more characters that are facing some sort of problem or conflict. The resolution of the conflict should answer the question the student chose to write about. Remind them that the resolution can be planned by one of the characters or the result of an accident.
5. Once they have revised, proofread, and finalized their myths, invite students to share their stories with one another. Encourage them to discuss how the style of the 'Amaterasu and the Cave' or other myths influenced their composition.

Discussion:

Before the Show/During the Activity:

1. What is a myth? Why do you think myths are created? Are there certain cultures whose myths you are more familiar with than others?
2. Think about the characters, conflict, and resolution of 'Amaterasu and the Cave.' Is the story of the Origins of taiko similar to any other myths or stories you know? Which ones? How are they alike?
3. Many myths are about the creation of natural phenomena, such as the creation of the sun or the rain. What does it tell you about the place of taiko in Japanese culture that there is a myth about taiko's origins?
4. What does the 'Amaterasu and the Cave' suggest about the ways taiko was used in Japanese culture? Compare your ideas with what you know from the 'History of Taiko' found on page 6 of this guide.

After the Show:

1. How did what you learned about the myth of taiko's origins connect with the performance?
2. When Amaterasu first heard the sounds of taiko, she was filled with strength and courage. How did you feel when you listened to the taiko performance? Did certain pieces make you feel different than others did? What does this tell you about the power of music?
3. San Jose Taiko used instruments besides the taiko drums in their performance, such as the bamboo flute known as the shinobue. Thinking about the sounds of one of the other instruments used in the performance, can you come up with a myth explaining its creation?

For additional ideas and resources for guiding this activity, check out the ArtsEdge 'Writing Myths' lesson plan at <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2231>

GRADES 10-12: ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Activity: Drums and Culture

Goal: Understanding a culture through its music.

Curriculum Connections: Music, Social Studies, Culture

Explanation: Explore another culture through its music using research and presentation.

Activity:

1. Ask students to research (in groups or alone) the history, construction, and purpose of the drum or other percussion instruments around the world. For example: the *tabor* of the middle east, the steel drums or pans of the Caribbean, gourd rattles, iron bells, pressure drums, *bata* drums or the *atumpan*.

2. Use the following questions as a guide:

- In what cultures does the drum exist?
- How does the drum differ between cultures?
- Is it used for the same or different purposes?
- With what materials is it made?
- How does the instrument work?
- How does the size of the instrument make a difference in its sound?
- Is the drum tied to any cultural history or religions?
- What does your research tell you about the culture from which your instrument originated?
- Is it featured in any stories or myths?

Have students include a drawing or photo of the drum with their research findings.

3. Ask students to present their research to the class. If possible, allow students to share audio clips of the instrument being played, either solo or as part of an ensemble. Conduct a discussion about the significance of music in culture. Use the discussion questions at right as a guide.

Discussion:

Before the Show:

1. How do different forms of music enhance understanding of a culture or historical tradition?
2. What can we learn about a culture through its music? How does it change our perception of that culture?
3. How does the ancient use of the drums compare to the modern usage in the different cultures studied? Has the importance or symbolism of the drum increased or decreased for the culture you are studying over time? How might you explain these changes?

After the Show:

1. Compare and contrast the role of taiko in ancient Japan and its function in modern day Japan or the United States. What has changed?
2. How might you use traditions or practices to help you further understand your culture or heritage (like the Sansei have used taiko)?
3. What happens to music (or other cultural activities you brainstormed in the last question) when it is practiced or used outside of its country of origin? How does it adapt and become its own tradition or instrument? What are the challenges in keeping the practice or tradition in its original state in its new country? Are changes to traditions universally positive or negative?

*Activity is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts' San Jose Taiko study guide materials.

GRADES 10-12: ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Activity: Debate a Cultural Theory

Goal: To understand the complex factors which influence a group's relationship with its cultural heritage.

Curriculum Connections: Social Studies, Culture

Explanation: Students will debate the validity of a theory regarding different generations' relationships with their cultural heritage. Students will research the experiences of Japanese Americans or their own ancestry to guide their analysis.

Activity:

1. Ask students to consider the validity of "Hansen's Law" (see description on accompanying handout on page 17 of this guide) regarding different immigrant generations' relationships with their cultural heritage.
2. Have students write down their initial reaction to "Hansen's Law."
3. Tell students that they will debate the validity of "Hansen's Law" using the experiences of Japanese Americans or their ancestry to confirm or deny the theory. Ask them to research (in groups or alone) Japanese American history or their own ancestry using the 'Questions to Guide Your Research' listed on the accompanying handout.
4. Invite students to discuss their findings in relation to "Hansen's Law." Divide them into groups based on their position and host a formal debate, or, facilitate an informal discussion. Use the 'Before the Show' discussion questions at right as a guide.
5. Ask students to write a reflection on the exercise, citing supporting evidence that supports their final analysis of "Hansen's Law".

Resources?

See page 20 of this guide for suggested online resources for students to use in their research.

Discussion:

Before the Show/During the Activity:

1. How do the experiences of Japanese Americans or your ancestors support "Hansen's Law"?
2. How do the experiences of Japanese Americans or your ancestors weaken "Hansen's Law"?
3. Are there other historical factors that could influence a generation's relationship with their cultural heritage? Does "Hansen's Law" take those factors into account?
4. Are there other factors that Hansen may have missed when forming his theory? (Consider simple generational differences, how isolated or open the immigrant group was in America, etc.)
5. Did your research and the following discussion lead you to change your mind about the validity of "Hansen's Law"?

After the Show:

1. What aspects of San Jose Taiko's performance demonstrated their respect for their cultural heritage?
2. What aspects of San Jose Taiko's performance departed from traditional Japanese taiko and showcased the group's Japanese American identity?
3. Why is San Jose Taiko's performance important for people to see?
4. San Jose Taiko aspires to encourage others to take pride in their cultural backgrounds. Did any aspects of their performance inspire you to find out more about your cultural background? If so, how?

Debate a Cultural Theory: Activity Handout for Students



Step 1: Look at “Hansen’s Law”

“What the son wishes to forget,
the grandson wishes to remember.”

The above-quote comes from Pulitzer-prize winning historian Marcus Lee Hansen’s 1938 essay “The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant.” In the essay, Hansen presented a theory about different immigrant generations’ relationships with their cultural heritage. He theorized that:

1. First generation immigrants wish to preserve their ethnic and cultural identities rather than assimilate;
2. Their children, who are born in the United States, reject their cultural heritage in order to become part of the American mainstream;
- and
3. Their children, third generation immigrants, have a strong desire to reconnect with their cultural heritage.

Hansen suggested that this pattern held true for all immigrant groups, regardless of their country of origin. This theory became known as “Hansen’s Law” and has been the subject of scholarly debate since it was first presented. Many scholars found it to be a useful paradigm to explain immigrant experiences and attitudes; others believed Hansen’s theory was based on conjecture rather than evidence and, therefore, could not be trusted.

Step 2: Initial Reaction

What is your initial reaction to “Hansen’s Law”? In a brief sentence or two, write down to what extent you agree or disagree with Hansen’s theory.

Step 3: Research

Research the experiences of Japanese American immigrants or members of your own ancestry. As you conduct your research, think about how your findings support or deny “Hansen’s Law.”

Questions to Guide Your Research:

1. San Jose Taiko was founded by third-generation Japanese Americans, known as Sansei. What are the names of the other Japanese American generations?
2. When did each generation group typically arrive in the United States?
3. Were there any significant historical events that shaped certain generations’ experiences in America?
4. What is/was the typical attitude held by each generation regarding their cultural heritage?
5. How does the formation of San Jose Taiko and other American taiko groups fit with the generational pattern?

Step 4: Debate

Team up to debate the validity of “Hansen’s Law.” Be prepared to use evidence from your research to support your position. Note: You do not need to argue for your initial reaction to “Hansen’s Law” if you changed your mind during the course of your research.

Step 5: Final Thoughts

Write a brief reflection on your experience examining “Hansen’s Law.” What is your final take and why? Use evidence from your research to support your analysis.

GOING TO THE THEATER . . .



YOUR ROLE AS AN AUDIENCE MEMBER

Attending a live performance is a unique and exciting opportunity. Unlike the passive experience of watching a movie, audience members play an important role in every live performance. As they act, sing, dance, or play instruments, the performers on stage are very aware of the audience's mood and level of engagement. Each performance calls for a different response from audience members. Lively bands, musicians, and dancers may desire the audience to focus silently on the stage and applaud only during natural breaks in the performance. Audience members can often take cues from performers on how to respond to the performance appropriately. For example, performers will often pause or bow for applause at a specific time.

As you experience the performance, consider the following questions:

- What kind of live performance is this (a play, a dance, a concert, etc.)?
- What is the mood of the performance? Is the subject matter serious or lighthearted?
- What is the mood of the performers? Are they happy and smiling or somber and reserved?
- Are the performers encouraging the audience to clap to the music or move to the beat?
- Are there natural breaks in the performance where applause seems appropriate?

THEATER ETIQUETTE

Here is a checklist of general guidelines to follow when you visit the Civic Center:

- Leave all food, drinks, and chewing gum at school or on the bus.
- Cameras, recording devices, and personal listening devices are not permitted in the theater.
- Turn off cell phones, pagers, and all other electronic devices before the performance begins.
- When the house lights dim, the performance is about to begin. Please stop talking at this time.
- **Talk before and after the performance only.** Remember, the theater is designed to amplify sound, so the other audience members and the performers on stage can hear your voice!
- Appropriate responses such as laughing and applauding are appreciated. Pay attention to the artists on stage—they will let you know what is appropriate.
- Open your eyes, ears, mind, and heart to the entire experience. Enjoy yourself!

*GOING TO THE THEATER information is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts study guide materials.

CIVIC CENTER FIELD TRIP INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS



Thank you for choosing the Applause Series at the Civic Center of Greater Des Moines. Below are tips for organizing a safe and successful field trip to the Civic Center.

ORGANIZING YOUR FIELD TRIP

- Please include all students, teachers, and chaperones in your ticket request.
- After you submit your ticket request, you will receive a confirmation e-mail within five business days. Your **invoice will be attached to the confirmation e-mail.**
- Payment policies and options are located at the top of the invoice. **Payment (or a purchase order) for your reservation is due four weeks** prior to the date of the performance.
- The Civic Center reserves the right to cancel unpaid reservations after the payment due date.
- Tickets are not printed for Applause Series shows. Your invoice will serve as the reservation confirmation for your group order.
- Schedule buses to arrive in downtown Des Moines at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the performance. This will allow time to park, walk to the Civic Center, and be seated in the theater.
- Performances are approximately 60 minutes unless otherwise noted on the website and printed materials.
- All school groups with reservations to the show will receive an e-mail notification when the study guide is posted. Please note that study guides are only printed and mailed upon request.

DIRECTIONS AND PARKING

- Directions: From I-235, take Exit 8A (Downtown Exits) and the ramp toward 3rd Street and 2nd Avenue. Turn onto 3rd Street and head south.
- Police officers are stationed at the corner of 3rd and Locust Streets and will direct buses to parking areas with hooded meters near the Civic Center. Groups traveling in personal vehicles are responsible for locating their own parking in ramps or metered (non-hooded) spots downtown.
- Buses will remain parked for the duration of the show. At the conclusion, bus drivers must be available to move their bus if necessary, even if their students are staying at the Civic Center to eat lunch or take a tour.
- Buses are not generally permitted to drop off or pick up students near the Civic Center. If a bus must return to school during the performance, prior arrangements must be made with the Civic Center Education staff.

ARRIVAL TO THE CIVIC CENTER

- When arriving at the Civic Center, please have an **adult lead your group** for identification and check-in purposes. You may enter the building through the East or West lobbies; a Civic Center staff member may be stationed outside the building to direct you.
- Civic Center staff will usher groups into the building as quickly as possible. Once inside, you will be directed to the check-in area.
- Seating in the theater is general admission. Ushers will escort groups to their seats; various seating factors including group size, grade levels, arrival time, and special needs seating requests may determine a group's specific location in the hall.
- We request that an **adult lead the group into the theater and other adults position themselves throughout the group**; we request this arrangement for supervision purposes, especially in the event that a group must be seated in multiple rows.
- Please allow ushers to seat your entire group before rearranging seat locations and taking groups to the restroom.

IN THE THEATER

- In case of a medical emergency, please notify the nearest usher. A paramedic is on duty for all Main Hall performances.
- We ask that adults handle any disruptive behavior in their groups. If the behavior persists, an usher may request your group to exit the theater.
- Following the performance groups may exit the theater and proceed to their bus(es).
- If an item is lost at the Civic Center, please see an usher or contact us after the performance at 515.246.2355.

QUESTIONS?

Please contact the Education department at 515.246.2355 or education@civiccenter.org. Thank you!

RESOURCES AND SOURCES



Classroom Resources:

Websites:

San Jose Taiko: <http://www.taiko.org/>

Taiko Drums: <http://www.miyoshidaiko.com>

San Jose Taiko Kidsweb: <http://www.sjtaiko.org/kidsweb>
Information, sound clips, and interactive activities for kids. Appropriate for children 12 and under.

Suggested Resources for 'Debate a Cultural Theory' Activity on pages 16-17:

Japanese American Citizens League: <http://www.jacl.org/edu/education.htm>
Includes information on Japanese American History and Asian Pacific American History, with specific information on immigration from Japan.

Review of *Nisei/Sansei: Shifting Japanese American Identities and Politics* by Jere Takahashi:
<http://kimallen.sheepdogdesign.net/Reviews/niseisansei.html>
A succinct summary of Takahashi's book, outlining how each generation of Japanese American experience was shaped by external events and their parent's generation.

Asian Nation: <http://www.asian-nation.org/japanese.shtml> and <http://www.asian-nation.org/assimilation.shtml>
Discussion of Japanese Americans and general factors affecting assimilation.

Study Guide Sources:

Ordway Center for the Performing Arts' Study Guides: <http://www.ordway.org/education/studyguides>

San Jose Taiko- School Outreach Curriculum Guide: <http://www.taiko.org>

University of Tennessee Chattanooga: http://www.utc.edu/Departments/edast/ncta/chatt/pdf/Glasscock-LP1_handouts.pdf *Additional information on Japanese Mon.*

Lyrical Works: <http://www.lyricalworks.com/stories/amaterasu.html>
Taiko legend of Amaterasu.

ArtsEdge: <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2231>