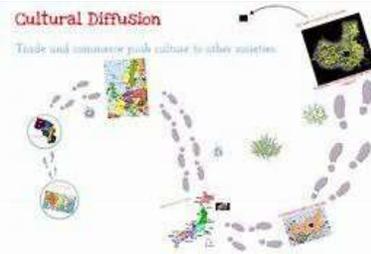


EAUM: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT AND THE ART OF JAPAN

By: Michael Freydin



Unit: Community and Cultural Diffusion

Topic: Frank Lloyd Wright and the Art of Japan

Skill: Compare and Contrast; Cause and Effect

Time Allotted: 1-2 class periods

Grade Level: 6-9

Essential Question: To what extent do art and architecture share elements across cultures? To what extent do cultural diffusion and appropriation play a part in making art and architecture available beyond their original borders? In what ways do the art of Frank Lloyd Wright and the art of Japan share elements and attributes?

Note to Teacher / Practical Directions:

In this unit, young historians will seek out common themes found in art and community, and how those themes drive them to investigate further. It is hoped that their investigation into art, architecture, and cultural diffusion will synthesize a deeper understanding of the communities around them. Student historians may use their newly gained insight to create artistic or written work to synthesize their understanding of the themes they have encountered in the visual, textual, and interpersonal resources.

I think it's important for us as educators and students to pay attention to the resources and comparisons that come from non-traditional sources, and realize that, in the words of Maya Angelou, "*we are more alike, my friend, than we are unlike.*" In order to do so, young historians will cultivate a sense of empathy for their subjects and interviewees.

Lesson will begin with a Warm Up activity of student journalists practicing Visual Thinking Strategies as applied to images supplied by the teacher. Teacher may wish to ask not only **what the students see**, but **what it is they do not see**, and how the scene before them in the image **is different** than what they would have expected to find. Those differences and similarities ought to lead students to common themes, which may then be explored in the readings that follow.

Lesson Goals: Materials will be used to reinforce the goals of bringing to light cultural and artistic connections between the art of Japan and the art of Frank Lloyd Wright, as well as giving voice to those experiences which may not be ordinarily shared across cultures, which focus on macro rather than micro experiences. Moreover, the goal of cultivating empathy and understanding by students of those who surround them in their communities, and making personal world-to-self connections through the lens of mutual or similar feelings others may have from shared experiences.

Formative Assessment: daily exit slips may include, but are not limited to a self-assessment as it relates to the daily lesson -

Goal 1: What can I learn from this story? What questions can I ask about these themes?

Goal 2: Now that I know what questions I can ask, whom can I ask these questions? How would I go about finding a person or source to help me learn about this theme?

Summative Assessment: while no summative assessment is truly necessary for the lesson, collaborative work may be exhibited through a collaborative Padlet or poster, which will reveal student feelings about the themes discussed in the unit.

Alternatively, Teacher may make use of the Writing Scenario to have students produce a journalistic work where students conduct hypothetical or actual interviews.

Higher Order Thinking Question: What policy could nations enact to address issues brought up in this unit?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy Standards – History/Social Studies:

RH.6-8.1 – Cite evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources

RH.6-8.2 – Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

RH.6-8.6 – Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose

RH.6-8.7 – Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

RH.6-8.8 – Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

Depth of Knowledge Levels: 2 Skill/Concept; 3 Strategic Thinking; 4 Extended Thinking.

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and International Reading Association (IRA) standards:

7. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Social Studies Practices: A - Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence:

1. Define and frame questions about events and the world in which we live, form hypotheses as potential answers to these questions, use evidence to answer these questions, and consider and analyze counter-hypotheses.
2. Identify, describe, and evaluate evidence about events from diverse sources (including written documents, works of art, photographs, charts and graphs, artifacts, oral traditions, and other primary and secondary sources).

NYS Standards:

NYS SS1: History of the United States and New York: use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and NY.

NYS SS2: World History: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in world history and examine the broad sweep of history from a variety of perspectives.

NYS SS3: Geography: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world in which we live—local, national, and global—including the distribution of people, places, and environments over the Earth's surface.

NCTE / IRA Standards for the English Language Arts Standards:

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.
7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Engage NY Scope and Sequence:

10.8 TENSIONS BETWEEN TRADITIONAL CULTURES AND MODERNIZATION: Tensions exist between traditional cultures and agents of modernization. Reactions for and against modernization depend on perspective and context.

10.9 GLOBALIZATION AND A CHANGING GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT (1990–PRESENT):

Technological changes have resulted in a more interconnected world, affecting economic and political relations and in some cases leading to conflict and in others to efforts to cooperate. Globalization and population pressures have led to strains on the environment.

National Core Arts Standards: The Arts as Community Engagement: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

NYS Learning Standards for the Arts - Connecting 10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. 11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Academic Vocabulary in Context:

Usonian: Conceived by Frank Lloyd Wright around 1900, Usonia was a design philosophy that evolved over many years, coming to fruition in the 1930s. As his commissions for large, grand houses dropped off with the onset of the Great Depression, Wright looked for a way to address the need for affordable middle-class housing while employing a simple design. The result was an architecture he termed “Usonian,” which focused on the residents of a culturally reformed United States of North America.

Materials and Resources: students can use the following websites to help create a visual understanding of the art of Japan, and of the art of Frank Lloyd Wright.

<https://www.guggenheim.org/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Usonia>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wabi-sabi>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Engawa>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ikebana>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nihonjinron>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yodok%C5%8D_Guest_House

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jiyu_Gakuen_Girls%27_School

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Nakashima

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shibui>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ma_\(negative_space\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ma_(negative_space))

Language Objective: Students will repeat precise vocabulary related to the art and architecture of Japan and that of Frank Lloyd Wright.

Students will verbally describe the main ideas behind the effects of cultural diffusion on individuals and communities, and the relevant points of view.

Students will be encouraged to use causal words (because of, due to, leading to) and descriptive language.

Content Goal: Students will learn about the importance of hearing multiple voices of the art and architecture of Japan and that of Frank Lloyd Wright. Students will be encouraged to delve into a different culture, and into their own, by eliciting information from textual sources, as well as from an informant about their home culture and their experiences. Students will be guided to look at this global phenomenon from the viewpoint of someone from another culture and place, and to see some similarities and differences in their experiences to students’ own experiences.

Skills Goal: Apply historical thinking (complexity, causality, change over time, contingency, context).

Mini Lesson: How can young historians consider artistic movements and traditions, and evaluate their effects on cultural diffusion and appropriation?

Academic Rigor:

Goal 1: Connecting Pictures to Themes

Goal 2: Connecting Themes to Community

Notes to Teacher/Background: Art and architecture can play multiple roles at different times: it can inform, educate, inspire, and motivate people. It can expose corruption, spark conversations, understanding, and reflection about our very different and shared experiences as humans. It can allow people to see something or someone from a different perspective, or a new light.

By this point, students will be familiar with the concept of cultural diffusion and of influence.

Opening Activity/Warm Up: utilize Visual Thinking Strategies as applied to Pulitzer Center photographic artifacts.

1. Take a few moments to examine the photograph below. What details do you notice? What details would you **not** have expected to see?

2. What is the story we can visualize behind this image? What's going on in this picture?

If the student needs to elaborate to make their statement clearer ask:

a. Why do you find this detail unusual? What did you expect to see?

3. What makes you say that?

If the conversation comes to a halt you may ask:

a. What detail or details are you referring to? What do you think made you notice this?

4. What else can we find?

Answers will vary.

Anticipated Answers:

- I see a metropolitan/urban area.
- I see an unusual building. It is not shaped like the buildings around it.
- I see cars and people in front of the building.
- This building can be a school or a museum or a community center of some kind.
- There are very few people
- I would expect there to be a lot more people in front of this building during the day.
- This is probably during the pandemic, there are few people out.



Historical Background/ Connections:

- In past lessons, we have learned of immigrant groups coming to the United States.
- We have learned that while they came at different times, and from different places, there was similarity in the reasons why many immigrant groups emigrated here.
- We also learned that as certain group reestablished their communities in the United States, they brought with them their ideas, tastes, religions, music, arts, cuisine, and architecture.
- We learned about the positive and negative aspects of cultural diffusion, and have seen its long-term effects.
- Today, we will begin to learn how certain tastes and innovations in art and architecture can be compared, to be found similar and/or contrasting.
- To do so, we will look at the art and architecture of Japan, and the architectural style of American architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Model:

- What I see when I look at this image is its unusual style. I recognize that this is not the architecture of a building I regularly see.
- My first thoughts go to the function of this building. What is it being used for? I can see the building next to it as much taller and larger, which makes me think this building is not that large. So, what could it be used for? It is too small for a sports arena or stadium – I can see it is only a block long, and I can count the number of cars. Is it a school? Is it a museum? Is it a community center? A library?

- I also see that the building is made in a spiral shape. Since this is not a regular shape for a building in my neighborhood, I am interested in finding out more about this spiral shape. Is it functional, or is it purely decorative? What was the inspiration behind this spiral shape – was it organic or geometrical?
 - My later thoughts go to the interior of this building. I wonder if the spiral outside is just seen on the outside, or if the inside of the building also takes on this form.
 - I would want to find out not only the answer to these questions, but to better understand how and why the decision to construct the building in this way was made.
- It just so happens that this is The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, often referred to as The Guggenheim, is an art museum located at 1071 Fifth Ave., in the Upper East Side neighborhood of Manhattan, New York City.
 - The Guggenheim collects, preserves, and interprets modern and contemporary art, and explores ideas across cultures. An internationally renowned art museum and one of the most significant architectural icons of the 20th century, the Guggenheim Museum in New York is at once a vital cultural center, an educational institution, and the heart of an international network of museums.
 - You might be waiting to learn about the unusual architectural design. In 1943, American architect Frank Lloyd Wright was commissioned to design a building to house the Museum of Non-Objective Painting. Wright chose to create an inverted ziggurat - a type of massive structure built in ancient Mesopotamia, with terraced stories or levels. The building itself was completed 16 years later, in 1959, and was immediately recognized as an architectural wonder of the world, a unique form of exhibiting contemporary art.

Quick Check: In a letter in 1943, the director of the museum instructed Wright, “*I want a temple of spirit, a monument!*” Looking at the image of the museum, do you feel Wright was successful in his mission?

Anticipated answer: Student responsiveness will be gauged as they respond to questions posed throughout introduction to see what connections they are making to their prior knowledge.

Work Period: Individually and in groups, students will:

Task 1: Listen and Learn: teacher intro to topic;

Task 2: Engage: read secondary sources from which they will learn about the architecture of Japan, and the art of Frank Lloyd Wright.

Task 3: Evaluate: relevant information from provided sources. See: Reading #1 and #2, Image Set #1 and #2.

Task 4: Reflect: on how Japanese architecture and the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright share certain elements, drawing conclusions on similarities and differences.

Task 5: Conclude: to what degree was Frank Lloyd Wright inspired by Japanese architecture? Given what you learn in the readings, in what ways can this exchange be considered cultural diffusion?

Differentiation, Scaffolding, and Workshop Model Seating: Group seating grouping and placement based upon Prosper pretest and post-test skills assessments, behavioral needs, linguistic needs, IEP goals, baseline assessment, and conferencing. An engaging and interactive introduction will be given. Introduction may include visual components to engage students who need visual stimuli. Visual components may include handouts or organizer.

ELL/IEP/FELL/SIFE students may receive a Vocabulary in Context or imbedded definitions. Students may receive differentiated reading. ICT/SETTS teacher may instruct selected group. Varying academic levels: individual writing time to allow students to progress at their own ability level. Auditory learners: encourage small-group discussion to create notes for information.

Extension Activity for Early Finishers may include Extended Reading.

READING #1

Source: Uncovering Cranbrook Lecture Series - Frank Lloyd Wright And Japan: Influences, Imports, And Impact (<https://center.cranbrook.edu/events/lectures/frank-lloyd-wright-and-japan-influences-imports-and-impact>, accessed 9/1/2021).

While Frank Lloyd Wright spent his career advocating for the development of a distinctly American architecture, his buildings are deeply indebted to Japanese art, architecture, landscape, and traditions. Join the Center for Collections and Research as we investigate Wright's lifelong fascination with Japan, and how his passion impacted his work, his home, and even the lives of his clients.

Frank Lloyd Wright was introduced to Japanese art and architecture in Chicago as a young architect, first through prints and then the Japanese Pavilion at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. He travelled to Japan in 1905 and lived in Tokyo between 1916 and 1922 to oversee the design and construction of the Imperial Hotel. Wright built a handful of additional structures in the country while amassing a large collection of Japanese art: prints, screens, scrolls, sculptures, textiles, and ceramics. These objects would be integrated into the architect's own Wisconsin home, Taliesin.

Wright's love of Japan often extended into his clients' lives, and Melvyn and Sara Smith became interested in Japanese culture after moving into their own Usonian* Wright house in 1950. The Smiths hosted Japanese visitors and students at the home, immersed themselves in the art of *chanoyu* (the traditional Japanese tea ceremony), and received many small tokens of appreciation in the form of Japanese ceramics, dolls, and books that remain on display in the home. In 1968, Wright's apprentice and protégé William Wesley Peters designed a small tea house to be constructed alongside the pond behind the house.

* Usonian: Conceived by Frank Lloyd Wright around 1900, Usonia was a design philosophy that evolved over many years, coming to fruition in the 1930s. As his commissions for large, grand houses dropped off with the onset of the Great Depression, Wright looked for a way to address the need for affordable middle-class housing while employing a simple design. The result was an architecture he termed "Usonian," which focused on the residents of a culturally reformed United States of North America.

READING #2

Source: Japanese Architecture - Japan's most celebrated buildings & architects, (<https://www.architectureanddesign.com.au/features/list/japanese-architecture-and-buildings>, accessed 9/1/2021).

Source: Japanese Architecture, (<https://www.hisour.com/japanese-architecture-31450/> accessed 9/1/2021).

Prior to the 1st century B.C.E., Japanese homes looked much like any other home across the world, consisting mainly of wood with thatched roofs and earthen floors. Built before the 6th century, some of Japan's first shrines looked similar to ancient storehouses or homes. It wasn't until the 7th century that Japanese architecture developed its own distinct style, having been heavily influenced by other Asian nations.

It was around this period that wood emerged as a preferred building material for Japanese architecture. This is due to a lack of stone available at the time due to volcanic activity, as well as wood's proven resistance to earthquakes.

“Traditional Japanese architecture” typically refers to buildings built during the Edo period, which was during the 17th to mid-19th centuries. Japanese Medieval architecture was somewhat comparable to Medieval European architecture at the time due to the prevalence of castles, but it was much simpler than its European counterpart. Following this period, Japanese architecture started to adopt more Western influences.

Japan underwent a period of intense Westernization in order to compete with other developed countries. Initially architects and styles from abroad were imported to Japan but gradually the country taught its own architects and began to express its own style. Architects returning from study with western architects introduced the International Style of modernism into Japan.

Much in the traditional architecture of Japan is not native, but was imported from China and other Asian cultures over the centuries. Japanese traditional architecture and its history are as a consequence dominated by Chinese and Asian techniques and styles (present even in Ise Shrine, held to be the quintessence of Japanese architecture) on one side, and by Japanese original variations on those themes on the other.

IMAGE SET #1: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT





IMAGE SET #2: ARCHITECTURE OF JAPAN



Yakushi-Ji Temple, Nishinokyo - built by Emperor Tenmu in 680 CE.





Yasaka-no-to Pagoda, in Kyoto, Japan – a 15th century addition to a 6th century temple.



Himeji Castle, Himeji – built by Akamatsu Norimura in 1333, rebuilt by Akamatsu Sadanori in 1349