

Japanese Printmaking, Nature, and the Development of Frank Lloyd Wright's Architecture

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ABOUT THIS LESSON

Using the materials provided, texts, and research materials, students will examine the role of Japanese printmaking in the development of Frank Lloyd Wright's unique architectural vision. Students will learn about the history and creation of Japanese prints. Then they will examine the work of Frank Lloyd Wright.

GRADE LEVEL

Middle School World History, Cultures and Geography Course (6th-8th)

CLASSROOM TIME

Approximately 1 week depending on time given in class. The teacher can choose to remove elements of the activity such as additional videos or limit the time students research on independently.

RESOURCES

Students will each need a copy of the Google Slides [Influencing a Master: Frank Lloyd Wright and Japanese Printmaking](#). Teachers will need to make a copy of the slideshow and share it with their students.

All other sources are cited within the Google Slideshow. Additional Resources used to create this unit:

- Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation: <https://franklloydwright.org/>
- Hiroshige: One Hundred Famous Views of Edo- Hardcover Book
- PBS- Frank Lloyd Wright a Film by Ken Burns & Lynn Novick
- Frank Lloyd Wright Natural Design Organic Architecture by Alan Hess

BACKGROUND

Frank Lloyd Wright is the most well-known American architect in history. His work broke the mold of the traditional American home. It introduced many different innovations such as simple lines, large open spaces on the ground floor and spaces with views that extended into the natural environment which surrounded the structure. His Prairie Style homes helped to shape early 20th century architecture. Wright was a brilliant artist, architect, engineer and designer and also an avid collector of Japanese prints called ukiyo-e. This unit will examine how did Wright's love of Japanese design help to influence his own work.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- explore the art of ukiyo-e (Japanese printmaking) in Japanese history by studying the work and 2 major artists Hokusai and Hiroshige
- research about the life of Frank Lloyd Wright and his major architectural achievements
- investigate the influences of Japanese Printmaking on Frank Lloyd Wright's work

STANDARDS

***Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Social Studies* (Grade 6-8 benchmarks)**

- *SS.BH2.b.m* Model how individuals learn the elements of their culture through interactions with others, and how individuals learn of other cultures through communication, travel, and study
- *SS.BH1.a.m* Identify patterns such as culture, prior knowledge, family, peers, school, communities, and personal interests that influence a person's cognition, perception, and behavior.
- *SS.Hist1:* Wisconsin students will use historical evidence for determining cause and effect.
- *SS.Hist4:* Wisconsin students will evaluate a variety of primary and secondary sources to interpret the historical context, intended audience, purpose, or author's point of view (historical methodology)

LESSON

Each student will receive a copy of the Google Slideshow: Influencing a Master: Frank Lloyd Wright and Japanese Printmaking. Students will complete their research on their slideshow which can be shared with the teacher. If the teacher does not have computer access for every student, specific slides (such as the KWL Chart) can be printed on paper and students can explore the websites in small groups or as a whole class.

Hook-

What inspires you? Draw or write something that inspires you in your life. This could be related to any element of your life: art, music, sports, school, etc...

Mini Lesson on Japanese printmaking-

Students will use the Google Slideshow to explore several websites and videos which explain the origin and process behind Japanese printmaking. They will begin by filling in the K and W in a KWL chart. As they learn more about the artform they will fill in the L portion of the chart. The following websites will be used in the exploration activity.

- Explore Ukiyo-e <https://web-japan.org/kidsweb/virtual/ukiyoe/index.html>
- Examine a famous Japanese artist and printmaker- Hokusai- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cebBWjgGAAQ>
- For a more detailed background on Japanese printmaking: <https://youtu.be/PtO5yPCYu-4>
- Examine the One Hundred Famous Views of Edo- <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/features/edo>

Frank Lloyd Wright History and Influences-

Once students are familiar with the history and process of Japanese printmaking, they will research the great American architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

- Mini biography on Frank Lloyd Wright- https://kids.kiddle.co/Frank_Lloyd_Wright
- PBS Clip Organic Architecture- <https://www.pbs.org/video/organic-architecture-qmekmu/>
- Lloyd Wright's Work <https://franklloydwright.org/a-stunning-sequel-spoke-art-frank-lloyd-wright-foundation/jc-richards-walkerhouse/>

See, Think, Wonder-

Students will examine 4 works of art from Utagawa Hiroshige's One Hundred Famous Views of Edo and 4 architectural designs by Frank Lloyd Wright. As they compare the works, they will complete a See, Think, Wonder chart for each set of images. Students should be encouraged to look for similarities between the images.

Whole Group Brainstorming-

Based on your knowledge of Frank Lloyd Wright and the images you have studied in this unit what were some of the major themes in his architecture? Frank Lloyd Wright was a great collector of Japanese prints. He specifically collected many of the works in the series One Hundred Famous Views of Edo by Utagawa Hiroshige. How do you think these prints influenced Wright's work? Write the ideas your class generated on the slideshow.

Major Influences- (Possible Answers) (1) Connectedness with nature (2) Simplicity (3) Geometric form (4) Japanese prints (5) Japanese architecture (6) Wide open spaces with views of outside

ASSESSMENT

Students will use the knowledge from this unit to create their own building and write a reflection based on what they have learned about Japanese printmaking and the style of Frank Lloyd Wright.

Using the Japanese prints and Wright's work create your own building- house, skyscraper, or business.

Think about your natural environment where your life. How can you incorporate nature into your design?

Think about the purpose of the building, what do people who live/work here need to feel comfortable or inspired? You can design your piece on paper, using computer drawing tools, or build it in 3D using natural materials. You will include a reflection in which they answer the following questions:

- *What is the purpose of your structure?*
- *How will it be used by people in everyday life?*
- *What elements do you think are the most important when designing a building?*
- *What influences did you incorporate from Japanese prints?*
- *What influences did you incorporate from Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture?*