

TWO RELIGIONS OF JAPAN  
7<sup>TH</sup> Grade World History and Geography

**NCSS Standard 1: Culture**

**Through experience, observation, and reflection, students will identify elements of culture as well as similarities and differences among cultural groups across time and place.** They will acquire knowledge and understanding of culture through multiple modes, including fiction and non-fiction, data analysis, meeting and conversing with peoples of divergent backgrounds, and completing research into the complexity of various cultural systems.

**Time Frame:** one 80-minute period

**Objectives:**

Identify and compare the major beliefs, rituals and history of Japanese Buddhism and Shinto religions through research, collaboration and creative, confident communication.

**Materials Needed:**

- Poster-making materials (poster-board, markers, scissors, glue, etc.)
- Diorama construction materials (shoe box, modeling clay, scissors, glue, etc)
- Internet-access and 1:1 technology

**Procedures:**

Do Now: Students will locate and label Japan on both a world and regional Map, identifying and labeling major physical features of Japan on the regional map. (Atlas or projection of a labeled map should be available for student reference.)

Direct Instruction: Show the following video [video](#) pausing to explain and scaffold with questioning to check for understanding when necessary. Students should take 3-2-1 notes while watching the video. Have students share out answers and use student responses about religion to focus in on the two religions of Japan.

RESEARCH: Students will use their textbook or the internet to research either Shintoism or Japanese Buddhism (half the class will research Japanese Buddhism and half will research Shintoism). Students should complete the fill in notes and identify the major beliefs, rituals, and origin of the assigned religion.

COLLABORATION: Once the research is complete students will collaborate in pairs to compare Shintoism and Japanese Buddhism (both member should have

researched different religions). Students will share their research, choose the medium in which they will present their comparison, and create their comparison.

COMMUNICATION/PRESENTATION: Students will present their comparison to the class. Students should complete a observation sheet when not presenting.

Closing: Students should complete a reflection on their collaboration and presentation skills.

Assessment:

Students will create a Poster, Diorama, Poem, Presentation (PPT or Prezi), or skit to compare Shintoism and Japanese Buddhism.

Resources:

Textbook—Pearson-myWorld History and Geography

[www.japan-guide.com](http://www.japan-guide.com)

[www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWRSjjeo0CY&feature=youtu.be>

## SHINTO

1. Shinto is the traditional religion of Japan.
2. Shinto means "the way of the gods."
3. Shinto has no founder, no scripture, and no permanent set of gods.
4. In Shinto, each clan worshipped its own kami
5. Kami's can be found in mountains, trees, rivers, and other natural objects.
6. Through the kami, the people learned proper behavior and values.
7. Shrines were built where the power of the kami was felt.
8. Thousands of shrines still exist in Japan today.

## BUDDHISM

1. Buddhism is a religion based on the teachings of the Indian spiritual leader, Siddhartha Gautama.
2. Buddha is the Enlightened One.
3. Buddhism originated in India. It went first to China and Korea before reaching Japan.
4. Buddhist monks worship inside of temples in Japan.
5. The Great Buddha Hall at the Todaiji Temple is the world's largest wooden building.
6. Buddhism has different schools of thought:
  - a. Mahayana Buddhism teaches that all living beings have the potential to be enlightened.
  - b. Shingon Buddhism—Buddhists recite "true words" in the form of mantras. A mantra is a sacred word, chant, or sound that is repeated over and over to advance ones spiritual growth.
  - c. Pure Land Buddhism is centered on the concept of bodhisattva, a merciful being who has achieved enlightenment but chooses to remain on Earth to help others.
  - d. Zen Buddhism is followers who meditate to empty their mind of thoughts in order to aid spiritual growth.

## SHINTO

1. Shinto is the \_\_\_\_\_ religion of Japan.
2. Shinto means “\_\_\_\_\_.”
3. Shinto has no \_\_\_\_\_, no \_\_\_\_\_, and no permanent set of \_\_\_\_\_.
4. In Shinto, each clan worshipped its own \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Kami’s can be found in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and other natural objects.
6. Through the kami, the people learned proper \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ were built where the power of the kami was felt.
8. Thousands of shrines still exist in \_\_\_\_\_ today.

## BUDDHISM

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2. Buddha is the \_\_\_\_\_.
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  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ Buddhism—Buddhists recite “true words” in the form of mantras. A mantra is a sacred word, chant, or sound that is repeated over and over to advance ones spiritual growth.
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ Buddhism is centered on the concept of bodhisattva, a merciful being who has achieved enlightenment but chooses to remain on Earth to help others.
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ Buddhism is followers who meditate to empty their mind of thoughts in order to aid spiritual growth.