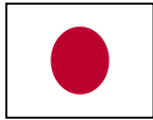


Year 7 - Music of Japan Knowledge Organiser

Musical Context



Japan is an island country in East Asia.



Sakura means 'cherry blossom' in Japanese.



What do you know about Japan?



- Name the 3 instruments you have learnt about, and which instrumental 'family' they belong to?
- What is the tempo of a typical Japanese piece?
- What does the title 'Sakura' mean?

Important Instruments

Shamisen

A 3 string Japanese instrument. Played like a banjo.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgN_xIHqLUA

Koto

A Japanese harp.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDTp_YQizqE

Shakuhachi

A Japanese bamboo flute.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmRPECd9Yig>

Musical Conventions

Timbre: the quality of the sound from the instruments that are different to ours

Texture: Uncluttered texture where each layer is clearly heard. Often only 1 or 2 layers of sound

Tempo: Often slow moving pieces

Melody: Moves very smoothly, usually in step and small leaps

Pitch/Tuning: Pentatonic scales (Using only 5 notes makes the music sound Japanese.)

The piece 'Sakura' uses the **In scale**, which is pentatonic (contains 5 different notes.)

E F A B D

These notes represent the five basic elements of earth, water, fire, wood and metal.

Thicken the texture of Sakura by adding another layer:

Drone: A sustained sound (held for a long time). Drones do not change pitch. The best notes to use are: **E and A.**

Ostinato: A short repeating musical pattern.

Useful Links

Check out **different** versions of Sakura using these links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AOJnEt391nU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKmWDL1wJvA>

Learn about **Taiko Drumming** and **expand your knowledge:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZagsLrNzg3I>

<https://youtu.be/CskqBy2uJ34>

Taiko: Any kind of drum
Kumi-daiko: An ensemble of Japanese drums.



Test Yourself

- Describe the texture of a typical Japanese piece.
- What name is given to a short repeating musical pattern, often used to accompany a melody?
- Name the 3 different note lengths used in your piece (2 beat, 1 beat and ½ beat).
- What name is given to a note that is held for a long time, often used to accompany a melody?

Notation – Note Duration

Note Name	Note Symbol	Note Value
Semibreve		4 beats
Minim		2 beats
Crotchet		1 beat
Quaver		½ of a beat
Pair of Quavers		2 x ½ beats = 1

The rhythm of our compositions:



Notation - Pitch



Every Green Bus Drives Fast



'FACE' in the space