

Summer With an Asian Twist

Comments from Campers

"I wish the camp lasted longer than a week!"

"I really enjoyed learning how to make sushi!"

"There should be a camp just for origami and calligraphy!"

"I love everything about the camp! It was really fun!"

"I want to come back again next year!"



Japan Camp group photo

UTSA's East Asia Institute hosted its third annual summer camp for kids who are between ages nine through 12, in June 2012.

Japanese language and Culture

Each day the Japanese camp typically started with a greeting song that helped the campers learn basic greetings from *ohayoo* (Good Morning) to *mata ashita* (See you tomorrow!)

Japan campers learned about the three different writing systems used in Japanese. They also learned how to decode and

write simple Japanese words and phrases using the Japanese syllabaries (*Hiragana* and *Katakana*). In addition, the attendees also learned to recognize a few *Kanji* characters as well. Upon successful completion of the camp, these campers were able to make a short self-introduction using their name, nationality, and preferences in food and drinks. They also learned how to ask some basic questions in Japanese.

The Japanese Language and Culture Camp offered great insight into the culture and society of Japan through interactive presentations.



China Camp group photo



From
Top: *Janken-ressha*, making *dango*,
playing Fruits Basket, and making *sushi*

Holidays were a part of the discussion as well. Topics that were covered included Children's Day, *Hanamatsuri*, elementary school life, Japanese New Year, and *Tanabata* (Star Festival).

Countless hands-on activities were encompassed throughout the camp as well. Many of which coincided with the cultural presentations. Campers created *Koinobori* (carp streamers) for Children's Day, ornaments for the Star Festival, made New Year's card using potato stamps, and cooked *dango* (dumplings) for *Otsukimi* (Moon Viewing Festival). Calligraphy and *origami* were among the most popular activities. Attendees learned to fold a wide variety of paper crafts such as jumping frogs, *Totoro* (based off the movie "My Neighbor Totoro") and even cranes. The campers even got to try their hands at playing the *Koto* (Japanese string instrument). Physical activities were subsumed as well. The kids enjoyed playing Fruits Basket, *Janken-ressha* (Rock-Paper-Scissor Train), *Rajio-taisou* (Radio Exercise), and daily walks around the campus.

Japan campers enjoyed their daily sacked-lunches with Japanese movies during the lunch

hour. Small discussions about Japanese culture, society and traditions soon followed. These films exposed the children a little more to the Japanese culture that has been discussed. In addition, the movies introduced new concepts as well.

On the last day of camp, the campers learned how to make Japanese *sushi* rolls (*maki-zushi*) and hand rolls (*temaki*). There was also a *bento* (lunch box) decoration competition. Each participant was given a box with cooked white rice along with assorted veggie items to decorate their boxed lunch with. Each camper gave their masterpiece a title/theme and entered it into the competition. The top two won a prize.

Chinese Language and Culture

Several students that participated in the Japanese Language and Culture Camp also attended the Chinese Language and Culture Camp. In addition to learning to speak Chinese through various interactive language activities and games, China campers also learned to recognize and write Chinese characters.

There were several presentations on Chinese culture, holidays, history



From Left: Panda masks, Chopstick Challenge game, and campers making fried rice

and geography. The campers enjoyed a wide selection of hands-on art projects, such as making panda masks and Chinese origami. China campers partook in calligraphy and ink wash painting sessions as well. Just like it was in the Japanese camp, Chinese calligraphy and origami were among the most popular activities for the students.

Aside from structured language and culture lessons, China campers also enjoyed daily sacked-lunches together while watching China-themed movies, which were followed by brief discussions about Chinese culture. Additionally, physical activities were offered every day to keep the campers entertained, including balloon games, chopsticks competitions, and walks throughout the campus.

On the last day of camp, a party was held. The campers all learned to make dumplings (pot stickers: *Jiao zi*) and enjoyed fried rice, Chinese green onion pancakes, and egg rolls prepared by the East Asia Institute faculty and staff.

Summer is a great time for rest, relaxation, and rejuvenation. However, the Japan and China campers relaxed with a twist as they submerged themselves in Asian societies, cultures, and languages. We look forward to seeing many new and familiar faces at next year's camps.



Japan Camper's Bento



Top: China Camp students with their calligraphy pandas, Japan Camp students listening to the Koto

Faculty:

Mimi Yu
Associate Director

Tomoe Kumashiro
Japan Outreach
Coordinator

Staff:

Letty Castro
Office Manager

Counselors:

Thomas Alvarado
UTSA Student

Marsyl Cotton
UTSA Student

Crystal Escobales
UTSA Graduate Student



East Asia Institute
UTSA MB 1.209
210.458.4943
www.utsa.edu/eai; eai@utsa.edu

