

A TRIP TO JAPAN

GRADE: 3-8

TIME: Two 1-hour sessions

Students will explore traditional Japanese home design through a virtual tour. Students will view images and infer how Wright was influenced by Japanese art and architecture. Then, students will use their understanding of Japanese design to individually redesign a space in their own home.

INTEGRATED SUBJECTS: Visual Arts, Social Studies, Media Literacy

OBJECTIVES

MATERIALS | RESOURCES

Library or internet access for independent student research

Teacher computer with internet access and presentation screen

Photographs from Wright's 1905 trip to Japan
(link included below)

Passport handout (Appendix A)

Photographs of Wright's designs before and after 1905 (Appendix B)

White printer paper

Colored pencils and/or crayons

1. Identify key elements of traditional Japanese home design.
2. Think critically about how Wright may have been inspired by his trip to Japan.
3. Develop design ideas through sketches.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. What are the key design elements in Japanese home design?
2. How was Wright inspired by Japanese design?
3. How can I reimagine spaces to include Japanese design influences?

LESSON PROCEDURE

EXPLORE

Session One

- **Begin by telling students that Frank Lloyd Wright took a trip to Japan in 1905 and was inspired by what he saw. Explain that students will take a virtual trip to a Japanese house just like those that Wright would have seen on his trip.** (Optional background information: The Japanese House is from the 1800s in Kyoto, Japan and was rebuilt in Boston in 1979. The house is a traditional city house called *machiya* and was once home to a family of silk merchants.)
- **Tell students that Wright redesigned parts of his own home after returning from Japan and that they are going to be asked to redesign a room of their home in Japanese style after completing the virtual tour.** (Note: Be sensitive to any unhoused students in the class and offer the option of redesigning a room within the school.)

LESSON PROCEDURE (continued)

- Direct students to fold their passport (Appendix A) into thirds, write their name and age on their passports, and draw a picture of themselves for the passport picture. Then, tell students to write their school's location in the "traveling from" section of their passport and "Kyoto, Japan" in the "traveling to" section.
- Then, have students open the passport and use an online search engine to locate Japan on a map. Instruct students to draw a dot where Japan is on their world map. Next, ask students to write Kyoto on the label line on the bottom map.

ENGAGE

Session One

- Open the 3D virtual tour of The Japanese House from Boston Children's Museum: <https://japanesehouse.bostonchildrensmuseum.org/virtual-tour/>
- Students can work individually, in pairs, or as a whole class to complete the tour, depending on available technology.
- Begin at "street" and ask students to write down what shapes and materials they see looking at the front of the house. Then have students look at each room, clicking and reading the information at each information bubble.
- Instruct students to work their way through the first page of their passport document, defining terms and sketching rooms as they explore the Japanese House.
- Next, have students turn the passport over for space to compare what was seen in the Japanese House to Wright's design.
- Direct students to look at pictures of Wright's designs. Use Appendix B to compare Wright's design before and after his trip to Japan. Additional images and background information are available at <https://www.teachingbydesign.org/multimedia/>. Examples include Hills De-Caro House, Robie House, Unity Temple, Midway Gardens, Imperial Hotel, Taliesin, Taliesin West.
- Encourage students to research independently or refer them to research materials such as Appendix B, <https://www.teachingbydesign.org/about/wright-and-japan/> and <https://www.teachingbydesign.org/multimedia/>. Other examples of Japanese-inspired designs include the Hills De-Caro House, Midway Gardens and the Imperial Hotel. Ask students to find 3 ways Wright might have been inspired by his trip to Japan.

DESIGN

Session Two

- Instruct students to pick a room in their home or school. After selecting a room, have students redesign it using Japanese architectural styles based on what students saw in the Japanese House. Have students sketch the designs on white construction paper using pencils, colored pencils and/or crayons.
 - Differentiation: prior to sketching, lead a discussion with students about features of Japanese home design. Display a list of these features and keep it visible while students are sketching.

CRITIQUE & INTERPRET

Session Two

- Once most or all students have completed their work, instruct all students to leave their designs on their desks. Encourage students to get up and walk around the room to view their classmates' work. Once students have viewed their classmates' work, lead a discussion. Ask students what changes they made to the room of their choices and what inspired them from the Japanese House.
 - Optional Extension: Sketch or use construction paper to create an enclosed garden, like the garden seen in the Japanese House tour.

Wright's Trip
How was Wright
inspired by his
trip to Japan?

1.

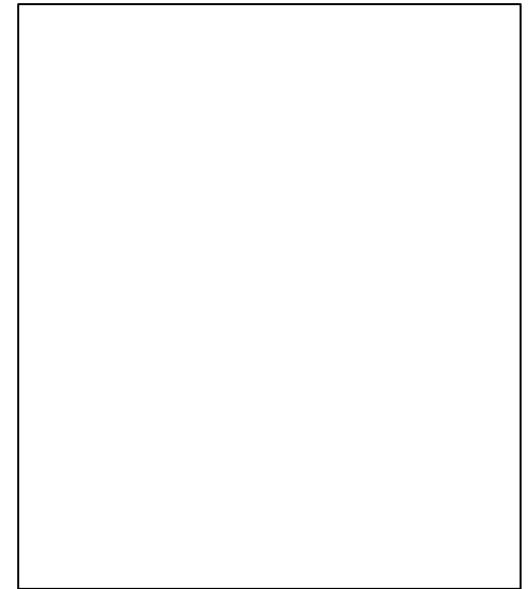
2.

3.

My Trip
How am I inspired
by my trip to
Japan?

Pick a room in your
home. Redesign the
room on a separate
sheet of paper to
include Japanese
design features.

Passport



Name:

Age:

Traveling From:

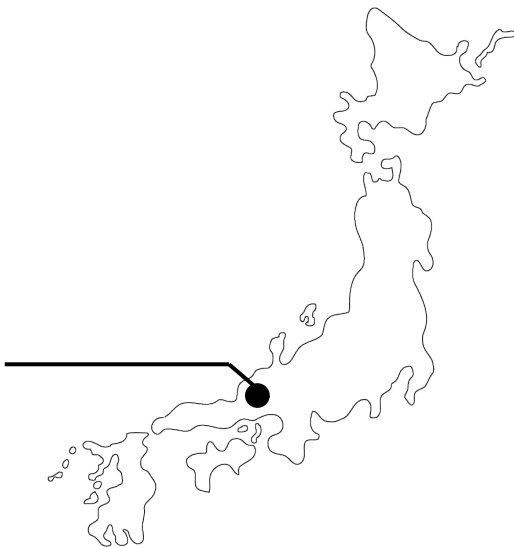
Traveling To:

Geography

On the map below,
draw a dot where
Japan is located.



Label Kyoto on the
map.



House Tour

Look at the front of the
house from the
street.

What shapes do you
see?

What materials do you
see?

Define the following
terms in the front
room:

Tatami-

Fusuma-

Shoji-

House Tour

Sketch the following
rooms below.

Garden:

Tea Room:

WRIGHT'S DESIGN BEFORE 1905



Nathan Moore House, 1895



Wright's Home Living Room, 1889

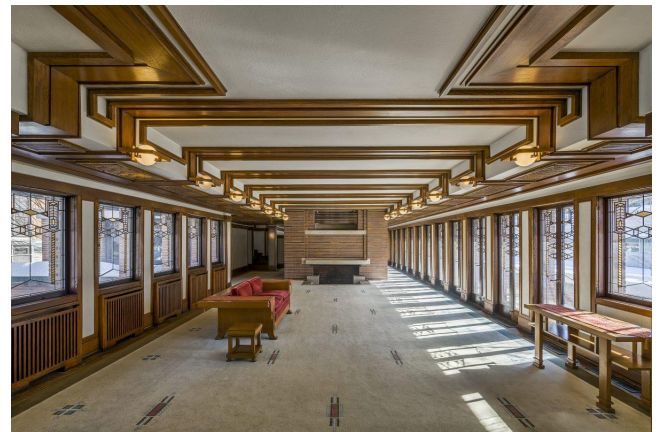


Wright's Home & Studio in Oak Park, 1898

WRIGHT'S DESIGN AFTER 1905



Nathan Moore House, redesigned in 1922



Robie House Living Room, 1907



Wright's Home at Taliesin, 1911