Japan Lesson Plan

Background: This is a lesson plan I will do following the chapter about Japan in the social studies book. The students will have general knowledge about Japan’s geography, history, and culture.

Purpose: Language, literature, the arts, beliefs, and values contribute to the development and transmission of culture.

Essential Questions:
1. What do Japanese comic books reflect about the culture of Japan?
2. How do Japanese comic books compare and contrast with U.S. comic books and comic books from England?
3. What is involved in developing a Manga, or Japanese comic book?

Rational: Students are exposed to another culture through art and literature.

Materials:
Samples of Manga
Samples of American comic books
Samples of British comic books
Reproduced page from a Manga
Reproduced page from a U.S. comic book
Reproduced page from a British comic book
Drawing paper and black fine tipped markers

Activities:
A. Pass out samples of Manga, U.S., and British comic books and discuss for pre-knowledge. Prompt discussion with the following questions. List answers on the board and/or large paper.
1. Who reads comic books?
2. How long do you think comic books have been around?
3. What comic books do you read?
4. What comic book characters have been developed into movies?
B. What do you know about Manga?
   1. What types of Manga are there? Explain that in Japan Manga entertain and instruct.
   2. Have you seen any Manga that have been made into movies?
   3. What are similarities and differences between Manga and U.S. comic books?

C. What can we learn about Japanese culture from Manga?
   Small group discussion using reproduced samples of Manga and centered around the following questions.
   1. What examples of popular culture are shown; fads, music, fashion, fast food, education?
   2. What values are exhibited; loyalty, love of nature, importance of the group, wanting to belong, duty?
   3. How would you describe the style; realistic, fantastic, cartoonish?
   4. Are there any emotions expressed; anger, love, annoyance, sadness, humor?
   5. What is the story line; action, romance, violence, heroes, heroines, villains?

D. Pass out individual Manga that represent a page or 2 from a story. The speech balloons have been whitened out before copying. Discuss the visual with the students; which box represents the first part of the story, the second part, etc. Have the students spread out so that they cannot confer with each other at this point. Students will fill the speech balloons with dialogue they feel goes with the visual situation. Have students read and discuss their sample in small groups.

E. Individual development of Manga. Once the Manga are finished and inked I will send them out to be copied and then compile them into a comic book. Each student will receive a copy of the compiled Manga.

This lesson plan is written for sixth grade but may easily be adapted to an older grade.
Sources:

Student material:
Green, Carol “Japan” Regensteiner, 1993
Flint, David “On The Map/ Japan” Steck-Vaughn, 1993

These three books describe Japan’s features of geography, history, scenic treasures, culture, industry, education, and people. Includes excellent text and numerous photos.

Coope, Katy “How to Draw Manga”, Tangerine Press, 2002
Krefta, Ben “Step-By-Step Manga”, Tangerine Press, 2004
Veda, Miwa “Peach Girl”, Kodansha LTD, 1999
Tachikawa, Megumi “Mink”, Tokyopop Inc., 2004
Takahashi, Rumiko “InuYasha Ani-Manga”, Viz,LLC, 2004
“Shonen Jump”, Viz,LLC, 2003

Teacher material:
Murphy, Rhoads “East Asia”, Pearson-Longman, 2004 This book gives historical reference

“Japan 2004-An International Comparison”, Tokyo: Keizai Koho Center
A yearly publication

Web sites for Manga:


Mangajin, Inc: [http://www.mangajin.com](http://www.mangajin.com)