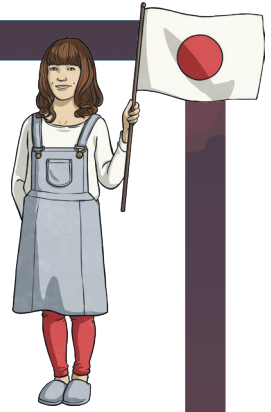


# Japan



Japan is an island country that lies off the eastern coast of mainland Asia and is home to around 127 million people. It is the world's third largest producer of cars and they are the leading country in inventing and making hi-tech robots. However, Japan also has a fascinating culture and unique customs which make it a very interesting country.

## School in Japan



Education is extremely important in Japan and the Japanese people are highly educated as a result. At school, children study Japanese, English, mathematics, science, social studies, music, crafts, physical education, home economics and ICT. Students also learn traditional Japanese arts and skills.

## Sport in Japan

Sport is an important part of Japanese culture. Traditional sports, such as sumo and martial arts, are popular as well as sports adopted from western culture such as baseball and football. Japan has hosted many international sporting competitions including the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo and the 2019 Rugby World Cup. Tokyo was set to host the 2020 Summer Olympics which have postponed until 2021 due to the Coronavirus pandemic.



## Food in Japan

When people think about Japanese food, they probably think of sushi. However, sushi is not the only food eaten in Japan. Vegetarian food is very popular, especially 'natto', which is a strong smelling dish made from fermented soybeans. Rice and noodles are common ingredients in most meals as well as soup and fish.

### Did You Know...?

Chopsticks are an important part of Japanese culture and tradition. Children are often taught how to use them before they have even learned how to walk!

### Tea Ceremony

The Japanese tea ceremony is a unique ritual in Japan. It is an important event in which green tea is prepared in front of and shared between special guests. Tea ceremonies represent harmony, respect purity and tranquillity and can last for several days.

### Children's Day

Each year on 5<sup>th</sup> May, Japan celebrate Children's Day. On this day, families celebrate the healthy growth and happiness of children. Households fly large, colourful, carp-shaped streamers outside their houses. The carp was chosen because it symbolizes strength and success as Japanese legend says that a carp swam upstream and turned into a dragon.



# Questions

1. Name **two** items that Japan produces.

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2. Which of the following subjects do children in Japan **not** study? Tick **one**.

- ☐ ICT
- ☐ Science
- ☐ RE
- ☐ English

3. What sporting event did Japan host in 1964? Tick **one**.

- ☐ Football World Cup
- ☐ Rugby World Cup
- ☐ Summer Olympics
- ☐ Winter Olympics

4. What is the Japanese name for fermented soybeans?

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5. What type of tea do guests share at a tea ceremony? Tick **one**.

- ☐ black
- ☐ Earl Grey
- ☐ mint
- ☐ green

6. What do Japanese people celebrate on 5<sup>th</sup> May? Tick **one**.

- ☐ Mother's Day
- ☐ Children's Day
- ☐ Father's Day
- ☐ Family Day

7. Give an example of an aspect of Japanese life that is different from yours.  
Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

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# Answers

1. Name two items that Japan produces.

**cars and robots**

2. Which of the following subjects do children in Japan **not** study? Tick **one**.

- ☐ ICT
- ☐ Science
- ☒ **RE**
- ☐ English

3. What sporting event did Japan host in 1964? Tick **one**.

- ☐ Football World Cup
- ☐ Rugby World Cup
- ☒ **Summer Olympics**
- ☐ Winter Olympics

4. What is the Japanese name for fermented soybeans?

**natto**

5. What type of tea do guests share at a tea ceremony? Tick **one**.

- ☐ black
- ☐ Earl Grey
- ☐ mint
- ☒ **green**

6. What do Japanese people celebrate on 5<sup>th</sup> May? Tick **one**.

- ☐ Mother's Day
- ☒ **Children's Day**
- ☐ Father's Day
- ☐ Family Day

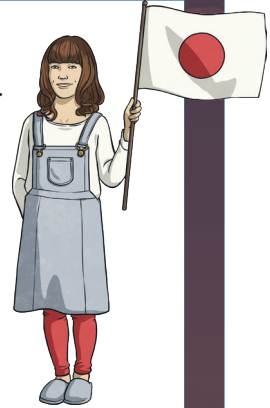
7. Give an example of an aspect of Japanese life that is different from yours.

Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

**Learner's own response, such as: In Japan, chopsticks are an important part of Japanese culture and tradition and children are taught to use them from a very young age. I don't use chopsticks to eat, instead I use a knife and fork.**

# Japan

Japan is an island country that lies off the eastern coast of mainland Asia and is home to around 127 million people. It is one of the most technologically advanced countries in the world. Japan is the world's third largest manufacturer of cars and the largest electronic goods industry. It is also regarded as one of the most innovative countries in the world. However, Japan also has a fascinating culture and unique customs which make it a very interesting country.



## School in Japan



Education is extremely important in Japan and the Japanese people are highly educated as a result. At school, children study Japanese, English, mathematics, science, social studies, music, crafts, physical education, home economics and ICT. Students also learn traditional Japanese arts and skills. All children have to attend school only up until the age of nine but 98% of students decide to go on to high school.

## Sport in Japan

Sport is an important part of Japanese culture. Traditional sports, such as sumo (Japan's national sport) and martial arts, are popular as well as sports adopted from western culture such as baseball and football. Japan has hosted many international sporting competitions including the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo and the 2019 Rugby World Cup. Tokyo was set to host the 2020 Summer Olympics which have postponed until 2021 due to the Coronavirus pandemic.



## Food in Japan

When people think about Japanese food, they probably think of sushi. However, sushi is not the only food eaten in Japan. Vegetarian food is very popular, especially 'natto', which is a strong smelling dish made from fermented soybeans. Rice is a common ingredient in most meals as well as a variety of noodles such as thick wheat noodles or buckwheat noodles. Although many Japanese people use forks and knives to eat, chopsticks ('hashi' in Japanese) are still the traditional eating utensil and are an important part of Japanese culture and tradition. Some children are taught to use chopsticks before they can even walk!



**Did You Know...?**

Sashimi is raw fish, not sushi as many people think. Sushi is a dish made up of small balls of vinegar-flavoured cold rice which can be served with vegetables, eggs or seafood.

**Tea Ceremony**

The Japanese tea ceremony is a unique ritual in Japan. It is an important event in which green tea is prepared in front of and shared between special guests. Tea ceremonies represent harmony, respect, purity and tranquillity and can last for several days.

**Children's Day**

Each year on 5<sup>th</sup> May, Japan celebrate Children's Day. On this day, families celebrate the healthy growth and happiness of children. Households fly large, colourful, carp-shaped streamers outside their houses. The carp was chosen because it symbolizes strength and success as Japanese legend says that a carp swam upstream and turned into a dragon.

# Questions

1. Find and copy a word which means **producer**.

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2. Which two languages do children study at school? Tick **two**.

- ☐ English
- ☐ German
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Japanese

3. What is Japan's national sport? Tick **one**.

- ☐ baseball
- ☐ sumo wrestling
- ☐ martial arts
- ☐ football

4. What is the capital city of Japan?

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5. What are 'hashi'? Tick **one**.

- ☐ noodles
- ☐ soybeans
- ☐ chopsticks
- ☐ fish

6. What do tea ceremonies represent? Tick **one**.

- ☐ harmony, respect, patience and tranquillity
- ☐ hope, respect, purity and truth
- ☐ harmony, respect, purity and tranquillity
- ☐ harmony, respect, politeness and tranquillity

7. Explain why you think a carp was chosen as symbol for Children's Day. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

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# Questions

8. Describe one similarity and one difference between Japanese culture and your own.

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# Answers

1. Find and copy a word which means producer.

**manufacturer**

2. Which two languages do children study at school? Tick **two**.

- ☒ **English**
- ☐ German
- ☐ Spanish
- ☒ **Japanese**

3. What is Japan's national sport? Tick **one**.

- ☐ baseball
- ☒ **sumo wrestling**
- ☐ martial arts
- ☐ football

4. What is the capital city of Japan?

**Tokyo**

5. What are 'hashi'? Tick **one**.

- ☐ noodles
- ☐ soybeans
- ☒ **chopsticks**
- ☐ fish

6. What do tea ceremonies represent? Tick **one**.

- ☐ harmony, respect, patience and tranquillity
- ☐ hope, respect, purity and truth
- ☒ **harmony, respect, purity and tranquillity**
- ☐ harmony, respect, politeness and tranquillity

7. Explain why you think a carp was chosen as symbol for Children's Day. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

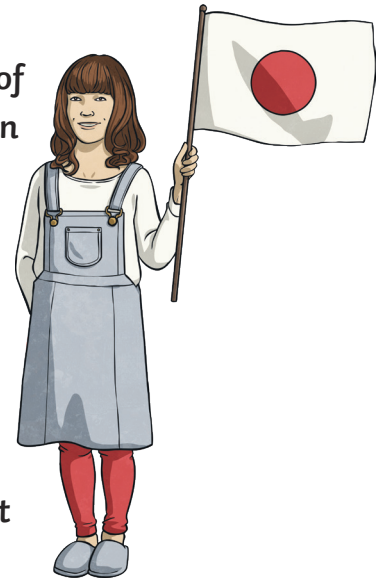
**Learner's own response, such as: I think that a carp was chosen as a symbol for Children's Day as it says in the text that they symbolise strength and success and this is something that parents would want for their children so that they can grow and be happy.**

# Answers

8. Describe one similarity and one difference between Japanese culture and your own.  
**Learner's own response, such as: A similarity between Japanese culture and my own is that we all have to go to school and some of the subjects that we study are the same such as English, mathematics and ICT. One difference is that chopsticks are a traditional eating utensil in Japan and whereas we use knives and forks to eat with.**

# Japan

Japan is an island country that lies off the eastern coast of mainland Asia and is home to approximately 127 million people. It is a fascinating country with a unique culture and customs. In addition to this, Japan is also one of the most technologically sophisticated countries in the world. For example, Japan is the world's third largest manufacturer of automobiles and the largest electronic goods industry. It is commonly regarded as one of the most innovative countries in the world as well as being ranked one of the healthiest countries to live in. So, what makes it so special?



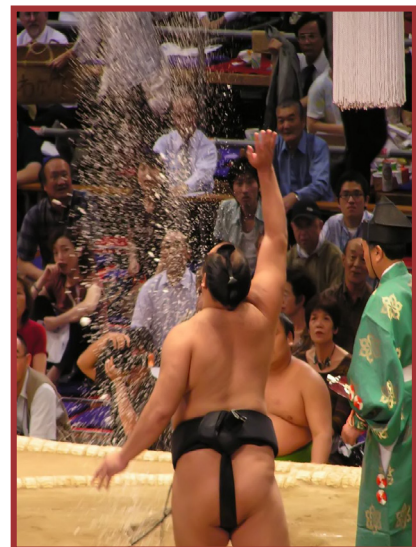
## School Life



Education is central to Japanese culture and Japanese people tend to be highly educated as a result. At school, children study Japanese, English, mathematics, science, social studies, music, crafts, physical education, home economics and ICT. Students also learn traditional Japanese arts and skills such as calligraphy, origami and haikus. Children are required to be in education up until the age of nine, however 98% of students decide to carry on their education into high school.

## Sport in Japan

Sport is a significant part of Japanese culture. Traditional sports, such as sumo and martial arts, are popular as well as sports adopted from western culture such as baseball and football. Sumo wrestling is considered Japan's national sport and originates from a religious ritual from about 1500 years ago. Japan has hosted many international sporting competitions including the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo and the 2019 Rugby World Cup. Tokyo (Japan's capital city) was set to host the 2020 Summer Olympics which have postponed until 2021 due to the Coronavirus pandemic.





The aim in sumo wrestling is to make your opponent touch the ground with any part of the body apart from the feet, or to force him or her out of the ring ('dohyo').

### Food in Japan

When people think about Japanese cuisine, they probably think of sushi. However, sushi is not the only food eaten in Japan. Vegetarian food is very popular, especially 'natto', which is a strong smelling dish made from fermented soybeans. Rice is a common ingredient in most meals as well as a variety of noodles such as thick wheat noodles or buckwheat noodles. Although many Japanese people use forks and knives to eat, chopsticks ('hashi' in Japanese) are still the traditional eating utensil and are an important part of Japanese culture and tradition. Some children are taught how to use chopsticks before they can even walk because it is considered to be an essential skill.

### Tea Ceremony

An ancient and unique ritual in Japan is the Japanese tea ceremony. It is an elaborate event in which green tea is prepared in front of and shared between special guests using special tools and equipment. Tea ceremonies represent harmony, respect purity and tranquillity and can last for several days. Tea ceremonies are traditionally held in a tatami room and the entrance is kept low so that guests have to bend when they enter.

### Children's Day

Children's Day ('Kodomo no hi') is celebrated annually on 5<sup>th</sup> May in Japan. On this day, families celebrate the healthy growth and happiness of children. Households fly large, colourful, carp-shaped streamers called Koinobori outside their houses. The carp was chosen because it symbolizes strength and success as Japanese legend says that a carp swam upstream and turned into a dragon.

### Did You Know...?

The kimono is the traditional Japanese outfit. The kimono varies depending on the occasion at which it is being worn and can be worn by women, men and children.



# Questions

1. **Find and copy** a word in the second paragraph which means **necessary**.

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2. What is calligraphy? Tick **one**.

- ☐ a dance
- ☐ a sport
- ☐ a type of food
- ☐ a special way of writing

3. Explain why it might be useful to be a large, strong person if you want to become a sumo wrestler. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

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4. What sporting event was hosted by Japan in 2019? Tick **one**.

- ☐ Football World Cup
- ☐ Summer Olympics
- ☐ Rugby World Cup
- ☐ Tennis Championship

5. **Find and copy** a word that means **food**.

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6. What are the carp-shaped streamers called that people hang outside their houses on Children's Day?

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7. Explain why you think the entrance of a tatami room is kept so low. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

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# Questions

8. If you could adopt one of the Japanese customs that you have read about, which one would you choose and why? Explain your answer fully.

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# Answers

1. Find and copy a word in the second paragraph which means **necessary**.  
**required**

2. What is calligraphy? Tick one.

- ☐ a dance
- ☐ a sport
- ☐ a type of food
- ☒ a special way of writing

3. Explain why it might be useful to be a large, strong person if you want to become a sumo wrestler. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

**Learner's own response, such as: It might be useful to be a large, strong person because it says in the text that the aim of sumo wrestling is to make your opponent touch the ground with a part of their body or to force him or her out of the dohyo. In order to do this, you would need to be bigger and stronger than your opponent.**

4. What sporting event was hosted by Japan in 2019? Tick one.

- ☐ Football World Cup
- ☐ Summer Olympics
- ☒ Rugby World Cup
- ☐ Tennis Championship

5. Find and copy a word that means **food**.  
**cuisine**

6. What are the carp-shaped streamers called that people hang outside their houses on Children's Day?

**koinobori**

7. Explain why you think the entrance of a tatami room is kept so low. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

**Learner's own response, such as: I think the entrance is kept so low because it says in the text that a tea ceremony represents respect and so when a guest enters a tatami, they are forced to bow which is a sign of respect to their host.**



# Answers

8. If you could adopt one of the Japanese customs that you have read about, which one would you choose and why? Explain your answer fully.

**Learner's own response, such as: If I could choose to adopt one Japanese custom it would have to be learning traditional Japanese arts and skills at school. I would choose this because calligraphy is using decorative handwriting and I enjoy writing in a different way and origami is the art of folding paper into shapes and figures which I would enjoy as I am very creative.**