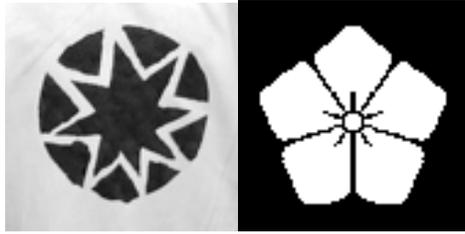


**Mon: Japanese Crests**



A lesson for LANGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL  
Students ages 11 to 13, grade 6  
Designed by Loren Fawcett, Education Assistant  
**ALLEN MEMORIAL ART MUSEUM**

**I. Theme/Subject:**

Japanese Crests (*Mon*)  
Symbolism  
Stenciling

**II. Objectives/Concepts:**

- Students will brainstorm ideas and create five (5) thumbnail sketches for a crest that represents either themselves, their group of friends, or their family.
- Make revisions to their favorite sketch using photographs as references.
- Create a their final crest on contrast-o paper.
- Exhibit their crests along with an explanation of the symbols.

**III. Standards:**

**A. National**

1. Visual Arts

- NA-VA 5-8.3: Students use subjects, themes, and symbols that demonstrate knowledge of contexts, values, and aesthetics that communicate intended meaning in artworks.
- NA-VA 5-8.4: Students describe and place a variety of art objects in historical and cultural contexts.
- NA-VA 5-8.5: Students compare multiple purposes for creating works of art.
- NA-VA 5-8.6: Students compare the characteristics of works in two or more art forms that share similar subject matter, historical periods, or cultural context.

**B. Ohio State standards**

1. Social Studies

- Compare cultural practices, products, and perspectives of past civilizations in ire.

- Describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence the behavior of people living in a particular culture.
  - Demonstrate skills and explain the benefits of cooperation when working in group settings
  - Demonstrate self-direction in tasks within the school community
  - Obtain information from oral, visual and print sources.
2. Math
- Use mathematical strategies to solve problems that relate to other curriculum areas and the real world; e.g., use symmetry in artwork.
3. Visual Arts
- Benchmark 1A: Compare and contrast visual forms of expression found throughout different regions and cultures of the world. Identify universal themes (e.g., family, good versus evil and heroism) conveyed in artworks across various times and cultures.
  - Benchmark 1D: Research the role of visual art in selected periods of history using a variety of primary and secondary sources (e.g., print, electronic media and interviews with a museum curator).
  - Benchmark 2A: Demonstrate skill in changing (e.g., exaggerating and transforming) natural forms for expressive purposes.
  - Benchmark 2B: Explore ways that art making functions as a means of personal identification and expression. Use observation, life experiences and imagination as sources for visual symbols and images.
  - Benchmark 3A: Use appropriate vocabulary to identify the content in works of art created for different purposes (e.g., functional, decorative, and social and personal). Explain how art elements and principles are used in artworks to produce certain visual effects (e.g., dynamic tension, textured surfaces, patterns and designs).
  - Benchmark 3B: Interpret selected works of art based on the visual clues in the works.
  - Benchmark 5C: Compare the ways that selected ideas and concepts are communicated through the perspective of visual art and through the perspectives of other academic disciplines.

#### IV. Vocabulary:

- *Crest*: an emblem for display symbolizing family, a clan, or an idea
- *Mon*: Japanese word for crest
- *Kamon*: Japanese word for family crest
- *Ideogram*: picture or symbol used in a writing system
- *Symbols*: signs or marks that represent something else

#### V. Materials:

Per student:

- (5-10) Five to ten sheets sketch paper
- Drawing pencils

- Xacto knife
- Cutting board (cardboard can be substituted as a cutting surface)
- Stencil brush (a small to medium sized brush works best)
- Paper towels
- Paint tray
- Masking tape
- Cardboard (to stretch t-shirts)
- (!) One Tshirt
- Blue permanent fabric paint
- (optional) photocopier/copies of students' designs

## VI. Strategies and Procedures:

### A. Engage (motivation):

Begin this lesson with an open discussion about symbolism. Point out modern uses of symbolism such as in advertising—brainstorm different examples that students encounter on a day-to-day basis. (ie: the “swish” sign = Nike; the golden arches = McDonald’s; the peace sign; a circle with a slash through it = “Do Not...” or “No...”)

### B. Explore:

Next, let students choose to create their crest either about themselves, their group of friends, or their families.

- Have students brainstorm different symbols and ideas that represent their chosen crest subjects.
- Have students draft 5 thumbnail sketches.
- Have students critique each others sketches and offer constructive criticism regarding use of principles and elements of art and design.
- Have students should select one of their five thumbnails.

Explain the tools needed for stenciling and how to use them properly!

- A stencil brush is thick, dense, and flat.
- Its short, stiff bristles prevent paint from getting under the surface of a stencil.
- When dipping the brush into the paint, dab the end of the bristles lightly into the color. Do not overload the brush with paint!
- Don’t let the paint be too watery or it will run under the edges of the stencil. alms

### C. Create:

Once students select their final sketch, have them finalize their lines and transfer the image onto stencil board.

Then have students follow the following procedures:

#### ***Making the stencil:***

1. Transfer design to stencil board. Make sure the crest has at least a 1/2" border surrounding its entire design. (Transfer or carbon paper may be used to expedite design transferal) \*
2. Using a craft knife, start cutting out the longest, straightest edges, as these are the easiest to cut. Press firmly and smoothly.
3. Use your free hand to stop the stencil from moving, but always keep fingers away from where you're cutting.
4. Finish making the stencil by cutting out the smaller details.
5. Finally, neaten any rough edges before painting.
6. Remember to safely cap the craft knife and return to its proper place. Discard any scrap stencil board.

*\* Alternative procedure: Photocopy students' final designs. Use photocopies secured with tape to stencil board and cut out with stencil.*

***Painting the stencil:***

1. Stretch t-shirt over an appropriate-sized piece of cardboard and secure with masking tape if necessary.
2. Position stencil in middle to center of t-shirt (or in desired location). Secure stencil to t-shirt with tape to prevent stencil from moving once painting has started.
3. Start from the outside and work inward. Apply the paint to the appropriate section of the stencil using a vertical, up and down motion. Do not brush across, instead tap the end of the brush onto the stencil.
4. For smaller sections and details, use the fingertips of your free hand to hold down the smaller parts of the stencil while you paint.

**VII. Assessment:**

Evaluate students' work based on the following criteria:

- Did the student follow directions?
- Did the student work well and respectfully with others?
- Did the student require little to no assistance?
- Did the student use materials properly?
- Did the student clean his/her work area completely?
- Did the student require little to no discipline?

**VIII. Closure:**

Have students wear the finished Tshirts and present them to the class. Students should explain the symbolism behind their crest design, who it represents, and how they created their finished crest. Have students do a self-critique.

**IX. Across the Curriculum:**

- A. Social Studies:** Have students compare Japanese crest history to European crests. Can they find any other cultures that used crests at one time?
- B. Math:** Have students practice using a compass instead of tracing a circle.
- C. Language Arts:** Have students write a short personal essay explaining their crest and its symbolism.
- D. Technology:** Have students do a web search on Japanese crest history. Have students create their crests in design programs such as Freehand or Adobe Illustrator.

**X. Resources:**

**A. Books:**

1. Grafton, Carol Belanger. *Treasury of Japanese Designs and Motifs for Artists and Craftsmen*. Dover Publications, 1983.
2. *Japanese Design Motifs*. Dover Publications, 1972.
3. *Japanese Floral Patterns and Motifs*. Dover Publications, 1990.

**B. Websites:**

1. [www.indiana.edu/~japan/LP/LS21.html](http://www.indiana.edu/~japan/LP/LS21.html)
2. <http://mothra.rerf.or.jp/ENG/Hiroshima/Things/69.html>