

Japanese Sushi Inspires Our Art

[By Jan Miller](#)

This resource is part of a collection of resources by Jan called [Teaching Art to Year Three](#).

Jan Miller leads a project enabling children to explore materials and learn from another culture by creating colourful, large-scale mixed media drawings inspired by food from Japan. This activity is suitable for older KS1 and KS2 children.



Context

This project used Art to discuss and learn about another culture. Pupils tasted and looked at sushi as their focus to

explore colour, shape, pattern, texture and line.

Aims

- use sketchbooks to research, improve drawing from direct observation
- learn to compose a photograph as part of their research
- explore the thoughtful manipulation of different materials
- produce an individual response in a large mixed-media piece showcasing their interest, findings and skill
- develop a layered piece beginning with a repeated patterned background
- develop work on a theme
- develop a project in which all abilities can feel a sense of achievement
- create an enthusiasm for learning

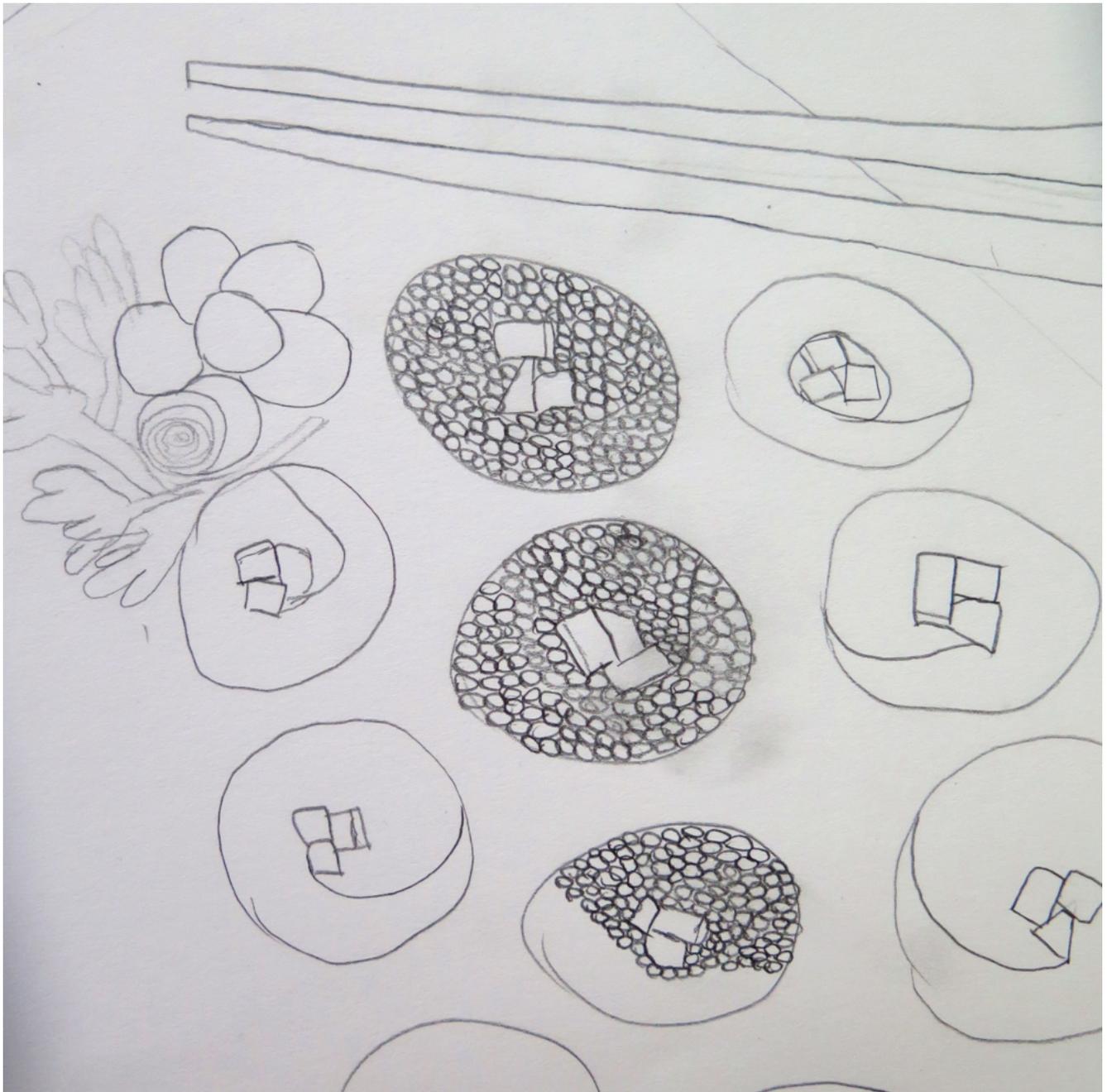
Who are the sessions aimed at?

The sessions were run with children aged 8 in Year 3.

The resources below can be used with children aged 7 to 11 (older KS 1 children and KS 2 children).

Which areas of exploration are covered?

- Drawing from observation
- Mark-making
- Colour blending and controlling transparency and consistency
- Exploring scale, composition, negative space, layering & cropping
- Learn through experimentation
- Appreciation of cultural difference
- Produce a large full colour mixed-media piece - making informed and independent material choices



How much time is needed?

Each of the six sessions took an hour with the whole class. If you were working with a smaller group of children the activities may take less time. Sketchbooks were available in all lessons to continue research drawing. The activities progressively built on each other and the children developed an understanding of process. If you followed all the sessions you would cover the areas of exploration listed. However, if time is limited, you could complete a smaller piece of work in two or three sessions, depending upon your chosen area of interest. The teacher could complete more of the preparation,

such as the printing or work on patterned wallpaper as much of it will be drawn over.

Extension ideas

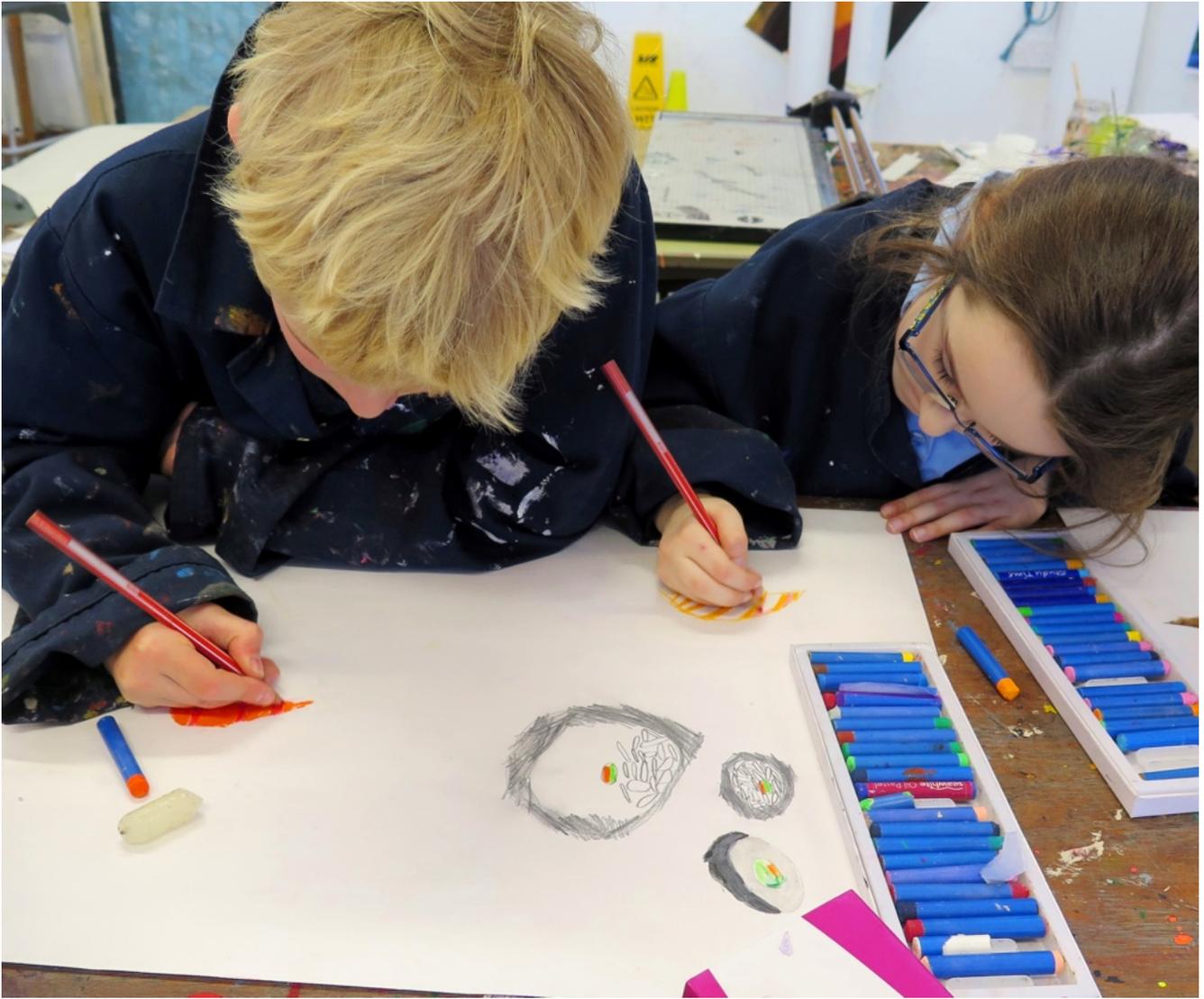
- The children worked on several Japanese-themed pieces of art simultaneously from research into their culture - food, clothes, houses, rituals and art.
- Use felt-making to make sushi shapes.

Variation

- Any cultural close-up of food could be used
- Any subject relating to Japanese culture could be drawn
- More materials to offer are optional - e.g.- soft pencils 4B, graphite powder, waxy coloured pencils
- Alternative to screen printing background could be a string print, cutting from sticky foam to print, printing with paper straws or pipe cleaners. Shapes from fluorescent paper could be cut and glued on
- Textured wallpaper samples can be glued around a wide tube, which are then perfect for children to print a repeated design

TIP

Make viewfinders using two L-shaped cards, held together with a couple of paperclips.



Where might the sessions be used?

- Classrooms (as part of art lessons or workshop)
- After-school art club or AG&T group
- Community groups (i.e. Scouts and Guides)
- Gallery, Museum or Art Organisation workshop

Materials and Equipment preparation

- Block-printing ink, roller, board for mono-printing noodles
- Screen printing screen, ink, squeegee
- A2 paper
- Oil pastels
- Scissors or BBQ skewers to scratch in
- Indian ink/brushes

ACTIVITY

WEEK 1: EATING, DRAWING AND PHOTOGRAPHING SUSHI

Children used a home-made viewfinder, before recording using a shared camera, to zoom in on shapes and colours of interest. This formed their composition.



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