

I-SEARCH INDEPENDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

Japan

1. **PARADOXES:**

Japan is a relatively small country with very few natural resources. By all accounts they should not be able to compete economically with the rest of the world. Yet Japan has one of the most powerful economies in the world. Create an art gallery to show how they have achieved this.

2. **ATTRIBUTES:**

Japanese people consider themselves to be a pure race. Americans come from all over the world. Create a chart showing the average income, life expectancy, literacy, health rates, etc. of Americans and Japanese. Which country looks better on paper? Which country would you like to live in?

3. **ANALOGIES:**

In the 1950s Akira Kurosawa created what some consider the greatest movie ever made: The Seven Samurai. This movie was later remade into a Western called The Magnificent Seven. Watch both movies and create a sculpture detailing the similarities and differences between the Samurai and Cowboys.

4. **DISCREPANCIES:**

In 1945, the United States dropped two nuclear bombs on Japan - one at Hiroshima and one at Nagasaki. Create a powerpoint showing the pros and cons of using atomic weapons against another country.

5. **PROVOCATIVE QUESTIONS:**

Japan attacked the American Naval Base at Pearl Harbor in 1941 and caused the United States to enter World War II. Draw a map showing what the world might look like today if the United States had not entered the war.

6. **EXAMPLES OF CHANGE:**

Pu Yi was China's last emperor. Hirohito was Japan's emperor at the same time and was about the same age (He died in 1989). Create an illustrated story showing the lives of the two men in the 1930s.

7. **EXAMPLES OF HABIT:**

For Americans, it is often very easy to confuse the cultures of China, Korea, and Japan. This is because all three have historically influenced each other. Create a game that shows how various ideas spread from one culture to another (e.g., kanji, dragons, Buddhism, etc.)

8. **ORGANIZED RANDOM SEARCH:**

The Japanese have a very strong affinity for nature, as can be seen in their gardens, paintings, and poetry. Ignoring conventional wisdom, redesign Jurupa Middle School so that it incorporates the Japanese love of nature. Create a model and explain how it would improve education.

9. **SKILLS OF SEARCH:**

Create a video taped news program that discusses the reign of Prince Shotoku and the characteristics of Japanese society and family life during his reign.

10. **TOLERANCE FOR AMBIGUITY:**

Prepare a song that compares Christianity to Zen Buddhism.

PRODUCTS

A Dance/A Letter/ A Lesson	Oral Defense
Advertisement	Oral Report
Animated Movie	Painting Pamphlet
Annotated Bibliography	Pantomime
Art Gallery	Papier Mache
Block Picture Story	Petition
Bulletin Board	Photo Essay
Bumper Sticker	Pictures
Chart	Picture Story for Children
Choral Reading	Plaster of Paris Model
Clay Sculpture	Play
Code	Poetry
Collage	Political Cartoon
Collection	Pop-Up Book
Comic Strip	Postage Stamp,
Computer Program	Commemoratives
Costumes	Press Conference
Crossword Puzzle	Project Cube
Database	Prototype
Debate	Puppet
Demonstration	Puppet Show
Detailed Illustration	Puzzle
Diorama	Rap
Diary	Radio Program
Display	Rebus Story
Edibles	Recipe
Editorial Essay	Riddle
Etching	Role Play
Experiment	Science Fiction Story
Fact File	Sculpture
Fairy Tale	Skit
Family Tree	Slide Show
Fiction Story	Slogan
Film	Soliloquy
Filmstrip	Song
Flip Book	Sound
Game	Story Telling-Tall
Graph	Tales
Hidden Picture	Survey
Illustrated Story	Tapes-Audio-Video
Interview	Television Program
Jingle	Timeline
Joke Book	Transparencies
Journal	Travel Brochure
Labeled Diagram	Venn Diagram
Large Scale Drawing	Web Home Page
Learning Center	Working Hypothesis
Letter to the Editor	Write a new law
Map with Legend	Video Film
Mazes	
Mural	
Museum Exhibit	
Musical Instruments	
Needlework	
Newspaper Story	
Non-Fiction	

11. **INTUITIVE EXPRESSION:**

The Samurai idea of *bushido* is similar to the European Knight idea of *chivalry*. Produce a play that illustrates *bushido* / *chivalry*.

12. **ADJUSTMENT TO DEVELOPMENT:**

Japan is one of the world's most modern nations, providing us with Yamaha, Toyota, and Nintendo. Yet it is also a nation rich in tradition. Create costumes that show Japan's past and present.

13. **STUDY CREATIVE PEOPLE AND PROCESS:**

Study the life of a famous Japanese person (e.g., Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Akira Kurosawa, etc.) Write a poem that describes his life and influence on present day Japan.

14. **EVALUATE SITUATIONS:**

Kublai Khan attempted to invade Japan in the 1200s and was driven back by the Samurai. Create a mural that shows this event and demonstrates the importance of the Japanese driving off the Mongols.

15. **CREATIVE READING SKILL:**

During World War II, the United States rounded up Japanese-Americans and put them in internment camps, behind barbed wire and guard towers. This did not happen to German-Americans or Italian-Americans. Read Farewell to Manzanar and create a diorama showing American treatment of the Japanese during World War II. (By the way, the internment camp Manzanar is located in California on Highway 395.)

16. **CREATIVE LISTENING SKILL:**

Listen to music by a Japanese pop group such as *Pizzicato Five*. Make a pop-up book that shows Japanese values based on what you hear.

17. **CREATIVE WRITING SKILL:**

Research a particular event from the history of Japan that interests you. Use your research to write a "Choose Your Way Through History" story that you can read to the class. Include several places in the story where the class must choose what happens next. Create several endings for their choices.

18. **VISUALIZATION SKILL:**

According to the Shinto religion, everything has a spirit. Paper, therefore, cannot be cut. This led to the invention of *origami*, or paper folding. Make a puppet show that demonstrates Japanese life using only *origami* as puppets.

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