

Friends from Kyoto 友達

THE JAPANESE HOUSE ACTIVITIES



Join Mei on a visit to her tomodachi's (friends) home and learn about how they live.

1. Learn about Daily Life of Kids in Kyoto

The Japanese House in Boston Children's Museum was originally built around 1890 near Nishijin, a famous silk district of Kyoto. It was transported as a gift to Boston in 1979 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of their sister-city relationship. The style of the house is called Kyo no Machiya, which National Geographic included in its June 2012 article, "Now or Never? 9 Places to See Before They Slip Away."

Many kids in Kyoto and other parts of Japan live in modern housing, but some still live in traditional homes like the Kyo no Machiya. The video, "Many Homes in Kyoto, Japan" presents the diversity within homes and familial environments from the kids' perspectives. It introduces the social aspects and changes in an urban environment as well as their daily life in this city.

TIME:

40 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Video: *Many Homes in Kyoto, Japan*

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

Kyoto: *Kyoh-toe*

Tomodachi: *Toe-moe-dah-chee*

Nishijin: *Nee-she-gee-n*

Kyo no Machiya:

Kyoh no mah-chee-yah

2. Meet New Friends

Before you start—Talk about your own town and home—How old is it? How is it the same or different from your own friends' houses and town?

1. Pretend you are visiting Kyoto, Japan. You will meet many *tomodachi*—friends—there.
2. Watch the video, “Many Homes in Kyoto, Japan.”
3. Talk about the video and the friends that you’ve met. What parts of your new friends’ lives are similar to yours? What parts are the same or different from your home or town?



Useful tips:

- Be aware of bias words when talking about other cultures: for example, referring to a custom as “different” from your own is a direct observation, but using words such as “weird,” “strange,” or “odd” to describe the custom carries negative connotations.
- Be aware of diversity within one culture: when talking about a culture, it is important not to generalize or assume they are all the same. The stories in the video are real stories of real people, but they are only some examples of life, people, and customs in Kyoto.

3. Things to Talk about

- Which homes and friends would you like to visit if you were to take a trip to Japan for real?
- The Nishijin district in Kyoto where our friends in the video live is famous for silk and textile industry. What is your hometown famous for?
- Imagine you are making a video about your hometown and your daily life for kids in Japan. What would you like to show and tell them?



Ran

- She lives in a *machiya*.
- She enjoys calligraphy.
- Her grandpa owns a silk business and makes *obi* (*kimono* belt)
- Her home has a traditional *kotatsu*, Shinto shrines, and a Buddhist altar.
- She sleeps on a *futon*.



Shiori

- Her family tore down an old *machiya* and built a new home.
- She lives with her parents, sister, and grandparents.
- Her grandfather owns a *konbini* (convenience store) in front of her home.
- She loves Disney and High School Musical.
- She likes to cook and eat hamburgers with rice.



Yoshiteru

- His family owns a *wagashi* (traditional Japanese sweets) shop.
- His home is very modern with a hi-tech toilet.
- He likes history and wants to travel around the world.



Souhei

- He lives in a modern house with his parents.
- He loves baseball, pokemon, and collecting fossil rocks.
- His grandparents' home uses a *hibachi* stove.



Yukiko

- She lives in a condominium with her parents.
- She likes to read *manga* (Japanese comic books) and eat many kind of *okashi* (Japanese snacks).
- After school, she does ballet, plays the piano, and studies English.

Other cast members:

Furutake-san

- *Machiya* conservationist

Nakajima-san

- Silk dyer
- Many generations of her family have been in the silk business.

Yoshioka-san

- Silk weaver
- She uses an *oriki* (a loom).

Arisa Furimoto

- Arisa's House Museum
- Turned her grandmother's *machiya* into a museum—community center.