

The Toro Nagashi ceremony is held after the Obon season, a three-day Buddhist festival held to celebrate the beginning of the harvest where it is believed that the spirits of those who have passed are invited, for a short time, to return home. First held in 1946, Toro Nagashi (meaning “flowing lanterns”) is a Japanese ceremony in which participants float glowing paper lanterns down a river to light the journey of our ancestors back to the afterlife after their visit during the Obon. In Japanese tradition, all humans originally come from water, hence the lanterns visually guide the spirits back to the elements.

This celebration allows people of all ethnicities and backgrounds to remember loved ones who are no longer with us. Toro Nagashi is meant to be more of a joyful celebration than a time of mourning.

SYMBOLISM

In the garden, you will learn about symbolism where a non-living and living thing represents a different idea. California State Board of Education Standards are used for the following leading questions.

LEADING QUESTIONS

Grades 3rd -5th

KEY IDEAS & DETAILS

1. In your own words, explain the significance of the Toro Nagashi ceremony.

CRAFT & STRUCTURE

1. Can you describe what the floating of a lantern represents?

TEXT TYPES & PURPOSE

1. Can you give an example of a similar ceremony you have experienced and say how they are different or the same?

Grades 6th - 8th

CRAFT & STRUCTURE

1. What do you believe is the author’s main purpose in writing this article?

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE & IDEAS

1. What is the genre of this piece and what in the article demonstrates it?

TEXT TYPES & PURPOSE

1. In a well-defined paper, explain how do you believe that a ceremony like Toro Nagashi can help a community deal with a serious topic like death?

Grades 9th – 12th

KEY IDEAS & DETAILS

1. What is the central idea of the text, give examples of how the central idea is defined?

TEXT TYPES & PURPOSE

1. In a well-defined paper, explain how do you believe that a ceremony like Toro Nagashi can help a community deal with a serious topic like death?

Link to video

RESEARCH TO BUILD & PRESENT KNOWLEDGE

1. Gather at least one additional example of ceremonies held to commemorate their loved ones that have passed and compare and contrast the ceremonies in a well detailed paper.

ADDITIONAL LESSON PLANS from Shinzen Friendship Garden

From the Welcome to the Shinzen Garden Series

1. The 1939 Lantern (link to video)
 - The 1939 Lantern (link to document)
2. The Koi Pond (link to video)
 - The Koi Pond (link to document)
3. Design Concepts (link to video)
 - Design Concepts (link to document)

ADDITIONAL LESSON PLANS from GSBF-Clark Bonsai Collection

From the Welcome to the Clark Bonsai Collection Series

1. Yamadori and the Contribution of Japanese Americans to the Art of Bonsai (link to video)
 - Yamadori and the Contribution of Japanese Americans to the Art of Bonsai (link to document)
2. How Old Is It? Age in Bonsai (link to video)
 - How Old Is It? Age in Bonsai (link to document)
3. The Peace Tree Bonsai (link to video)
 - The Peace Tree Bonsai (link to document)
4. An Outdoor Museum (link to video)
 - An Outdoor Museum (link to document)

ADDITIONAL LINKS TO JAPANESE CULTURE & GARDENS

Visit us at: <http://shinzenjapanesegarden.org>

1. Traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony (link to video)
2. Japanese Chado Matcha Green Tea Ceremony (link to video)
3. 45 Japanese Garden Design Ideas (link to video)
4. Portland Japanese Garden (link to website)
5. Oregon Koto-Kai Performances (link to website)
6. Green Legacy Hiroshima (link to website)
7. Hiroshima Peace Tree Planted in Clovis (link to website)



ADDITIONAL LINKS TO GSBF BONSAI COLLECTIONS & BONSAI

Visit us at: <https://gsbfclarkbonsaicollection.org>

1. CBC_Behind the Scene with Bob Hilvers, "John Naka – California Juniper" (link to video)
2. CBC_Behind the Scene with Bob Hilvers, "The Dwarf Oak" (link to video)
3. CBC_Behind the Scene with Bob Hilvers, "Basic Bonsai 01" (link to video)
4. CBC_Behind the Scene with Bob Hilvers, "Basic Bonsai 02" (link to video)
5. CBC_Behind the Scene with Bob Hilvers, "Basic Bonsai 03" (link to video)