

Kindergarten Focus: Japan

Global Week 2019 - Lower School

Konnichiwa! This week was Global Explorers Week! We spent the week immersed in the culture, food, and language of Japan.

We learned about Japanese music; what children their age sing, what most people listen to, and traditional music like taiko drumming. So we listened to children's songs such as "Mori no Kuma-san" "Panda, Usagi, Koala" and "Kirakira boshi." I performed a traditional Japanese haiku called "Sakura" about the sakura trees and we talked about the Hanami festival.

We ate peach daifuku and learned about Peach Boy (a famous Japanese tale that children know in Japan) and voted if we liked the daifuku or not. We made onigiri (rice balls wrapped in seaweed) with fun vegetables inside. We saw some short films from Japan, one of which featured a rice ball as the main character.

We also learned about Japanese music and listened to some modern music by Japanese artists in English and in Japanese. We also learned about traditional Japanese music with pieces like Sakura, a poem sung about a cherry blossom tree. We talked about the taiko drumming and the importance of practice and discipline that they have in order to perform. They all know taiko is three things: warrior training, music, and dance. We saw some taiko drummers and read some stories about some drummers as well.

We learned some popular children's stories and characters in Japan throughout the week, ones like Pikachu, Mario, and Hello Kitty, but some traditional ones like *oni*. We learned that oni are scary monsters from Japan and that they are so scary that we hang up oni masks to scare away nightmares. We also talked about Japanese calligraphy and they had the opportunity to write their names in Japanese Katakana.