

# 11<sup>th</sup> Explore Japan – 2022

A Cultural and Educational Experience  
for Grade 10 High School Students  
in the greater Edmonton areas and Red Deer

October 29, November 7 and 8, 2022

Sponsor:

Edmonton Japanese Community Association

Co-sponsors:

Alberta Education

Consulate General of Japan in Calgary

Prince Takamado Japan Centre, University of Alberta

December 15, 2022

## 1. Program Objective - What is the “Explore Japan”?

The program provides an opportunity for Grade 10 students in the Capital Region and Red Deer to explore Japanese culture first-hand. Through various activities facilitated by Japanese community members, the program will help young learners enhance their understanding of Japanese culture and promote friendship between Japan and Canada. High school Japanese programs will significantly benefit by participating in the event.

Explore Japan has been highly evaluated as a program that offers a valuable opportunity for students learning the Japanese language at high schools to experience Japanese culture.

## 2. Background

Edmonton Japanese Community Association (EJCA) has been promoting Japanese culture and language in the Edmonton area. Since 2002, it has provided the “Japan Today” program to junior high schools as a Grade 8 Social module supplement. In May 2010, EJCA Culture Programs Committee received an inquiry from the Alberta Japanese Teachers Association (AJTA) if a cultural presentation to Grade 10 students who would start studying the Japanese Language and Culture in September could be organized by EJCA. Since then, the Explore Japan program has been held annually; this was the eleventh event.

## 3. Summary of Explore Japan 2022

Dates and Times: October 29<sup>th</sup>, November 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 9:35 am – 2:00 pm

Location: Edmonton Japanese Community Association Centre

Instructors and assistants: 16

Guests and other attendees: 3

## 4. Registered Schools, Students, Teachers and Chaperons

School	City	Students registered	Teachers & Chaperons
Harry Ainlay High School	Edmonton	50	2
Memorial Composite High School	Spruce Grove	65	2
Jasper Place High School	Edmonton	25	1
Lindsay Thurber High School	Red Deer	50	4
Paul Kane High School	St. Albert	20	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>10</b>

Lindsey Thurber school from Red Deer could not attend the event on November 7th because of a snowstorm. Some students from other schools could not join the event because of the flu. The total number of students who attended was 150.

## 5. Guests and Representatives from Co-Sponsor Organizations

**Consulate General of Japan:** Consul Riki Kishimoto and Vice-Consul Takamasa Ito.

Consul Riki Kishimoto delivered a message on paper to students on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Alberta Education:** Ms. Keiko Yoshikawa, Language Advisor, International Education Service,

Ms. Keiko Yoshikawa delivered a welcome message to students on November 7<sup>th</sup>.

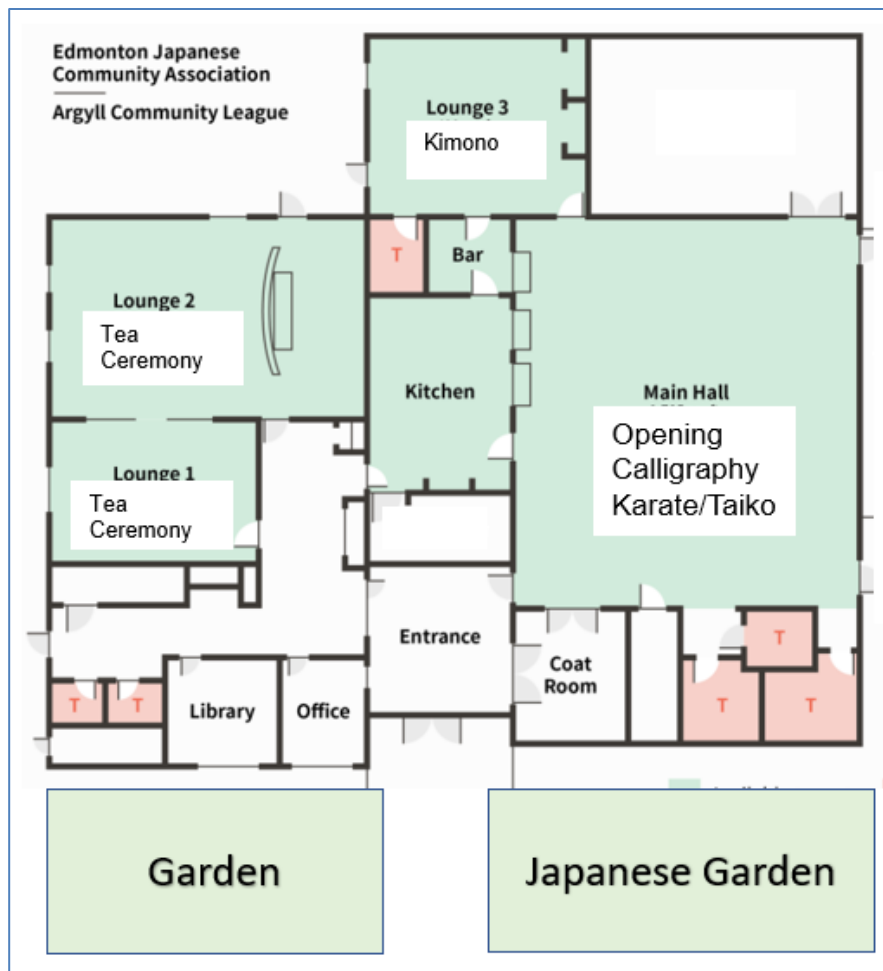
Japan Foundation/Alberta Education prepared gifts and information flyers to students and teachers.

**Edmonton Public School Board:** Mr. Ron Sperling, Curriculum and Learning Supports

Teacher Consultant - Language & Culture Programs joined the event on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Edmonton Japanese Community Association:** Mrs. Sanae Ohki: Explore Japan Coordinator

## 6. EJCA Centre and Rooms used for the Explore Japan



## 7. Program Details

a. **Opening** 9:50 – 10:00 am

b. **Workshops in the morning** 10:00 am – 12:25 pm

Three groups of students went through three workshops.

i. **Calligraphy** 45 minutes

After the instructors explained the fundamentals of Japanese calligraphy and tools, students quietly practiced a few kanji characters using samples and made one good copy. Students made bookmarks with their names written in Japanese.

ii. **Tea Ceremony** 45 minutes

The room was prepared in the tearoom setting with Tatami mats. After demonstrating a Tea Ceremony, all students made pairs with classmates, enjoyed pastries, and then made tea for each other.

iii. **Kimono** 45 minutes

Looking at slides and sample Kimonos, students were introduced to the traditional Japanese garments and how to wear Yukata. After the introduction, each student wore a Yukata and took individual and group photos.

c. **Workshops in the afternoon** 1:00 – 2:00 pm

i. **Taiko Workshop**

The instructors introduced the Taiko and basic beats. Then demonstrated vital techniques. All students took turns drumming the Taiko.

ii. **Karate workshop**

The instructor guided students into the “Karate world.” The essential Japanese values and behaviour, i.e., politeness, concentration, and respect for others, were introduced as students enjoyed practicing basic Karate movements.

d. **Lunch** 12:25 – 1:00 pm

Students could order a Japanese Bento lunch for \$15.00 (regular, vegetarian or gluten-free) from the Mikado Restaurant or bring their lunch. Many students enjoyed the Bento lunch.

The programs were all prepared so that students had an opportunity to experience each culture's topics. A Teachers and Students Handbook (Online) was designed to support understanding of these topics before the event days. [Explore Japan 2022 Teacher & Students Handbook](#)

All workshops were designed and instructed by members of Culture Programs, the Gojukai Karate Club, the Kita no Taiko of the Edmonton Japanese Community Association, and the Matsukaze Tea Ceremony Club.

## 8. Feedbacks from Students

121 students out of 150 attended responded to online feedback by November 8<sup>th</sup>.  
(81% response rate)

### Your school's name:

School	Number of responses	Percentage
Harry Ainlay	34	28.1%
Linsey Thurber	0	0
Paul Kane	11	9.1%
Memorial	48	39.7%
Jasper Place	28	23.1%

### a. Were the five sessions enjoyable and valuable?

	Strongly Yes	Yes	Satisfactory	No	Strongly No
Taiko Drum	82	36	3	0	0
Karate	72	37	11	0	0
Tea Ceremony	81	29	9	1	0
Kimono	103	17	0	0	0
Calligraphy	70	43	6	0	0
Total	408	162	29	1	0
Percentage	68%	27%	5%	-	-

### b. Did today's event leave a memorable impression on you?

Strongly Yes	83	68.6%
Yes	35	28.8%
No opinion	3	2%
No	0	0
Strongly No	0	0

- c. Did today's event help to deepen your understanding toward Japan and Japanese culture?

Strongly Yes	79	65.3%
Yes	41	33.9%
No opinion	1	1%
No	0	0
Strongly No	0	0

- d. Did today's event inspire you to take some action related to Japan? (e.g. a desire to visit Japan, study in Japan, learn Japanese, join a cultural exchange, purchase Japanese products, or learn more about Japan or specific groups/people from today?)

Strongly Yes	86	71.1%
Yes	30	24.8%
No opinion	4	3%
No	1	0
Strongly No	0	0

- e. Overall, were you satisfied with today's event?

Strongly Yes	104	86%
Yes	16	13.2%
No opinion	1	1%
No	0	0
Strongly No	0	0

- f. The Consulate General of Japan in Calgary provided a partial fund to 2022 Explore Japan. Is this your first time participating in an event organized or co-hosted by the Japanese Embassy / a Consulate General in the last three years?

Yes	118	97.5%
No	3	2.5%

**g. Please tell us your opinions on today's event and its meaning to you.**

Also, 106 students respond in the comment field. Typical comments are:

- ✓ It was a very memorable experience learning more about Japan's culture!
- ✓ It was very fun to learn firsthand about Japanese cultures and traditions.
- ✓ I had so much fun today, I'm grateful for a chance to experience Japanese culture without killing my wallet and going to Japan on vacation!
- ✓ This trip has given me a deeper understanding in the Japanese culture.
- ✓ I want to join my younger brother's karate class now (can't let him get an upper hand)
- ✓ I found it was very informative and fun to do, I will be going on a trip/school to Japan in 2023 so this was a good introduction.
- ✓ It was an amazing experience wearing a Summer Kimono
- ✓ I enjoyed seeing Japanese values demonstrated in the traditional arts. It was interesting to see Japanese clothing and experience what a tea ceremony might be like.
- ✓ Even for Japanese today's activists were meaningful and memorable! 日本の方とお話できてよかったです。ありがとうございました
- ✓ It was welcoming and nice. A calm environment that made learning not stressful and fun.
- ✓ Learning from people who were originally from Japan was also amazing because they were able to provide context and stories I otherwise would not have known.
- ✓ It was a lot of fun, and only strengthens my want to visit Japan
- ✓ it was amazing, i'll remember this forever

**9. Value of the program**

Daniel Ito Sensei of the Harry Ainlay School described the value of the program.

Dear Ohkisan, EJCA, volunteers and sponsors for Explore Japan,

On behalf of the Japanese students at Harry Ainlay High School I want to express my gratitude for the absolutely wonderful experience that you provided my students. The event as a whole was very well organized and well executed. The venue space was used very effectively and the schedule was well planned. Thank you for the flexibility of changing times on the fly.

Each of the events were carefully planned and very well instructed, Not only did our students learn various aspects of Japanese traditional culture but they

also got to experience the virtues and values behind these activities. The instructors were all very knowledgeable and kept the students involved and interested. My students came away from the event with a passion and enthusiasm for Japanese culture. You gave them an interactive and authentic experience of Japanese culture that I cannot do alone in my classroom. Thank you for this invaluable opportunity.

We are very fortunate to have volunteers like you in the Edmonton Japanese community who are willing to take time out of your very busy schedules to serve the larger Edmonton community by sharing your passions and interests in Japanese language and culture. I certainly hope that some of my students will become like you in pursuing Japanese culture to a level where they can share it like you have.

We would like to thank the sponsor organizations, the Consulate General of Japan in Calgary and the EJCA for allowing this opportunity to take place.

Once again, thank you so much!!

とても 素晴らしい イベントでした。ほんとうに ありがとうございました。

## 10. Funding Sources and Expenditure

Support	Consulate General of Japan in Calgary	\$2,490.00	
	Alberta Education	\$1,000.00	
	Prince Takamado Japan Centre	\$800.00	
	Edmonton Japanese Community Association	\$3105.00	
	Total		\$7395.00
Expenses	Honorarium	\$2,490.00	
	Educational material and other expenses	\$1,337.48	
	Material cost paid to EJCA	\$462.52	
	Edmonton Japanese Community association	\$3105.00	
	Total		\$7395.00

## 9. Teachers of attending high Schools

Daniel Ito, Harry Ainlay High School  
 Emma Crossley, Jasper Place High School  
 Miriam Irons, Lindsay Thurber High School



Erika Oshiki, Memorial High School  
Elizabeth Masurok, Paul Kane High School

## 10. Photos

### Calligraphy Workshop



### Tea Ceremony Workshop





Kimono workshop



## Karate Workshop



## Taiko Workshop

