

Workshop "Let's try Japanese festival: Chants and Japanese Percussion Experience"

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1. introduction

"Matsuri" (matsuri or festivals) is one of the Japanese representing culture. The original purpose of "matsuri" is a ceremony to thank Gods. In Japan, there is a concept of "ハレ Hare" and "ケ Ke", which "Hare" means "Extraordinary" and "Ke" means "Ordinary". Matsuri is the "Hare"; people tried to reset "Ke" by holding a festive event.

Japanese "Matsuri" is not only for ceremonies for shrines but also for festivals held by citizens to promote their communities, originating from seasons or to celebrate the histories.

At "Matsuri", people enjoy music and dance (voice, instruments, and dance). The goal of this workshop is to provide the experience to Thai Children with the elements of Japanese festivals as a part of the cross-cultural experience.

2. Happi

The traditional Japanese costume essential for festivals is "Happi". People wear "Happi" in colours like red or blue with the Kanji character "祭 Matsuri" written, with a "ハチマキ Hachimaki", a cloth headband wrapped around their head, to visually create the atmosphere of "Hare (extraordinary)". In this workshop, Thai children will also try wearing a simple "Happi".

3. "Kakegoe", Chants

Festival sound consists of human voices and musical instruments. Chants are varied, including chants used when carrying "神輿 Mikoshi" (a portable shrine), chants used while dancing, and more, depending on the type and region.

In this workshop, we will pick up some chants with familiar rhythms and easy pronunciation to call and respond to each other.



4. musical instruments

Festival music is played on instruments like 笛 Fue (bamboo flute) and 太鼓 Taiko (drum) .

鳴子 Naruko is a musical instrument which the dancers hold in their hands. It is a simple percussion instrument similar to a castanet, first used at the Yosakoi Festival in Kochi in the 1950s. As Yosakoi-style festivals spread throughout the country, Naruko began to be used in many parts of Japan. There are some childcare facilities where they teach their children how to dance with Naruko to perform at festivals. In this workshop, we will pass out Children's Naruko so the children can experience making a sound.



5. Combination of Voice, Instruments, and Dance

In actual festivals, a comprehensive combination of voice, instruments, and dance is used in the performance. In the workshop, children will be experiencing dancing and making noise

with the Naruko, following the chants they learned.

6. Opening and Closing

At the workshop's beginning and end, we will lecture on the Japanese language and Japanese songs. The workshop will start with the "Name Game". Instructors will call each child's name with a "ちゃん XX-chan" (a Japanese form of addressing small children), and the child will respond by saying "はい Haai" (Yes), following the examples shown by the instructors for the children to follow.

At the end of the session, we will be making a circle with all participants. We will sing a Japanese children's song, "Sayonara Ankoromochi (Good-bye Ankoromochi), as we have the closing greeting.