

JAPANESE GARDENS INTRODUCTION

Activity one: Draw a Japanese rock garden

Before we start looking at Japanese rock gardens, have a go at drawing one. It will be interesting to see how much your drawing looks like a traditional Japanese rock garden.

Draw a picture of what you think a Japanese rock garden looks like. Follow the instructions below:

1. In your book or on your device, use up to $\frac{1}{2}$ a page to draw a large rectangle shape. This is your garden outline.
2. Choose an odd number of rocks such as 3, 5 or 7. Now draw the rocks in your garden. Draw some of the rocks next to each other, and spread some out.
3. Draw a little bit of green moss growing on some rocks.
4. Around your rocks draw some swirling lines to look like water or waves.
5. Colour in the moss (green) and stones (grey), but leave the background of your garden white to look like white sand.
6. If you are able to, share your drawing with a classmate. Talk to each other about what is the same, or different, or what you like about your classmate's drawing.

Activity two: Compare your drawing to images of Japanese rock gardens

Now use your device to google images of Japanese rock gardens.

Look at 3 different images.

1. In what ways do these 3 images look like your drawing?

Example - My drawing has rocks and sand, like the images I found...

2. In what ways do these images look different to your drawing?

Example - In my drawing the rocks are all the same size, but in the images, there are different sizes.

Activity three: About traditional Japanese rock gardens

Now let's learn about traditional Japanese rock gardens, so that you will be able to create your own miniature garden.

Karesansui gardens

Rock gardens were first created more than 800 years ago in the Kamakura period (1185-1333) in Japan.

In the Muromachi period (1333-1568), a new style of rock garden was invented and called *karesansui*, meaning dry landscape.

You can pronounce *karesansui* like this, *kare-san-sui*. These gardens are unique or special to Japan because they were only created in Japan during this time.

Karesansui gardens are made of only two things, white sand and rocks. The sand is used to look like flowing water, while the rocks represent mountains or waterfalls.

Karesansui gardens follow Zen Buddhism and are a very simple way to create a peaceful and calm mood for people looking at the garden.

Sometimes moss grows on and around rocks, or small shrubs are used to add something green.

Source: *Niponica – Discovering Japan*, No 26 '[Welcome to Japanese gardens](#)'.



Tips for creating a Japanese rock garden

- Keep things simple (less is more).
- Place items randomly to look as if the garden grew by itself.
- Use odd numbers like 3, 5 and 7 for a more natural look.
- Use sand to show flowing water.
- Use rocks or stones to show mountains or waterfalls.