

“ Conversational Ballgames”

An Expository Essay
By Nancy Masterson Sakamoto



FOCUS

Overarching Question

What should we learn?

Reading Skill

- **Main Idea**

Literary Analysis

- **Expository Essay**

Technology Link

- **Podcast**
- **Online Assessment**

Global Connection

- **Japan/America – cultural differences in conversation**

Connections



About the Author

Nancy Masterson Sakamoto graduated from UCLA with an English degree. She married a Japanese artist and Buddhist priest, and the couple lived in Japan for twenty-four years. There, Sakamoto as a visiting professor at the University of Osaka, where she trained Japanese teachers who taught English to middle school and high school students.

While living in Japan, Sakamoto was able to serve conversations from both the Japanese and American perspectives [Pearson 431].

Cultural Diversity

While people around the world have much in common, they also have cultural differences. Some of the ways people express these differences are through the foods they eat and the ways they dress. In this essay, you will learn that a way of talking that may seem normal to you might be considered strange, or even rude, to a person from another culture. [Pearson 431]. {Watch the **Background Video** - Pearson Successnet/Before You Read}



Traditional Japanese Customs

After watching the **Get Connected Video** {Pearson Successnet/Before You Read}, explain why it is important to learn the traditional customs of a country before you go there.

Watch 1 minutes of Video Clip Japanese Bow - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdlNZJ_TFXU and have students bow to each other and say 'hello' in Japanese.



The Big Question



Big Question Vocabulary

Analyze	Curiosity	Discover	Evaluate	Examine
Experiment	Explore	Facts	Information	Inquire
Interview	Investigate	Knowledge	Question	Understand

DIRECTIONS. Complete the following sentences using the above word bank. There may be more than one right answer.

1. _____ an older person in your family to learn about history.
2. _____ is often gained after a lifetime of experience.
3. It can take to learn to _____ someone from another culture.

DIRECTIONS. Follow the directions in responding to each of the items below.

1. List two different times that you learned something about a person from another culture. Write your response in complete sentences.

2. Choose one of the experiences you listed in number 1. write two or more sentences describing that experience. Use at least two of the Big Question vocabulary words in your answer. You may use the words in different forms [for example, you can change *analyze* to *analyzing*.]

3. Write a short paragraph in which you connect this sentence to the big question:

Cultural knowledge can _____

4. You will learn that a way of talking that may seem normal to you In “Conversational Ballgames,” you will learn that Japanese and western cultures have different ‘rules’ for conversation. Complete the following sentence:

Understanding conversational ‘rules’ can be helpful because _____

While you read, look for insights about how communication between people may be affected by cultural beliefs and practices.

Building Background



Vocabulary Warm-up

<u>Word</u>	<u>Part of Speech</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Sentence</u>
Cultural	Adjective	Having to do with the way of life of a particular people, including their customs, religions, ideas	Our country is made strong by CULTURAL diversity.
Discussion	Noun	Argument on or consideration of a subject	The topic under DISCUSSION is after-school diversity.
Formal	Adjective	Requiring elaborate dress and manners	Jan's FORMAL gown was made of silk.
Occasional	Adjective	Occurring now and then	Don made OCCASIONAL comments as he observed the game.
Powerful	Adjective	Strong; mighty	Alfie's POWERFUL play in the last quarter won the game.
Refer	Verb	To call attention to; to speak of	Marsha's comments REFER to Angela's previous statement.
Response	Noun	A reply or reaction	The audience's RESPONSE to the performance consisted of wild clapping.
Suitable	Adjective	Proper for the purpose or occasion	A SUITABLE response is a simple thank you.
Elaboration	Noun	Addition of more details	His ELABORATION of the main idea helped me grasp his point.
Unconsciously	Adverb	Thoughtlessly	The dog UNCONSCIOUSLY scratched his ear.
Murmuring	Verb	Making low sounds that cannot be heard clearly	My parents were MURMURING in the hallway to each other.
Parallel	Adjective	Extending in the same direction and at the same distance apart	The train tracks ran PARALLEL to the highway.
Suitable	Adjective	Appropriate	The movie was SUITABLE for children.
Indispensable	Adjective	Absolutely necessary	Sunscreen is INDISPENSABLE in the strong summer sun.

EXERCISE A: DIRECTIONS. Answer the questions with complete explanations.

1. Would it be **SUITABLE** to give a twelve-year-old a car for his or her birthday?
2. If you were told that a dog exhibits **OCCASIONAL** bursts of violence, would you want to be around that dog?
3. What might you expect to see and hear at a **CULTURAL** event?
4. What would you wear to a **FORMAL** event, such as a wedding?
5. What is your **RESPONSE** when you are introduced to someone for the first time?
6. What is the difference between a **DISCUSSION** and a speech?
7. Suppose you are doing research on a certain topic, and ten sources **REFER** to a certain book. Would you try to find the book? Explain.
8. Do you think that a **POWERFUL** flea powder would kill fleas on a dog?

Japanese Kimono



EXERCISE B: DIRECTIONS: Think about the meaning of the **BOLD** word in each sentence. then, answer the question.

1. If two lines run **PARALLEL** to each other, what do you know about them?
2. If a speaker is **MURMURING**, what might he or she be asked to do?
3. Why might someone who is learning Japanese say that a dictionary is **INDISPENSABLE?**
4. If you were engaged in a conversation about cultural differences, and someone asked you for **ELABORATION**, what would you do?
5. If two cultures had different ideas about **SUITABLE** times for serious conversation, would holding a meeting b simple or difficult?
6. Why is it hard to stop doing something if you do it **UNCONSCIOUSLY?**



Japanese Tea Ceremony

Read the following passage one time through, paying special attention to the **BOLD** words. Then, read it again, and complete the activities in the right-hand column.

The Japanese tea ceremony is a **CULTURAL** tradition that follows a basic format. The host usually wears a kimono, a traditional Japanese costume. Guests have the choice of a kimono or other **FORMAL** wear. After walking quietly and calmly through a garden, guests are met by the host, who silently greets them with a silent bow. each guest's **RESPONSE** is a similar bow. Everyone then removes his or her shoes and goes through a small door to enter the teahouse.

Once inside, guests admire the kettle, the flowers, and other decorations. The decorations, **SUITABLE** to the season or the occasion, are always simple. Then the guests kneel on mats made of rice straw, resting on their heels. They watch as the host performs the various ceremonies. If no meal is offered, the host will serve small sweets. Then each utensil for the tea is cleaned in front of the guests in a precise way. the tea is prepared by whisking powdered green tea into hot water with a bamboo whisk. With much ceremony, bowing, and wiping of the bowl's rim, the bowl is passed among the guests.

1. Circle the word that is described by **CULTURAL**. Use **CULTURAL** in a sentence:
2. Underline the word that names a Japanese garment that can be worn on a **FORMAL** occasion. Describe what you would wear on a **formal** occasion:
3. Circle the words that describe each guest's **RESPONSE** to the host's bow. Use **RESPONSE** in a sentence:
4. Underline the noun that is described by **SUITABLE** . What does **suitable** mean?

After the guests have had the tea, the host cleans each utensil again. Again, much ceremony goes along with this. Guests take turns examining and admiring each item, often using a special cloth to handle each one. After the host collects the utensils, the guests depart. The host stands at the door and bows, ending the ceremony.

The ceremony is a time for the host and the guests to be spiritually refreshed. **DISCUSSION** is limited. Guests relax, enjoying the atmosphere. they listen to the sounds of the water and the fire. They smell the incense and the tea. They make **OCCASIONAL** comments. They might **REFER** to the beauty of the teahouse as they enjoy one another's company. The ceremony is a **POWERFUL** reminder of the importance of slowing down our hectic lives.

5. Circle the word that describes the amount of **DISCUSSION** at a tea ceremony. What is another word for **DISCUSSION**?

6. Underline the word that **OCCASIONAL** describes. What does **OCCASIONAL** mean?

7. Circle the words that explain what guests might **REFER** to in their discussion. Use **REFER** in a sentence.

7. Circle the root word in **POWERFUL**. Define **POWERFUL**.

Japanese Tea Ceremony



Before You Read



Reading Skill: Adjust Your Reading Rate to Recognize Main Ideas and Key Points

The **MAIN IDEA** is the central point of a passage or text. Most articles and essays have a main idea. Each paragraph or passage in the work also has a main idea, or **KEY POINT**.

The main idea of a paragraph is usually stated in a **TOPIC SENTENCE** – a sentence that identifies the key point. The paragraph then supplies **SUPPORTING DETAILS** that give examples, explanations, or reasons.

When reading nonfiction, **ADJUST YOUR READING RATE TO RECOGNIZE MAIN IDEAS AND KEY POINTS.**

- **SKIM** the article to get a sense of the main idea *before* you begin reading. Look over the text quickly, looking for text organization, topic sentences, and repeated words.
- **SCAN** the text when you need to find answers to questions or to clarify or find supporting details. Run your eyes over the text, looking for a particular word or idea.
- **READ CLOSELY** to learn what the main ideas are and to identify the key points and supporting details.

DIRECTIONS. Scan each paragraph below to find answers to the questions that follow:

1. What game does the author discuss in the below paragraph?

PARAGRAPH 1:

A western-style conversation between two people is like a game of tennis. If I introduce a topic, a conversational ball, I expect you to hit it back. If you agree with me, I don't expect you simply to agree and do nothing more. I expect you to add something—a reason for agreeing, another example, or an elaboration to carry the idea further. But, I don't expect you always to agree. I am just as happy if you question me, or challenge me, or completely disagree with me. Whether you agree or disagree, your response will return the ball to me.

2. What game does the author discuss in the below paragraph?

PARAGRAPH 2: A Japanese conversation, however, is not at all like tennis or volleyball. It is like bowling. You wait your turn. And you always know your place in line. It depends on such things as whether you are older or younger, a close friend or a relative stranger to the previous speaker, in a senior or junior position, and so on.

DIRECTIONS. Now, read the paragraphs closely for **main ideas** and **supporting details**.

Main Idea of Paragraph #1	
Two supporting details that support the main idea of Paragraph #1	1. 2.
Main Idea of Paragraph #2	
Two supporting details that support the main idea of Paragraph #2	1. 2.

While You Read



Literary Analysis: Expository Essay

An **EXPOSITORY ESSAY** is a short piece of nonfiction that explains, defines, or interprets ideas, events, or processes. The way in which the information is organized and presented depends on the specific topic of the essay. Writers organize the main points of their essays logically, to aid readers' comprehension. They may organize information in one of these ways or in a combination of ways:

- comparison and contrast
- cause and effect
- chronological order
- problem and solution

"Conversational Ballgames" is an expository essay that explains two processes. It uses comparison and contrast to make the explanation clear.

DIRECTIONS. Use the below chart to compare and contrast Japanese-style conversation with Western-style conversation. In the left-hand column, write five characteristics of western-style conversations as those conversations are described in "Conversational Ballgames." In the right-hand column, describe how the Japanese style differs from, or is similar to, each characteristic described on the left.

Western-Style Conversation	Japanese-Style Conversation
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

After You Read



Critical Thinking

EXERCISE A. DIRECTIONS: Answer each of the below questions.

1. What is the most surprising thing you learned in this essay? Why is it surprising?
2. What happened at first when the author joined in during conversations in Japan?
3. Draw Conclusions: What misunderstandings took place during those initial conversations? Use examples from the essay to support your response.
4. To what sports or games does the author compare Japanese-style and Western-style conversations?
5. Apply: What do the author and her family and friends need to understand about each other?
6. How do the Japanese feel about conversing during dinner?
7. How does the Japanese behavior compare with Westerners' behavior during a meal?

8. How does awareness of other cultures help us to communicate with other people? How does it help us to understand the world better?

9. What is the main idea of the article?

10. Explain why “Conversational Ballgames” is an **expository essay**. Give examples from the text to support your answer.

EXERCISE B. DIRECTIONS. Fill out the below chart to organize the information provided in the essay.

Describe Polite Conversation in the United States	Describe Polite Conversation in Japan	Author’s Conclusion

Podcast Project



Writing Dialogue

From reading “Conversational Ballgames,” you know how western-style and Japanese-style conversations differ. Work with a partner to write a conversation in each style. Decide which of you will be Speaker 1 and which will be Speaker 2. Then, write your parts. Write about one of these topics:

- The best time to do homework
- The best way to spend summer vacation
- My favorite musician/musical group

Afterwards, create a podcast to share with the class..

Western-style Conversation

Speaker 1: _____

Speaker 2: _____

Speaker 1: _____

Speaker 2: _____

Japanese-style Conversation

Speaker 1: _____

Speaker 2: _____

Speaker 1: _____

Speaker 2: _____

Academic Indicators



This unit of instruction will address the following Ohio Department of Education Academic Indicators for Seventh Grade:

Acquisition of Vocabulary

- 7.1. Define the meaning of unknown words through context clues and the author's use of comparison, contrast, definition, restatement and example
- 7.8. Determine the meanings and pronunciations of unknown words by using dictionaries, thesauruses, glossaries, technology and textual features, such as definitional footnotes or sidebars

Reading Process: Concepts of Print, Comprehension Strategies and Self-Monitoring Strategies

- 7.1. Establish and adjust purposes for reading, including to find out, to understand, interpret, enjoy and solve problems
- 7.2. Predict or hypothesize as appropriate from information in the text, substantiating with specific references to textual examples that may be in widely separated sections of text
- 7.3. Make critical comparisons across text, noting author's style as well as literal and implied content of text.
- 7.4. Summarize the information in texts, using key ideas, supporting details and referencing gaps or contradictions.
- 7.5. Select, create and use graphic organizers to interpret textual information
- 7.6. Answer literal, inferential, evaluative and synthesizing questions to demonstrate comprehension of grade-appropriate print texts and electronic and visual media
- 7.7. Monitor own comprehension by adjusting speed to fit the purpose, or by skimming, scanning, reading on, looking back, note taking or summarizing what has been read so far in text

Oral and Visual Communication

- 7.5. Demonstrate an understanding of the rules of the English language and select language appropriate to purpose and audience.
- 7.6. Adjust volume, phrasing, enunciation, voice modulation and inflection to stress important ideas and impact audience response.
- 7.7. Vary language choices as appropriate to the context of the speech.
- 7.8. Deliver informational presentations (e.g., expository, research) that:
 - a. demonstrate an understanding of the topic and present events or ideas in a logical sequence;
- 7.9. Deliver formal and informal descriptive presentations that convey relevant information and descriptive details.



Citations



Videos

- **Get Connected Video on Pearson Online Website, Before You Read**
- **Background Video on Pearson Online Website, Before You Read**
- **<http://www.clker.com/clipart-2813.html>**
- Japanese Bow - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdlNZJ_TFXU

Images

- **thetokyotraveler.com**

Lesson Plans



The purpose of this Unit is to expose students to Japanese culture and 21st century technology skills within the framework of ODE English Language Arts indicators. This unit will focus on the following:

Overarching Question

What should we learn?

Reading Skill

- Main Idea

Literary Analysis

- Expository Essay

Technology Link

- Podcast
- Online Assessment

Global Connection

- Japan/America – cultural differences in conversation

Each lesson is designed as part of a 7th grade English Language Arts block schedule of 80 minutes.

Note: A Student Study Packet will be given to students {see attached} The expository essay “Conversational Ballgames” is found in the Pearson Literature Ohio Textbook. Resource materials can be found in the Pearson Resource Unit 3 reproducible. Please check copyright guidelines for reproducing these materials.

Materials Needed

“Conversational Ballgames”
an expository essay by
Nancy Masterson Sakamoto

Student Study Packet [one
for each student]

Video Clips –
bookmarked on
computer
Infocus Projector

Computers to create
podcasts [one for each
pair of students]
Online Assessment put
on Quia – one
computer per student

LESSON 1

Connections

1. Show Video Clips about Japan
 - Journey Through Japan – Part 1 [3:04 minutes]
[http://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video; ylt=A0WTb_nomNxLLz8AwrK\]zbfF?ei=UTF-8&p=journey%20through%20japan&fr2=tab-img&fr=moz2](http://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video; ylt=A0WTb_nomNxLLz8AwrK]zbfF?ei=UTF-8&p=journey%20through%20japan&fr2=tab-img&fr=moz2)
 - Traditional Japanese Music [1:20 minutes]
<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=6210016496839663795#>
2. About the Author
3. Cultural Diversity
 - Get Connected Video about diversity {Pearson Successnet/Before you Read]
4. Traditional Japanese Customs
 - Background Video {Pearson Successnet/Before You Read}
5. The Big Question: What should we learn?
6. Building Background: Vocabulary Warm-up

LESSON 2

Building Background: Japanese Tea Ceremony

- Read Study Packet Informational Text & Complete Activities
- Watch Video Link: Living in Asia: Japanese Tea Ceremony [4 minutes]
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOCiOOjoWXk&feature=related>

Before You Read: Reading Skill – Main Idea

- Read Study Packet Material and complete activities

While You Read: Literary Analysis – Expository Essay

LESSON 3

After You Read: Critical Thinking & Discussion Questions

Podcast Project: Demonstrating Cultural Differences in Conversation

LESSON 4

Online Assessment – Quia.com