

# George Nakashima: One with Nature Resource Kit

## *Teacher's Manual*



**James A. Michener Art Museum**

138 South Pine Street, Doylestown, Pennsylvania 18901

[www.michenerartmuseum.org](http://www.michenerartmuseum.org)

# George Nakashima: One with Nature

## Resource Kit

### Table of Contents



G  
E  
O  
R  
G  
E  
  
N  
A  
K  
A  
S  
H  
I  
M  
A

#### Introduction

#### Contents of Kit

##### Lesson 1: Interesting Interiors

Using the Nakashima Reading Room as a motivational tool, students are inspired to create their “dream” room. (*Suggested Classroom:* Visual Arts, Language Arts)

##### Lesson 2: Nakashima the Architect: A Focus on Japanese Architecture

Students create a clay façade of a Japanese building. (*Suggested Classroom:* Visual Arts, Language Arts)

##### Lesson 3: Exploring Organic Form

Students create a collage inspired by organic forms found in Nakashima’s furniture. (*Suggested Classroom:* Visual Arts)

##### Lesson 4: The Growth of a Tree

Using the furniture of Nakashima as a springboard for discussion, students explore the growth of a tree and illustrate what they have learned. (*Suggested Classroom:* Visual Arts, Science, Language Arts)

##### Lesson 5: Mad for Modernism

\*\*A lesson for high school students to explore the areas of the Modernist movement. (*Suggested Classroom:* Visual Arts, Language Arts)

##### Interdisciplinary Connections in Japanese Architecture

More lesson and activity ideas linking social studies, science, math and the visual arts.

##### More Lesson Ideas

A list of more lesson ideas to explore in your classroom including: Sumi-ink painting, Haiku poetry, Japanese papermaking, and more. Four more complete lessons are included.

##### Vocabulary

##### Biographical Information on George Nakashima

##### List of Slides/Visuals

##### Bibliography

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ART  
MUSEUM



G  
E  
O  
R  
G  
E  
  
N  
A  
K  
A  
S  
H  
I  
M  
A

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## Lesson 1: Interesting Interiors: George Nakashima, The Designer

**Grades:** Elementary/Middle

### **Objectives:**

**Knowledge:** The students will learn that George Nakashima was a designer who created designs for interiors, architecture, and furnishings.

**Skill:** The students will learn how to design a “dream” imaginary room of their house.

**Attitude:** The students will learn to appreciate the design and the planning process of creating an interior space.

### **Prepare Ahead:**

#### **Motivation:**

The students will first visit the **Nakashima Reading Room** at the Michener. The teacher will explain that Mira Nakashima-Yarnall, daughter of George Nakashima, created and designed the room. The teacher will tell the students that architects are not only interested in buildings, but they also very frequently design interiors and furniture. The teacher will ask the students, “what is different about this room from your house at home?”. The students will respond with various answers. The teacher will ask the students to identify things in the room that are different. Items that will be discussed are: the *Mother post*, the *shoji screens*, the *tatami mats* (a basic unit in Japanese building construction), the *conoid chairs*, the *kyo-kabe plaster*, the *asa-no-ha* pattern, and the *claro-walnut table*. The teacher will discuss the purposes of each of the elements in the room. The teacher will ask the students to explain the shape of the table. The teacher will explain that it is a “*free edge*” form. The teacher will then explain the difference between *organic* and *geometric* form. The teacher will ask the students to point out examples of each in the Reading Room.

The teacher will ask the students to count the number of chairs in the room. The teacher will ask if it an odd or even number. The teacher will explain that Japanese culture do not like even numbers, because they feel it is bad luck. The teacher will explain the difference between *asymmetry* and *symmetry*. The teacher will ask the students to explain whether they think the room is asymmetrical or symmetrical. The teacher will explain how asymmetry is relevant in Japanese architecture.

The teacher will ask the students how *color* is used in the room. The students will say that the colors are natural, and you cannot find anything with color (from the color wheel). The teacher will tell the students that the Japanese use colors of nature when creating buildings rather than adding color. The teacher will ask the students, “how do these color choices make you feel?” “How do they reflect the values and preferences of the Japanese people?”.

The teacher will ask the students to explain what *materials* are used in the room. The students will say that they everything in the room is natural. The teacher will tell the students that the Japanese use objects from nature when they are creating their interiors.

The teacher will show visuals of other interiors such as images of the interiors of the Nakashima studio in New Hope, and images of a Japanese tea room. The teacher will show other interiors created by other architects as well and ask the students to compare/contrast them with the Nakashima Reading Room.



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A  
S  
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M  
A**

The teacher will then ask the students to imagine that they are all architects, and they have the opportunity to design a dream interior space, such as their bedroom. The teacher will tell the students that they can use their imaginations. The teacher will then say that the students must choose material that they will use throughout the room, just like Mira Nakashima uses wood and natural objects to create her interior space. The students must use this material through many of the aspects of the room. (For example, a room can be created out of all different types of metal. Or a room can have many things created out of glass.) The students must use this element in most of the room and its furnishings. The teacher will show his/her example to the class.

The teacher will ask the students to sketch out ideas on a scrap paper, working on the actual space first such as the walls and floor, and sketch out ideas of the furnishings.

**Visuals:** Images of interiors of Nakashima's studio in New Hope, Pennsylvania: The Minguren Museum, the Conoid Studio, the interior of Reception House.

**References to Art History:** Arts and Crafts Movement, George Nakashima

**Exemplars:** Teacher's example

**Activity:** Following the discussion, the students will create an imaginary interior design. The students will first complete sketches of the aspects of the room such as the walls, floors, and furnishings. The students will complete a final drawing in colored pencils on 14x18 paper. The students will write one paragraph about their dream interior space and attach it to their work. The students will display their work and discuss their dream interior with the rest of the class.

**Supplies:** 14x18 paper, pencils, colored pencils, and erasers

**Vocabulary:** mother post, shoji screens, tatami mats, conoid chair, butterfly inlay, kyo-kabe plaster, asymmetry/symmetry, George Nakashima, free-edge, asa-no-ha, woodworker, architect, organic, geometric

**Closure:** What is an interior? Who created the Nakashima Reading room? What were the differences that were discussed that we saw in the room?

**Pennsylvania Learning Outcomes:** 1vi, 1vii, 6ii, 6iv

**NAEA Standards:** 1a, 3a, 3b

**Pennsylvania Arts and Humanities Standards:** 9.1.5.J, 9.3.5.B, 9.3.5.D.

**Assessment/Evaluation:** This lesson is successful if the students create an imaginary interior design of their dream room.

**Extension Activities:**

- **Middle/High School level:** Using this lesson, incorporate the use of **2-point perspective** when creating the "dream" room.
- Have students explore interiors of other architects, and of different cultures.

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## Lesson 2: Nakashima the Architect: A Focus on Japanese Architecture

**Grades:** Elementary/Middle

### **Objectives:**

**Knowledge:** Students will learn the differences between Japanese and American architecture by examining various architects including George Nakashima.

**Skill:** The students will learn how to design and create a façade of a Japanese building using clay.

**Attitude:** The students will appreciate the differences in Japanese and American culture.

**Prepare Ahead:** The teacher must prepare clay, clay tools, and newspaper for working areas. The teacher will need to put out scrap paper for sketches of Japanese buildings.

### **Motivation:**

The teacher will begin the class by asking, “what is an architect?” The students will respond with, “someone who designs buildings.” The teacher will show various images of Japanese architecture and asked the students to describe it. The teacher will ask the students to compare it to architecture they have seen in their environment, and describe how it is different.

The teacher will explain that Japanese architecture has a special relationship to nature, not found in most Western architecture. The color and texture of Japanese architecture result from the nature of materials used – especially wood. Its distinctive characteristics are based on structure; it is raised up from the ground to prevent rot (Japan has heavy rainfalls) and it allows movement during earthquakes. There is no attic or basement, no chimneys, and no doors and windows as in Western architecture.

There are few fixed walls, even at the exterior, which results in a versatile use of interior space. Screens allow for variety and changeability in the exterior wall openings. The broad overhanging roof design allows winter sun in, while shading summer sun and rainfall. Fences and gates define the garden. Of primary importance is the view of the garden from the building; the building becomes a part of nature. The effect is serenity and tranquility.

The teacher will then tell the students they are to research one building they have found in Japanese architecture, and write a 1-paragraph description of it. The teacher will then explain that they will create a sketch of their building on scrap paper, and can begin their work in clay when they have finished their paragraph.

The teacher will then explain how to create a slab out of clay and demonstrate how to create a façade of their building using additive and subtractive techniques. Once the tiles are fired, the students will then paint their tiles with watercolors and coat them with a polymer medium.

**Visuals:** Image of the Conoid Studio, the Minguren Museum, tea room at the Nakashima Studio, Ashram of Sri Abindo

**References to Art History:** Arts and Crafts Movement, George Nakashima, Japanese Architecture

**Exemplars:** Teacher's example



**Activity:** Students will research a Japanese building and write a 1-paragraph paper describing the characteristics. Students will create a façade out of a 8x8 slab of clay. Students will use additive and subtractive processes. After the teacher has fired the pieces, the students will paint the tiles with watercolor, and then paint a clear polymer medium over it for a shiny appearance.

**Supplies:** clay, clay tools, paper, pencils, rulers, rolling pins, water, watercolors, brushes, polymer medium

**Vocabulary:** architect, façade, additive and subtractive

**Closure:** What are the characteristics of Japanese architecture?

**Pennsylvania Learning Outcomes:** 1vi, 1vii, 6i, 6ii, 6iv

**NAEA Standards:** 1a, 4a, 4b, 6a

**Pennsylvania Arts and Humanities Standards:** 9.1, 9.2, 9.3

**Assessment/Evaluation:** This lesson is successful if the students can create a façade out of clay of a Japanese building and write a one-paragraph paper about the characteristics of Japanese architecture.

**Extension Activities:** Explore the works of other architects such as Le Corbusier, Mies Van der Roe, Frank Lloyd Wright, other Japanese architects

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### Lesson 3: Exploring Organic Form

**Grades:** Elementary/Middle

**Objectives:**

**Knowledge:** The students will learn the differences between organic and geometric forms.

**Skill:** The students will learn how to create a collage using organic forms.

**Attitude:** The students will learn to appreciate the differences in organic and geometric forms.

**Prepare Ahead:** Gather objects from nature: leaves, branches, bones, rocks, etc. The teacher will ask the students the day before to bring in objects from nature for this lesson.

**Motivation:** The teacher will begin the class by showing various examples of natural objects and ask the students to identify them. The teacher will ask them to describe the shapes of the objects, and ask the students what kind of lines they would use to draw them. The teacher will then explain that the objects are called **organic**, meaning that they are from nature. The teacher will then explain that shapes can be organic and **geometric**. The teacher will ask the students to identify some geometric shapes. The teacher will draw various examples of organic and geometric shapes on the board.

The teacher will then show various examples of artwork (paintings and sculpture) that include geometric and organic shapes. The teacher will discuss **abstract/realistic** with the students. The teacher will ask if an organic shape can be abstract. The teacher will ask the students to identify shapes in the artwork whether they are organic or geometric.

The teacher will then show work done by Nakashima and ask the students to identify organic and geometric shapes. The teacher will then explain how Nakashima was inspired by nature. The teacher will explain that Nakashima let the natural form of the tree become the design. The teacher will ask the students if furniture can be a form of **sculpture**. The students will respond with various answers. The teacher will explain that Nakashima left the **“free edge”** on the piece of furniture. The teacher will ask the students if they can identify the “free edge”.

The teacher will ask the students to explain what a major difference is between furniture as sculpture and “regular” sculpture. The teacher will ask the students what the purpose of furniture is. The students will respond with various answers, and the teacher will explain that furniture has a **function**. The teacher will ask the students if other sculpture can be functional. The students will say, “a fountain, etc.”.

Using the objects from nature, the teacher will ask the students to draw shapes that they see in their objects. The teacher will tell the students they are not to add detail, just the contour line or outline of the shape. The teacher will say that if they see shapes within a shape, such as in a branch or a leaf, that they can draw that too. The teacher will demonstrate this on the board. The teacher will tell the students that they may draw at least 5 organic shapes, which will be used to create an abstract design. They will cut these shapes out of colored paper to arrange in their collage. The teacher will then suggest that the students may add simple lines to their design using oil pastels.

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**Visuals:** examples of Nakashima furniture; images of paintings and sculpture containing organic and geometric forms

**References to Art History:** Arts and Crafts Movement, George Nakashima

**Exemplars:** teacher's example

**Activity:** Following the discussion, the students will draw organic shapes using their samples they brought into class onto scrap paper. The students will draw at least 5 shapes that they will use to create an abstract design. They will use these forms as templates to cut out of colored paper and arrange into an abstract design. The students will glue the shapes onto their paper. Students may add line using oil pastels. Following the activity, the students will display and discuss their work. The students will explain what objects from nature influenced their shapes.

**Supplies:** objects from nature, pencils, scrap paper for sketching, 12x18 paper, colored paper, glue, oil pastels

**Vocabulary:** organic, geometric, free edge, abstract, realistic, sculpture

**Closure:** What is an organic shape? What is free edge? Who was George Nakashima? What is abstract?

**Pennsylvania Learning Outcomes:** 1vi, 1vii, 6i, 6ii, 6iv

**NAEA Standards:** 1a, 2b, 2c

**Pennsylvania Arts and Humanities Standards:** 9.1, 9.2, 9.3

**Assessment/Evaluation:** This lesson is successful if the students can identify and understand organic form, and how it is used by various artists, including George Nakashima. This lesson is also successful if the students can create a collage out of organic forms using colored paper.

**Extension Activities:**

- Middle/high school level: Substitute foam core board with colored paper and make a 3-D collage.
- All levels: Create a clay sculpture using organic forms
- All levels: Create a sculpture out of natural objects

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## Lesson 4: Nakashima: Exploring Nature – The Growth of a Tree

**Grades:** Elementary/Middle

**Interdisciplinary Connections:** Science/Visual Arts

### Objectives:

**Knowledge:** The students will learn the process of the growth of a tree using work by Nakashima as a springboard for discussion.

**Skill:** The students will learn to identify the elements of growth of a tree and draw them using colored pencils.

**Attitude:** The students will learn to appreciate the growth of a tree, and the organic naturalism in Nakashima's work.

### Motivation:

**PART I:** The teacher will show visuals of work done by Nakashima containing the free edge design. The teacher will discuss free edge design and organic form with the students. The teacher will talk to the students about the work of Nakashima, how one can identify the parts of a tree, and its growth using his work. The teacher will also discuss the different types of wood Nakashima used in his work.

Then the teacher will take the students on a nature walk outside, which will include a discussion on the types of trees (maple, walnut, cherry, oak, etc.), identifying the parts of a tree (burl, grain), and discussing the process of its growth (outer bark, phloem, cambium layer, xylem, or sapwood, heartwood, earth growth, and pith). The students will identify the different leaves from each tree, and sketch a few examples in their sketchbook. The students will also sketch the growth of the tree in their sketchbooks as a preliminary sketchbook assignment. The students will also label the parts of the growth.

**PART II:** The teacher will then discuss **composition** with the students. The teacher will ask, "What does it mean to *compose* something?" The students will respond with, "to create something, to put something together." The teacher will then ask, "What do you think a composition means?" The students will answer with, "a composition is something that you put together". The teacher will then say, "how do you think a composition is in art?" The students will respond with various answers. Then teacher will then say, "a *composition* in art, is the manner in which the forms, lines, and colors of an artwork are arranged." The teacher will explain that the students will create a composition of the trees that they have researched on their nature walk. The teacher will explain that they will need to think about placement of the trees, and balance. The teacher will show an example.

The students will then create a **composition** of trees that they have created preliminary sketches for on a 12x18 paper. On a separate piece of paper, the students will write a short paragraph explaining what trees have been included in the composition, and what are the characteristics of each.

At the end of the lesson, students will share their work with their classmates and display their work.

**Visuals:** slides and laminated visuals of work by George Nakashima, diagram of growth of a tree from *The Soul of a Tree* book



G  
E  
O  
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G  
E  
  
N  
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K  
A  
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H  
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M  
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**References to Art History:** Arts and Crafts Movement, George Nakashima

**Exemplars:** teacher's example

**Activity:** For Part I of the lesson, the students will sketch the various types of tree leaves that they have found on their nature walk in their sketchbook. They will also sketch the growth of a tree in their sketchbook labeling the parts of growth. In Part II, they will create a composition of trees using colored pencils. After they have completed their drawing, they will write a one-paragraph essay explaining what trees they have included in their drawing and their characteristics. The students will display their work and share their work with the rest of the class.

**Supplies:** colored pencils, 12x18 paper, and sketchbooks

**Vocabulary:** outer bark, phloem, cambium layer, xylem (sapwood), heartwood, early growth, pith, free edge design, burl, and composition

**Closure:** What are the important parts of a tree and its growth? What kinds of woods did Nakashima use in his work? What is a composition? What trees did you include in your composition?

**Pennsylvania Learning Outcomes:** 1iii, 1iv, 1vi, 4i, 5vii, 6i, 6ii, 6iv

**NAEA Standards:** 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 2c, 6a, 6c

**Pennsylvania Arts and Humanities Standards:** 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4

**Assessment/Evaluation:** This lesson is successful if the students can sketch the various leaves from the trees they observed and the growth of a tree in their sketchbook. This lesson is also successful if they can complete a composition of trees as their final assignment along with a brief paragraph explaining the trees in their composition.

**Extension Activities:**

- For younger students, create texture rubbings of the various barks of trees using crayons.
- Create a landscape using the trees that were seen on the nature walk.

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## Lesson 5: Mad for Modernism

**Grades:** Middle/High School

**Interdisciplinary Connections:** Language Art/ Visual Arts

### **Objectives:**

**Knowledge:** The students will learn the connection that George Nakashima had to the Modernist movement in Europe and the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States.

**Skill:** The students will learn how to convey Nakashima's connection to the modernist movement through an essay comparing and contrasting his work with another designer. In addition, the students will learn how to create a design of a piece of furniture using colored pencils.

**Attitude:** The students will appreciate the work of George Nakashima and his connection to Modernist designers in Europe.

### **Motivation:**

The teacher will introduce Nakashima and the other key designers that were part of the exhibition, *George Nakashima and the Modernist Moment* to the students. The teacher will pass out the "fact sheet" to the students. The teacher will lead a discussion on the differences and similarities of the works done by the different designers.

The teacher will ask the students to choose a designer from the exhibition to explore more in depth. The teacher will tell the students to write up to a three-page essay comparing and contrasting the work of the designer that they have chosen with the work of George Nakashima. The teacher will also tell the students that the essay must address the connection that Nakashima and the designer had to the Modernism movement in Europe and how it was different that the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States.

The final part of the lesson will include a drawing project which will be a design of a piece of furniture. This design can be inspired by the work of George Nakashima, one of the designers in the exhibition, or another American furniture designer that the student has researched. The teacher will say that the grade for the drawing component will include creativity and originality of design, and neatness.

**Visuals:** images from book, *George Nakashima and the Modernist Moment*, laminated visuals in teacher's guide; slides from teacher's manual

**References to Art History:** Arts and Crafts Movement, George Nakashima, and Modernism in Europe

**Exemplars:** teacher's example

**Activity:** The students will research one of the designers that were featured in the exhibition, *George Nakashima and the Modernist Moment*, and write up to a three-page essay comparing and contrasting his/her work with George Nakashima. Once the students are finished the essay, the students will create a design of a piece of furniture in colored pencils on 9x12 paper. This design can be inspired by the work of George Nakashima, one of the designers in the exhibition, or another American furniture designer that the student has researched. At the end of the lesson, the students will share their essays with the rest of the class and display their work.



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THROUGH  
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**Supplies:** colored pencils, erasers, 9x12 paper, and pencils

**Vocabulary:** Modernism, Arts and Crafts Movement, designer

**Closure:** Why was George Nakashima considered to be connected to some of the European designers? What was the difference between the Arts and Crafts movement and the European Modernist movement?

**Pennsylvania Learning Outcomes:** 1i, 1iii, 1iv, 5vii, 6i, 6ii, 6iii, 6iv,

**NAEA Standards:** 1a, 3a, 3b, 6a

**Pennsylvania Arts and Humanities Standards:** 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4

**Assessment/Evaluation:** This lesson is successful if the students can write an essay communicating the similarities and differences of one of the European designers with George Nakashima. This lesson is also successful if the students can explain the connection Nakashima had with the Arts and Crafts movement and the Modernist movement in Europe. This lesson is also successful if the students can create a furniture design in colored pencils.

**Extension Activities:**

- **Elementary age students:** Students create a furniture design in oil pastels
- Students explore other artists that were part of the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States
- **High School:** Students create a perspective drawing using furniture as the subject

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# George Nakashima: One With Nature

## Resource Kit

### INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS IN JAPANESE ARCHITECTURE

#### SOCIAL STUDIES

Compare the American culture to the Japanese culture. How does the architecture in each society reflect its culture? What values are shown to be important through their architecture? How does the architecture in each society show its relationship to nature?

#### SCIENCE

Japanese buildings are usually made of wood, with simple post and beam structure. Investigate how post and beam structure has been used in other types of buildings, including the frames for skyscrapers.

#### MATH

Japanese buildings are designed around the basic unit of the *tatami* mat. Rooms are designated in size as “four mat rooms” or “six mat rooms”. Rooms do not usually have permanent partitions so they can be combined into one large room.

Measure your rooms at home and school and see how *tatami* mats would lay out in those rooms. Cut out *tatami* mat shapes and see how many different configurations you can make.

Design a house using *tatami* mats as the unit. Remember that Japanese homes are usually small and rooms can overlap.

What makes a good proportion for a room? How does a low or high ceiling affect the way a room feels? The “Golden Section” is an ideal spatial relationship (1:1.618) which is also found in nature in the proportion of shells, flowers, and other natural forms. Build a model to investigate the proportions of the Golden Section to see why this is such a pleasing relationship. Measure some real spaces that seem to be a good proportion and see how they compare to the Golden Section.

#### VISUAL ARTS

Just as in Western art, Japanese artists depicted buildings in their paintings. Find some examples of Japanese art in books and discuss ways in which buildings are incorporated. Compare the buildings in Japanese paintings to those in Western paintings.

Japanese architecture uses the colors of nature, rather than the colors of paint. Build a model of a house using only the colors of the natural materials instead of adding color. How can you combine natural colors to still have interest and contrast in the composition? How do these choices of color make you feel? How do they reflect the values and preferences of the Japanese people?

Ideas taken in part from: *Space and Place*, a chapter from the **Explore Through The Art Door Curriculum Binder**, James A. Michener Art Museum.



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## VISUAL ARTS

Noh Masks

Japanese Fans, Japanese Kites

Sumi-e: Japanese Ink Printing (see activity sheet)

Hanko designs

Ukiyo-e (1600-1968): (Block Printmaking and brush painting), Hokusai

<http://www.nbn.co.jp/ukiyo/theme/t7E.html> for Ukiyo-e images

Japanese Tea Bowls – pinch pots (tea ceremony); Japanese sculpture

Origami, Paper making, Fish printing, Shodo - Calligraphy

## LANGUAGE ARTS

Japanese poetry has a special form which shares some of the spare characteristics of its architecture. This poetry is called *haiku* and is one of the oldest forms of poetry still active. It usually involves 17 syllables written in lines of 5-7-5 syllables. It should create two to three images in your mind, perhaps with another image which adds a twist. Every word is important and cannot be changed to a different word without losing the meaning of the poem. Each image is interrelated, and shows a reverence for life, but with perhaps a little humor.

Research all the rules of haiku and try to write some. Use spaces and places as a theme. How are the structure and form of Japanese buildings similar to Japanese *haiku*?

## COMPUTERS

Use the World Wide Web to travel to the other side of the world. Try these sites:

<http://www.kippo.or.jp/culture/build.htm> At this site you can view and learn about many different Japanese buildings. Click on "HOME" to select "English", then click "Culture".

<http://www.yamate.co.jp/en/waza.htm> At this site you will both see nice pictures and read good descriptions of Japanese buildings.

<http://www.japan-guide.com> Ask to search for the word "Architecture." This site also has links to other sites

<http://www.jinjapan.org/kidsweb/>

See [http://www.kyohaku.go.jp/mus\\_dict/hddc1e.htm](http://www.kyohaku.go.jp/mus_dict/hddc1e.htm) for the National Museum in Kyoto – children's introduction page

For a very brief introduction of sumi-e, see

<http://www.bway.com/singingbird/sumie.htm> and also see "Introduction to Sumi-e

Painting" at <http://www.pressenter.com/~tgoree/sumie/intro.htm>

See [http://www.sfusd.edu/schwww/sch618/japan/Japanese\\_Art.html](http://www.sfusd.edu/schwww/sch618/japan/Japanese_Art.html) for many more links regarding traditional Japanese art forms



# A C T I V I T Y S H E E T

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# George Nakashima: One with Nature

Resource Kit

## MORE LESSON IDEAS TO EXPLORE:

### HAIKU POETRY

**Grades:** Elementary/Middle

**Objectives:**

**Knowledge:** The students will learn that a Haiku is a Japanese form of poetry which is about nature.

**Skill:** The students will learn how to write a Haiku.

**Attitude:** The students will learn to appreciate Haiku poetry.

A Haiku is a small poem with a big theme. It contains the seed of an idea that you can continue to think about. A Haiku is a Japanese form of poetry with seventeen syllables composed as an unrhymed, three-line poem about nature.

The lines are arranged like this:

<b>Line 1</b>	<b>Five Syllables</b>	<b>Loud crashing thunder</b>
<b>Line 2</b>	<b>Seven Syllables</b>	<b>Pouring rain and shining sun</b>
<b>Line 3</b>	<b>Five Syllables</b>	<b>The rainbow appears</b>

Although the haiku pattern is mistakenly used for poems about other subjects, a true haiku is about nature. At least one word must identify a specific season – spring, summer, fall, or winter – either by naming it the season or including something typical of that time of year. A haiku captures a small scene of something that is happening now. The present tense is always used.

**Supplies:** pen, paper

**Suggestions for activity:**

- Write a haiku in response to a painting that you have seen in a museum, or one that you have painted in class.
- Write a haiku in response to a print by Hokusai.
- Learn more about Haiku poetry on the internet at:  
<http://www.insite.com.br/rodrigo/poet/haiku.html>;  
<http://www.gardendigest.com/haiku1.htm> (more links);  
<http://home.clara.net/pka/haiku/haiku.htm>

### JAPANESE TEA CEREMONY AND TEA BOWLS

**Grades:** Elementary/Middle/High School

**Objectives:**

**Knowledge:** The students will learn the importance of the Japanese Tea Ceremony and the tea bowl.

**Skill:** The students will learn how to create a Japanese Tea bowl out of clay.

**Attitude:** The students will learn to appreciate the importance of the Japanese Tea ceremony and the aesthetic value of the Japanese tea bowl.

The teacher will explain that the tea ceremony, or *chanoyu*, is an aesthetic pastime unique to Japan. *Chanoyu* involves more than merely enjoying a cup of tea in a stylized manner. The ceremony developed under the influence of Zen Buddhism, the aim of which is, to purify the soul by becoming one with nature.

The teacher will then explain the purpose of the tea bowl. The teacher will say that it is an especially treasured object, and it should represent high-quality workmanship and be decorated simply yet beautifully. It is the essential element of the time honored Japanese tea ceremony. Everything in the ceremony has a meaning. The teacher will explain that the ceremony, which revolves around the tea bowl, traditionally begins after the visitors enter through a very low door. Participants leave their shoes outside and all gestures show respect and promote harmony.



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## MORE LESSON IDEAS TO EXPLORE (CONTINUED):

The teacher will explain that serenity is experienced through the contemplative gestures of the tea ceremony. The tea is poured into the bowl, and the host and guests slowly turn the bowl around in their hands, admiring the shape, the glaze, and the texture. There is appreciation and respect for the integrity of all the materials used in the tearoom, including the architectural design of the room.

The teacher will then explain that it is said that the tea ceremony began to gain its place in Japanese culture when exhausted scholars and samurai sought a place of retreat from the demands of the outside world. In addition, monks also regarded tea drinking as a useful aid to meditation. One can now say that the form of the tea has since evolved to the point where it has become a metaphor for Japanese living.

**Supplies:** clay, water bottle sprayer, plaster bats (or plastic covered boards), smocks, paper towels, paintbrushes, plastic covering for work space, modeling tools, kiln, glazes/underglazes

**Directions:**

- Discuss the nature of clay. How does it feel? Why do we enjoy using it? How can we help the clay become a little bowl?
- Distribute clay balls.
- Press thumbs into the center of the ball.
- Keep pressing the thumb down while slowly turning the clay in the palm of the hand. Try to keep the walls of the pot even – about a half-inch thick so it will be sturdy.
- Let the clay air dry. (Dried clay may be fired as determined.)
- Glaze it with simple earth-colored glaze or paint it with acrylic earth tone paints. Another kiln firing may be in order. One or two letter style characters could be painted on with a small brush after the background color dries. Simple patterns – lines and even squiggles – are encouraged.

**Suggestions for activity:**

- Title the bowls. Discuss them quietly and respectfully with your classmates.
- Have a tea ceremony.
- Learn more about Japanese tea ceremonies on the internet at:  
<http://www.holytn.com/tea/Japanesetea.htm> ; <http://www.teahyakka.com/> and <http://jin.jcic.or.jp/today/culture/culture8.html>

### **DARUMA: A POPULAR FOLK HERO DOLL**

**Grades:** Elementary/Middle/High School

**Objectives:**

**Knowledge:** The students will learn that the Daruma is a popular folk hero in Japanese culture.

**Skill:** The students will learn how to create a Daruma out of papier-mâché.

**Attitude:** The students will learn to appreciate the purpose of a Daruma in Japanese culture.

This teacher will explain that the Daruma (Da-ROO-MA) is a popular folk hero in Japan. It is so popular, that when Japanese children build a snowman, they usually make it in the shape of a Daruma. The teacher will explain that the Daruma is a roly-poly character based on the first of the Zen masters. The teacher will then explain that Daruma is *Bodhidharma* in Chinese, and that *Bodhidharma* was an Indian monk who brought the practice of Zen Buddhism to China in the 6<sup>th</sup> century.



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## MORE LESSON IDEAS TO EXPLORE (CONTINUED):

The teacher will say that one of the favorite tales of this folk hero explains that Daruma, who loved to meditate, once sat in the same spot for thirty years. The story says that when he awoke from a too-long meditation, he was so angry that he pulled off his eyebrows and threw them on the ground below. From these eyebrows grew the first tea bushes.

The teacher will explain that the Daruma has a distinguishing appearance. In paintings, he is shown with big, bushy eyebrows, bulging eyes, full beard, and one earring. As a folk figure, (which is the more common appearance) the Daruma is made of lacquered papier-mâché and is usually painted scarlet red and decorated with gold and black calligraphy. The teacher will explain that Darumas come in many sizes, and they are considered good luck. The face is applied simply but without the eyes. The teacher will say that when you make a wish, you then paint one of the eyes. Then if your wish comes true, you paint the other eye. In Japan, Darumas are especially popular at the New Year and politicians use them as luck in elections.

**Supplies:** wheat paste or other papier-mâché recipes (recipe: equal parts of flour and water mixed in bowls), masking tape, water containers, newspaper, paintbrushes, acrylic paint: red, white, black, gold, peach

**Prepare ahead:**

- Cut newspaper strips to about 1"x3" for the students to handle easily.
- Cover tables to facilitate clean up.

**Directions:**

- Tell students about Daruma, the papier-mâché doll that is a symbol of good fortune and luck in Japanese culture. Daruma has big, bulging eyes and bushy eyebrows and is very important.
- Roll up two balls of newspaper. Make one ball the size of an orange, the other the size of a grapefruit. Tape them so the balls don't come undone, and then tape the small ball on top of the larger ball.
- Cover the newspaper balls with three layers of newspaper strips soaked in the papier-mâché mixture. Let dry thoroughly (3-7 days). Flatten the bottom somewhat so it will stand up by itself.
- After it has dried, paint the face. Paint circles for the eyes and paint the nose, mouth and whiskers.
- Paint the rest of the Daruma bright red. Add some gold and black calligraphy as a finishing touch.
- Students may choose to make their wish and paint one eye. When their wish comes true, paint in the other eyeball and thank Daruma.

### THE TALE OF THE KIMONO

**Grades:** Elementary/Middle/High School

**Objectives:**

**Knowledge:** The students will learn the tradition of the kimono.

**Skill:** The students will learn how to paint a visual kimono

**Attitude:** The students will learn to appreciate the cultural significance of the kimono.

The teacher will explain that the kimono is the national garment of Japan. It represents the woven history of a culture that celebrates art and tradition. The design of the kimono is made so that there is no waste. The teacher will explain that the kimono is made of six rectangles of cloth that allow the kimono to change from full ceremonial display to a folded square that will fit in a box.



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## MORE LESSON IDEAS TO EXPLORE (CONTINUED):

The teacher will explain that the kimono serves not only to mark the important occasions of life; it provides a perfect vehicle for storytelling. The Tanabata tale is one legend that many kimonos will tell. The story has several versions, but the meaning is essentially the same.

The teacher will tell the story to the students: "Heavenly Star Princess Tanabata was said to live on one side of the galaxy where she was known as The Weaver of the Skies. On the other side of the River of Heaven – the Milky Way – lived the Celestial Herdsman Altair. Princess Tanabata, the patron deity of weaving, was also the daughter of the King of the Sky. She was the weaver and seamstress of the gods. Weaver or not, the princess fell in love. She implored her father to allow her to join her true love, the Celestial Herdsman, so that they could be together forever. Her father eventually gave in.

So in love were these two that they spent all their time staring into each other's eyes and playing music while the weaving fell off the loom and the herds wandered away. The Sky King grew so furious that he sent them back to their opposite sides of the universe where they could resume their heavenly duties. However, on the seventh day of the seventh month – July 7<sup>th</sup> each year – a celebration known as Tanabata takes place. At this time it is believed that the lovers are able to reunite. A bridge is formed by the interwoven wings of a thousand magpies that allows the 2 lovers to meet, if only briefly, yet completely. Today the Tanabata Bridge Festival is enjoyed by the people of Japan" (Rodriguez, 27).

**Supplies:** watercolors, paintbrushes, 2 white 18"x24" paper per student, pencils, glue, erasers

**Prepare ahead:** Teacher may want to precut kimonos out of one piece of paper.

### Directions:

- Teacher is encouraged to tell the Tale of Tanabata or any other Japanese folk story, including excerpts from the Tale of Genji. Seasonal motifs such as the plum blossom (hope), pine tree (longevity), bamboo (strength), and the chrysanthemum (Japan's imperial flower emblem) will enhance your visual kimono.
- Learn more about the tale of Genji at <http://www.iz2.or.jp/english/> and <http://mcel.pacificu.edu/as/students/genji/homepage.html>
- Discuss when the kimono is worn with students. A kimono was both officially and commonly worn until the end of the last century, but today the kimono is mostly worn only on special occasions such as New Year's Day and weddings. Other kimono variations such as the cotton Yukata are still popular today.
- Demonstrate the watercolor technique "wet on wet" with the students. Distribute materials and paint. Discuss cool and warm colors. Tell the students to first apply water to large white paper before the cool or warm colors are used. Ask the students what season might your kimono be worn in? The choice of season will influence the colors that are used.
- After the paper has dried, encourage students to discover images within their colors, such as landscapes, waves or even the Tanabata Bridge.
- Assemble paper kimono with glue.
- Displays kimonos together and have students share their thoughts.



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# George Nakashima: One with Nature

## Resource Kit



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### More lesson *ideas* to explore:

- Research another furniture designer from a different country. How is the person you researched different from Nakashima and his work?
- *Sumi-ink* paintings often show nature themes. Explore the art of *Sumi-ink* painting using bamboo brushes.
- Examine other the works of other architects such as Le Corbusier, Antonin Raymond, Mies Van der Roe, and Frank Lloyd Wright. What were their connections with Nakashima?
- Frank Lloyd Wright had a connection to nature when creating his designs. How was his connection to nature different/similar to Nakashima's?
- Research has claimed that Nakashima had a connection to Shaker design in furniture. Sometimes Nakashima called himself a "Japanese Shaker". Research a couple shaker pieces and examine their characteristics. What was their philosophy? How similar was it to Nakashima?
- Find sticks, stones and other objects from nature to examine their character. What can you see in them? Build a simple structure from these objects. How did their qualities influence the design of your structure?
- Explore Daniel Garber, a Pennsylvania Impressionist and "Japonisme"
- Explore the various *textures* in the *Nakashima Reading Room*.
- Explore the school of Japanese printmaking, known as *Ukiyo-e*. Examine one of the Ukiyo-e artists, Hokusai.
- Japanese Bookbinding
- Paper Folding (Origami)
- Japanese Paper Making (etchu washi)
- Fish and plant prints
- Japanese Theatre: Kabuki and Noh Masks
- Japanese Screens
- Explore Japanese Calligraphy, known as *Shodo*.
- Create signature seals, known as a *Hanko*.
- Explore the influence of Japanese Prints on the French Impressionists
- Japanese Fans and Kites

### More complete lessons on:

- *Haiku* poetry
- The Japanese Tea Ceremony and Tea Bowls
- Daruma: A Popular Folk Hero Doll
- The Tale of the Kimono

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# GEORGE NAKASHIMA: ONE WITH NATURE

## Resource Kit

### VOCABULARY LIST

**Arts and Crafts Movement:** a movement originating in Great Britain around the mid 1800's, which damned the social and artistic effects of industrialization. It was an attempt to reassert the aesthetic and spiritual importance of the handmade in a society suddenly awash in the shoddy, mechanically produced good that signaled the arrival of the machine age.

**Architectonic:** of, relating to, or according with the principles of architecture: architectural; having an organized and unified structure that suggests an architectural design

**Architect:** a person who designs buildings and advises in their construction

**Asa-no-ha:** literally a "hemp leaf"; this decorative pattern, stylized rendering of the hemp leaf, is ubiquitous in Japanese design – it appears on fabrics, decorative papers, and lacquer and inlay work among other decorative arts. The asa-no-ha wood grille is perhaps the most sophisticated design made. (p139 sketch)

**Ashram:** a monastic community in India, usually with a living guru.

**Bahut:** The French term for chest or cabinet, especially one having a rounded top, and used as furniture.

**Biomorphic:** resembling or suggesting the forms of living organisms (biomorphic sculptures, biomorphic images)

**Board:** A flat slab of sawn wood, usually not too large, that is relatively thin in relation to its width. Often used interchangeably with the term lumber.

**Bole:** the trunk of a tree.

**Book-Match:** "Matching" lumber to show the wood grain to best advantage is an important concern for the woodworker. Two successive boards from the same log, laid side by side like the double-spread pages of an open book, are said to be *book-matched*.

**Burl:** An abnormal, rounded outgrowth or enlargement on the trunk or branch of a tree. Causes of burls are not yet perfectly understood, but burls appear not to affect the health of a tree. On close examination, a burl may seem to be comprised of mass of buds or "eyes." These make the alignment of the wood fiber very irregular so that the grain of burl wood forms clusters or round curls. Sometimes burling may be concentrated in one area, but with some species, like the English oak burl, it may even occupy the whole tree.

**Butterfly inlay:** in woodworker's parlance, a small wood member shaped somewhat like a butterfly to hold two boards together or to reinforce a weak spot. The grain of the butterfly member must run at right angles to the boards. The butterfly inlay is both functional and decorative. *Butterfly joint* is a double V, bow tie, or butterfly-shaped piece of wood that is inserted into a corresponding surface receptacle at the edges of two pieces of wood to join them.

**Cambium:** Near the bark of a tree, between the phloem and the sapwood, is a thin layer of cells known as the *cambium*. These cells, through which the vital fluids of the tree rise and descend, produce the new wood and bark cells of each year's growth.



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## Vocab List (continued p.2)

**Cantilever:** a projecting structural element supported at only one end in any of several ways. In architecture, for example, in the construction of balconies, steps, canopies, and other forms the cantilever projects beyond the support, or fulcrum element, and is counterbalanced by downward forces behind the fulcrum. In seat furniture the cantilever is used to construct chairs whose seats are supported at one end. (Conoid Chair 27)

**Conoid:** A three-dimensional geometric form with a base that is square or rectangle. Between the arched and rectangular sides extends a rounded plane. One of Nakashima's buildings which he designed after this geometric form, the Conoid Studio. Designs developed in this building are called Conoid pieces.

**Cross-grain:** cutting or marking wood at ninety-degree angle to the direction of the fibers in the wood. This term also refers to wood that is cut so that the grain runs parallel to the width of the board.

**Daiku:** the Japanese expression for carpenter – or better, a master builder. *Dai* means "great" and *ku* is "construction".

### Designer

**Dowel:** a wood member, cylindrical in shape, that fits tightly into a corresponding hole and is used to fasten or align adjacent wood pieces.

**Dress down:** to smooth the surface of a roughly sawn board or plank with a hand or machine plane.

**Free edge:** this is a phrase that was coined in Nakashima's New Hope Workshop to describe a board or plank that has been debarked but otherwise left with a natural edge.

**Futon:** Japanese bedding, consisting of a light mattress and quilt, which are folded up daily and kept in large built-in cupboards. From the same word, comes *zabuton*, which are flat pillows used as cushions for sitting on the floor in tatami-matted rooms.

**Grain:** strictly speaking, grain refers simply to the direction or orientation of wood cells, particularly the fibrous elements. In different lumber one sees a number of grain types – straight, wavy, coarse, fine, etc. – but even in the same piece of lumber, different grain patterns are produced by winter wood and summer wood, the winter wood being slow-growing and hard, usually of a darker color. The type of grain that is seen in a piece of lumber is dictated in part by the method use to saw the log. (p.96and 99)

**Hardwood:** Botanically, the group of trees that are broad-leaved, bear flowers, and shed their leaves annually. The term does not refer necessarily to the actual hardness of the wood. In general, hardwoods make good furniture because of their interesting grain and figures.

**Heartwood:** The aged core of a tree, extending from the pith to the sapwood, which has ceased to contain living cells. Heartwood, which may be penetrated with gums and resins, is usually darker and harder than sapwood.

**Joinery:** the art or craft of joining pieces of wood. In furniture making there are many kinds of joints. Some are highly visible and known as **revealed joinery**; others, added to strengthen pieces of furniture that have weakened with age or use, are known as **remedial joints**; some remedial joints, such as the butterfly joint, are also very decorative. The joints listed here are most frequently used by Nakashima. A **bridle joint** is a lap joint in which the major element is cut with a through-tongue into which fits a perpendicular member cut to match the groove.



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## Vocab list (continued p.3)

**(Joinery continued) A butt joint**, the simplest kind of joint, is a joint in which the end of one piece of wood is butted up against the end of another piece of wood at right angles or straight on and attached without overlap. A **dado joint** is a joint in which the end of one piece of wood fits into a groove cut across the width of another piece of wood. A **dovetail joint** is a joint in which the end of one piece of wood is cut to form a tapered pin which fits into a corresponding tapered slot cut into the edge of another piece of wood. **Through-dovetail joint**, the most common type, the slot is cut right through the edge of the wood so that the end of the tail is clearly visible. A **mortise-and-tenon joint** is a very strong T-shaped joint. The mortise, a hole or groove, is cut into one piece of wood, and from the other piece of wood is cut the tenon, a projecting pin, usually rectangular or square, which fits into the mortise. A wooded peg can be driven through the joint to secure it. In a **through-tenon** version of the mortise-and-tenon joint, the mortise is cut straight through the wood, and the tenon is cut to match. Through-tenons were common on portable pieces of furniture made in Europe from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

**Lintel:** The horizontal load-bearing bar or beam above a door, window, or other opening. It also refers to the top bar of a frame, including a mirror frame.

**Modernism:** (in postwar Europe and the United States) Design that was predicated on the rationalist notion that form by dictated by function and a utopian commitment to design for the common man. It was a movement that focused on the techniques of mass production as a means of achieving that rationalist and utopian program. In Europe, the sensibility of design produced in small workshop studios prevailed. (Refer to pages 8-9 in *George Nakashima and the Modernist Moment*)

**Mortice:** a term used in joinery to refer to the square or rectangular hole made in a piece of wood to receive the male member, or *tenon*.

**Oyabashira:** Literally, "mother post". In Japanese farmhouses the most important structural member, usually a quality timber, is popularly called the *oyabashira*.

**Outer bark:** The protective skin of a tree. The way bark expands characterizes the species of the tree: some scale off, some create fissures, and some seem almost elastic in their smoothness.

**Photosynthesis:** The process by which nature converts water and carbon dioxide into carbohydrates, using sunlight as the source of energy through the chlorophyll containing cells in green plants.

**Phloem:** The thin layer of living tissue between the bark and the cambium layer that conducts food from the leaves to the rest of the tree. It eventually becomes part of the tree's bark.

**Pith:** The elementary growth of the infant tree from the seed. The *pith* center (as referred to in the Nakashima workshop) never grows any wider than at its start, but it remains until the tree is destroyed or decayed, usually becoming a thin hollow.

**Spindle:** a lathe-turned slender pin or rod of wood that is often used vertically in the back of a chair or bench, as in the Windsor chair.



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## Vocab List (continued p.4)

**Sapwood (or xylem):** Through this layer moisture runs from the roots through the leaves and evaporates. This is the tree's living tissue. The sapwood is almost lighter in color than the heartwood, producing delightful contrasts, but it is conventionally regarded as undesirable for fine woodworking. It is usually slightly softer than the heartwood.

**Shoji:** In Japan, a sliding screen made of thin wood strips and covered with hand laid paper. Shoji are used both for partitioning rooms and to cover windows. They insulate well against heat and cold and also act to diffuse light.

**Shuji:** Japanese, "calligraphy". The practice of writing characters in ink and brush in such an art that it is usually referred to with an honorific modifier as *o-shuji*.

**Slab:** a term meaning a large, heavy plank, coined at Nakashima's New Hope Studio. It is a semi round cut taken off a log when sawing it into a long square, in preparing for *rolling the log* and producing grade lumber.

**Softwood:** Botanically, the group of trees that are needle-bearing or cone-bearing, for example, the Douglas fir, white fir, or redwood. The term does not refer to the actual hardness of the wood.

**Spindle:** A lathe-turned slender pin or rod of wood that is often used vertically in the back of a chair or bench, as in the Windsor chair.

**Tatami:**- a two-inch thick mat, covered with fine-woven straw, measuring about three to six feet. The floors of the main living rooms in Japanese style houses are covered with tatami. So widespread is the use of tatami that it has long been the practice to use multiples of this module to measure the areas of both floor space and real estate.

**Tangential cut:** wood that is cut longitudinally, or with the grain.

**Transverse cut:** wood that is cut latitudinally, or across the grain.

**Turned legs:** furniture legs that are round in section and formed by rotating wood on a lathe and shaping further with hand tools.

**Tung oil:** a hardening resinous oil extracted from the seeds of the tung tree, used for finishing furniture. It seems to have been first used by the Chinese, but today tung oil is a widely used product and available in most hardware stores.

**Veneer:** Thin sheets of wood, from 1/100 to ¼ inch thick. Veneers are usually sliced off the log with a large knife, but they may be sawn. Veneers of hardwood are used as a finish, or top layer, on plywood or another stable material for furniture and paneling.

Yoke back

**Woodworker:** one who makes things in wood, adopting an approach that seeks to integrate both art and craft.

**Zen:** a major form of Buddhism that arose in China and that developed in a unique way in Japan in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Zen stressed self-discipline through meditation and appealed greatly to the samurai class. Zen inspired many Japanese art forms. As a common noun, the word zen refers to a small, low table for eating.

**Zelkova:** an oriental elm, highly esteemed in Japan, where it is called *keyaki*. In earlier days, it was used both for buildings and for furniture, but now having become relatively scarce and expensive, it is used mostly for furniture.



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