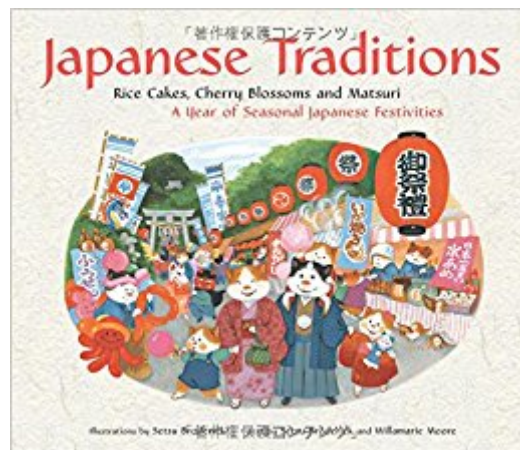


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Japanese Traditions: Rice Cakes, Cherry Blossoms And Matsuri: A Year Of Seasonal Japanese Festivities



Synopsis

Packed with colorful illustrations and fun facts about Japanese culture, celebrations, language and history, this multicultural children's book will delight children and parents alike! A wonderful look at Japanese culture and family life, *Japanese Traditions* is an intricately illustrated romp through the childhood reminiscences of author/illustrator Setsu Broderick. Told via a series of short text blocks and lighthearted illustrations based on cats, *Japanese Traditions* displays seasonal festivals and activities such as O-Bon (Festival of the Souls), O-hanami (cherry blossom viewing) and preparing for the New Year. While enjoying the charming illustrations of a family of Japanese cats, the author shares her warm childhood memories of many Japanese customs, such as gathering around the kotatsu (heated table) to stay warm, throwing soybeans to keep away ogres and hanging handmade teru-teru-bozu (fine-weather) dolls out the window to stop the rain. There are also many traditional Japanese foods, toys, games and celebrations taught through the illustrations. All in all, *Japanese Traditions* provides a magical feast for children of all ages.

Book Information

Hardcover: 48 pages

Publisher: Tuttle Publishing; Hardcover with Jacket edition (April 10, 2010)

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 20 customer reviews

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Age Range: 7 - 12 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 6

Customer Reviews

Grade 2-5 The authors regale readers with memories from Broderick's childhood in rural Japan 50 years ago. Two spreads per month describe activities such as the New Year celebrations in January, and feature felines rather than humans in the illustrations. The picture for November shows

how to set up a futon and keep warm while sleeping on it and explains the traditions involved in Inoko Matsuri, a celebration of children's good health and prosperity, and in Shichi-Go-San (7-5-3), a festival celebrating girls who are seven, boys who are five, and boys and girls who are three. While the text includes factual information about customs, food, games, festivals, and other cultural topics, the narrative is conversational. Soft, appealing cartoon illustrations of the cuddly, expressive cats dressed in traditional Japanese clothing are full of detail and humor. Each month is represented by a full-page illustration, with the name of the month written in Japanese characters. The last page gives a list of items to look for in the pictures, and poses related questions. Though this is an enjoyable work, most of the cultural information can be found elsewhere, making it an additional purchase. DeAnn Okamura, San Mateo County Library, CA Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"While the text includes factual information about customs, food, games, festivals, and other cultural topics, the narrative is conversational. Soft, appealing cartoon illustrations of the cuddly, expressive cats dressed in traditional Japanese clothing are full of detail and humor." — School Library Journal

"But the real value of this book is the masterful way it combines loads of vocabulary words and customs with the tenderness of the author's memories and the hilarious and busy drawings, making it a treat for both younger and older kids. And for anyone who wonders how life in Japan used to be when people lived closer to the earth, the seasons and each other, this is a sweet, fun, entertaining primer." — The Japan Times

"Japanese Traditions is completely charming. Children, parents, and teachers will enjoy perusing the playful illustrations and learning about traditional Japanese culture." — Leslie Swartz, Senior VP, Boston Children's Museum and co-author of *Moonbeams, Dumplings & Dragon Boats*

"Japanese Traditions is exactly the kind of book worth curling up with in a warm place with your child. It's a friendly, nostalgic look at the country, filled with the bustling details of the everyday life of Japanese families in the countryside as they experience it twelve months of the year." — Paper Tigers

"Setsu Broderick's book *Japanese Traditions: Rice Cakes, Cherry Blossoms and Matsuri* is another one that I would recommend. As may be expected, it focuses on various customs, including those that involve cherry blossoms." — Killeen Gonzalez, Yahoo! Voices

"Told via a series of short text blocks and lighthearted illustrations based on cats, *Japanese Traditions* displays seasonal festivals and activities such as O-Bon (Festival of the Souls), O-hanami (cherry blossom viewing) and preparing for the New Year." — Starts at Eight blog

"there's a LOT of information contained within the pages of this beautiful hard-cover book. *Japanese Traditions* is a wonderful resource for any home

or school to have. It will teach children about traditions they may not know, and the illustrations are so rich in additional information this book could be used to start conversations between children and/or children and adults to learn more about each other if one is from Japan."

•CastleViewAcademy.com

This is a charming book with beautiful illustrations. While the text is written by an author who lived in Japan decades ago, traditions summarized within provide creative ideas for activities on any continent (kite flying, writing postcards to friends, playing badminton, sharing cozy evenings with family, observing nature, etc.). In an age where parents pacify their children by handing youngsters mobile devices/tablets and where too few children experience the pleasure of entertaining themselves away from the screen, this book offers wonderful alternatives while exploring the culture of old Japan. Children will be enriched by learning about the lives of people elsewhere in the world and by discovering the joys of life's simple pleasures. Japanese Traditions is a feast for the eyes and the imagination.

As a Japanese person, I appreciate the concept of this book. I would say though, the book has some materials that are only specific to certain region of Japan and fails to mention it. The title is "tradition" so I guess this is understandable but a lot of the contents are very old and outdated. I don't know any Japanese today that follows some of the customs discussed in the book. With that said, the book is very detailed and great source for Japanese historical customs.

Kudos to Setsu Broderick's kawaii illustrations! She not only captures perfectly the Japanese affinity for cats (think: Hello Kitty and Maneki-Neko) through her own original cat family characters, but she also infuses so many thoughtful expressions of traditional every day and celebratory life in such loving and accurate detail. One such example that warmed my heart and prompted me to write this review is of mochi rice cakes puffing up as they grill on an old-fashion hibachi. My two-year-old son and I enjoy identifying the various Japanese items and events, while delighting in each and every cat's unique personality. The chapters are organized by month and highlight a festival and/or community activity with simplicity, but again with such detail. And the wonderful sidebars range from things like instruction on the more popular origami (paper folding) to information on the lesser known kami-shibai (paper drama). This book is a treasury of traditional Japanese culture for all ages... It's a treasure in our family.

My mom grew up in the same time period as the author/illustrator. I was fortunate to visit Japan as a young girl in the early 60's when many of these same household items were being used and before the advent of all of the current cool Japanese electronic gadgets. The detail in each illustration is incredible. Each time I open the book I see something I had missed earlier. I was impressed and astounded with even the tiniest details ... take a close look at the calendars ... the pinheads (a flat flower) on the pin cushion ... and oh myyyyyy using cats instead of people. The cats make it so much easier and fun for kids to enjoy this book! So many of these things are obsolete ... the old style rice cooker, heating the bath with a log burning fire, the water jug hand washer ... what a joy to see them again in this book. Buy it, enjoy it, learn about these traditions, share it, enjoy it again :)

Words can't express the delight of this both well written and illustrated book. The book starts out with an introduction from the author, explaining how her childhood had influenced her growing up in the Japan countryside 50 years ago. So these illustrations are depicting the time, era, and details of that time in Japan. The book is laid out month by month giving the reader a rich understanding of what traditions, festivals, and Japanese holidays occur during that particular month. Setsu uses "cats" to illustrate the events, which makes it all the more delightful. Love it, love, love it! Thanks again for contributing to the world the education of Japanese traditions.

While the book is a lovely book, the description shows it to be bilingual. It is not. I ordered it on the premise of the jacket with the Japanese above the title and the description saying it was. Very unfortunate because I know that this is a bilingual book and should put the correct Jacket to represent this specific book, as there are actually two different printings with the same ISBN. I would not hesitate to order the book for pleasure but not if you are expecting it to have more than just a smattering of Japanese represented.

My daughter had a culture report due for 1st grade. This was perfect because it had characters that held her attention and talked about the celebrations. She truly enjoyed this. The colorful pictures captured the attention of the whole class

A nice story that shows more about what goes on during the months of Japan. It is very beautifully illustrated

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