



Overview:

In this lesson, students examine several tsunami-related, Japanese characters. Students then incorporate these characters into original watercolor paintings.

Targeted Alaska Grade Level Expectations:

Science

[4] SD2.2 The student demonstrates an understanding of the forces that shape Earth by identifying causes (i.e. earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, floods, landslides, and avalanches) of rapid changes on the surface.

Objectives:

The student will:

- combine characters related to tsunamis to represent a new idea; and
- paint a natural watercolor scene including Japanese characters.

Materials:

- Globe
- Watercolor paper (8 ½ x11 in.)
- Watercolors
- Paintbrushes
- Water
- Black construction paper (9x12 in.)
- STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET: "Character Cards"
- VISUAL AID: "All Characters"
- VISUAL AID: " Watercolor Examples"

Science Basics:

"Tsunami" is Japanese for harbor (tsu) wave (nami). Historically tsunamis often have been called "tidal waves." This is incorrect because they are not caused by the tides. Japan experiences a high occurrence of tsunamis. Within a period of 1,313 years, about 195 tsunamis have hit Japan. The earliest recorded tsunami to strike Japan was in November, A.D. 684, and was caused by the Hakuho-Nankai earthquake.

Japanese writing is made with characters that symbolize ideas, and with characters that symbolize sounds. The following activity uses characters that symbolize ideas. Please note that combining characters to express new ideas does not mean the pronunciation of each new character is combined.

Activity Preparation:

Cut cards from the STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET: "Character Cards."

Activity Procedure:

Part 1

1. Explain that combining two or more words sometimes makes new words. For example, combining the word “book” with the word “shelf” makes “book•shelf.” Ask students to think of as many compound words as they can. Do this as a class for younger students, or if appropriate, place students in small groups to do this activity and then share compound words with the class.
2. Ask if students know where the word “tsunami” comes from. Explain that it is a Japanese word. Use a globe to show where Japan is in relation to the local community. Ask students why we use a Japanese word for this phenomenon.
3. Explain that Japan has had many tsunamis. In Japan’s history, over 195 tsunamis have been recorded.
4. Explain that Japanese writing uses characters to symbolize ideas. Distribute a card to each student. Circulate and ask each student to hold up his or her card to show the information on the card.
5. Explain that just like the word “bookshelf,” the character for “tsunami” is made by putting two ideas together. Model the mix and match strategy by using the cards for “bookshelf.” The three students holding the cards “book,” “shelf,” and “bookshelf,” should find each other and stand together.
6. Now instruct all students with cards to intermingle and find their corresponding group members. When all students are with groups, place the VISUAL AID: “All Characters” up on the projector to check the students’ matching.

Part 2

1. Explain that Japanese art often involves scenes of nature. Watercolor is typical, and characters often are used in artwork. Today, students will make a watercolor painting including Japanese characters.
2. Show students the VISUAL AID: “Watercolor Examples.” Their first step is to paint a scene for the background. They must use colors like blue, green, orange, red and yellow.
3. Next, they will paint at least one character in the foreground. These should be in black for contrast. Leave the VISUAL AID: “All Characters” out for students to refer to.
4. Allow the painting to dry then glue or tape to black construction paper for a frame.
5. Follow up questions: Where does the word tsunami come from? Which two characters make up the word tsunami?

Extension Ideas:

- Show pictures of typical Japanese art.
- Require students to write haiku to accompany their paintings. A haiku is a Japanese poem that has three lines. The first and third lines have five syllables each and the second line has seven syllables. These poems often are about nature and are written in the present tense.
- Incorporate the following vocabulary into the lesson. Please adapt to the local Native language if necessary. Seek out native language speakers to aid in pronunciation.

English	Alutiiq	Unangam Tunuu
tsunami	tung'iruaq (literally, fake or false high tide)	alaġu-ġ
volcano	puyulek	anġidachaluġ (literally mountain with a place for emitting breath, smoke)
earthquake	arulauq	adgilax or yaagi-lix

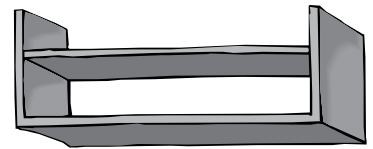
Answers:

See VISUAL AID: "All Characters." There is no STUDENT WORKSHEET for this lesson.

book

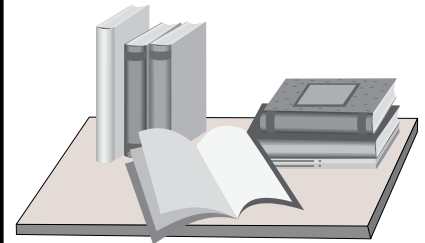


shelf



_____ + _____
=

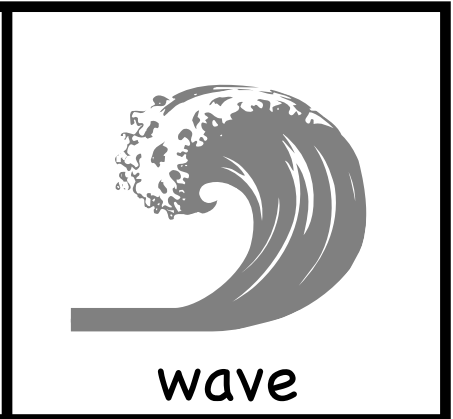
bookshelf



津



波



— + —
=

tsunami



火



fire

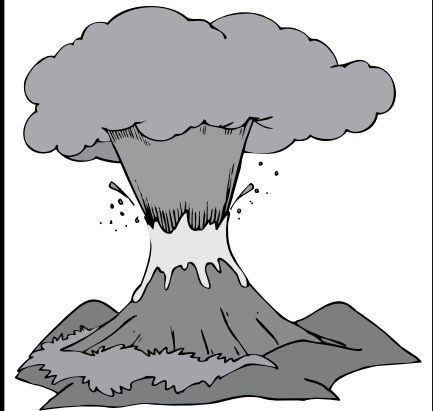
山

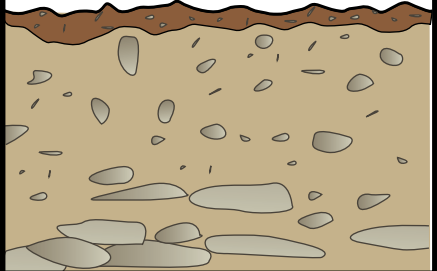



mountain

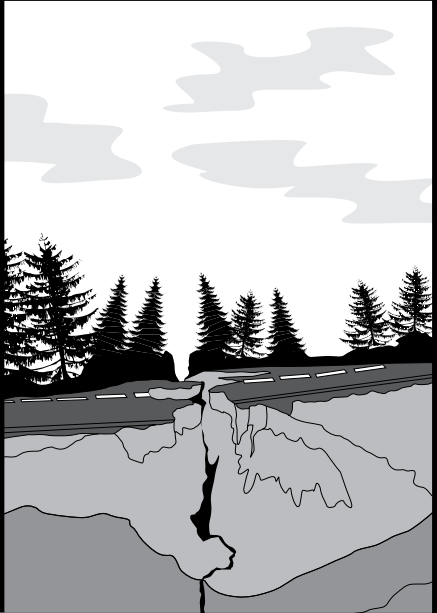
_____ + _____
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volcano



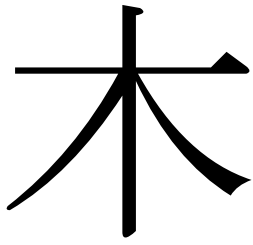
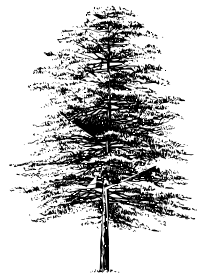
<p>地</p>	<p>ground</p> 
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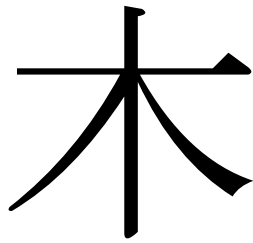
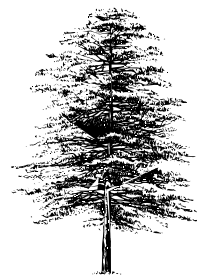
<p>震</p>	 <p>shaking</p>
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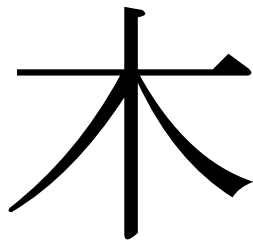
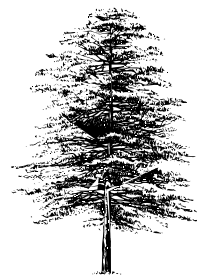
<p>_____ + _____ = earthquake</p>	
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Character Cards _____
Student Information Sheet



	 tree
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	 tree
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	 tree
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<p>_____ + _____ + _____ = forest</p>	
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