Japan In A Suitcase is a free program that reaches out to schools in the DC, Maryland, Virginia area.

Through the use of some hands-on activities, crafts and colorful PowerPoint presentations, students can learn about Japanese culture and language. Japan-in-a-Suitcase works to encourage a deeper understanding and awareness of Japan and Japanese culture to school children through hands-on activities and demonstrations. We bring bits of Japan — traditional toys, clothing, school items and crafts — to the classroom in our exciting suitcase.
School visits are arranged as follows:

- Large assembly format for multiple classes or grade levels
- Single grade-level class presentation
- Multiple visits (up to five) for a class
- Afterschool program
- Booth at an international fair or school event

Presentations start by teaching students the standard greetings each Japanese class begins with: “konnichiwa” (hello), and then “kiritsu, rei, chakuseki” (attention, bow, be seated).

After students brainstorm on what they know about Japan, they are introduced to Japanese items they may already know and love—but may not have realized were of Japanese origin.

Students will practice geography and critical thinking as they locate Japan on a map, find Tokyo, and consider the difference in time zone. They also take a look at the life of a Japanese school student by exploring backpacks stuffed with Japanese pencil cases, textbooks, indoor shoes and yellow hats.

Students get to try on traditional clothing—kimono and yukata dresses, happi coats and hachimaki headbands. They will also get to play with traditional Japanese toys, as well as more current popular toys and games.

When requested, Japanese alphabet and basic characters can also be taught: students then get a chance to learn how to write their own names in Japanese.

Japan-in-a-Suitcase

Japan-in-a-Suitcase is run completely by JASW staff and volunteers who travel around the DMV area to help students learn about Japan. If you are interested in volunteering, please fill out the registration form at the bottom of the reverse side of this page.

Request us today!

If you are interested in having the Japan-in-a-Suitcase program visit your school, please visit our website or fill out the application form attached to the reverse side of this page.

Volunteer!

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