

JAPANESE POPULAR CULTURE

Organizing Questions

- What are some examples of Japanese popular culture?
- What are some unique features of Japanese pop culture?
- How have the popular cultures of Japan and the United States influenced each other?
- Why is Japanese pop culture also popular outside of Japan?

Introduction

Students begin this lesson discussing the types of popular culture they enjoy, and they are then introduced to examples of pop culture that originated in Japan. Students read an informational handout and watch a short video lecture to learn about the history and evolution of Japanese pop culture, particularly *manga* and *anime*, in the United States. Students then work in pairs to select and research a Japanese pop culture product or personality of their choice, prepare a presentation, and present it to the class. Throughout this lesson, students become familiar with different types of Japanese pop culture, its unique qualities, and why it has become popular outside of Japan. Students also become more aware of the Japanese influence on American pop culture.

Objectives

In this lesson, students will

- gain a broad understanding of various types of pop culture from Japan;
- learn a brief history of Japanese manga in the United States;
- become more aware of Japan's influence on American pop culture; and
- research and present information about a Japanese pop culture product or personality.

Connections to Curriculum Standards

This lesson has been designed to meet certain national history, social studies, and common core standards as defined by the National Center for History in the Schools, the National Council for the Social Studies, and the Common Core State Standards Initiative. The standards for the lesson are listed here.

National History Standards (from the National Center for History in the Schools)

World History

Era 9, Standard 2F: The student understands worldwide cultural trends of the second half of the 20th century.

- Grades 9–12: Describe ways in which art, literature, religion, and traditional customs have expressed or strengthened national or other

communal loyalties in recent times. [Examine the influence of ideas, human interests, and beliefs]

Era 9, Standard 3A: The student understands major global trends since World War II.

- Grades 9–12: Analyze connections between globalizing trends in economy, technology, and culture in the late 20th century and dynamic assertions of traditional cultural identity and distinctiveness. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

National Social Studies Standards (from the National Council for the Social Studies)

- Culture; Thematic Strand I: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.
- Time, Continuity, and Change; Thematic Strand II: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.
- People, Places, and Environments; Thematic Strand III: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.
- Individual Development and Identity; Thematic Strand IV: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of individual development and identity.
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; Thematic Strand V: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions.
- Production, Distribution, and Consumption; Thematic Strand VII: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people organize for the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.
- Science, Technology, and Society; Thematic Strand VIII: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of relationships among science, technology, and society.
- Global Connections; Thematic Strand IX: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of global connections and interdependence.

Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies (from the Common Core State Standards Initiative)

- Standard 1, Grades 9–10: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- Standard 2, Grades 11–12: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

- Standard 3, Grades 9–10: Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.
- Standard 4, Grades 9–10: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history / social science.
- Standard 7, Grades 11–12: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- Standard 9, Grades 11–12: Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (from the Common Core State Standards Initiative)

- Standard 4, Grades 6–12: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Standard 6, Grades 9–10: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
- Standard 7, Grades 9–12: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Standard 9, Grades 6–12: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Materials

Handout 1, *Culture Goes Pop*, 30 copies
 Handout 2, *Lecture Notes*, 30 copies
 Handout 3, *Pop Culture Research Project*, 30 copies
 Handout 4, *Presentation Notes*, 30 copies
 Teacher Information, *Research Project Rubric*, 15 copies
 Answer Key 1, *Culture Goes Pop*
 Answer Key 2, *Lecture Notes*
 Video Lecture, “Japanese Manga in the United States” (15 minutes 5 seconds), online at <https://vimeo.com/128179851>

Equipment

Computer with Internet access and a Flash-enabled or HTML5-supported web browser
 Computer projector and screen

Computer speakers

Whiteboard or butcher paper and marker

**Teacher
Preparation**

Instructions and materials are based on a class size of 30 students. Adjust accordingly for different class sizes.

1. Make the appropriate number of copies of handouts.
2. Become familiar with the content of the handouts, teacher information, and answer keys, and view the video lecture.
3. Set up and test computer, projector, speakers, and streaming video lecture. Confirm that you are able to play the video lecture and project sound audibly to students.
4. Collect examples of Japanese pop culture to share with the class, such as manga, YouTube videos of J-pop artists or anime, pictures of Japanese architecture, fashion, cuisine, anime, video game characters, etc.
5. Locate an image of Doraemon, the popular Japanese anime character and 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games “ambassador,” to display to the class on Day One.

Time

Three 50-minute class periods

**Procedures
Day One**

1. Begin the lesson with a class discussion about the types of music, television shows, movies, literature, video games, fashion, design, and/or food that the students enjoy. Explain that these are all examples of popular culture, or pop culture. Popular culture is defined as “culture based on the tastes of ordinary people rather than an educated elite.” Activities, products, or personalities that are widely accepted and well known by the general population belong in the category of pop culture.
2. Display an image of the anime character, Doraemon, and ask students if they recognize it. Explain that this futuristic cat is part of Japan’s pop culture. This is a popular Japanese anime (animation) character named Doraemon, who was selected as Japan’s “ambassador” in Tokyo’s bid for the 2020 Olympic Games. This anime character was selected, in part, to exemplify the global interest in Japanese anime.
3. Pose the following questions to the class:
 - Are you familiar with Japanese anime?
 - Did you know that Pokemon, Transformers, and Power Rangers are all anime from Japan?
 - Are you familiar with other types of pop culture from Japan?

Students may not realize that many of the pop culture products they are exposed to originated in Japan, such as Nintendo and Mario Brothers.

If students are having difficulty thinking of Japanese pop culture with which they are familiar, ask them to consider the music they listen to, television shows or movies they watch, literature they read, video games or smartphone games they play, food or snacks they eat, and styles they wear.

4. Record student responses on the whiteboard or butcher paper for future reference. Write each example under its pop culture category (e.g., video games, movies, food, etc.).
5. Pose the following questions to the class:
 - What might be some similarities between American pop culture and Japanese pop culture?
 - What types of American pop culture do you think might be popular in Japan?
6. Explain to the class that in this lesson they will learn about Japanese pop culture. Distribute one copy of Handout 1, *Culture Goes Pop*, to each student, and instruct them to read the handout and answer the questions on a separate sheet of paper.
7. While the students are reading, prepare the video lecture to play for the class.
8. When students are finished with Handout 1, ask a few volunteers to share their answers, and discuss the handout as a class. Then collect students' written responses for assessment.
9. Distribute one copy of Handout 2, *Lecture Notes*, to each student, and inform them that while they watch a 15-minute lecture on Japanese pop culture, they should fill in the blanks on the handout to help them follow along. Play Video Lecture, "Japanese Manga in the United States," online at <https://vimeo.com/128179851>.
10. Facilitate a debriefing discussion about the lecture using the following questions:
 - According to Frederik Schodt, what are some ways in which Japanese manga are similar to American comics?
 - What are some ways in which they are different?
 - What information in the lecture did you find most interesting or most surprising?
 - Why are Japanese manga and anime gaining popularity in the United States?
11. Explain that students will work in pairs to choose a type of Japanese pop culture to research and present to the class. Display the list of pop culture examples students mentioned in the discussion at the beginning of the lesson (in procedure step four). Ask students to add other examples or other pop culture products from later discussions, the reading, and/or the lecture.
12. Distribute one copy of Handout 3, *Pop Culture Research Project*, to each student and review the instructions as a class.
13. Divide the class into pairs. Allow partners the remainder of class time to decide on a research topic and plan their project.
14. Partners must complete research and prepare the presentation materials as homework and come to the next class period prepared to share with the class.

- Day Two
1. Allow a few moments for students to prepare for their presentations. Remind students that each pair has up to five minutes to complete their presentation.
 2. Distribute one copy of Handout 4, *Presentation Notes*, to each student, and explain that they should use this sheet to take notes during their classmates' presentations.
 3. Facilitate partner presentations, and evaluate each using Teacher Information, *Research Project Rubric*, as a guide.

- Day Three
1. Continue student presentations and remind the class to continue taking notes on Handout 4, *Presentation Notes*.
 2. When presentations are complete, allow students a few moments to respond to the questions at the end of the handout, and then collect completed handouts.
 3. To conclude the lesson, facilitate a debriefing discussion with the class, using the following questions as a guide.
 - What was the most popular type of Japanese pop culture in our class? Does this surprise you? Why or why not?
 - Have you gained a greater understanding of and appreciation for Japanese pop culture during this lesson? Why or why not?
 - Do you notice the influence of Japanese pop culture in your surroundings more now than you did before this lesson? If so, which type(s) of pop culture have you noticed?

- Assessment
- The following are suggestions for assessing student work in this lesson:
1. Assess student responses to questions on Handout 1, *Culture Goes Pop*, based on Answer Key 1, *Culture Goes Pop*.
 2. Informally evaluate student participation during the video lecture, demonstrated by the completion of Handout 2, *Lecture Notes*. Use Answer Key 2, *Lecture Notes*, as a guide.
 3. Evaluate partner research projects and presentations, using Teacher Information, *Research Project Rubric*, as a guide.
 4. Informally assess student participation during the partner presentations, demonstrated by their notes taken on Handout 4, *Presentation Notes*.
 5. Assess student participation in group and class discussions evaluating students' ability to
 - clearly state their opinions, questions, and/or answers;
 - provide thoughtful answers;
 - exhibit sensitivity toward different cultures and ideas;
 - respect and acknowledge other students' comments; and
 - ask relevant and insightful questions.

CULTURE GOES POP

BY FREDERICK SCHODT

manga—a style of Japanese comic books and graphic novels, typically aimed at adults as well as children; characterized by highly stylized art

anime—a style of Japanese film and television animation, typically aimed at adults as well as children; characterized by stark colorful graphics depicting vibrant characters, often with fantastic or futuristic themes

J-pop music—an abbreviation for Japanese pop; refers to Western-influenced Japanese popular music. The term J-pop was coined by J-Wave, an FM radio station, to label what was once called “New Music.” The term is widely used in Japan to describe many different musical genres including pop, rock, dance, rap, and soul

shogunate—the office or rule of a shogun, a chief military commander from about the 8th century to the end of the 12th century, then applied to the hereditary officials who governed Japan

lacquer—a liquid that is painted on wood or metal and forms a hard, shiny surface when it dries

woodblock printing—one of the earliest methods of printing; a technique for printing text, images, or patterns that was used widely throughout East Asia and originated in China

samurai—a member of a powerful military caste in feudal Japan, especially a member

According to Oxford Dictionary, “popular culture” is “culture based on the tastes of ordinary people rather than an educated elite.” In other words, it is something nearly everyone can enjoy, without spending a great deal of time learning *how* to enjoy it. In North America, when we think about Japan in recent years we are often thinking of popular culture: *manga*, *anime*, J-pop music, and probably food like *ramen* and take-out *sushi*. Indeed, much of the Japanese culture that has most influenced North America over the last nearly two hundred years has been popular culture. And much of it comes from Tokyo.

So why is Japan’s “popular culture” so popular overseas? Aside from the fact that it is simply fun, it is also because it is a little bit different, but not *too* different. Japan was largely cut off from the outside world for over two hundred years during the Edo Period (1603–1867). This was part of a long period of rule by the feudal Tokugawa shogunate, which moved Japan’s capital to Edo, or what is now called Tokyo. In over two centuries of peace, many unique forms of Japanese culture—especially popular culture—emerged, and a tradition of doing things a bit differently than in other places also developed. Tokyo today is the epicenter of Japanese popular culture, and the place where much of it emerges. Tokyo is by far the biggest city in Japan, and a bustling, vibrant, and exciting place for young people who want to make their mark on the world.

Because Japan was isolated from the outside world for so long, most Americans knew almost nothing about it until fairly recently. It is hard to believe now, but until 1853, when the U.S. navy forced Japan to start trading with the outside world, most Americans used the word “Japan” as a verb, to mean something that had been “japanned,” or made with lacquer. As Japan opened to the outside world and Americans and Europeans slowly began learning about this “exotic” land, however, they were particularly fascinated by its popular culture. Colorful woodblock prints of actors and samurai and geisha and landscapes—all part of Japan’s popular culture—captivated Americans and Europeans and influenced new art movements such as Impressionism. Although largely forgotten today, from around 1867 up to the start of World War I, Americans were also fascinated by daring Japanese acrobats, hundreds of whom came from Tokyo and nearby Yokohama, to perform for crowds of thousands in American and European cities. One of the first, the Imperial Japanese Troupe, even toured the White House and met with President Andrew Johnson in 1867. The star of the troupe, a young boy named Umekichi Hama’ikari, was given the nickname of “Little All Right.” He became a household name and a hero in America; his image was used on all sorts of advertising and a popular “All Right Polka” was composed in his name.

After World War II, Americans were again exposed to different kinds of Japanese popular culture, including new foods, such as *sukiyaki*.

of the class of military retainers of the daimyo (feudal lords); Japanese warrior-aristocrats of medieval and early modern times

geisha—a Japanese woman trained as a professional singer, dancer, and companion for men

Impressionism—a style or movement in painting originating in France in the 1860s, characterized by a concern with depicting the visual impression of the moment, especially in terms of the shifting effect of light and color; a literary or artistic style that seeks to capture a feeling or experience rather than to achieve accurate depiction

line art—typically a single-color drawing (such as one made with a pen or pencil) with little or no solid areas, and no shading effect other than cross-hatching; also called line drawing

improvisation—something that is improvised, especially a piece of music, drama, etc., created without preparation

While sukiyaki itself is not limited to Tokyo, most American G.I.s were probably exposed to it there, and it became one of the first Japanese foods widely popular in America. In 1961, Americans got their first taste of what now might be called J-pop music, when “Ue Wo Muite,” sung by Kyu Sakamoto, from the Tokyo area, became a huge hit. The real title (“Looking Up”) was too hard for Americans to pronounce at the time, so they just called it by one of the Japanese words they knew best: “Sukiyaki.”

Today, both manga and anime are fascinating examples of how popular cultures of very different countries can fuse together and create something new. Both manga and anime are based on American comics and animation. They use techniques and a type of storytelling “grammar” developed in America and Europe, yet they fuse these with Japan’s own, long tradition of popular line art that entertains, has a narrative component, and enjoys fun depictions of humanity.

It took many years before Japanese fully developed their own styles of comics and animation. But people today are often surprised to learn how early this work started. Japanese artists began creating American-style comics at the beginning of the 20th century. Sako Shishido, popular for a children’s series called *Speed Taro*, lived in America for nearly nine years starting in 1912, and studied the art of newspaper comic strips. Yoshitaka (Henry) Kiyama came to America in 1904 to study Western oil painting, but in 1931 he created a comic book spanning over a hundred pages about the experiences of himself and other Japanese immigrants in San Francisco. Titled *Manga Yonin Shosei* and known today as *The Four Immigrants Manga*, it was modeled after American newspaper comic strips, which were then hugely popular. But because Kiyama published his work in San Francisco as a book, he may have inadvertently created the first true graphic novel, or comic book, in the United States.

Today Tokyo is the center of the Japanese manga and anime world. After World War II, largely Tokyo-based artists began making improvisations in both comics and animation, creating new genres and styles that were different from those in the United States. Osamu Tezuka, who lived from 1928 to 1989, is revered in Japan as the *manga no kami-sama*, or “God of Comics.” After World War II, he used American comic book formats to create long, narrative “story manga” that could be enjoyed almost like novels or films. In 1963, he turned his most popular manga work—*Mighty Atom*, or “Astro Boy”—into a 30-minute animated show for television and succeeded in selling it to the United States. In doing so, and in creating merchandise for his most popular works, he essentially created the framework for what is today a gigantic pop culture industry in Japan.

In 1997, at the peak of the Japanese manga industry, nearly 40 percent of all published books and magazines in Japan were manga. In fact, it is safe to say that no other nation on earth enjoys manga, and anime, as much as Japan today. Manga are the engine, not only of the anime industry, but of much of the merchandise and video and smartphone games—in fact, much of the pop culture—that we now enjoy from Japan.

Meanwhile, Tokyo, in particular, has become a global center for new types of popular culture, a place where we expect new and interesting and fun things to emerge. It is the generator of what the Japanese government calls “Cool Japan,” which is now a major export industry. And we all get to enjoy it.

Frederik L. Schodt is a writer, translator, and interpreter based in San Francisco. In 2009, he was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, for his contributions to the introduction and promotion of Japanese contemporary popular culture in the United States of America. His website is <http://www.jai2.com>.

Questions

Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. What types of Japanese pop culture are you familiar with? List some of your favorite manga or anime stories or characters, songs, foods, architectural and/or fashion styles, etc.
2. When did Americans and Europeans first become interested in Japanese pop culture?
3. What was the first type of popular culture from Japan that Westerners developed an interest in? What impact did it have on the West?
4. How was sukiyaki first introduced to Americans?
5. What were manga and anime modeled after?
6. Why is Osamu Tezuka considered the “God of Comics”?

LECTURE NOTES

While viewing the video lecture by Frederik Schodt, fill in the blanks below.

1. In Japan, manga is a generic term that means comic _____, comic _____, and cartoons.
2. Modern Japanese _____ is a fusion of a long tradition in Japan of a love of line art that entertains with comic strip grammar imported from the United States in the beginning of the _____ century.
3. Comic strip “grammar” refers to the use of _____ to divide up time sequentially and word _____ that allow the writers to incorporate words and infuse them with pictures.
4. In 1931, Henry Kiyama published one of the first comic books in the United States written by a Japanese _____. The comic was a semi-autobiographical history of Japanese-American immigrants in the San Francisco area. It was written in _____ and Japanese.
5. Then there was a long gap before Japanese manga had a presence in the United States. During this time, Japanese manga developed into more _____, longer, and more sophisticated stories than comics in the United States.
6. In 1963, Osamu Tezuka created the first 30-minute television animation (anime), called “_____” that became popular in the United States.
7. In 1979, volunteers in Japan translated a classic Japanese manga, *Barefoot Gen*, about the author’s first-hand experiences in _____ before, during, and after the atomic bombing. The comic layout was flopped so it could be read from left to right and was marketed for American readers. This manga had an influence on artists in the _____.
8. During the 1990s publishers realized they did not have to flop the Japanese comics because American manga readers were willing to read the comics from _____ to _____ as in Japan. Once this was discovered, many more Japanese manga were translated into English, shortened, and _____ to look like American comics—for American readers.
9. Today Japanese manga in the United States are typically issued in _____ format and read from right to left.
10. Manga have influenced American comic book _____. This can be seen in some male characters who have less muscles, female characters with a softer appearance, and characters with _____ eyes.
11. Japanese manga has influenced American animation and live actions films. For example, _____ has been heavily influenced by Japanese anime and manga, as have films such as *The _____*, *The Lion King*, and *Black Swan*.
12. Manga and anime are increasingly becoming part of American culture, similar to how _____ has become mainstream in America.
13. Now in the United States there are translated manga from _____ and Japan as well as original _____-language manga written by North American artists.
14. With the increasing number of anime and manga clubs on U.S. high school and college campuses and anime and manga conventions, it is becoming an autonomous _____ in the United States.

POP CULTURE RESEARCH PROJECT

For this project, you and your partner will choose a pop culture personality or product that interests you, learn more about it, and create a presentation to share with the class.

1. **Step One:** Choose a personality or product of Japanese pop culture and research it. Choose from anime, manga, J-pop, film, fashion, architectural design, or cuisine.
2. **Step Two:** Write one or two paragraphs describing your topic, and one paragraph comparing and contrasting it to a similar type of pop culture where you live.
3. **Step Three:** Find and/or create at least two images to accompany your topic. If appropriate, you may also include audio/visuals to further demonstrate and explain the personality or product.
4. **Step Four:** Create a poster or PowerPoint presentation using the information and audio/visuals you have selected or created.
5. **Step Five:** Prepare with your partner to present your information to the class. Your presentation should be between three and five minutes in length.

Your poster or PowerPoint presentation will be evaluated on content as well as appearance and use of correct writing mechanics. Make sure to include your information in an aesthetically-pleasing format, free from errors, and easy to read and understand.

Use the space below to plan your project and presentation with your partner.

PRESENTATION NOTES

Take brief notes in the space below while watching the partner presentations.

Names of Presenters	Pop Culture Product or Personality	Notes

Questions

1. Which type of pop culture was most popular with your classmates? Which was least popular?
2. What did you find most interesting about Japanese pop culture from the presentations you watched?
3. What are at least three reasons why you think Japanese pop culture is also popular outside of Japan?

RESEARCH PROJECT RUBRIC

Criteria	1	2	3	Score
Content	Demonstrates little knowledge of topic, or content is incomplete and/or inaccurate	Demonstrates some knowledge of topic; some content is incomplete and/or inaccurate	Demonstrates knowledge of topic; content is complete and accurate	
Organization of Information	Information is presented in an illogical, uninteresting, and/or disorganized format that confuses the audience	Information is presented in a somewhat logical, interesting, and organized format that audience can mostly understand	Information is presented in a logical, interesting, and organized format that audience can understand	
Visual Appeal	Does not include images/audiovisual materials, or images/audiovisual materials detract from the content or are inappropriate	Includes appropriate images/audiovisual materials that somewhat enhance and do not detract from the content	Includes appropriate images/audiovisuals that enhance the content	
Mechanics	Uses three or more spelling and/or grammatical errors	Uses one or two spelling and/or grammatical errors	Free from spelling and/or grammatical errors	
Presentation	Uses distracting body language; and/or does not speak loudly or clearly; and does not make eye contact with audience	Uses distracting body language; and/or does not speak loudly or clearly; and makes occasional eye contact with audience	Uses appropriate body language; speaks loudly and clearly; and maintains eye contact with audience	

Comments	Total Score

CULTURE GOES POP

1. What types of Japanese pop culture are you familiar with? List some of your favorite manga or anime stories or characters, songs, foods, architectural and/or fashion styles, etc.
Student responses will vary.
2. When did Americans and Europeans first become interested in Japanese pop culture?
Americans and Europeans became interested in Japanese pop culture beginning in 1853 when Japan was forced to start trading and was opened to the outside world.
3. What was the first type of popular culture from Japan that Westerners developed an interest in? What impact did it have on the West?
Woodblock prints were the first type of pop culture that became of interest to Westerners. Woodblock prints influenced new art movements in the West, such as Impressionism.
4. How was sukiyaki first introduced to Americans?
The American G.I.s were first exposed to sukiyaki in Japan after World War II.
5. What were manga and anime modeled after?
Manga and anime were modeled after American comics and animation.
6. Why is Osamu Tezuka considered the “God of Comics”?
Osamu Tezuka created long, narrative “story manga,” turned his story “Astro Boy” into an animated television show, and created merchandise for his most popular works, hence setting the stage for what has become a huge pop culture industry in Japan.

LECTURE NOTES

1. In Japan, manga is a generic term that means comic *books*, comic *strips*, and cartoons.
2. Modern Japanese *manga* is a fusion of a long tradition in Japan of a love of line art that entertains with comic strip grammar imported from the United States in the beginning of the *20th* century.
3. Comic strip “grammar” refers to the use of *panels* to divide up time sequentially and word *balloons* that allow the writers to incorporate words and infuse them with pictures.
4. In 1931, Henry Kiyama published one of the first comic books in the United States written by a Japanese *immigrant*. The comic was a semi-autobiographical history of Japanese-American immigrants in the San Francisco area. It was written in *English* and Japanese.
5. Then there was a long gap before Japanese manga had a presence in the United States. During this time, Japanese manga developed into more *visual*, longer, and more sophisticated stories than comics in the United States.
6. In 1963, Osamu Tezuka created the first 30-minute television animation (anime), called “*Astro Boy*,” that became popular in the United States.
7. In 1979, volunteers in Japan translated a classic Japanese manga, *Barefoot Gen*, about the author’s first-hand experiences in *Hiroshima* before, during and after the atomic bombing. The comic layout was flopped so it could be read from left to right and was marketed for American readers. This manga had an influence on artists in the *United States*.
8. During the 1990s publishers realized they did not have to flop the Japanese comics because American manga readers were willing to read the comics from *right* to *left* as in Japan. Once this was discovered, many more Japanese manga were translated into English, shortened, and *colorized* to look like American comics—for the American readers.
9. Today Japanese manga in the United States are typically issued in *paperback* format and read from right to left.
10. Manga have influenced American comic book *artists*. This can be seen in some male characters who have less muscles, female characters with a softer appearance, and characters with *bigger* eyes.
11. Japanese manga has influenced American animation and live actions films. For example, *Disney* has been heavily influenced by Japanese anime and manga, as have films such as *The Matrix*, *The Lion King*, and *Black Swan*.
12. Manga and anime are increasingly becoming part of American culture, similar to how *sushi* has become mainstream in America.
13. Now in the United States there are translated manga from *Korea* and Japan as well as original *English-language* manga written by North American artists.
14. With the increasing number of anime and manga clubs on U.S. high school and college campuses and anime and manga conventions, it is becoming an autonomous *subculture* in the United States.

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