

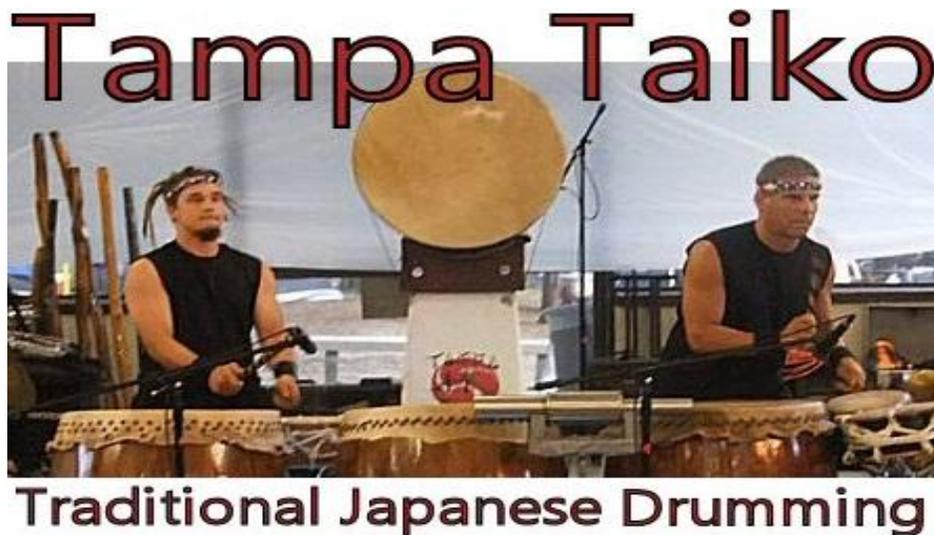


Learning about Japanese Culture with Tampa Taiko

“Konichiwa,” from The Tampa Taiko Japanese Drumming Ensemble

Tampa Taiko is a professional drumming ensemble that has performed for a vast array of audiences. Using a collection of taiko drums they have made themselves from discarded barrels, Tampa Taiko entertains and educates audiences with an exciting traditional presentation of an ancient Japanese art form.

This program can be held in a theater, gymnasium, band room, cafeteria, classroom, or most any other venue of your choice. Concerts and workshops are usually 50 to 70 minutes, tailored for the performance space, for any size audience. Also, the presentations and hands-on workshops are tailored to meet the needs of various the age and ability levels.



Tampa Taiko’s Goal Statement: Through the proper study of traditional taiko, we learn about and honor the Japanese and the world in which they live(d).

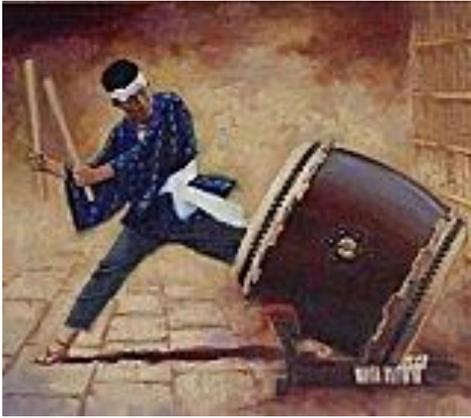
Our performances and workshops support K-12 Florida Music Standards regarding Historical and Global Connections: *Through study in the arts, we learn about and honor others and the worlds in which they live(d).*

This program is may be presented as a concert, a workshop for students, a team building event for adults, or as a VIP event, such as a pep rally, half-time show, or graduation. Also available to music and physical education programs as an on-going course with classes during or after school, meeting daily, weekly or monthly.

Contact: Ron Collins, Managing Director of Tampa Taiko Japanese Drumming Ensemble – www.TampaTaiko.com – 727.531.7999

Before the Show – Introduction

Educators, please share this information with your students prior to the event.



Taiko drums are deeply entrenched in the fabric of Japanese culture. Taiko drums were used to drive away pests harmful to crops. By imitating the sound of thunder, it was believed that they could bring rain, and at harvest time taiko drums were always played to celebrate and to show appreciation for a bountiful crop. Taiko drums were often used at contests to motivate the group, to make announcements or to call out orders.

In the years following 1945, a cultural renaissance has taken place in Japan - a rediscovery of native arts. Many festivals, building dedications, video games, TV shows and corporate events feature taiko drummers. With world-renowned touring ensembles like Kodo and Ondekoza, taiko has been popularized and is played on stages throughout the world.

Before the Show – Genre and Content - What to Expect

Taiko is known as the modern art of traditional Japanese drumming in a group ensemble that uses martial art like movements and "ki-ais" (shouting to encourage high energy). The performance may also dramatize Japanese folktales with dialogue, with gestures, and through the use of props. Drums were used in ancient times to signify the boundaries of a village. Events such as rice harvests, public ceremonies and dance festivals were celebrated with drums. Drums were played loudly to sound like thunder and make rain. Drummers led warriors into battle to send signals and to intimidate the enemy. Taiko drums were included in Japanese folklore. In one example, by drumming, the Sun would come out of its cave. Japanese culture has celebrated the athleticism of traditional drumming for over one thousand years.

Taiko became popular around the world in the 1950s and was introduced to the United States in 1968 by Grand Master Seiichi Tanaka, who wanted taiko to be a common household word, like chopsticks and sushi. Knowledge shared by Grand Master Tanaka has been passed from generation-to-generation, from sensei-to-student, and eventually was shared with the performing members of Tampa Taiko.



The drummers of Tampa Taiko have been trained to perform in a traditional style, and wear no shoes on stage or while they are training in their dojo. They wear headbands called, "hakimachi" and play an assortment of traditional drums, gongs, cymbals and shakuhachi, which is a Japanese bamboo flute. Even Tampa Taiko's uniforms mimic the color and style of clothing that was worn by the taiko drummers of ancient Japan.

Before the Show – Theater Etiquette – The Role of the Audience

Educators, please share this information with your students prior to the event.



Regardless of what type of live theater or concert performance, audience members are a very important part of the show. Live performances are different than watching a presentation on television or on a digital device because the performers are in the same room with you. That means that the performers can see, hear, and can immediately interact with the audience.

Please enter the performance space quietly, and listen for instructions. Is recording of audio or video allowed? How about photography, either with or without flash? Is food or drink allowed in the seating area? You should not assume that permission will be granted to record, photograph, eat or drink during the show.

Performers prefer that the audience members watch and listen quietly. Loud or excessive talking disturbs the performers and other members of the audience. But there also may be times that the performers ask the audience to participate by clapping, by drumming along with their hands, or by using a strong voice in unison. Pay attention, participate, and enjoy the performance!

At the conclusion of the show, the performers like to hear you clap when they bow. Sometimes, the audience members may rise to their feet while clapping to show even greater enthusiasm for an outstanding performance. After the performers have finished taking their bows, sit quietly and listen for instructions on how to begin the hands-on workshop event, or for instructions regarding how to exit the venue.



Florida Standards for Theater Etiquette: Grades K-12, TH.[GRADE LEVEL].S.1.1

TH.K.S.1.1 - Demonstrate appropriate audience behavior at a live performance.

TH.1.S.1.1 - Exhibit appropriate audience etiquette and response.

TH.2.S.1.1 - Exhibit the behavior necessary to establish audience etiquette, response, and constructive criticism.

TH.3.S.1.1 - Demonstrate effective audience etiquette and constructive criticism for a live performance.

TH.4.S.1.1 - Exhibit proper audience etiquette, give constructive criticism, and defend personal responses.

TH.5.S.1.1 - Describe the difference in responsibilities between being an audience member at live or recorded performances.

TH.68.S.1.1 - Describe the proper audience etiquette at live and recorded performances.

TH.912.S.1.1 - Describe the interactive effect of audience members and actors on performances.

Florida Standards for Music Performance: Grades K–12, MU.[GRADE LEVEL].H.1.1

MU.K.H.1.1 - Respond to music from diverse cultures through singing and movement.

MU.1.H.1.1 - Perform simple songs, dances, and musical games from a variety of cultures.

MU.2.H.1.1 - Perform songs, musical games, dances, and simple instrumental accompaniments from a variety of cultures.

MU.3.H.1.1 - Compare indigenous instruments of specified cultures.

MU.4.H.1.1 - Examine and describe a cultural tradition, other than one's own, learned through its musical style and/or use of authentic instruments.

MU.5.H.1.1 - Identify the purposes for which music is used within various cultures.

MU.68.H.1.1 - Describe the functions of music from various cultures and time periods.

MU.912.H.1.1 - Investigate and discuss how a culture's traditions are reflected through its music.

During the Show - Selected Glossary

Educators, this is a short list of easy-to-learn key words that we frequently use in our dojo, during our performances, and in our hands-on workshops:

1. **Bachi** - drumstick; various sizes, commonly 15" to 16" long and 7/8" to 1" diameter
2. **Dojo** - practice hall
3. **Sensei** - teacher
4. **Hakimachi** - headband; strip of cloth tied around the head
5. **Happi** - a short work coat; martial arts top cover
6. **Kata** - form; basic body alignment and movement when striking the drum
7. **Mimi** - "ears"; flaps over the side of the drum used when pulling on the skin to tighten the head prior to nailing
8. **O Daiko** - big drum; the largest drum on stage is called the odaiko, but people often think of the very large drums (4-5 feet in diameter) played by Tampa Taiko (pictured), Kodo or Ondekoza; usually played on a tower stand
9. **Shime Daiko** - "tightened" drum; from verb "shimeru" = to close tightly or tie tightly; smaller, flat drums whose heads are pulled together by rope or metal bolts; highest toned drum, often used to maintain the base rhythm on songs; also used on solos
10. **Taiko or Daiko** - drum; general term for any drum, as well as the music played on them



During the Show – “Matsuri Daiko” - Festival Drums

Taiko means "big drum," but there are many shapes and sizes. Tampa Taiko performances can include other instruments such as cymbals, gongs, flutes, strings, and even a seashell. During each event, a traditional piece, “Matsuri Daiko” is performed, along with an appropriate explanation of the song’s music and its use in Japanese culture. The sound made by striking the drum is defined by a syllable, and to play the rhythmic phrase, the taiko drummer plays a pattern of taiko syllables (Don, DoRo etc.) with their R (right) and L (left) drum sticks(bachi):

v Listen v

Don - 1 Beat Hard

DoRo - ½ Beat Hard

TsuKu - ½ Beat Soft

Kat - 1 Beat Rimshot

KaRa - ½ Beat Rimshots

Su - Silence



Matsuri Daiko

Don	Don	Don	KaRa	Ka	Ka
R	L	R	RL	R	L

Don Don	SuRo	Don	KaRa	Ka	Ka
RR	L	R	RL	R	L

Part 2

Don	DoRo	Don	Don		
R	R L	R	L	x8	

After the Show – Follow Up Activities and Discussion

Educators, your performance may be followed up immediately with a hands-on opportunity for everyone to play our taiko drums (groups of 150 or less), or you may follow up with these activities at a later date.



Playing traditional Japanese taiko music requires a blend of many disciplines, and there are many classroom subject areas where these disciplines may be applied. We recognize that there are many demands placed on educators to meet standards and benchmarks. For this reason, we have constructed activities to help students meet The Florida Standards in Music, Theater, Social Studies, Physical Education, and World Languages.

Development of cultural awareness has become much more important as our student populations become more diverse, and there is a need to counter the bullying, discrimination and isolation that most people encounter on a daily basis.

After the Show – Hands-on Experience

Our favorite way to share our passion for taiko is to teach our signature song, “Matsuri Daiko,” to people of all ages. Grades K-12, adults, and retirees enjoy playing our big, loud drums in the workshops led by Tampa Taiko’s Sensei Ron Collins. For concerts and assemblies with over 150 attendees, our workshops and classes may be scheduled when we return at a later date. For advance training that involves multiple classes, taiko drum building, and rehearsal for a public performance, please inquire about our Residency Program.

Teachers may also assume the role of sensei and lead the group activities, with all participants starting with Step 1 and working towards Step 4.

Step 1 – Grades K, 1, 2 and up

Grades K, 1, 2 - Standard for Physical Education

PE.1.C.2.5 - Recognize the importance of practicing to improve performance.

Professional taiko performers must practice their craft daily, and training is strenuous on the mind as well as the body. Even when drums are not available, taiko players are still able to vocalize their music or train by using fingertips on their lap or a flat surface.



All students in the taiko dojo, regardless of age, start by learning the first line of “Matsuri Daiko.” Led by the sensei, the group starts by singing, or “rapping” the first three beats in unison, followed by silence:



Don Don Don Su repeat

This is a very basic beat that young children can vocalize and learn, since it is just three notes followed by a silent note. Once the group can verbally repeat the line in unison, you are ready to play your “song” using taiko drums or alternate objects. If you have access drums, that is fine, but

many alternatives are commonly used for taiko training: tires, wood blocks, rubber mats, on the floor, plastic buckets or even on inverted rubber garbage cans.

Discuss: Why is taiko not just music, but also considered to be a sport that is physically and mentally demanding? *Taiko involves strength, coordination, endurance and synchronized movements with others in the group. It is very similar to a martial art form like karate and judo, with similar protocols and a sensei.*

Grades 1, 2, 3 - Standard for Social Studies

SS.1.A.2.1 - Understand history tells the story of people and events of other times and places.

1. Find Japan on a map or globe to see where it is located and what it looks like. *Japan is an island nation, with 4 large islands, and over 6,000 smaller islands, of which over 430 are inhabited. There are mountains, and it is cold in the north and warm in the south.*
2. How was drumming used long ago in Japan? Why were they used during celebrations and ceremonies? *Taiko drums were used to send signals. People also thought that the drums possessed the power to make rain and were used when offering thanks for a bountiful crop.*
3. What 3 questions would you like to ask a taiko player? *How did you learn taiko? Where did you grow up? Where do you train, and do your neighbors enjoy hearing the big, loud drums?*
4. When watching or playing taiko drums, how do you feel? Excited? Scared? Or, do you feel like you want to dance? *Many people become emotional when watching or playing taiko drums!*
5. Enjoy reading and acting out one of children's books, "The Drums of Noto Hanto" or "Ten Oni Drummers." If you are unable to secure a copy of either book, the plot for, "The Drums of Noto Hanto" is provided in our Annotated Bibliography.



Grades K, 1, 2 may skip Steps 2, 3 and 4

Step 2 – Grades 3, 4, 5 and up

Grades 3, 4, 5 - Standard for Physical Education

PE.5.C.2.1 - Apply purposeful movement to a variety of movement settings to include designing and performing movement routines.

Older children have a greater ability when drumming in time and memorizing lines of music. Led by the sensei, and following martial arts protocols such as bowing and steadfast attention, the group starts by singing, or "rapping" the first full line of "Matsuri Daiko" in unison:



Don Don Don, KaRa Ka Ka repeat

This is the entire first line, starting with 3 three notes, followed by 4 notes that are played on the rim of the drum and filling in the silent space on the 4th beat. Next, the drummers can play the song using taiko drums or alternate objects. Taiko drummers exaggerate their arm movements, reaching out to touch the rim with their sticks while performing dance movements in unison.

Students can also complete the exercise by drumming along with their fingers on their desk, with hands on laps, with rhythm sticks while seated on the floor, or by making martial arts-style movements and imitating the drumming movements on an imaginary drum. If you decide to make

your own bachi (drum sticks), 8-16 inch sticks such as dowel rods may be fashioned into a reasonable facsimile, or use unsharpened pencils, chop sticks, etc.

Grades 3, 4, 5 - Standard for Dance

DA.3.H.1.1 - Practice and perform social, cultural, or folk dances, using associated traditional music, to identify commonalities and differences.

All of the arm movements, spins, stances and dancing of the taiko drummers is choreographed and rehearsed to make it more appealing to the audience. Host a Matsuri (festival) that includes taiko music, dancing, costumes, decorations and refreshments.

Host a cultural event, a Matsuri celebration!

Obon Festival – A celebration that involves a famous dance called Bon-Odori

Haru Matsuri - Spring Festival, celebrating planting of crops or warming weather

Sakura Matsuri - Cherry Blossom Festival, usually in springtime near blooming cherry trees

Nikkei Matsuri - Japanese American Festival, popular in Hawaii, California, Oregon and Washington

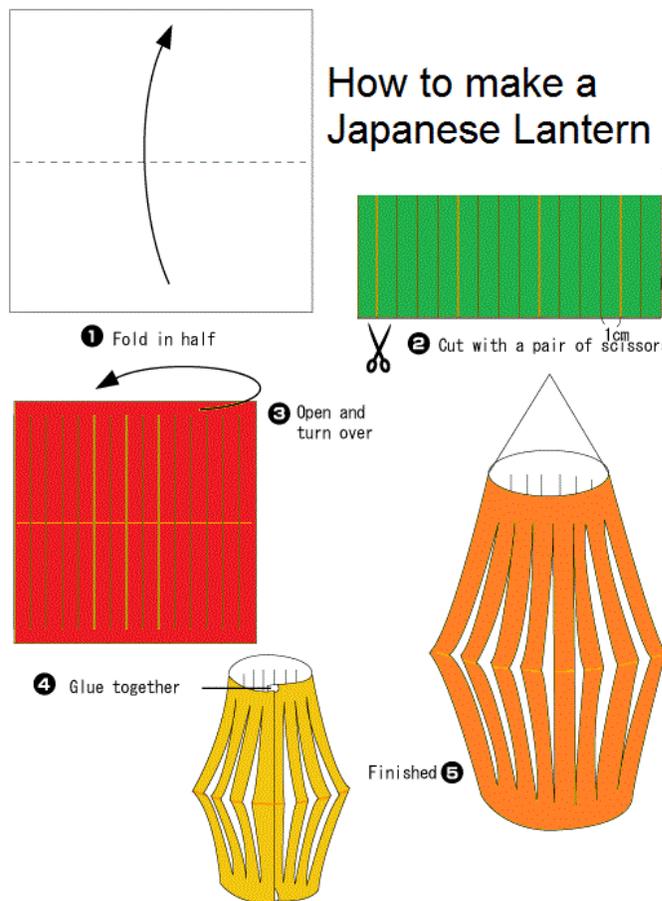
Hina Matsuri - Girls' Day

Kodomo no Hi - Children's Day

Aki Matsuri - Autumn Festival, similar to a harvest festival

Taiko drumming with dancing is always featured at festivals in Japan. Wear a hakimachi (headband) you can easily make by tearing

strips (24 inches long x 4 inches wide) of cotton cloth. Decorate the room by hanging Japanese lanterns (see diagram) made of construction paper. Serve Japanese food such as rice, or try to eat any kind of food while using chop sticks. During the celebration, be sure that you can listen to music by taiko ensembles like Tampa Taiko, Kodo, or one of the other artists from our list.



Discussion Question: What holidays in the United States are celebrated with music? *Virtually every holiday world-wide is celebrated with the joyful sounds of music and dancing. For example, Americans celebrate Independence Day with parades featuring marching bands playing, "Star and Stripes Forever." The song, Auld Lang Syne, is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world to celebrate the New Year.*

Discussion Question: Tampa Taiko members wear a predominantly black uniform to pay homage to the working class laborers who handled most of the drumming duties in ancient Japan. What other conventions do Tampa Taiko drummers use to honor traditional taiko drummers? *Their hakimachi (headbands) are worn for courage and strength, no shoes are worn, they wear martial arts pants*

and tops, they bow to the audience before and after each performance, and they use traditional instruments.

Grades 3, 4, 5 may skip Steps 3 and 4

Step 3 – Grades 6, 7, 8 and up

Grades 6, 7, 8 - Activity connected to Physical Education

PE.6.R.6.3-Participate in games, sports and/or physical activities from other cultures.

Once the group can verbally repeat the first full line of notes, have the group vocalize the second part and repeat the pair of lines:



Don Don Don, KaRa Ka Ka
Don Don Su Ro Don, KaRa Ka Ka

Once the group has mastered the first two lines, everyone can try it on taiko drums or with alternate objects. Students can drum along with their fingers on their desk, with hands on their laps, using rhythm sticks while seated on the floor, or just by making martial arts-style movements and imitating the drumming movements on an imaginary drum. If you must make your own bachi (drum sticks), dowel rods may be fashioned into a reasonable facsimile, or you can use unsharpened pencils, chop sticks, etc.

Discussion Question: How was Taiko originally used? What other examples do you know of when sounds are used as signals? *Taiko drums were used in battle to give their warriors courage and to intimidate the enemy. They were also used to communicate and make announcements. Other examples include talking drums in Africa; drums communicating orders in the civil war; school bells, fire drills; alarm clocks and clock radios; telephones and cell phones; etc.*

Grades 6, 7, 8 – Standard for Social Studies

SS.6.W.4.Su.d - Recognize a teaching of Buddha, such as compassion, selflessness, or enlightenment.

1. Listen to shakuhachi music and role play or discuss its traditional use in Japan. Use Komuso.com as your starting point for research and listen to commonly known pieces, called *honkyoku*, on [Youtube](https://www.youtube.com). The Komuso wore a hat that concealed their identity, thus promoting their own selflessness.
2. How are the Komuso and Zen connected? How did the Komuso monks use the shakuhachi? *They used the shakuhachi to make peaceful music, but they were also meditating by using the shakuhachi flute to do breathing exercises to relax their mind and body to achieve enlightenment.*



Grades 6, 7, 8 - Activity connected to World Languages

WL.K12.NH.7.1 - Use vocabulary acquired in the target language to access new knowledge from other disciplines.

Review our glossary for new terms and play a word game that involves naming as many Japanese words as possible. Write, or take turns saying aloud, commonly used Japanese words that we use while speaking English. Allow proper nouns like companies and cities to increase the possibilities. *There are dozens of words, like sushi, Toyota, sayonara, tsunami, Sony, tofu, tempura, shogun, Mitsubishi, arigato, hibachi, honcho, ninja, kamikaze, Tokyo, karate, sensei, bonsai, Sudoku, dojo zen, emoji, teriyaki, Kawasaki, manga, tycoon, Kyoto, wasabi, Ikebana, origami, haiku, soy, Suzuki, sashimi, miso, geisha, rickshaw, kudzu, koi, samurai, karaoke, and of course, taiko.*

Grades 6, 7, 8 may skip Step 4

Step 4 – Grades 9, 10, 11, 12

Grades 9, 10, 11, 12 - Standard for Physical Education

PE.912.R.2.In.c: Identify the role of games, sports, or physical activities in other cultures.

Older children and adult taiko drummers should start by learning the first two parts of, “Matsuri Daiko” as described in Steps 1-3. Once the group can verbally repeat the two parts of the piece, add Part 2 to complete our rendition of the song:



Part 2

Don DoRo Don Don x 8

Once Part 1 and Part 2 have been mastered separately, now the parts are put together. At first, everyone in the dojo will verbalize, in unison, Part 1 four times, followed by repeating Part 2 for eight times. Then split the class into two groups and have them do the parts simultaneously, and by switching from Part 1 to Part 2:



Part 1

Don Don Don, KaRa Ka Ka
Don Don Su Ro Don, KaRa Ka Ka

Part 2

Don DoRo Don Don x 8

Next, the drummers can play the song using taiko drums or alternate objects. If you have access to any kind of drum, that is fine, but many alternatives are commonly used for taiko training: tires, wood blocks, rubber mats, on the floor, plastic buckets or even on inverted rubber garbage cans.



Ideally, this exercise can be done in a space that allows everyone to move their arms without making contact with others. Add in choreography and voice commands to embellish the work, and then get ready to perform the piece for an audience!

The group can rehearse their new song using taiko drums or alternate objects. Medium-sized taiko drums weight about 60 lbs., and they are also expensive, so most all taiko professionals will save their drums only for performances or for very important training sessions.

Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 – Standard for Social Studies

SS.912.W.8 - Recognize significant events and people from the post World War II and Cold War eras.

1. Research and write a paper about the Japanese Internment Camps of World War II. *There were over 100,000 people of Japanese descent that were detained in California, Arizona, Oregon and the state of Washington. Most were U.S. citizens, and were held in 13 makeshift centers that were created in 1942. Evacuation notices were posted on telephone poles and on buildings.*
2. Discuss the incarceration of Japanese-Americans at internment camps by the United States government during World War II. Do images and personal accounts of the detainees remind you of other incarcerated civilians during that war? *Many historians have compared and contrasted these internment camps to concentration camps in Nazi Germany.*



Discography for Tampa Taiko

Tampa Taiko has three LP albums that are available at most of the popular on-line retailers and streaming services, including Amazon, eMusic, Google Play, iTunes, Last.fm, Play.com, Rhapsody, Slacker, Spotify, Wal-Mart, and many more...



Tampa Taiko

Big, Loud
Drums

2009



Tampa Taiko

Live in Ybor
City

2012



Tampa Taiko

Ron
Shakuachi

2013

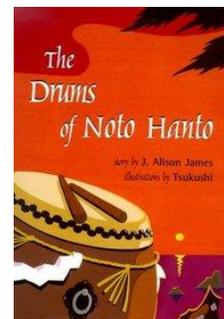
Additional sources for Tampa Taiko audio, video, and photographs are available on social media sites such as Facebook ([Facebook.com/TampaTaiko](https://www.facebook.com/TampaTaiko)) and Youtube. The Internet Archive ([Archive.org](https://archive.org)) also has a treasure trove of free, downloadable media. There are entire concert video and audio recordings by Tampa Taiko, by Ron Shakuachi, and by several other related projects. Search for "Tampa Taiko" or visit our official website at TampaTaiko.com for more.



To see other professional taiko ensembles, search for Kodo, Ondekoza, Wadaiko Tokara, Yamato Drummers, Portland Taiko, Seiichi Tanaka, Taiko Project, Soh Daiko, Sokeroku, Uzume Taiko, and Joji Hirota.

Annotated Bibliography

James, J. Alison., and Tsukushi. *The Drums of Noto Hanto*. New York: DK Pub., 1999. Print. *Our favorite taiko book for kids! Students can follow along and act out the actions in this story about villagers that had to work together to turn away an invasion. They used their loud drums and scary costumes with masks to turn away invading warriors without anybody drawing a weapon. Grades K-3.*



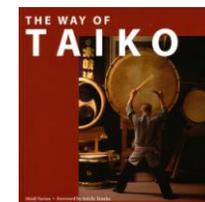
Gollub, Matthew, and Stone Kazuko G. *Ten Oni Drummers*. New York: Lee & Low, 2000. Print. *This is other favorite taiko book for kids. Students act out the actions described in the story. Grades K-3.*

DiJoseph, Robin. *Small Moments in a Big World: Haiku for Children*. 2008. Print. *One of many books available that introduce young people to Haiku. Grades K-5.*

Temko, Florence. *A Thousand Cranes: Origami Projects for Peace and Happiness*. Berkeley, CA: Heian, 2011. Print. *Simple how-to projects with paper folding, not just cranes. Grades K-5, 6-8. Grades 9-12 and adults very often make a thousand cranes as a service project, for decorations, etc.*

Kawabata, Yasunari. *A Thousand Cranes*. Tokyo: Tuttle, 1984. Print. *This novel was written in 1952, during the early years of Japanese reconstruction that followed World War II. A Thousand Cranes is also a popular play. Grades 6-8, and 9-1*

Varian, Heidi. *The Way of Taiko*. Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge, 2005. Print. *A textbook for traditional taiko training and performance, with a foreword by Grand Master Seiichi Tanaka. Grades 6-8, and 9-12.*



Hart, Mickey, Stevens Jay, and Lieberman Fredric. *Drumming at the Edge of Magic: A Journey into the Spirit of Percussion*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990. Print. *Gain a deeper understanding of the affect that percussion has in various world cultures, including Japan. Grades 9-12*

Coutts-Smith, Mark. *Children of the Drum: The Life of Japan's Kodo Drummers*. Hong Kong: Lightworks, 1997. Print. *Endurance training and mental preparations endured by members of the world's most famous taiko ensemble. Grades 9-12.*

A Message from Tampa Taiko's Managing Director



"When I graduated from Virginia Tech in 1985 with degrees in English (Writing for Children), and Business (Management Science), I never imagined that I would become a professional taiko artist. After a 5 year internship of intensive training under my sensei, I performed in public for the first time & I immediately knew that I would devote the rest of my life to sharing my passion for taiko. I have had the honor to present this art form to tens of thousands of students, adults, and retirees, and I am sure we can create an event that will be educational and entertaining. Together, we will make memories that will last a lifetime." -Ron Collins