



Mini-Lesson: Sado Island

INTRODUCTION

The haiku that Matsuo Bashō wrote about Sado Island was penned over 300 years ago, but it continues to be read and honored by people in the 21st century. Was there (and is there) a real Sado Island? Where is it? What is it like and how is it connected to Jodie Blackshaw's music? This short lesson provides images and information about the real place that the poet immortalized.

LEARNING GOAL

Students will read and view information about Sado Island, then hold a speculative discussion about its links to the music, *Letter from Sado*.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- PowerPoint or (PDFs thereof) with maps and history of Sado Island and images of Sado Island today (found in the Interdisciplinary Lessons folder of this curriculum)
- Questions for discussion (see below)

PROCESS

1. Re-read Bashō's haiku poem about Sado Island. Remind students that as he grew older, he traveled alone and on foot across rural Japan. His wandering took him to a remote corner of Honshu, the largest of Japan's islands. He heard the sound of the sea and made his way to the shore. There he looked westward over the Sea of Japan and saw Sado Island.
2. Based on what they noticed in the music of *Letter from Sado*, ask students to speculate about the island. What might they see, hear, smell, and feel in the air? What about those "stormy seas" and the Milky Way or "heaven's river?"
3. Play the PowerPoint included with the *BandQuest*® curriculum. As students view the images, ask various individuals to read the text. After viewing, direct students to answer the following questions in small groups or as a homework assignment. You might also consider placing the Sado Island PowerPoint on your classroom web site for viewing at home before a class discussion.
 - Where is Sado Island? To what country does it belong?
 - How is this island connected to the haiku that inspired *Letter from Sado*?
 - Speculate on these questions about the *Letter from Sado*:
 - Why do you think Jodie Blackshaw includes the ocean drum in the piece?
 - Why are taiko drums included in the piece?
 - Why do you think Blackshaw has musicians chant parts of the haiku?
 - Do you have any new insights into the music after learning a bit about Sado? What are they?