



REACH Tries Out Taiko 太鼓

Taiko means “drum” in Japanese. Taiko Drumming is one of the most popular and most widely recognized Japanese cultural performances. The performances can last between 5 and 25 minutes and typically follow a jo-ha-kyū (beginning, middle, end/rapid, sudden, urgent, and emergency) structure, which means the performance will speed up significantly towards the grand finale.

As I waited patiently in the lobby for our turn to try Taiko drumming, I was astounded by the strong beats of the drumming class before us. Every beat was played at a specific time, and all the drummers sounded like one large drum. This past month, REACH had the awesome opportunity to learn the basics of Taiko drumming from the Orlando Taiko Dojo. Can you believe it? We learned how to play a whole song in just an hour! From this experience, I learned that it really takes teamwork and dedication to play a song together. When one of us played on the wrong beat, we had to start all over again from the beginning of the song. I also got to learn a little bit more about the Japanese culture and strong drumming style. I'm truly glad I got the chance to try Taiko drumming. If it wasn't for this generous invitation to try out Taiko drumming by Orlando Taiko Dojo, I probably would have never been able to play Taiko drums. What an incredible feeling it was to play Taiko drums! Thank you, Orlando Taiko Dojo, for this amazing opportunity! I will never forget it.

By: Priscilla Leung, *President of REACH*

Going to the Taiko drum try-outs was interesting because we learned about how the drummers read their music. Instead of having notes on a sheet of music to read, like most other instruments (i.e. trumpets, clarinets, etc.), they read words on a normal piece of paper, i.e. don don dodon. We also got to feel what it was like to have a practice like the drummers would normally have. We had the opportunity to learn a whole song.

By: Celeste Hoeh, *VP Internal of REACH*

I thought the Taiko drumming was fun and interesting. It was different than what I thought it would be, and we actually learned a full song in one practice. It takes a lot of rhythm, which I don't seem to have, and is actually quite challenging. Overall it was a pretty intriguing experience.

By: Tiffany Tang, *President Elect of REACH*

I watched Taiko drumming at the Japan Festival before and it was such a cool performance. REACH was invited by the Orlando Taiko Dojo to have a free try out of Taiko drumming. I was excited, and I think that through this try out, I learned more about Japanese culture. I also learned that Taiko drumming is fairly difficult in which you have to follow the rhythm and listen intensely, since you have to drum at the exact same time as your teammates. I was amazed at the teenagers coaching us because I thought that they possessed immense skill and that they knew their culture very well. Thanks to Take San and his team for inviting REACH for this free try out. We definitely had a lot of fun.

By: Frank Lau, *VP External of REACH*

About REACH



REACH (Recognizing Experiencing Asian Cultural Heritage) provides many wonderful programs to foster young leaders in the Central

Florida community through cultural performances, classroom presentations and carnival activities. REACH invites students from High Schools and Middle Schools within the Central Florida region as members. Visit <http://www.reachocf.org/> for more details.