



Bette Spencer, Teaching Artist ArtSeed Packet

BIO: Bette Spencer: After admiring Japanese flower arrangement for many years, Bette had a chance to take a class in the San Francisco Unified School District taught by Yuri Oka and her husband, James Oka. They would meet in the evenings in school cafeterias, which began an 18-year learning experience in Ikenobo school of Ikebana taught by the Okas, until they retired. Unfortunately, the Ikebana headquarters in Japantown, San Francisco has been closed for several years but there is still an interest in arranging flowers in the Japanese way, which is not better but just different than western style. The Soko Hardware store in Japantown still sells tools, vases and equipment for Ikebana style arrangements. Headmasters and professors in Ikebana occasionally come to San Francisco to do exhibitions and demonstrations in different styles. Arranging flowers is a restful tranquil experience and what could be more fun than arranging flowers – no homework! This art goes back to the 17th century when nobles and warriors developed the style as a distraction from wars and the stress of battles. You can put your feelings into the arrangements so that others can enjoy them. Freestyle arrangements offer more freedom to arrange the flowers in your own personal style.

ArtSeed Statement

It is certainly commendable that ArtSeed pairs at-risk children with professional artists in creative endeavors promoting and encouraging the children's potential to overcome familial traumas. Using artwork and a variety of media empowers the children as well as gives professional artists an opportunity to volunteer their skills and services for the benefit of the community.

Ikebana – Ikenobo Japanese style flower arranging video.

VideoBetteSpencerIkebana



Ikebana [ee-ke-bah-nah]: Japanese Flower Arranging

Lesson #1: Title: Arrangement of flowers in Shoka style of Ikebana **Date:** 7/13

Time of day: 10:00am-12:00pm

Artist: Bette Spencer

Materials/Prep: Simple vases, pin holder (Kenzan), scissors (Hasimi), Shobu Iris, Watsonia leaves, and water.

Introduction/Goals: The goal is to bring out the elegance of the iris using green leaves, and correct spacing in holder.

Activity: Arranging one iris with background and foreground of tall green leaves in Kenzan.

Vocabulary: Flowers: Shobu Iris, Watsonia; vase;

Japanese words:

Ikebana – Japanese flower arranging;

Ikenobo – Japanese family name of headmasters;

Shoka – style of Ikenobo;

Kenzan – pin holder;

Hasimi – scissors;

Issuiké – one flower arrangement.

Closing: Gratitude and respect for beauty of flowers, grasses and branches in our life through skillful instructors. It is unique in the Japanese culture to find beauty in grasses, leaves, and woody branches.

Successes: It is pleasant and eye-catching to observe the details of one beautiful flower.

Challenges: To always have the appropriate grasses, branches, or buds to use in harmony with the flowers.

CA State Standard(s): K.VA:Cr1.1, 8.VA:Cr1.1, 2.VA:Cr1.2, 4.VA:Cr2.2

Relevant Artist(s) and Distinguished People: Senei Ikenobo (headmaster), Ikebana International, Yuri Oka: Instructor.