

# Japan's next World Heritage site

## What do Australian high school students suggest?

While certainly not a scientific survey, the entries for the 28th Australia-Japan Relations Essay Contest Junior B category gave some idea of what might be chosen. The topic asked entrants, as 'a representative of Japan', to nominate the next Japanese World Heritage site and explain their choice.

If it went to the popular vote, then **Mt Fuji** was the overwhelming favourite among the 140 entries the Sydney Consulate received from Year 9 and 10 students in the ACT, NSW and the NT. These nominators argued that it was not only Japan's most recognisable landmark but that it had long played an important cultural role, particularly in religious and in literary and artistic terms. Many students were aware that Mt Fuji had already been nominated and is on the tentative list. The need to protect Mt Fuji from the impact of garbage left by the many mountain climbers was mentioned by many students.

**National parks** were also a popular choice not just for their beauty but as important reserves for unique species such as the marimo in Lake Akan (**Akan National Park**, Hokkaido). The **Ogasawara Islands**, often referred to as

the Galapagos of the east, were another popular nomination.

Many students chose natural sites as they saw an imbalance between the number of cultural properties (11) and natural properties (3) that are already designated World Heritage sites in Japan. However, cultural properties were still strongly argued for. **Several of Japan's castles** including Hikone-jo were nominated for their historic and architectural value. The **Tomioka Silk Mills** were picked up as an important site to preserve knowledge of Japan's early industrialisation.

Quite a number of students went further back in time to Japan's very early history. The **Sannai Maruyama Iseki** in Aomori prefecture, **Japan's largest kofun** (burial mound) in Osaka prefecture, and **remains in the Asuka area** near today's Nara city were all put forward as potential World Heritage sites.

**To learn more** about Japan's World Heritage sites and sites tentatively listed see:

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/jp>.



The ever popular Mt Fuji



Sannai Maruyama Iseki, Aomori Prefecture

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## 先生方へ Educational Resources

### Teacher's Kits

Teacher's kits containing fact sheets, magazines and booklets on various aspects of Japan, its people and culture, and posters and maps for the classroom may be obtained from the Consulate upon written request.

**Videos and DVDs** may be borrowed by schools with no cost to the school apart from the cost of return postage. The catalogue can be emailed to teachers upon request. A small range of **cultural items** may also be borrowed.

### Web Japan

This is an excellent site to look for reliable information.

**Kids Web:** content specifically designed with younger students in mind. From the top page you can navigate

through 'Play', 'Learn' and 'Try' sections. This last section allows students to explore school life and food culture.

**Trends in Japan:** interesting reading for older students and members of the general public.

**Japan Fact Sheets:** information about Japan's geography, government, economy, society, culture and sports.

<http://web-japan.org>

### School Visit Program

The Information Section of the Consulate-General of Japan, Sydney, conducts a school visit program open to both primary and secondary schools.

For more details and how to apply see:

[www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/english/education/school\\_visit.htm](http://www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/english/education/school_visit.htm)