



The Beauty of Imperfection: Exploring Japanese Philosophy of Wabi-Sabi in Education

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Course details

- 🕒 One week course
- € Starting from 480€ (Cultural activities included)*
- 👥 Min. 4 - max. 14 participants
- 📄 Certificate of attendance included (80% of attendance required)
- 📍 Available in Amsterdam

* A 60 € late registration fee will be applied if you register less than 8 weeks before the course start date.

Course description

Are you familiar with the following scenario?

A teacher asks students to complete a project at home, such as creating a model of animals' habitats. A week later, the students present their impressive models to the class! The teacher then asks, "Why are the leaves yellow and red in your design?" The student replies, "I'm not sure! My father did it!"

You might have several questions arising from this short story:

- How can I foster a culture of independence?
- Can I establish clear boundaries between a supportive environment and one that hinders parental involvement?
- Is it possible to convey the true meaning of failure and learning?
- Can I demonstrate the beauty of authenticity to my students?
- How can I teach STEAM when students fear imperfections and unconventional ideas?
- Is there a way to encourage my students to be more open to exploring new ideas, experimenting, and thinking outside the box?





This course is designed to introduce teachers to the concept of Wabi-Sabi, a Japanese aesthetic philosophy that celebrates the beauty of imperfection, inclusion, and simplicity. An environment where individuals feel accepted and valued for their true selves, fostering self-esteem and positive self-image.

Participants will learn how perfectionism often leads to fear of failure and making mistakes, a fixed mindset that people avoid taking risks and trying new things! On the other hand, they will also discover how imperfection promotes empathy and understanding to foster connection and inclusion.

The course will propose a combination of interactive lectures, presentations, hands-on activities, and group discussions. Participants will have the opportunity to get creative by observing simple objects such as stones, leaves... and generate ideas from the objects' shapes, textures, or patterns to overcome the fear of not being a creative person!

Not being an artist, not being a perfect teacher! They will have the opportunity to create something valuable out of broken objects to experience how unexpected ideas emerge during the Wabi-Sabi brainstorming approach.

Each day of the course will propose a "Problem-Solving Activity" with a specific theme such as "The Perfect Mistake". The open-ended problem-solving activities will provide opportunities for participants to think critically, explore alternative perspectives, develop practical solutions, and have reflective discussions.

By the end of the week, participants will have more ideas about promoting a holistic approach to teaching and learning, an approach that led them to explore innovative teaching methods, encourage open-ended problem-solving, and support students' unique talents and interests.

Learning outcomes

The course will help the participants to:

- Increase awareness and understanding that value individuality;
- Develop lesson plans that integrate the Wabi-Sabi philosophy into the classrooms;
- Shift their perspective to emphasize the value of authenticity and embrace mistakes as learning opportunities;
- Enhance student engagement by encouraging students to reflect on their own experiences;
- Use Wabi-Sabi principles to enhance the effectiveness of the 4Cs.





Tentative schedule

Day 1 – Introduction to the course

- Introduction to the course, the school, and the external week activities;
- Icebreaker activities.

The philosophy and principles of Wabi-Sabi

- Key principles of Wabi-Sabi;
- Fostering a growth mindset;
- Problem-Solving Activity of the day: The impact of perfectionism in education and potential solutions to address perfectionism.

Day 2 – Creating a nurturing learning environment

- Evaluating diversity and learning styles;
- Fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance among students;
- Cultivating a culture of reflection and self-awareness;
- Problem-Solving Activity of the day: Creating an inclusive learning environment empowered by UDL and Wabi-Sabi principals.

Day 3 – Incorporating the principles of Wabi-Sabi into lesson planning

- Exploring literature, art, and history through a Wabi-Sabi lens;
- Wabi-Sabi in STEAM projects to investigate sustainable design;
- Promoting self-expression and self-reflection for global perspectives;
- Problem-Solving Activity of the day: The perfect mistake by a gallery walk to review and discuss each group lesson plan, focusing on the introduced mistakes and the potential learning outcomes.

Day 4 – Rethinking traditional grading systems

- What is constructive feedback;
- Put students in charge of giving feedback;
- Empowering students to find beauty and meaning in their own work;
- Problem-Solving Activity of the day: Redesigning assessments for growth by brainstorming alternative assessment approaches.





Day 5 – Group discussion and reflection

- Showcasing Wabi-Sabi-inspired projects from photography to designing growing Jewellery;
- Problem-Solving Activity of the day: Reflections on integrating Wabi-Sabi Principals in K-12 education.

Day 6 – Course closure and cultural activities

- Course evaluation: round-up of acquired competencies, feedback, and discussion;
- Awarding of the course Certificate of Attendance;
- Excursion and other external cultural activities.

*The schedule describes likely activities but may differ significantly based on the requests of the participants, and the trainer delivering the specific session. Course modifications are subject to the trainer's discretion. If you would like to discuss a specific topic, please indicate it at least 4 weeks in advance.

Our courses usually include two cultural activities. Further information is available on the webpage of each course location.

About the provider

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