

# 日本語



## Pre Primary Term 4

# MANEKINEKO :Beckoning Lucky Cat

This term our PrePrimary students are learning about some traditional items that are important to Japanese culture.

This week we learnt about Manekineko- the beckoning lucky cat. Here is a little history about how this statue became so popular in Japanese culture.

According to ancient Japanese folklore, a good luck charm for good fortune in business and happiness. Although there are many stories surrounding the true origin of the Lucky Cat, one of the most popular tales of all is the legend of the Gotokuji Temple. This story is about the local toy maker who, despite his poverty, would share his food with a stray cat hurt by a passing horse. The cat had eventually passed away from his injuries, and the toy maker sadly went on his way.

When passing the temple on a stormy day, the toymaker took shelter under a large tree during a thunder storm and saw what looked like the cat beckoning him towards the temple gate with his paw. As he approached the cat, a bolt of lightning struck the tree he was under, causing it to crash down onto the ground where he would've been taking shelter had the cat not signalled him to move.

These ornamental cats are now commonly found placed outside houses and shops due to their lucky symbolic nature. Ones with their left hand raised are said to invite customers to business, while ones with their right hand raised are said to invite prosperity.

The different colours of **Japanese Lucky Cats** are also significant to what they symbolise:

- White invites happiness
- Black protects against illness and bad omens
- Gold and yellow attracts good fortune
- Silver invites longevity
- Pink is for love
- Red is to bring good health



If a lucky cat is wearing a gold bell it will bring good fortune, whilst a red scarf draws attention and a gold coin promotes wealth.

Today many still visit the Gotokuji Temple where the original Maneki Neko is said to have lived, with hundreds of souvenir Japanese lucky cats put on display outside on racks by people searching for good fortune or in remembrance of their late pet cats.

Below are some picture of our students drawing and colouring their own manekineko.





さよなら。

Sayonara

( Good-bye. )

