

Sakura History

Sakura, which means Cherry Blossoms in the Japanese language, is one of the most famous melodies in Japan. It is a very old song, originally known by the name of *Saita Sakura*. Children all over Japan love to sing this song. The words to the song are from a poem written by Tsuge Gen'ichi.

Cherry blossoms, cherry blossoms,
In the March sky,
As far as one can see -
A mist? A cloud?
Their fragrance fills the air.
Come, everybody!
Let's go and see them.

Traditionally, Sakura is played on an instrument called the Koto. It is one of the first tunes a Koto player learns. In the musical score that you were also given, you will see three other traditional Japanese instruments, the Shakuhachi, Temple Blocks, and Taiko drum. If you would like to learn more about the Koto, and even play a virtual one on the Internet, visit:

www.genkienglish.net/genkijapan/koto.htm.

Sakura is written in a pentatonic scale, which means that it only has five different notes. There are many different pentatonic scales, and Sakura is written in a Japanese version known as the *In* scale. The notes that Sakura uses are: E, F, A, B and C.