

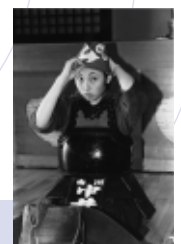
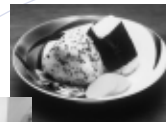
Feature:

Toward a New Dimension in the Study of Culture

In the past few years, incorporating the study of culture into Japanese-language classes and language education in general has widely come to be taken for granted. Emphasis is now placed on the cultural dimension in standards and guidelines for language education in different countries and regions.

The study of culture, however, differs depending on its purpose, what aspects of culture are to be introduced, and the method by which it is introduced. Definitions of "culture," moreover, are legion and the ways it can be dealt with are also diverse. Culture may be traditional, high-brow culture, daily life culture, explicit culture, implicit culture, and so on. There are numerous approaches to its introduction: citing and examining data and facts, providing explanations as background reference, observing various tangible objects or activities of the culture, evaluating ways of thinking and values set against a particular cultural backdrop, or via direct personal experience of a culture.

In this issue, we have asked experts in cultural anthropology, social studies, and Japanese-language education to share their perspectives on the study of culture.



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in Japan today?

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quality" merchandise!

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Photograph Collection *The Way We Are
2000* Published, etc.

Culture in Intercultural Education: An Anthropological View

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Awareness and interest in the diversity of humanity began to grow as economic activity began to substantially expand on a global scale in the nineteenth century. A wide variety of information gathered and accumulated particularly in Great Britain, from its colonies all over the world. As the tremendous variety of humanity became fully evident, the discipline of anthropology, devoted to the study of humanity in all its diversity, was born. The English anthropologist Edward B. Tylor, known as the father of anthropology, defined culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (*Primitive Culture*, 1871). This definition has been widely used ever since as one of the fundamental explanations of culture.

Today, meanwhile, we are experiencing the advent of a new era of globalization. In the days when globalization involved economic activity alone, it was mainly a small elite of specialists and experts who had opportunities to see the world and to live in and experience other cultures firsthand. Today's globalization, however, embraces all sorts of human movement and relations among people, meaning that the opportunity for contact with other cultures may be an everyday occurrence for virtually everyone, via their workplace, school, or social circle.

Reflecting this new era, awareness and interest in the diversity of human cultures is no longer the preserve of a small elite in society but has come to be more widely shared by people in general. Through a kind of bird's-eye view approach, the anthropology of the nineteenth century sought to define the mechanisms of the origin and spread of human cultures in a fixed and systematic manner. Today's anthropology, however, seeks a more dynamic understanding of culture as empirical knowledge that gives order and meaning to daily experience from the viewpoint of the individual.

As economic historian Immanuel Wallerstein has pointed out, "culture" is used in at least two senses. One usage covers the body of institutions, customs, behavioral norms, knowledge, belief, values, worldview and so on of individual societies and groups that is passed down from generation to generation through the learning process known as enculturation. This sense of culture approximates the concept of traditional culture as defined by Tylor and later anthropologists. It is what the individual acquires in the normal process of maturation (enculturation) in a particular society. It is what actually links the individual to a given community and governs the activities of his or her daily life.

The other usage of "culture" is that which serves as the symbol of status and rank of a particular society or group; it is used selectively to refer to things of artistic, scientific, or technological merit considered valuable and superior by

that society. This sense of culture is often used with political motives to justify inequality in a hierarchical world or as a locus of pride for those aspiring to equality. The group represented by culture in this sense is frequently an "imagined community" such as state, nation or ethnic group, and in this case "culture" is something deliberately inculcated in the members of the group.

Considering these two meanings of culture, which is the one we should rely on in teaching children about other cultures? This important issue is often left unresolved, but the failure to address the distinction can lead to confusion. Culture in its second sense is very closely related to the pride of individual members affiliating and identifying with the group. In the encounter of different groups, culture in its second sense functions as the "formal-dress" that members of each group present for the sake of protocol and by which they recognize each other. It is well established that adequate familiarity with such protocols is useful for harmonious inter-group relations. Once the protocols are over, however, what is more important is culture in a more concrete sense, namely the culture acquired and internalized by individuals in the process of growing up. This is the first meaning of culture referred to above. Knowing about culture in this sense makes it possible to accurately recognize the differences between peoples and to find ways to carry out the necessary adjustments for dealing with the mutual differences.

We must bear in mind that in a rapidly globalizing world in which world culture is becoming even more diverse, we cannot be content only to have an intellectual interest in the diversity of human cultures. We urgently need practical knowledge and ability for understanding people of other cultures and getting along with them.

The experiences of our lives all take shape in very individual and specific contexts. Contact with other cultures, too, comes in contexts that vary from one individual to another. We come in contact with other cultures and become accustomed to them not on the abstract, conceptual level of states and peoples, but in the course of specific relationships formed with neighbors or friends. I believe that the objective that intercultural education should be aiming for lies in cultivating capacities that will help us to adjust, emotionally and perceptually, in such situations. Toward that end, what we need to focus our attention on most is not culture as the symbol of the "imagined community" of a state and its people, but the everyday culture that shapes the lives of individuals.

The Study of Culture: The TJF Perspective

The *TJF Newsletter* featured a series on Japanese culture entitled "A Day in the Life" continuing over six years from No. 4 to No. 20. In the boxes below, page 3 through page 5, we look at the creative ways of introducing culture in this series. "A Day in the Life" was replaced starting in No. 21 by "Meeting People." Here we would like to explain TJF's philosophy of the study of culture that underlies the inauguration of this new series as well as the photograph-centered resources now being developed under the project "Deai: The Lives of Seven Japanese High School Students."

TJF believes that the purpose of Japanese-language education at the elementary and secondary level is not only the acquisition of practical language skills for communication. In a larger sense it should also equip students with adaptability and the capacity to understand culture and the ability to deal with the differences between cultures. These are skills that are increasingly required for the coexistence of different cultures in a truly global society. The important thing for children and young people is that the encounter with new languages and cultures, ways of thinking, values, rules of human relations, behavioral patterns, lifestyles, etc. different from their own culture prompts them to think more about their own native language and culture. This leads to the relativization of the self, which, we believe, will help them acquire a global perspective and an openness to understanding other cultures.

TJF's Approach to Study of Culture

TJF is currently developing a photograph-centered resource called "Deai: The Lives of Seven Japanese High School Students." Seven students whose lives we believe will capture the interest of elementary and secondary school students studying Japanese were chosen as the ma-

terial for this project. "Deai" provides the tools for studying culture through real individuals, by interacting with them on a one-on-one basis, just as they would in ordinary day-to-day communication.

In "Deai," so-called culture is not something for which there are fixed, objective answers. It is, rather, the subject matter that can set in motion a self-driven process of study beginning with observing the actions and things portrayed in the pictures of the Deai students' daily lives, comparing them with oneself, noticing the differences and commonalities, searching for the reasons for the differences, analyzing what one finds, and drawing conclusions.

Although the ideal situation in learning about culture is for learners to search themselves for the answers, to facilitate that process the "Deai" project makes available information on culture that forms the backdrop of the high school students' lives, to be tapped by the learner as needed. Some of the background descriptions are more or less objective, based on available facts and reliable data. For others, which involve a high degree of subjectivity, we first introduce the thinking and values displayed by the individual Deai students (which can be counted on to be candid) and then offer a number of differing views (with the sources clearly identified) as a means of stimulating the thinking of learners. These reference materials are prepared in such a way as to call attention to the fact that "Japanese culture" is not something fixed or static, and to highlight the diversity as well as the dynamic, constantly changing nature of culture, introducing the perspective of the sub-cultures of family, school, and local society as well as the cultures that transcend national boundaries such as the culture of Asian countries and global culture.

Culture introduced in the "A Day in the Life" series: Creative Ways of Introducing Culture

■ O-cha (No. 7) Daily Life Culture (Food)

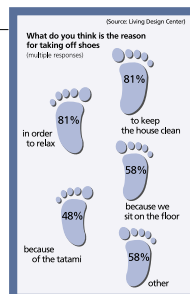
- Places *o-cha* in Japan in the context of Asia and the world. Considers the roots of tea through words for "tea" from around the world.
- Takes up the question of cultural change, citing the recent popularity of such innovations as canned green-tea drinks, green-tea flavored ice cake. Notes total consumption of tea and related products.
- *O-cha* in Japan is strongly associated with images of the tea ceremony, one of the most frequently mentioned examples of traditional culture. Text looks at "tea" from the perspective of how it is rooted in the contemporary culture of daily life, including the lives of young people. This represents an original approach to gaining a deeper understanding of sophisticated culture by beginning with the culture of everyday life.

■ The origins of "cha"

Cantonese	cha	Fujian	te
Hindi	chae	Dutch	thee
Japanese	cha, sa	English	tea
Korean	cha	Finnish	tee
Mandarin	cha	French	thé
Mongolian	tsai	German	tee

■ Kutsu nugi (No. 8) Daily Life Culture (Housing)

- Introduces the Three P's (Products, Practice, Perspective) interpretation of culture recommended for the study of culture under the U.S. national standards. The products, "*genkan* (entrance way) and *kutsu* (shoes)," and practice, "*kutsu o nugu* (removing shoes)," are introduced as well as perspectives (the reasons for the products and practices such as hot and the humid summer climate) along with questionnaire results.
- Also takes into account cultures other than Japanese where removing shoes is part of traditional culture.



■ Kome (Nos. 9, 11) Daily Life Culture (Food)

- This feature shows how a single phenomenon of culture can be viewed from various different perspectives.
- Through the introduction of rice in Japanese culture, gets students to think about rice in various cultures or about the more universally staple food. Takes up the common and similar qualities of rice from the viewpoint of the universal culture of food. This exercise is intended to tie in with the reappreciation of one's own culture.



Language Education for a "New Culture"

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The secondary school level Japanese-language textbook used in Australia, *Mirai*, includes a lesson on the theme "Exchange Students" in Stage 5 of its six-stage series of lessons. Two students introduce themselves in Japanese. One is a Japanese high school student, who says: "はじめまして。山口幸子といいます。ひこくにのってオーストラリアへ行きます。うれしくてたまりません。" [How do you do. My name is Yamaguchi Sachiko. I'm going to fly to Australia. I'm so excited I can hardly stand it!] The other is an Australian high school student. He says, "ジョン・モリスです。どうぞよろしく。日本に行って、日本の高校で勉強します。" [I'm John Morris. Nice to meet you. I'm going to go to Japan and study at a Japanese high school.] This lesson beautifully illustrates the feature of this series which is that in our era, things, people, and culture easily crisscross national boundaries. Not only Japanese-language education, but language education as a whole is part of this trend of our times.

In consideration of the kind of Japanese-language education needed for such an era, those of us who compiled this series for *Mirai* made three points our guide: (1) Drawing the content from the lives of the language learners themselves, taking advantage of their own interests and concerns, (2) incorporating as much as possible scenes of actual communication and interaction, and (3) integrating the teaching of language and the teaching of culture. This article explains the thinking that lies behind this approach.

Need for a Changed View of Culture

The general trend in language education is to stress the teaching of language, and to teach culture mainly in the form of background explanations to language. In this

framework, culture becomes something academic, a priori information and facts that the teacher provides to the student. When the students are at the beginning levels, this information is generally provided in their native language (e.g., English). The drawback is that information presented in this way is usually thought to be fixed and static in content; it reflects the typical view of the traditional language teacher, which tends to be that culture is something long established that has existed from antiquity.

This static view of culture has become the subject of considerable debate in recent years. Many assert that culture is not fixed, homogeneous, and static, but rather constantly changing, internally diverse, and dynamic. This new view, moreover, calls on teachers to revise the established practice in language teaching of presenting cultural aspects as simply background explanation.

What Kinds of Methods Nurture What Capabilities?

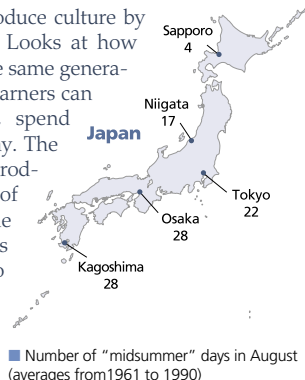
The crucial issue for us is how to integrate this constantly changing, diverse, and dynamic understanding of culture into language education. This question is linked to what methods are to be used in the teaching of Japanese language in order to nurture what abilities.

Let us consider this point by giving a specific example. The *Mirai* text uses cartoons to introduce various scenes of contact with a different culture. For example, when the above mentioned "John" arrives at his homestay household, he discovers, much to his surprise and bewilderment, that there are all kinds of slippers in a Japanese house—slippers to put on upon entering the house, slip-

■ O-Bon Yasumi (No. 13) Annual Event

- By introducing the difference in the number of "mid-summer days" (*manatsu-bi*, when the temperature is 30 degrees or over) from region to region within Japan, this topic illustrates the variety of culture within the country itself and the ways the diversity of its climate and environment has affected the development of the culture as a whole.

- Attempts to introduce culture by looking at people. Looks at how young people of the same generation, with whom learners can readily empathize, spend their O-Bon holiday. The explanation of the products and practices of O-Bon as well as the perspective on its background is also expressed from the individual viewpoint.



■ Hanami (No. 16) Annual Event

- Looks at cherry blossom viewing from the viewpoint of its relation to other school subjects, such as science and music.
- Makes the introduction of *hanami* the occasion for getting students to think about the flowers they like and what kinds of events are celebrated in their own culture having to do with flowers. (observation of culture: universal qualities, reappreciation of own culture)



■ Iro (No. 17) Nature

- This topic makes vocabulary itself the subject of culture, illustrating how to view culture through words. Showing variations of the "color-thing-image" relationship, it attempts, through "activities," to alert students to the similarities and differences in the relationships of colors, things, and images in both cultural and individual associations. (observation of culture: comparative, universal qualities)

Activities

Part I Coloring
Paint the pictures below with the colors you like.

Part II Q and A

- あなたの好きな色は何ですか。What is your favorite color? どうしてその色が好きですか。Why do you like that color?
- Fill in the blanks below.
- Write in the names of the crayon colors in Japanese in the boxes and English on the line.
- Write in the name and a picture of the things you associate with these colors (English or Japanese).
- Write in what you feel or the images you think of for those colors (e.g., red → passion, celebration, etc.) and do the same for (2).
- Compare your chart with other students'. Are there a lot of similarities? How much difference is there?
- In your country, what colors are identified as "happy" or auspicious colors? Which are ill-omened or ominous colors?
- Are there colors in your country or local region that have special meaning? What colors are those? What meaning do they have?

Color Chart:

色	名前	イメージ
赤	あか	あか
青	あお	あお
黄	きいろ	きいろ
緑	きいろ	きいろ
紫	むすび	むすび
白	しろ	しろ
黒	くろ	くろ
金	きん	きん
銀	ぎん	ぎん

pers for the toilet, slippers for the veranda—and he learns that there are rooms where you can wear slippers and where you have to take them off (Japanese-style tatami rooms). The cartoon does not just teach simply that shoes are removed when entering a house or describe the “slipper culture” as part of fixed information about Japanese culture, but gives the student in the course of studying Japanese a vicarious experience of the bewilderment and surprise encountered by a character who actually comes into contact with this culture.

This approach demonstrates to the student that learning a foreign language means making contact with a different world and that bewilderment, misunderstanding, and surprise are a natural part of the experience. The teacher then asks the student to try to figure out how to handle such unfamiliarity and dismay, and how to overcome such reactions. To fulfill that challenge the student initiates a search for the language expressions and the information needed and adopts an attitude open to such discovery. Through this cartoon, moreover, the student learns, by asking Japanese in the vicinity if there really is such a thing as a “slipper culture” in Japan, to relativize the meaning of “Japanese society” while learning Japanese.

We believe that this pattern of fostering the ability to adapt to a different culture by (1) starting with topics of interest and concern to students, and through (2) contact (vicarious or otherwise) with various aspects of that culture to learn about its diversity, (3) to overcome bewilderment and misunderstanding, is a major task that language education must address from now on.

Cultivating Adaptability to Other Cultures

In a sense, culture is the perception of society that emerges out of relationships between people. It follows, then, that culture is constantly changing and diversifying. What is important in language education from now on, however, is not mastering vast amounts of information about diverse cultures but acquiring the capability to understand and

deal with culture. By deepening our understanding of society through contact with other people we gradually acquire the capacity to live in society by considering the what, why, and how of the society. Therefore, the process of thinking about culture and society through learning about “other worlds” that is part of learning a foreign language nurtures a person’s powers of thinking and living. Herein lies the real purpose of Japanese-language education at the elementary and secondary level.

“Different worlds,” and “contact scenes” are found not only in Japan. Take the example of Yamaguchi Sachiko mentioned above. At the high school in Australia, she finds everything strange and bewildering. She is surprised to see that the school has a period for “morning tea,” during which the students have a light snack, and since they are not allowed to eat the snack in the classroom, they eat it sitting around outside. She is accustomed to the tradition in Japan whereby eating and snacking in classrooms is taken for granted. Through episodes like this, Japanese-language learners can improve their ways of communicating with Japanese foreign students whose English is not fluent and deepen their understanding of the bewilderment and dismay such students experience.

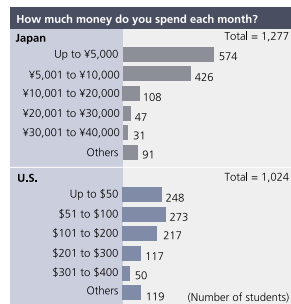
Cultivating the capacity to understand the kind of bewilderment and misunderstanding observed in “contact scenes,” to solve problems, and to create relationships between people is linked to the basic abilities for contemplating how to understand “cultures,” how to deal with them, and in what way “new culture” can be created. This endeavor is bound to become more and more important in teaching for the era when people, things, and cultures so easily crisscross national boundaries. That which is built by those who follow the John and Sachiko in their encounters across national boundaries will be a “new culture.” This is the “mirai” (future) we can already foresee in our teaching today.

Club Activities (No. 18) High School Students

- In order to demonstrate the diversity of perspectives within a culture, this topic is approached not with objective data alone, but by deliberately presenting mutually conflicting views on the topic as expressed in the actual messages of high school students submitted in the TJF photo contest regarding their club activities.
- Through “activities,” suggests a class procedure: understanding Japanese school clubs ► comparing it with one’s own culture ► simulation.

Okozukai (No. 20) High School Students

- Introduces data on allowances of Australian and American high school students as a point of reference for understanding allowances in Japan. Suggests a class procedure: Recognition of diversity in one’s own culture ► grasp of diversity in Japan ► similarities and differences between students of various countries and Japan as seen in the uses of allowances and the source from which they come, as well as awareness of the perspectives that form their backdrop.



I asked my friends about whether they were working, and of the five of us, all (including one girl) have jobs. We make an average of about AU\$140 a month. We use the money mostly on magazines about our interests, and food. The girl rides horses as a hobby, and spends a lot of her earnings on food for them. (12th grade student, public school in rural Victoria, Australia)

Using the “World Cultures Model” and Tips for Teaching about Culture

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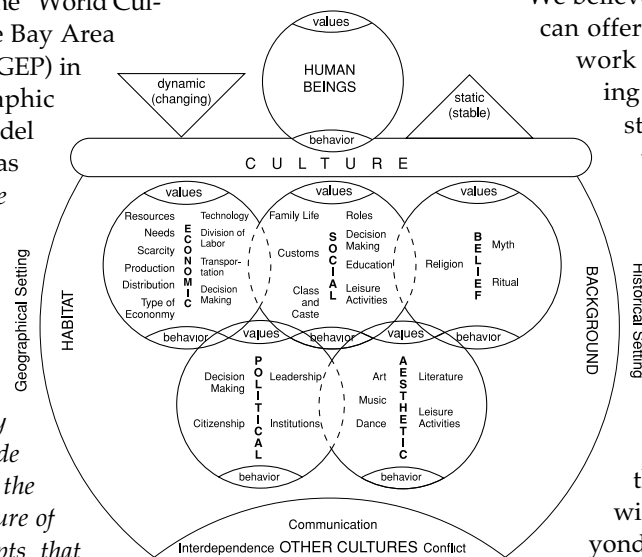


Since 1976 SPICE has supported efforts to internationalize elementary and secondary school curricula by linking the research and teaching at Stanford University to the schools through the production of curriculum materials on international and cross-cultural topics. At SPICE, the question, “How can culture be described to elementary and secondary level students?” recalls the “World Cultures Model” developed by the Bay Area Global Education Program (BAGEP) in the late 1980s. Presenting a graphic representation of culture, the model is described in its theme guide as follows (*World Cultures Theme Guide*, SPICE, Stanford University, 1983, p. 7).

The model is not a flowchart, and it is not an outline of content to be “covered.” The instructor is not expected to start instruction at any one place on the model or to conclude at any specified point. However, the model does provide a general picture of the important issues and concepts that should be included in any cultural study (in order that none be overlooked): change vs. stability, interdependence, communication, and conflict. It seeks to bring the study of geography and history into the curriculum in a meaningful way—as needed to understand how and why a certain culture has developed as it has. Finally, it suggests that study can be focused upon five universal, interlocking components—economic, social, beliefs, political, and aesthetic—particularly as they are manifested in human behavior and cultural values.

To be more specific, a teacher may choose to study one culture in depth—Japan, for example. In this case each one of the thematic “bubbles” would be included in the study through a variety of activities that would, when possible, consider the general issues of change vs. stability, interdependence, communication, and conflict, as they apply to the five themes, with historical and ge-

ographic studies being brought in as necessary. Or, a teacher may wish to select one of the cultural universals—economics, for example—and use it as the basis for a comparative study of several different cultures, again focusing upon the general background issues as much as possible.



We believe that the World Cultures Model can offer students a useful visual framework for thinking about and examining culture. There is a tendency for students to see culture as static or to learn about a particular culture through only one or two of the bubbles represented in the model. This can lead to stereotyping. For example, it is common in the United States for elementary students to be introduced to Japanese culture through only its aesthetics, e.g., haiku and origami. It is hoped that the World Cultures Model will encourage students to think beyond the borders of one bubble and to see its connections to other aspects of culture; and also to learn about the importance of geography and history in the development of culture.

SPICE has developed numerous social studies lessons on Japan. The lesson plan here is adapted from one of these lessons, “Getting Around Tokyo.” In “Tokyo Subways,” references are made to “World Cultures Goals” (*World Cultures Theme Guide*, p. 9) under “Teacher tips.” Using the subway system is a vehicle for teaching Japanese language, as well as bringing students’ attention to practical survival skills for getting around Japan and other aspects of Japanese culture. The following are suggestions for activities.

Note: Information about BAGEP may be found at <http://csmf.ucop.edu/cisp/regional/bayarea.html>

Tokyo Subways

Setting the Context

1. Brainstorm with students about different types of transportation. Make a list on the blackboard or on an overhead transparency. Ask students to identify those types of transportation on their list they have actually used. Which type do they use most often to get to school? To go shopping? To visit friends? Does distance or cost determine the mode of transportation used? Tell students that they will begin to explore how their transportation experiences compare to those of students in

Japan by learning more about transportation in Japan’s capital and largest city, Tokyo.

- **Teacher tip:** Distribute a copy of the World Cultures Model to students and ask them to locate “transportation.” Although transportation is located in the “economic” bubble, ask students to discuss the importance of transportation to the other bubbles, e.g., transportation is important for social activities like leisure. *It is important for students to begin to understand that cultures are complex and are made up of many components.*

2. Ask students why people build subways (faster, especially if surface streets are crowded; could be cheaper than other means of public transportation; cheaper than purchasing and maintaining a car; reduces noise and air pollution, etc.).

3. Share information such as the following with students regarding the Tokyo subway system:

- Japan's population density is 334 people per square kilometer as opposed to 29 for the United States. (*Japan 2001: An International Comparison*. Keizai Koho Center, 2001, p. 10)
- In addition to subway lines, Japan Railways (JR) and a number of other private railways, and an elevated railway (monorail), Tokyo is laced with a network of 1000 miles of track that crisscross at major hubs within the city.
- Many people rely on trains and subways for daily commuting.
- There is inadequate parking for private vehicles.
- Some underground stations are as many as six floors below street level (36 meters).
- Many of Tokyo's subway stations have vast underground concourses, with specialty stores, shopping centers, and restaurants.
- Trains and subways run on regular, punctual schedules.
- Fares are based on the distance traveled. The cheapest subway fare is 160 yen for adults. Children travel for half the price of adults.

> **Teacher tip:** Trains were introduced to Japan from the West in the mid-nineteenth century. Japan's high population density and limited land are two main reasons why its major cities have subway systems. *It is important for students to recognize the significance geography and history play in shaping a culture.*

Tokyo's subway stations are constantly undergoing change—not only in terms of efficiency and convenience, but also in terms of economics, e.g., having a convenience store next to a subway exit. *It is important for students to understand that change is natural and ongoing and that people's value systems are reflected in their lives in different ways.*

4. Ask students if they have ever been on a subway. If yes, have the students describe in detail the steps involved in travelling by subway or other rapid transit system. Later they can make comparisons with the Japanese rapid transit system.

Comprehensible Input

Using photographs from the TJF Photo Databank, http://databank.tjf.or.jp/intro_e.html, describe Japanese subways to the students. Some of the available photos are:

- a Japanese subway
- a Japanese train
- a subway ticket vending machine
- a "silver seat"

> **Teacher tip:** "Silver seats" may serve as an interesting segue into how societies treat the elderly. It is common in many parts of the world to have designated seats on buses and trains for the elderly. Ask students to discuss whether or not there are certain cultural universals such as caring for the elderly. *It is important for students to understand that there are individual and cultural distinctions within the context of certain cultural universals.*

Comprehension Check

You can check for comprehension showing the photos with simple questions:

- when showing the photo of the subway or the train: これは日本の電車ですか。地下鉄ですか。(Is this a Japanese train? A subway?)

- the ticket machine: ここで何をしますか。何を買いますか。(What do you do here? What do you buy?)
- the "silver seat": ここに誰が座りますか。皆さんはこの席を使いますか。(Who uses these seats? Do you use these seats?)

Guided Practice

Using the subway map provided at the following <http://www.kotsu.metro.tokyo.jp/subway/data/rosen00.gif>, you can guide the students through the map while providing them with practical language and "survival" skills.

1. Hand each student or pair of students a color copy of the Tokyo Subway Map. Give students a few minutes to become acquainted with the map. (If using black and white copies, supply students with different colored markers or pencils and ask them to color in the subway lines according to your directions: 千代田線を緑でぬって下さい。(Color the Chiyoda Line green.) 丸の内線を赤でぬって下さい。(Color the Marunouchi Line red.) Use a color transparency so that students can check for accuracy, or color the lines with them.)

2. Tell students the following: 銀座線はオレンジ色です。銀座線を見つけて下さい。(The Ginza Line is orange. Please find the Ginza Line.) Ask students to put a finger on the line. Using a color-coded overhead transparency of the map, show students where the line is, checking to see if they found the correct one. Repeat this procedure until they are comfortable with the different subway lines.

3. Ask students questions such as the following about the map:

- How does a junction differ from a subway stop?
- Where is Otemachi Station? How many different lines run through Otemachi Station?
- What symbols does this map use to show the difference between a junction and a subway stop?

4. Give students directions about how to get from a certain point to a different city.

例: 今、中野にいます。おいしい魚を食べにつくじに行きたいです。まず、東西線でかやばちようまで行って、かやばちようで乗り換えます。ひびや線でつくじまで行きます。(You are in Nakano Station. You would like to go to Tsukiji to buy fresh fish. First you take the Tozai Line to Kayabacho Station and change lines. You take the Hibiya Line to Tsukiji Station.)

When first giving directions, use the overhead transparency to trace the route with the students. When they seem ready, turn off the overhead projector and see if students can follow along with only verbal directions.

5. Ask students to brainstorm questions they might need to ask if actually traveling via subway in Tokyo. Write these questions on the blackboard; students should also take notes.

6. Homework: Ask students to write dialogues that might occur at a Japanese subway station, incorporating the vocabulary and facts they have learned. Additional homework may include having students write directions between different places on the subway map.

Extension Activities are provided on the TJF website

(<http://www.tjf.or.jp/eng/ce/ce04nletter.htm>) as well as a list of related vocabulary and suggested grammar.

Meeting People



In this series we will “meet” real-life individuals and consider from various angles the culture they represent. In each issue we will introduce a person or group of people and the events they are part of, as well as provide the necessary information on the TJF website for discussing those events. We hope these stories will prompt students to think about their own situations, discuss the similarities and the differences, and gain a fuller awareness of the multi-layered nature and rich diversity of culture. In this issue, we meet Nana, a fifth-grade elementary school student in Tokyo. This is a story from her experiences in fourth grade.

Meet Nana Jan Taught Me to Treasure All Living Creatures

We Want to Keep a Hamster

ハムスターを飼いたい

One day in May, Nana’s mother said, “A friend of mine has a hamster (ハムスター) that had babies. If I ask her, we could have one. Would you like to keep a hamster?” Nana had only kept goldfish. She wasn’t sure she liked animals. She decided she didn’t really want to have a hamster at home. Then Nana thought that since her class (クラス) at school, Yo-nen, Ichi-kumi (4年1組 the fourth grade class 1),¹ didn’t have a pet, maybe her classmates would like to keep a hamster. She decided to consult her teacher and the class and see.



なな
菜々

Profile

年齢: 11才(公立小学校5年)
 家族: 両親、兄1人
 住所: 東京都港区
 趣味: 絵をかくこと
 特技: 水泳、リレー



At first everyone said they wanted to have a class hamster. The teacher, Uto-sensei said, “All right, but let’s talk it over in a *gakkyūkai* (学級会 class meeting) first.”

In the meeting, some members of the class who had once had hamsters were in favor of the idea: “They’re so cute—let’s have one!” But Sari said, “We once had a hamster, but we couldn’t go away on trips because you have to take care of it every day.” Then another classmate said, “Pretty soon summer vacation is going to start. What are we going to do on holidays (休みの日)² and long vacations like in summer and at New Year’s?” They also realized they had to think about what would happen when they moved on to fifth grade and the members of the classes would change.³ Uto-sensei reminded them, “Taking care of any living thing is not easy.”

ナナの学校の年間行事 (School year calender at Nana’s school)

4	5	6	7	8	9	10
-6 始業式 1学期 First term begins, commencement ceremony (Entrance ceremony)	-18 プール開き Pool classes begin	-19 終業式 夏休み Ceremony marking last day of classes, Summer vacation begins	-20-22 林間学校 Summer school trip (<i>rinkan gakkō</i>)		-1 始業式 2学期 Second term begins, commencement ceremony	
-24 遠足 School excursion					-30 運動会 Field day	
Spring break	First term			Summer vacation		



Unfortunately, it didn't seem like a good idea. But when the chairperson of the meeting took a vote, the majority of the class wanted to have a hamster as a class pet. They decided that everyone should talk it over with their parents and then discuss it again in class the next day.

After holding several class meetings, six members of the class agreed to take care of the hamster during holidays and one offered to take the hamster as a family pet at the end of fourth grade. Finally they decided to take one of the baby hamsters. Nana was delighted! Her classmates had discussed the idea she had presented and offered to cooperate in caring for a class pet, so now she was sure the hamster would be all right when she brought it to school.

When the hamster came to class, they decided to give it a name. At first it seemed as if the name would be "Ham," since it was a hamster, but Uto-sensei said, "That's not very imaginative!" So the students thought some more, and finally chose the name "Jan," because he was a ジャンガリアン (Dzungarian) hamster.

There was a lot to learn about taking care of a hamster. After putting Jan into the cage that had been prepared, he got his tiny foot caught in the bars on the floor of the cage. They quickly laid down layers of newspaper. At first, classmates who had experience taking care of hamsters were appointed "Jan leaders," and they took charge of his daily care, putting in new feed, changing the water supply, and cleaning the cage. The other students watched how they did it, and after everyone had learned what to do, it was decided to make taking care of the hamster part of the duties of the *nitchoku* (日直 class day-leaders).⁴ On weekends, the students took turns taking the hamster home, and they made a journal, called the "Jan Notebook" to record how Jan was when they were tak-

ing care of him. The students' mothers were all very cooperative, and they even formed the "Jan's Moms Club."

At first, Keita, who had once had a hamster, bought a box of hamster food for Jan and brought it to school. But that posed a problem the students had to think about. Uto-sensei looked at the box and saw that the price was ¥800. "That's expensive. Do we expect Keita to keep on paying that much for the hamster food?" The class had another meeting and the students suggested various ways of paying for Jan's food like selling their books to a second-hand bookstore, sharing money from their allowances, and collecting stamps to sell to collectors, but it turned out to be difficult to agree on what to do, and the days went rapidly past. Nana and her classmates began to worry about what would happen if Jan's food ran out.

Around that time, Minoru brought to school the skin shed by a snake and the class decided to display it in the classroom. The students began to tell about their own special treasures—rock crystals, pretty stones, antique coins, fossils and such. These stories ended up providing the hint to the solution of Jan's food fund. Each student would bring one of his or her treasures to school, look up information about it, and they prepare a display of the items with explanations as a mini-mini museum (博物館). They invited their school friends, teachers, and parents to come to their museum and show them through the exhibits. By charging 10 yen a person, they could raise money for Jan's food.

Jan became a regular member of the class. He even cooperated in the fund-raising campaign. He sat in his cage at the entrance to the museum wearing a sign around his neck that said: "Donations Please," and many visitors contributed. Hamsters are nocturnal creatures, but Jan gradually began to stay awake in the daytime, often energetically spinning his exercise wheel while classes were in session.



1. クラス: Students in each grade at Japanese elementary schools are divided into one or more classes, called "kumi" (like Nana's Yo-nen, Ichi-kumi), and except for classes like music and science, that are held in separate classrooms, they have all their classes in the same classroom taught by their homeroom teacher. Classes are made up of 40 students or less, about an equal number of girls and boys. Class discussion meetings (*gakkyūkai*) or long homerooms are held about once a week at which students discuss class matters and plan and conduct various activities.
2. The Japanese school year begins in April and ends in March. Most schools operate on a three-term system, the first term lasting from April to July, the second term from September to December, and the third term from

- January to the end of March, but there are some differences from one region of the country to another.
3. Each year of the six years of elementary school, the members of the classes in each grade are shuffled. The procedures and timing of class reshuffling differs from one school to another. At Nana's school, the members of each class and the teacher changes at the beginning of third grade and the beginning of fifth grade.
4. 日直: Two at a time the students in each class take turns daily taking charge of regular class tasks. The 日直 pair is responsible for taking roll, leading the morning assembly, giving various announcements to the class, and keeping the class journal (*gakkyū nishshi* 学級日誌).

11	12	1	2	3
-16-17 学芸会 Performing arts festival	-25 終業式 冬休み Ceremony marking last day of classes, Winter break begins	-8 始業式 3学期 Third term begins, commencement ceremony	-22 ミニ音楽会 Mini concert	-22 修了式 Ceremony marking the last day of the school year
		-15-19 書初め展 Kakizome exhibit of New Year's calligraphy homework	-20 大掃除 All-school cleaning day	-25 卒業式 春休み Graduation, Spring break begins
Second term		Winter break	Third term	
			Spring break	

Goodbye, Jan

さようなら、ジャン



Winter came. The students who would take turns taking Jan home during winter break were decided, and it was not long until classes would come to an end. Then one day, when the class came back from physical education class, they discovered that Jan wasn't moving anymore. Thinking that maybe he

would come back to life, during the following third and fourth periods, they tried to warm him up. Nana thought to herself, "You were so full of energy when we went out to gym class; please, please come back to life!" But during the lunch hour, they got the science teacher to examine him, and he confirmed that Jan was dead. Nana felt very sad and others in the class were crying. Uto-sensei didn't bother starting after-lunch classes, but just let the children mourn poor little Jan. Nana thought to herself, "Maybe Jan knew that if he died when he was being taken care of during the winter break, that person would feel responsible, so he decided to die before the holiday began."

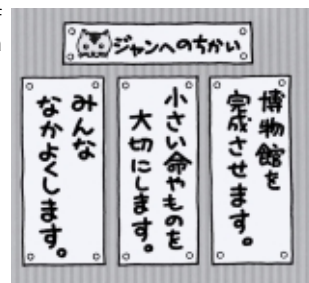
The class discussed what kind of funeral to hold for Jan. Everyone wanted to send him off to a happy life in heaven. The class built a small altar, made mourning badges, and decorated the altar with offerings. They even made a black-and-white striped curtain to hang up around the room. They darkened the classroom and in their own way held a wake and an *o-sōshiki* (お葬式 funeral)⁵. Along with all the other students, Nana put her hands together in prayer in front of the little altar. She whispered to the spirit of Jan: "It was so much fun being with you, Jan. Thank you!" Her classmates laid letters and sunflower seeds for Jan on the altar. After that, they made a grave for Jan in one corner of

the school garden and buried him there. Ami had brought a bouquet of chrysanthemums, and they pulled off the petals to make a soft bed for Jan in the grave. They each said farewell to Jan, putting one scoop of earth into the grave. Nana felt very sad, but as she watched her classmates making the grave and sending off Jan to the other life, she thought to herself that Jan was lucky to have so many caring friends.

After Jan was buried, the students of Yo-nen, Ichi-kumi agreed to make a list of pledges that they thought would make Jan happy in heaven and posted it on the bulletin board.

Pledges to Jan:

- We will complete our Museum
- We will treasure life and all things, no matter how small
- We will learn to get along with each other



Nana often looks at the photograph of Jan she has at home and wonders what Jan is doing now. Sometimes she goes to visit Jan's grave in the school garden. Before, she hadn't really liked animals, but after getting to know Jan, she had gotten comfortable with him and gotten quite fond of him. She still didn't really love animals, but she thought that once she got used to a pet, she would love and cherish it. Jan had taught her, she thought, how it feels to care about living things.



⁵ 葬式: Most funerals in Japan are held according to Buddhist tradition. The usual Buddhist-style funeral consists of a *tsuya* (通夜 wake) held through the night by close relatives of the deceased and a formal religious ceremony and farewell ritual held the day following the wake. A curtain with broad black and white vertical stripes is usually hung around the hall in which Buddhist funeral services are held. Chrysanthemums are the flowers most commonly used for decoration at funerals.

The illustration shows the altar as the children actually arranged it. They added the cross, although it doesn't have anything to do with Buddhism.

Classroom Activities

1. Choose the words from the choices below that fit in the parentheses. (Answers on following page.)

- ① お母さんの友だちのハムスターが()を産みました。
- ② 菜々は、このハムスターをクラスの()にしたいと思いました。
- ③ 学校で、先生とクラスの()に話しました。
- ④ ハムスターに()という名前をつけました。
- ⑤ ()の日は、交代で世話をしました。
- ⑥ ミニミニ()をつくって、その入場料でえさ代を払いました。
- ⑦ ()、ジャンは死んでしまいました。
- ⑧ みんなで()をしました。

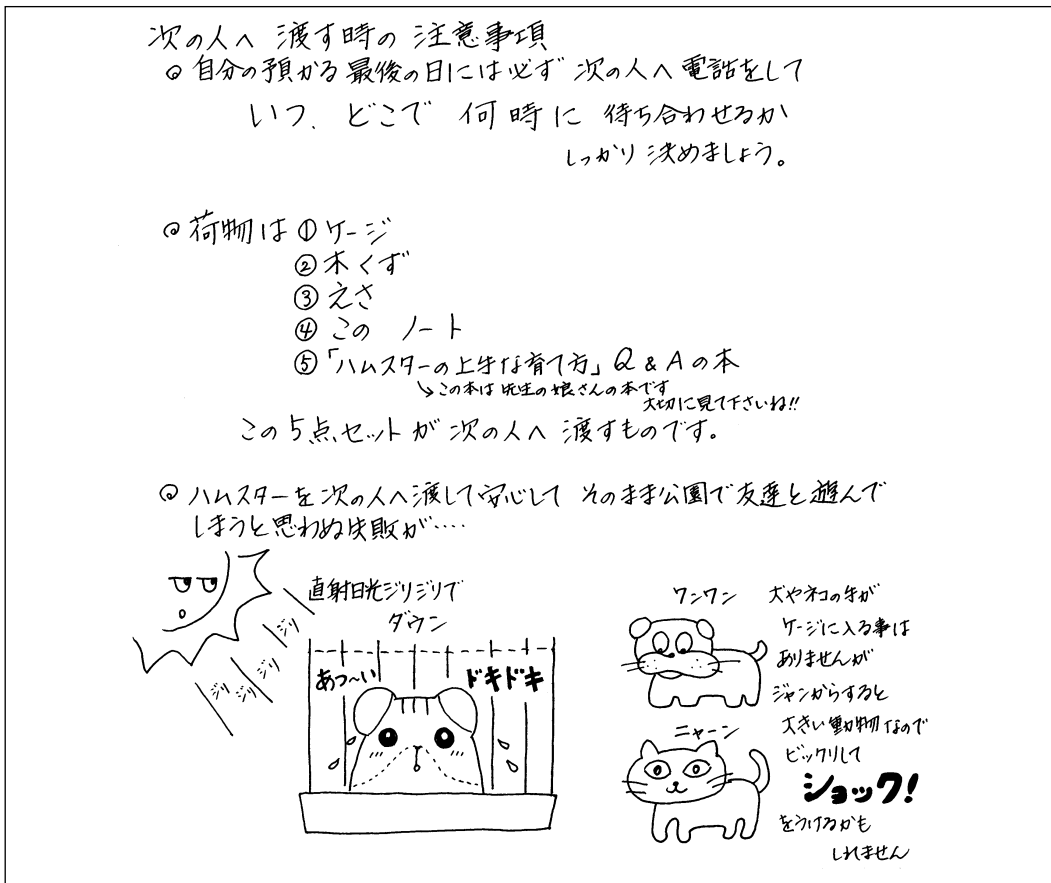
ジャン	休み	赤ちゃん
お葬式	ペット	冬
博物館	友だち	

Hint

- ① Mother's friend's hamster had babies.
- ② Nana thought it would be nice to make this hamster their class pet.
- ③ At school, she told her teacher and the class about the hamster.
- ④ They gave the hamster the name Jan.
- ⑤ On holidays, they took turns taking care of Jan.
- ⑥ They made a mini-mini museum, and the admittance fee to the museum paid for Jan's food.
- ⑦ When winter came, Jan died.
- ⑧ Together, the children held a funeral.

2. The following is a page from the "Jan Notebook." Here the mother of the person who took care of Jan wrote some

notes for the next person to take care of the hamster. Try to imagine what kinds of things are written in the notebook.



[To the teacher: You may want to make an assignment to the students, based on this page, asking them to call a classmate and arrange a time and place to meet and hand over Jan. For the translation of this page, see the box below.]

3. Let's have a discussion on the theme of pets.

Points	Vocabulary	
* Types of pets	ハムスター	hamster
* Taking care of pets (what kinds of care are needed; what you have to be careful of)	動物	animal
* Reasons for having pets; for not having pets	犬	dog
* Robot pets	ねこ	cat
* Relationships between pets and humans	ペット	pet
	家族	family
	飼う(飼います)	keep [a pet]
	夏休み / 冬休み	summer vacation / winter vacation
	世話を(します)	care (take care of)
	えさ	pet food
	死ぬ(死にます)	die
	生まれる(生まれます)	born

If there were someone or some members of your class who wanted to have a pet, how would you decide? What kinds of things would be a problem. How would you resolve the problems?

Are there differences in the problems your class talked about and the problems Nana's class discussed? If they were different, why do you think they were different?

Answers for Classroom Activity 1: ①赤ちゃん ②ペット ③友だち ④ジャン ⑤休み
 ⑥博物館 ⑦冬 ⑧お葬式

Translation of page from the "Jan Notebook":
 Handing Jan over to the next person to take care of him
 * On the last day of your turn taking care of Jan, be sure to call up the next person and clearly decide, when, where, and at what time you will meet.
 * Items: Hand over to the next person the 5 items: 1. Jan in his cage, 2. the bedding supply, 3. food, 4. this notebook, 5. the *Hamusutā no jōzu na sodate-*

For reference information to support the discussion, see the following topics in the PDF edition of the newsletter on the TJF Website at <http://www.tjf.or.jp/eng/ce/ce04nletter.htm>. ➡ Pet Statistics, Problems with Pet Care, Laws: Revision of the "Law on Protection and Care of Animals," Robot Pet

kata Q&A [Q&A for Good Care of Hamsters] book.
 * After you hand Jan over to the next person, don't make the mistake of putting the hamster down and playing in the park before he or she takes Jan home. Something terrible could happen. . .
 [Jan could get sick from being left out in the hot rays of the direct sun and he could die of fright.]
 [Dogs and cats can't get their paws through the bars of the cage, but they are big animals and getting a fright could be a dangerous shock to Jan.]



With the previous issue, we began a regular column introducing the voices of *TJF Newsletter* readers. Here, we introduce interesting ideas from two teachers in the United States using the article on *keitai* (mobile phone) published in the *TJF Newsletter* No. 21 for a class project.

What is popular with teenagers in Japan today?



Guiding Principle: To create an authentic and active learning environment in which all students can excel. For example, I often use realia (such as real *shinkansen* schedules and food packages), rather than rely on pictures in the textbook alone. This helps to bring Japanese alive for the students, and makes it more than just a language they see in a textbook. I try to keep my classes student-centered and use an array of cooperative learning activities. This is especially useful in classes made up of students of different levels of ability.

Rachel Lichtig

Brookline High School
Massachusetts,
United States

My students in Brookline always are asking me what is currently trendy or fashionable in Tokyo. One trend that fascinates them is the widespread use of cell phones, even among people their own age. They are amazed by the advanced technology, small size, and light weight of Japanese cell phones. The feature on "Keitai" in *TJF Newsletter* No. 21 is a great place to start in talking about current trends in Japan.

Students can begin by brainstorming among themselves about the cell phone culture at Brookline High School or in the Boston area. They can share their ideas with a partner, and then present them to the class. They can then read a copy of the *TJF* article on cell phones in Japan and discuss the differences between their own cell phone usage and that of teenagers in Japan. Using a prepared worksheet, students can try to figure out the meaning of messages commonly exchanged among friends. For example: They can also try to write their own messages using these codes for homework and have a classmate try to discover the meaning.

As an extension activity, students can look at the NTT DoCoMo web site (<http://www.nttdocomo.co.jp>) and the J-Phone web site (<http://www.j-phone.com>) to find out more information about cell phones in Japan. Using authentic teaching materials in the classroom connects the students to the target language and gives them a more global perspective.



Japanese Culture Now:
Keitai (No. 21)

Worksheet

どんなメッセージでしょう?

2 key	1 time
* key	1 time
0 key	3 times
6 key	1 time
* key	1 times
4 key	3 times
# key	1 time
4 key	4 times
5 key	4 times



Notes:

- (1) Refer to the *TJF Newsletter* No. 21 for the rules on inputting a hiragana message on a *keitai*
 - (2) The * key adds 「 ^ 」 to the previous letter
 - (3) The # key makes the character small (example:「っ」for「きって」)
- (Inputting procedures differ by type of mobile phone.)

Answer: がんばってね

Idea from another teacher

✉ I would have the students generate Japanese sentences about themselves, their interests, their families and friends, etc. for homework. In class the students would exchange papers and draw an appropriate "smiley" as a comment to each sentence.
[Suzanne Ishii, Ramsey High School, New Jersey, USA]

We invite readers to contribute their "Voices" to the *TJF Newsletter*. We hope readers will respond to articles printed in the *Newsletter* and reflect on their day-to-day endeavors in teaching Japanese in letters that we may share with readers. Especially welcome are accounts of using such articles as "Meeting People" and "Japanese Culture Now" as the basis for classroom study or projects.

Those whose contributions are published in the *Newsletter* will receive copies of "The Way We Are" and the most recent edition of "Opening the Minds and Hearts of Your Japanese-language Students to Culture."

Please write e-mail to: forum@tjf.or.jp with the subject line: "Voices"

Japanese Culture Now

Defure (Deflation): We love “inexpensive, quality” merchandise!

In March 2001, the Japanese government officially confirmed the description of the Japanese economy using the phrase “*yuruyaka na defure jōtai*,” meaning “experiencing the effects of continuous, gradual deflation,” for the first time since the end of World War II. With this announcement, the word “defure” entered the popular vocabulary.

Japan is well known for the high price of everything related to food, clothing, and housing, and, especially in the cities, one is forced to use quite a bit of money living day to

day. With the bad times for business seeming to continue without end, consumers are now being forced to curb their spending. As a natural result they are seeking out “inexpensive but quality” merchandise.

An economy experiencing deflation is not necessarily healthy and can even end up in collapse. Still, considering the high prices they had to pay up until now, consumers are happy when they find it easier to obtain “inexpensive, quality” merchandise.

Half-price Weekday Hamburgers

Photo: Hongō Jin



The “hamburgers half-price on weekdays” sale begun in February 2000 by the fast-food chain McDonald's has been much talked about. From Monday to Friday, a hamburger (regular price ¥130) is ¥65, and a cheeseburger (regular price ¥160) is ¥80. According to McDonald's Japan the strategy was effective, increasing visitors to its restaurants 18.3 percent over the previous year to an aggregate 1.318 billion in 2000. Gross sales increased to

a record figure of approximately ¥430 billion.

The McDonald's half-price campaign triggered similar sales not only at other hamburger chains like Lotteria, but at the *gyūdon* (牛丼 beef bowl) chain Matsuya, which cut the price of its regular-size *gyūdon* bowl from ¥400 to ¥290. Lowered prices are also spreading to restaurant menus and the *o-bentō* (boxed lunches) sold in convenience stores.

UNIQLO

While sales in the apparel departments of department stores and large-scale supermarket chains have fallen off, the casual-wear apparel store Uniqlo has been growing rapidly. The Fast Retail Company, which operates Uniqlo, handles everything from design, to manufacture, to sales, applying thoroughgoing cost-reduction and quality control management. Ninety percent of its products are manufactured in factories in China. The secrets to its success are astonishingly low prices, simple designs that can be worn by young and old alike, good quality materials and stitching, variety of colors and sizes, and skillful advertising featuring popular entertainers.



The popularity of Uniqlo's already well-liked fleece jacket (¥1,900) burgeoned after the array of colors was increased from the former 15 to 50 last winter, and 25 million jackets, three times the 8.5 million sold the previous year, were sold. With seasonal hit products such as chino slacks and T-shirts, its popularity has remained strong, although some people object to the impersonality and uniformity of the brand.

100-Yen Shops



Shops featuring a wide variety of merchandise all uniformly priced at 100 yen (although consumption tax is added to total purchases) are known as 100-yen shops. Now quite ubiquitous in urban areas, some 100-yen chain stores have made their appearance as well. Known for the variety of their merchandise, they sell household necessities, food products, stationery supplies, cosmetics, sewing notions, and many other items. Shoppers are inevitably disarmed by the low per-item price and enjoy picking up one item after another, often buying more than they need.

In Tokyo's Shibuya district the chain store Daisō does a flourishing business from a building of four stories above ground and a basement stocked completely with 100-yen goods. The store is always filled with the young people who flock to this entertainment center of the city.



TJF News

Photograph Collection *The Way We Are 2000* Published

The fourth edition of the works submitted to the photo-message contest on the daily lives of Japanese high school students has been published.

The Way We Are 2000 (A4 size, 48 pages) was published in late June. In addition to the 17 prize-winning entries, it includes photographs and messages selected from as many of the other entries as possible. Presented with only minimal editing in order to faithfully transmit the atmosphere of these high school students as they really are, their original messages tell vividly of their daily lives, dreams and hopes, worries, and their friends. The "News in 2000: Keywords for 2000" page, introducing trends and highlights from the year is a valuable source of recent information on Japan.

Two thousand copies of *The Way We Are 2000* are to be donated to schools and other places where Japanese language is taught in North America, Australia, China, Korea, and other locations overseas. To facilitate its use as a teaching resource, all kanji have *rubi* readings. For use in English-language speaking areas, an insert giving the complete translation of the text is being prepared and will be sent out with the booklet.



Photo Contest in the U.K.

May 2001 through March 2002 has been designated "Japan 2001," featuring a year of events introducing Japanese culture and lifestyles in the United Kingdom. For these events, TJF has made available on loan works from the photo-message contest "The Way We Are: Japanese High School

Students' Lives." The exhibit consists of 25 photograph panels introducing the lives of 20 high school students as well as panels selected for a number of themes including family life, fashion, food, hanging out, and sports. A total of five sets of panels were produced and have been circulating among high schools and libraries throughout Britain.

Responding to these photographs from Japan, a photo-message contest is being held simultaneously called "The Way We Are (UK)." Matching the approach of the Japan-based contest, the UK contest entries will consist of 5 photographs of a featured student and a message. The prize ceremony will be held in late February 2002 to coincide with the announcement of the winners of the fifth photo-message contest on the daily lives of Japanese high school students. First prize in the contest (for 2 persons) will be accompanied by a roundtrip air ticket to Japan. We are looking forward with great anticipation to seeing the messages and hopes the high school students in the UK will express in their text and photographs.

TJF hopes that the idea of the photo-message contest will spread to other countries besides the UK, helping to deepen mutual understanding among high school students around the world.



Flyer advertising The Way We Are (UK)



Daily Express (UK newspaper) weekend special magazine Saturday, May 5, 2001 edition.

TJF Homepage—What's New?

TJF-Net: Bulletin Board Update

The TJF bulletin board, TJF-Net, reopened on July 17th under three new titles:

- *The Way We Are (BBS for high school students)
 - *Activities & Resources Using WWW (BBS for language teachers)
 - *TJF Photo Data Bank Guest Book
- (Except for The Way We Are, posting to these bulletin boards is limited to TJF ID holders.)

Until this revision, the bulletin board was divided into two parts for Japanese and English. With this updated version, instructions have been added to facilitate use in either language on the same bulletin board. We hope that interaction between secondary students studying Japanese overseas and Japanese students will flourish on "The Way We Are," and that information exchange among teachers on the other two lists will be even more vigorous than before.

TJF Photo Data Bank Number of Photographs Steadily Increasing!

http://databank.tjf.or.jp/intro_e.html

The number of photographs available at the Data Bank is steadily growing, particularly on the theme of annual events (*nenchū gyōji*). We look forward to reading your messages at the Guest Book (BBS).

Main content to be added between now and October: *Gōkaku happyō* (posting of entrance examination results), *Hinamatsuri* (Doll's Day), *Hanami* (cherry blossom viewing), *Nyūgakushiki*

(commencement ceremony), *Kodomo no hi* (Children's Day), *Haha no hi* (Mother's Day), White Day (March 14), *Chichi no hi* (Father's Day), *Natsu matsuri* (summer festival).

Japanese Culture and Daily Life

<http://www.tjf.or.jp/eng/ge/geindex.htm>

New titles:

- *Club Activities of High School Students
- *Rain
- *How High School Students Use Their Allowances



TJF Photo Data Bank

ACTFL 2001

Place: Washington, D.C.

Date: Friday, November 16
9:30 am - 10:45 am

Session title: A Brand-New Photo Material "Deai (Encounter)" Developed by The Japan Forum to Teach Culture/ Language through the Lives of Seven Japanese High School Students

The content of the presentation:

In this session, TJF's newly developed photo resource entitled "Deai: The Lives of Seven Japanese High School Students" will be presented with proposal for using it to teach language and culture through the real lives of the individual people.

Co-presenter: Dr. Tohsaku Yasu-hiko, Professor, University of California, San Diego

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Focusing on Everyday Life of Individuals

TJF understands culture as the entire system of living—way of life, behavioral patterns, value system, ways of thinking, and so forth—created by the members of a group for their specific environment. In the belief that it is desirable to begin with those aspects of culture that are relatively familiar and recognizable to young learners, we focus especially on the culture of daily life. Study can then proceed as needed or desired, and according to the interest and ability of the learners, to aspects of culture of a higher order. It is in the culture of daily life that adjustment and understanding between cultures is most needed in actual communication.

One common pitfall in education for cultural understanding is teaching information that is excessively stereotyped and rigid. While one may attempt to explain the culture of Japan and Japanese in general, it often becomes clear later on that such explanations do not apply to all Japanese. One of the difficulties of understanding about culture is that it is not static, but constantly changing, and that there is diversity within even a particular, apparently well-defined culture. As one way for avoiding this pitfall, we have developed the approach of introducing culture as it is reflected in different individuals.

Studying Multi-layered Cultures

In our global society today the culture of the groups to which people either consciously or unconsciously belong and that influence them in the course of their upbringing is very complex and multi-layered. “Japanese culture” as it is treated in the study of the Japa-

nese language is still an important topic of study, but it is by no means the one and only “culture” that shapes people. Subcultures like the family, the school, the local community, and the extended dimensions like regional (Asian) culture and globalized culture must be taken into account as well.

Mastering Three Ways for Learning Culture

What is the goal of learning about culture? Cultural phenomena that are more or less objective can be explained and described based on available facts and reliable data. The study of culture, however, can be more than this: it can set in motion a self-driven process of study in which the learners search for the answers themselves.

There are three dimensions of learning about culture: mastery of a process of gaining perspective on culture (developing interest in other cultures, and acquiring perspectives for observation, comparison, analysis and evaluation), cultivation of attitudes tolerant of and respectful of other cultures (broadening of one’s basic framework of perspectives and values), and acquisition of skills for adjusting to the differences found in other cultures and working with people of those cultures.

Through this *Newsletter* and the TJF website, as well as through our new photograph-centered resource, “Deai: The Daily Lives of Seven Japanese High School Students,” we seek to support endeavors in the study of culture.

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