

Resources make "visual lessons" possible



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Guiding Principle:

I base my teaching on encouraging students to simply do their best and on knowing how to be polite and tolerant of other peoples' cultures. Not everyone can be a perfect linguist. Not everyone can remember all the verb conjugations. However, we can all know the joy of making contact with someone from another country and making them feel comfortable and welcomed by saying something in their own language. Some of my students, of course, go much further and continue to learn when they leave our school. We have as a goal the idea that our students will become life-long learners.

I am a teacher of distance education. Distance education is the provision of schooling to students who live in such remote places that they cannot attend regular schools.* We teach via radio/telephone/teleconference/letter/fax/email/computer/and soon, video. We have over 450 students from pre-school to year 10 and approximately 110 students learning Japanese.** The articles and website photo data bank that TJF provides are invaluable as they allow students to access resources quickly-thus we can hold "visual lessons." Also, the topics TJF covers are up-to-date; no textbook can compete with such new information and vocabulary. Even my teaching colleague from Japan finds herself learning new things.

I used articles from the *TJF Newsletter* to help my students understand how very similar young people are in some ways. I really like to ensure that my students do not have stereotypical "pictures" of Japan. I want them to see young people today as they really are. The *Newsletter* articles are a wonderful help in this regard.

I have also found the articles a good stimulus for helping students write compositions. I usually send out a copy of an article (for example, how students use pocket money) to students and then we discuss it in our radio or telephone lessons.

* Nowadays, even students who do not live in remote places may also choose to receive their education this way. The majority of our students live on cattle stations in central Queensland. Other students are from these types of backgrounds: medical enrollments, home schooling (do not want to go to a regular school for various reasons), traveling students (living on boats or in other countries or traveling around Australia, but still wanting a Queensland curriculum education), international students, prisoners approved as students (special circumstances / special needs), adult education (literacy / numeracy / year 10 core subjects / vocational education).

** We teach Japanese and French at Charters Towers School of Distance Education. For language programs, the students' work is guided by the Education Queensland program and also teacher-prepared activity sheets. During radio lessons, or in teleconferencing, students practice the pronunciation and oral parts of the course. They also do the listening sections. Students who are able come in for Inreach Days at our school. Teachers also travel out to various areas twice a year to teach face to face.



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