

Activity 1: My Showcase

Objectives

- ▶ To learn to use expressions to show one's ability through discussing rental showcase stores.
- ▶ To make a presentation to share one's own interests as well as learn about others' interests by setting up a showcase for display in a mock store.
- ▶ To become acquainted not only with rental showcase stores but also with the town of Akihabara.

Expressions

- ▶ (Place) があります。
- ▶ V することができます。
- ▶ お店、お客さん、レンタルショーケース、値段、借りる、決める、入れる、買う、売る

Learner level: Early beginner

Time Required: 90-100 mins., including preparation of displays

Materials: *Takarabako*, Worksheets

Procedure

● Preparation

Copy the *Takarabako* feature article and column on rental showcase stores as well as the activity worksheet for each student in the class.

1. Show the class a photograph of a rental showcase store and ask, “これは、^{みせ}お店です。何のお店ですか？” Have students discuss and give their answers in pairs or groups.

2. Explain to the class that the photograph is of a rental showcase store.

Example

これは、レンタルショーケースのお店です。お客さんは、お店からショーケースを借ります。(そしてお客さんは、)ショーケースに好きなものを入れます。(そしてお客さんは、)好きなものの値段を決めます。(そしてお客さんは、)それを売ります。ほかのお客さんは、それを買います。

(This is a rental showcase store. Each customer rents a showcase from the store. Then they stock the showcases with whatever they choose. Then they put prices on the items they have chosen to display. Then they sell the items. Other customers buy items from the showcases.)

3. Check students' understanding of the above explanation by asking them what people can do in this store. Have them answer by using the sentence pattern “V することができます。”

Question

お客さんが、レンタルショーケースのお店に来ます。何をすることができますか。

(A customer comes to a rental showcase store. What can he/she do there?)

4. After the students have finished responding, summarize again what people can do in a rental showcase store.

Rental Showcases

As a new and unique marketing system, the rental showcase is gaining popularity in Akihabara and other cities. Acrylic showcases can be rented by anyone who wants to sell some sort of merchandise.

On the seventh floor of the Radio Kaikan just outside the Denki-gai (Electronics District) exit of JR Akihabara station is the rental showcase shop Volks, a long-established model manufacturer, opened in 2001. This shop has some 800 rental showcases on display filled with a tremendous variety of goods: figurines, trading cards, antique toys, hand-made dolls, cameras, insect specimens, and so forth. Each case rents for 2,000 to 5,000 yen per month, with prices differing by size and location in the store. The renter of the box is free to set the price of the goods sold in the showcase. In exchange for

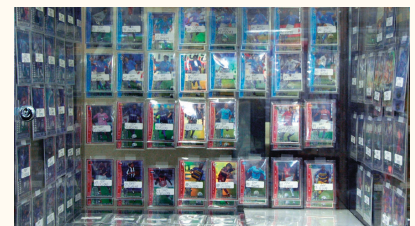
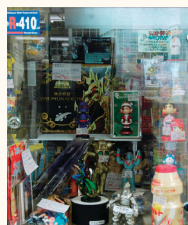
housing the case and marketing the merchandise, the shop receives 15 percent of any sale.

The appeal of the rental showcase is that it allows renters to operate a miniature “shop” of their own at little cost. It is also a place to put on public display articles one has collected from a personal interest or hobby and can serve as a mini-gallery for hand-made items as well. Shoppers in the store are attracted by the enjoyment of finding, in the vast quantity of goods on display in the cases, items they had long been searching for or that exactly suit their tastes.

Cooperation: Volks, Inc. Otakara Club “Yume no Kuni”

http://www.volks.co.jp/jp/volks/otakara/index_otakara.aspx

Reference: <http://www.designboom.com/snapshots/venice04/japan.html>



Example

ショーケースを借りることができます。／ショーケースに、好きなものを入れることができます。／(好きなもの)値段を決めることができます。／好きなものを売ることができます。／好きなものを買うことができます。

(People can rent a showcase from the store. They can stock the showcases with whatever they choose. They can put prices on the items (that they have chosen to display). They can sell what they want to sell. People can buy what they want to buy.)

5. Have students read the column in *Takarabako* about rental showcase stores in order to deepen their understanding. (See notes 1 and 2.)
6. Mention to the class that Akihabara has not only rental showcase stores but many other shops for enthusiasts of various kinds, and then have them read the feature in *Takarabako* if time permitted.
7. Next, assign the students the project of designing their own showcases to display their favorite things or activities. Have them list the things they want to display in the Showcase box of the worksheet. Students should attach photographs, cutouts of magazines and advertisements, illustrations, simple explanations (mixture of Japanese and other languages permissible), and the like to indicate what their showcases will look like.

Collect the worksheets and put them together into a pamphlet to be given to the students at the time the showcases are displayed (or, if not setting up actual displays, at the time of the oral presentations) so they can refer to it while looking at or hearing about what others have done. (See notes 3 and 4.)

Example 1

- 1) Theme: The Theater
- 2) Contents of the display: Ticket stubs for plays I have seen, pamphlets, scripts of plays I have participated in, stage photographs, etc.
- 3) Expressions to use
わたしのショーケースのテーマは演劇です。
(The theme of my showcase is the theater.)
わたしは演劇が好きです。
(I like the theater.)
ショーケースの中に、半券と、パンフレットと、台本があります。
(There are ticket stubs, pamphlets, and scripts in my showcase.)

Example 2

- 1) Theme: My Sources of Energy
- 2) Contents of display: CDs by my favorite artists, books I read when I am discouraged, photographs with friends, etc.
- 3) Expressions to use
わたしのショーケースのテーマは「元気のもと」です。
(The theme of my showcase is "my sources of energy.")
わたしは、Xの歌とXの本が好きです。
(I like songs by X and books by X.)
ショーケースの中に、XのCDと、Xの本があります。
(There are CDs by X and books by X in my showcase.)

Keypoint

Students can either design their showcase around a specific theme, as in example 1, or group several of their favorite things under a theme such as "my sources of energy," as in example 2.

8. Hold a class exhibit of the showcases. Since distributing actual display boxes to the entire class may be impractical, let the students set up their displays in appropriate spaces instead. If the class is small, have everyone take turns presenting their displays to the class; if large, divide the students into two groups, one to present and the other to be the onlookers, and have them switch roles halfway through. Those assigned to looking can listen to presentations of whichever displays interest them. (See note 5.)

Notes

1. Collectors and enthusiasts who attain a certain level in their collecting and/or expertise will typically go on to seek (or set up on their own) places for sharing and enjoying their interests with others. Rental showcase stores provide one such meeting place. Students should understand that these stores are meant less for selling off unwanted items than for trading coveted items with people of similar interests and exhibiting one's hobbies to others.
2. For secondary school students: Hold group discussions on the advantages and disadvantages of rental showcase store versus other types of stores such as retail shops, garage sales, and flea markets (use mixture of Japanese and other languages if desirable).
3. In situations where setting up actual displays are difficult, students can give oral presentations instead, using the photographs, magazine and advertisement cutouts, and other visual materials they have attached to the worksheets. Referring to the worksheets should prove useful to classes in which actual exhibits can be held as well, since comparing the Japanese vocabulary listed on paper to the actual objects displayed will reinforce the link between the two and help students learn the words even if they were previously unfamiliar.
4. The worksheets feature several set sentence patterns, so this will accommodate even low-proficiency learners.
5. During presentations, high proficiency learners can also be called upon to practice additional objectives, for example expressions of giving and receiving or the topic of "gifts," by using expressions to relate anecdotes about their displays in response to such questions as "どこで買いましたか?" (Where did you buy this?) or "だれにもらいましたか?" (Who gave this to you?) asked by the teacher or by other classmates.

Worksheet

名前
[テーマ]
[好きなもの]
[ショーケース]

発表の表現

- ・ショーケースのテーマは、()です。
- ・わたしは、()が好きです。
- ・ショーケースの中に、()と()と()が、あります。

Worksheet may be downloaded at Takarabako website.

Activity 2: Things Change

Objectives

- ▶ To learn how to talk about the past by making presentations about the history of the Akihabara district.
- ▶ To understand that urban areas have special characteristics and that those features differ according to the conditions of a country and its industrial structure through learning about the characteristics of Akihabara and its history.
- ▶ To study the history of students' own town and, while thinking about how it might develop from now on, think about what they themselves might be doing from now on.

Key expressions

- ▶ Vました/Vていました。
- ▶ ～か～にあります。
- ▶ ～年前、～だった時、～年

Learner level: Mid-beginner

Time: 30 mins. x 2 or 60 mins. x 1

Materials: *Takarabako*, Worksheets 1, 2

Procedure

● Preparation

Download Worksheets 1 and 2 from *Takarabako* website and copy them for each student in the class.

1. The teacher should read the English text of the “Basic Akiba Information,” and ask the students several questions in Japanese, having the students respond in Japanese as much as they can.

Examples of questions

- 1) 秋葉原は、東京の何区にありますか。
(Akihabara is in what ward in Tokyo?)
- 2) 秋葉原に、いくつの店がありますか。
(How many stores are there in Akihabara?)
- 3) 秋葉原に、どんな店がありますか。
(What kinds of stores are there in Akihabara?)
- 4) 最近、秋葉原にどんな店がたくさんありますか。
(What kinds of shops are recently numerous in Akihabara?)
- 5) 東京駅から秋葉原駅まで、何分ですか。
(How many minutes does it take to get from Tokyo Station to Akihabara?)

Answers: 1) 千代田区 (Chiyoda-ku) (2) 600, (3) 家電製品、パソコン、電子辞書など (Household appliances, personal computers, electronics parts, etc.), (4) ゲーム機、DVD販売店、アニメ関連グッズ、アニメ専門店などのアニメ向けの店 (video game software stores, DVD retail stores, stores specializing in anime-related goods and figures), (5) 11分 (約5分) (5 minutes by the Yamanote Line)

2. After having the students read the “History of Akihabara” from *Takarabako*, form them into groups of 3 or 4 members. Distribute Worksheet 1, which gives questions about the history of Akihabara, and have them consult as a group and fill in the answers. The teacher should circulate through the classroom, giving advice to groups having trouble with the exercise. If some groups finish up the worksheet early, have them help out the groups that are having trouble.
3. When all the groups have finished, have them each present their answers.
4. After saying, “We have just studied the history of Akihabara.

Now let's think about the history of your town,” ask the following questions.

Questions

- 1) 秋葉原は、今は何の町ですか。
(What kind of town is Akihabara now?)
- 2) (学習者の居住するところ)は何の町ですか。
(What kind of town is [town where students live]?)
- 3) どうしてですか。何がありますか。
(Why is that? What do we have here?)
- 4) (学習者の国の大都市や著名な都市)は何の町ですか。
(What kind of city is [big or well-known city in the students' country]?)
- 5) どうしてですか。何がありますか。
(Why is that? What does it have?)

Keypoint

If useful, introduce “Kanda-Jinbocho, Town of Books” and “Ameyoko, Shopping Town (Okachimachi).” (See note 1.) The reason for introducing Kanda-Jinbocho or Ameyoko here is to show students, by introducing areas of Tokyo other than Akihabara, how the people and neighborhoods of each part of the city have their own character. It is also helpful in getting students to notice how those shared characteristics foster attachment to and pride in a community.

5. Have the students return to their regular seating arrangements and distribute Worksheet 2, which gives questions about the history of the students' own town.

Keypoint

If the students' Japanese ability is limited, it may be better to assign the worksheets to them in pairs or in groups.

6. When they have finished filling out Worksheet 2, have them draw pictures or paste photos in the empty space. It may also be a good idea to have them draw or work on a large sheet of paper using Worksheet 2 as a model. (See note 3.)

Keypoint

The completed worksheets can be hung on the walls, used for individual presentations, or other opportunities for the students to transmit information to others.

Note

1. Kanda-Jinbocho is a district where many large-scale and long-established bookstores are clustered. With some 170 secondhand bookstores, it is known as a book district that has frequent book sales and other festive events involving books. “Ameyoko” is a nickname of Ameya yokocho [Ameya Alley]. A long shopping street extending from the JR station at Tokyo's Okachimachi (Taito-ku) toward Ueno station, it is lined with more than 400 shops.
2. Learners interested in an unfamiliar place like Tokyo's Akihabara may find great appeal in this story, but it may hold little fascination for others, making the class less absorbing for them. One strategy for dealing with this situation is to make the activity involving the Basic Akiba Information a group project, and, after showing examples of how Akihabara has changed over the years, turn to the students' own town, getting them to think about how it has grown or change with the passage of time. Then, focusing the subject on the students themselves, have them think about how they are growing up in the future, making the theme something that feels close to home for them.

Worksheets 1 and 2 may be downloaded at *Takarabako* website.