

# Takarabako

たからばこ

September 2011 No. 29



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### "Japanese Culture and Daily Life Takarabako" e-Books



### 300 Responses to Questionnaire

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## Thank You to Our Readers

TJF's English-language newsletters, the *TJF Newsletter* (October 1993-June 2004) and *Takarabako* (September 2004 to present), have introduced the lives of Japanese young people, mainly elementary and secondary school students, through topics of recent interest in Japan. Five thousand copies of each issue were printed and more than 4,000 were distributed to teachers and other interested persons in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States, as well as various countries in Europe. Constantly keeping in mind the interests and needs of teachers and elementary and secondary school students, we have sought to show the multi-faceted nature of conditions in Japan. By portraying the way of life, thinking, joys, and anxieties of real-life elementary and secondary school students, we have sought to provide a window on Japan and Japanese that focuses on diverse subjects their peers in other countries can share.

We often received messages, telling us of success in using a particular article in the classroom, or reporting on the interest students took in this or that subject. TJF is deeply grateful for this support and feedback from our readers.

### Continuing to provide information about Japan through Click Japan

With expansion of Internet use and developments in information and communications technology, the potential of website-related ways of publishing and serving the needs of readers has greatly increased. As announced in the previous issue, we have decided to cease publication of *Takarabako* with this issue. TJF's efforts to provide information about Japan today, however, will continue. From now on, taking advantage of the ways information can be provided online, we will develop the potential of the Click Japan website.

TJF will be always with you!

## Yomiuri Photo Grand Prix: Photo and Essay Division Deadline for submissions is coming up!

High school students are invited to submit entries consisting of up to 5 photographs and a message (150 words in English or 200 characters in Japanese). The photographs should present a lively portrait of a subject the photographer knows well and who is close in age, portraying the subject's dreams, hopes, worries or uncertainties in a realistic and candid manner. The message should express how creating the entry helped the photographer deepen understanding of both the subject and him- or herself.

### First prize is a round-trip ticket to Japan.

The prize-winning entries will be published in the *Yomiuri shimbun*, one of Japan's leading national newspapers. TJF will post the photographs of the prize-winning works and

other selected entries on its website. In 2010, an Australian high school student won a prize. We hope you will encourage your students and their friends to consider submitting an entry to the contest.

### Deadline: November 20, 2011

(The deadline must be strictly observed. Be sure to mail your entry in plenty of time)

For guidelines and application form, go to [www.tjf.or.jp/thewayweare2/en/index.html](http://www.tjf.or.jp/thewayweare2/en/index.html)

Here's a chance for your students to show people around the world what their country and locale is like.

Students can express themselves in the language they are studying. (The message may be in either Japanese or English.)

# Takarabako History



To read these articles go to [Click Japan www.tjf.or.jp/clicknippon/en/](http://www.tjf.or.jp/clicknippon/en/) [Takarabako www.tjf.or.jp/takarabako/](http://www.tjf.or.jp/takarabako/)



## #2 Convenience Stores: Can't Live Without Them!?

Below are the ten most popular *Onigiri*. Try putting them in order from one to ten, one being the most popular.

- 1. Plain (white rice)
- 2. One (lower) pickled plum
- 3. Anko (red bean)
- 4. Salmon (salmon)
- 5. Tuna (tuna)
- 6. Tuna (tuna)
- 7. Tuna (tuna)
- 8. Tuna (tuna)
- 9. Tuna (tuna)
- 10. Tuna (tuna)

### #1 Finally I was able to see all around me

天田喜應 (Amida Kiyonari) shares his experience of being able to see all around him after a long period of blindness.

## #3 The Lives of Japanese Elementary School Students

| 時間    | 月    | 火    | 水    | 木    | 金    |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 8:15  |      |      |      |      |      |
| 8:25  | 月曜朝会 | 職員朝会 | 職員朝会 | 職員朝会 | 職員朝会 |
| 8:30  | 児童朝会 | 職員朝会 | 職員朝会 | 職員朝会 | 職員朝会 |
| 8:45  | 国語   | 家庭   | 国語   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 9:30  | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 9:35  | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 10:20 | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 10:40 | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 11:25 | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 11:30 | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 12:15 | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 12:55 | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 1:15  | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 1:35  | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 2:20  | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |
| 2:25  | 算数   | 家庭   | 社会   | 国語   | 職員朝会 |

### #5 TJF Photo Data Bank

Activity 1: Observing, Reflecting

Using the layout plan of a home and photographs provided here, introduce the various rooms in a Japanese home. The learner can learn to explain the layout of his or her home and think about home and family relationships.

- リビングルーム (和風) living room (Japanese-style room): t018
- リビングルーム (洋風) living room (Western-style room): y020
- ダイニングルーム dining room: y060
- ダイニングキッチン kitchen and dining room: sm.p04.3
- キッチン/キッチン kitchen: y044
- 子供部屋 children's room: yk.p04.1
- 洗面所 washbasin room: ok009
- 玄関 entrance hall: my.p05
- 廊下 hallway: yk017
- 浴室 bath: KENTAR039
- 書斎 (父の部屋) study (father's room): yk.p06
- 和室 (母の部屋) Japanese-style room: my.p05
- 押入れ dressing closet: my036

## #11 Traditional Games Making a Comeback

### Kendama

Cup and Ball

Playing with *kendama* (lit. "sword and ball") begins by swinging the ball onto the small, medium, or large "plate (cup)," or making the ball, where it has a hole on one side, fall on the tip of a shaft at one end, called the "sword" (*ken*). The first challenge is to get the ball to land on the large plate, then on the medium and small plates, and finally to make the ball fall on the shaft.

The roots of *kendama* are said to be found in the French *hiloopier* (see right side in left box below), a game played in Europe during the nineteenth century. In France, it was played by aristocrats, while in England, it was a game for girls.

*Kendama* is said to have reached Japan from China via Nagasaki during the Edo period (1603-1867). At the time, it was comprised of a straight stick and a ball. *Kendama* as we know it today, with three plates and a sword tip, was invented in Hiroshima during the Taisho period (1912-1926). It was an instant hit among children, and was commonly played until the early Showa period (1926-1989).

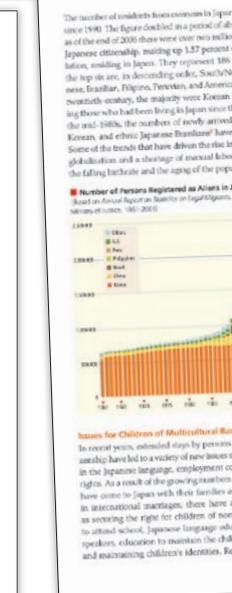
To promote the spread of *kendama* as a sport, the NPO Japan Kendama Association founded in 1975 created a standard *kendama* for competition (*kendama* with approval stickers are used at competitions), and a rulebook. Today, competitions and grade (*kyu, dan*) certification meets take place around the country.

Skill is ranked in ten *kyu* (rising from 10 to 1) and six *dan* (rising from 1 to 6).

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology is also focusing on games as a way to improve children's physical strength. Since *kendama* is recognized as a game that requires balance and helps exercise the entire body, including the back and knees, "caravans" comprised of people who travel to elementary schools to teach children how to play.

### Kendama Around the World

Germany, Mexico, France, Venezuela







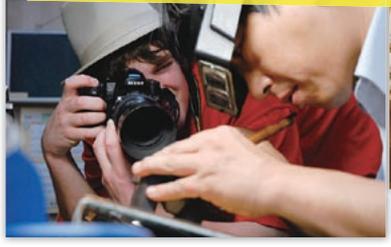
©Nakajima Yuko

## #25 The Deai Students: A Sequel



©Miyashima Midori

## #15 Japan Through the Eyes of High School Students from Around the World



### Popular Board Games and Card Games

While digital games are gaining popularity, board games and card games still show strong popularity, giving pleasure to people of every generation.

**Board games**  
**Go** is the Japanese version of the American board game released in 1960, sold over 12 million sets since its first release in Japan in 1968. Players spin the dial to determine how many steps to move their pieces towards the goal, encountering the various experiences and aspects of life as the game proceeds. Released in 2018, the...

### #18 Games for Cross-Enjoyment

...players with two people using coin-like pieces with black and white sides. Players first choose their color, and take turns placing pieces on the board. Any piece enclosed by pieces of the other player must be flipped to the color of the other player's pieces, and the player with the most pieces on the board at the end becomes the winner. Because of its simple rules, anyone young and old can enjoy playing. It is said that there are 40 million avid Othello players around the world, with over 30 world tournaments held so far. Another game originating in Japan, called Yakyuhun



In previous issues, Shō Takemura's *Shōwa Emperor* (1981), which was published in 1987 when Takemura was still a 39-year-old medical student, became a best-seller, with 400,000 copies sold. The work introduced the innovative techniques he adopted: including multiple shots, panning, and close-ups. Manga using such cinematic effects came to be called *story manga*, and *story manga* became the most common form of comic in Japan.

Takemura's stories were more than entertainment, giving readers high school students a sense of direction with complex personalities. Some of his stories end in tragedy, symbolizing the transience of life and the material world. He remained active as an actor until his death in 1988 at the age of 41. He not only produced *Famous Actor* (1987) but also wrote other story manga series but also was a supervisor in the field of anime. His manga have had tremendous influence on many of the people who are now budding in various fields, not only manga, painting and other fields of the arts, but also medicine, technology and sciences. He is now revered as the "god of manga."

**Birth of Weekly Manga Magazines and the *Shōjo-kan* Manga Era**

With the inauguration of boys' manga magazines, *Shōnen* (shōnen) and *Shōjo* (shōjo) shōnen magazines in 1958, manga became more popular among children than ever. Before those children became college students in the latter half of the 1950s they came under a strong influence of *ego-ani* (the "ego and semi-ego" style) genre of manga, examples of which are *Adolescence* (Takemura's best story of a young boy and girl) and *Star of the Earth* (the story of a star baseball pitcher), which have been translated into English and published in various countries, and collected into the *Golden Age of Manga* series.

The late 1950s to the early 1960s was the era of the *shōjo-kan* (teen and young adult) manga. The stories are often set in junior or senior high schools, capturing adolescent love between the male and female characters and the extracurricular and educational life that get in the way of their relationships. In the late-1950s manga series, romance is increasingly set against the backdrop of other-espionage events involving the protagonists and their characters, and gradually to give a balance between the elements of serious drama and comedy. Some works of this type were intended for television and adapted into anime.



| Top 10 Choices of Future Occupation |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Junior high school boys             | Senior high school boys                              |
| 1 Baseball player                   | 1 School teacher                                     |
| 2 Soccer player                     | 2 Public service employee                            |
| 3 School teacher                    | 3 Doctor   |
| 4 Doctor                            | 4 Physical therapist, medical dental hygienist, etc. |

## #19 Dreams and Career Planning

| 1 Car mechanic, car designer                                       | 7 Researcher, university professor                       |
|--|--|
| 2 Video game creator, video game programmer                        | 8 Technician, engineer, mechanic                         |
| 3 Public entertainer (such as singer, voice actor, comedian, etc.) | 9 Jurist (lawyer, judge, public prosecutor)              |
| 4 Jurist (lawyer, judge, public prosecutor)                        | 9 Fireman (rescue officer, emergency medical technician) |
| Junior high school girls   | Senior high school girls                                 |
| 1 Nursery school / kindergarten teacher                            | 1 School teacher   |
| 2 Nurse  | 2 Nursery school / kindergarten teacher                  |
| 3 Cartoonist, illustrator  | 3 Nurse  |
| 4 Public entertainer (such as singer, actor, comedian, etc.)       | 4 Public service employee                                |



## #22 Go-Tochi Boom: We Love Local



©Kodansha Shashinbu

| Top 10 Choices of Future Occupation |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Junior high school boys             | Senior high school boys                              |
| 1 Baseball player                   | 1 School teacher                                     |
| 2 Soccer player                     | 2 Public service employee                            |
| 3 School teacher                    | 3 Doctor   |
| 4 Doctor                            | 4 Physical therapist, medical dental hygienist, etc. |

## #19 Dreams and Career Planning

| 1 Car mechanic, car designer                                       | 7 Researcher, university professor                       |
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| 4 Jurist (lawyer, judge, public prosecutor)                        | 9 Fireman (rescue officer, emergency medical technician) |
| Junior high school girls   | Senior high school girls                                 |
| 1 Nursery school / kindergarten teacher                            | 1 School teacher   |
| 2 Nurse  | 2 Nursery school / kindergarten teacher                  |
| 3 Cartoonist, illustrator  | 3 Nurse  |
| 4 Public entertainer (such as singer, actor, comedian, etc.)       | 4 Public service employee                                |

**Why?**  
 Because... kind of... example... amount... bags... C...  
 ...transport, and sell the eco-bags, and that without plastic shopping bags, people who have used them for bundling trash must simply use other bags instead. The debate over disposable chopsticks has been going on for a long time as well.

We may find it difficult individually to confirm the facts on such matters, but it is important to act vis-à-vis the environment based on our own judgment, rather than be overly influenced by trends or popular views.

### Disposable chopsticks

**Arguments for**

- They are the most sanitary because they are not washed and reused.
- Chopsticks in Japan are made out of lumber remnants, in other words, from the by-product of lumber for other purposes, thus making an effective use.
- The timber is made comes from sustainably managed forests in Japan.

**Arguments against**

- Nothing "disposable" is good.
- Japan does have large stockpiles of wood that would make good raw material for disposable chopstick manufacture, but high transportation and labor costs render made-in-Japan disposable chopsticks relatively expensive, so over 90 percent are imported. This could accelerate deforestation in East and Southeast Asia.

## #23 "Koshien" as Big Stage for High School Students



©Kodansha Shashinbu



©Fashion Koshien Executive Committee

## #24 Shodo: An Old and New Form of Self-Expression



©Nippon Budokan



# "Japanese Culture and Daily Life Takarabako" e-Books

Takarabako and its predecessor, the *Japan Forum Newsletter*, published articles on many topics introducing the culture of Japanese daily life. On the occasion of the transition from print publication through *Takarabako* to publication online through Click Japan, articles published in the *Newsletter* columns on Japanese daily life and the *Takarabako* column "Japanese Culture Now" will be compiled under the title *Japanese Culture and Daily*

*Life Takarabako*, in three e-books subtitled *Daily Life*, *Pleasures and Sports*, and *Society and Education*, respectively. Designed in pages that can be turned as in a printed book, these e-books are meant to be read on a computer. They can be perused like ordinary books, flipped through to enjoy the photographs and charts, or searched as a reference work on various aspects of Japanese culture.

The image displays a digital interface for the e-book "Japanese Culture and Daily Life Takarabako". The main content area shows a page titled "Bento: Packaging Good Food and Human Warmth" with various sections like "Bento Times", "Day care and kindergarten", "Elementary and junior high school", "High school", "At workplaces", "Home delivery for the elderly", "Process eating", and "Time- and energy-saving meal". The interface includes a search bar at the bottom with the text "Use the search function." and a navigation bar with a "Show at next class!" button. A circular inset shows a 3D view of the e-book pages, with a callout "Turn the pages while reading onscreen." and another callout "Bring up to full-screen size with a right click.".

**How to Get the e-Books**  
Those who register to receive the Click Japan email newsletter will be sent the URL to access the *Japanese Culture and Daily Life Takarabako* e-books. To register for the email newsletter, go to <http://link.tjf.or.jp/MMCJP>

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### Please register for "Click Japan News"

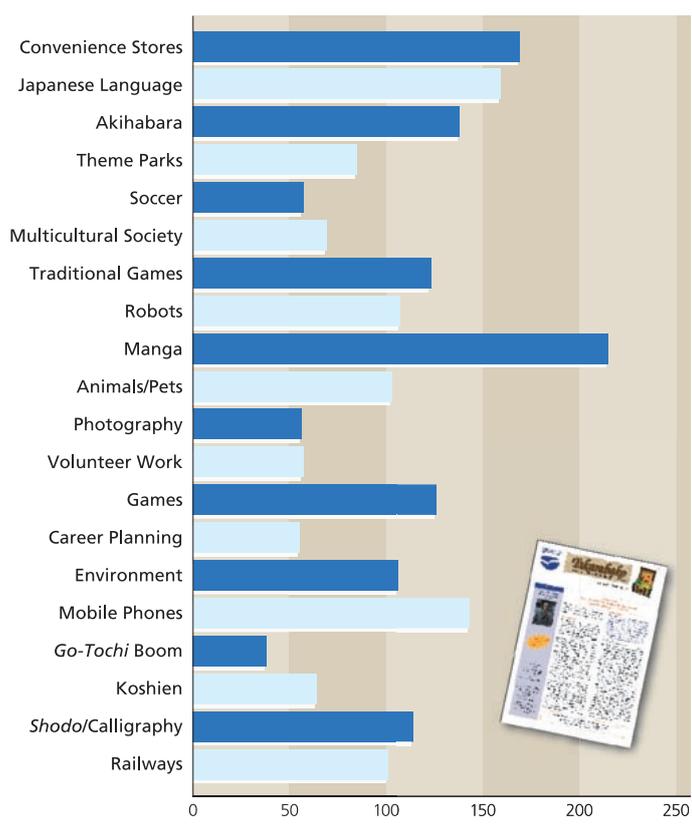
Readers of Click Japan website will be notified, via the e-mail newsletter, "Click Japan News," of updates to the Click Japan website and availability of information relating to Japanese-language education. If you are not already registered to receive these bulletins, we invite you to do so at <http://link.tjf.or.jp/MMCJP>



# 300 Responses to Questionnaire

TJF conducted a survey of *Takarabako* and *Hidamari* (Chinese newsletter) readers concerning topics taken up in its pages through issue No. 27 that teachers had utilized in their classes and that students found of particular interest. We are sincerely grateful to the readers who took time to respond to the questionnaire. The editorial staff was delighted to see how many of the articles have been useful to teachers.

Q: Among the topics taken up in past issues of *Takarabako*, which, if any, have you used in your classes or found of particular interest to your students?



## Blog Features Class-Activity Ideas on Great East Japan Disaster Theme

The questionnaire also asked readers to suggest ideas for topics they would like us to take up from here onward. Many respondents suggested the subject of natural disasters like the earthquakes and tsunami that Japan experienced in March this year. In Japanese classes at many elementary, junior high, and senior high schools around the world, students are engaged in fundraising and other activities to think and care about the situation of the victims of the quake and tsunami. In this blog, we share messages and ideas sent to TJF by teachers participating in such projects with their students, in hopes that they will encourage and inspire others. **See the blog at <http://ameblo.jp/tjf2011/>**

## Class Activity Using "Go-Tochi Boom" Article

We recently received from Jessica Perrin in Australia a class-activity idea using the "Go-Tochi" feature of *Takarabako* (No. 22) summarized below. We hope other readers will let us know how they have used such feature articles in their classes. We would like to share your ideas with other teachers by posting them on the Click Japan site.

### Summary

Students engage with the prefectures and makeup of Japan; uncovering the unique specialties of each prefecture in an appealing way through the Kewpie character mascots.

### Objectives

1. Familiarize students with the makeup/layout of regions and prefectures of Japan
2. Increase awareness of Japan's local diversity (food/goods/language) and the pride taken in local specialties.
3. Introduce students to the concepts of *meibutsu* めいぶつ and *omiyage* おみやげ
4. Saying what an area is famous for.

### Procedure

1. Set the class up into groups and give each group a puzzle of Japan. Have the students try to put the puzzle together (ensure that there are no maps of Japan around the room!).
2. Reconvene and compare the work of each group. Distribute copies of the Japan map to show students the correct makeup. Elicit as much information as possible (island names, capital, any prefecture names that they know, region names, climate between north and south, where sister school is located, etc.). Depending on the level of the group, location sentences/simple statements like 日本は長いです／大きい島が4つあります could be included. Highlight how many prefectures there are.
3. Distribute *Takarabako* to each group. As a class read the first part of the article that defines *Go-Tochi*. Ask students why they think that this is a boom and what they think might be considered popular marks of local identity in Japan.

**For the full lesson go to:**

**[www.tjf.or.jp/clicknippon/en/activity/t22\\_01\\_e.html](http://www.tjf.or.jp/clicknippon/en/activity/t22_01_e.html)**