



INDIRECT PERSONAL ENCOUNTER

—Daily Life of an Elementary School Child in Japan—



Lynn Sessler-Schmaling
Clovis Grove Elementary
Wisconsin, U.S.

PURPOSE

This lesson enables students to have an indirect personal encounter with a student of their own age from Japan by using a series of photo panels, "A Day with Kentaro," which describes a day in the life of a Japanese elementary school student. Students compare the daily routines of a second-grade student in Japan to their own daily routines in the United States. Students use the *Vte+imasu* form to describe their own daily routines.

POINTS TO BE STUDIED

LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES

TARGET FUNCTIONS

❖ Expressing daily routines

TARGET EXPRESSIONS

❖ (Direct object) を (Verb) てい
ます

TARGET VOCABULARY

❖ Action verbs pertaining to daily routines: たべる, のむ, おきる, ねる, いく, かえる, ~する, かく, よむ, あそぶ
❖ Various review vocabulary used to describe daily routines: あさごはん, べんきょう

CULTURAL OBJECTIVES

- To describe, in English, similarities and differences in the daily routines of a second-grade student in Japan and a second-grade student in the United States
- To name three products of Japanese culture important to daily routines, and the practices associated with those products

OTHER OBJECTIVES

- To write a paragraph in English describing a picture of a daily routine being performed by an elementary school student in Japan (associated with the school's literacy/writing goals and the U.S. National Standards for Language Arts)

SOURCE MATERIALS

“A Day with Kentaro”¹
Work sheet (Handout *)

- 1 “A Day with Kentaro” is a series of photo panels featuring a Japanese elementary school boy, Kentaro, with captions in Japanese. It is produced by TJF, and the photos can be downloaded from the TJF website.

PROCEDURE

Previous study

The students in this class have previously learned the *Vte +* form using commands in the classroom. They have also seen the picture panels of “A Day with Kentaro” and each student has written, in English, a paragraph of his/her own interpretation about what Kentaro was doing in a particular picture panel. This activity was completed in cooperation with the Language Arts teacher.

Preparation

The teacher prepares items for role-playing daily routines, and arranges picture panels on the chalk board in order. Attached to the picture panels should be vocabulary written in *hiragana* and/or *katakana* for certain products used in the daily routine in Japan (e.g., a photo of a Japanese breakfast with the word あさごはん, an abacus with the word そろばん).

1. Demonstration of a sequence of daily events (5 mins.)

The teacher demonstrates a sequence of daily events in front of the class. As the teacher demonstrates each action, he/she introduces the *Vte + imasu* form.

2. Description of daily routines (5 mins.)

The teacher invites one or two students to go through a series of five to eight actions depicting their own personal daily routines. As the student is performing, the other students are describing it with the teacher.

あさごはん(きゅうしょく)をたべています, あるいています, なまえをかいています, ほんをよんでいます, きゅうにゆうをのんでいます, そうじをしています, あそんでいます, しゅくだいをしています.

3. Description of what Kentaro is doing (10 mins.)

While pointing to the picture panels of “A Day with Kentaro” the teacher asks the students what Kentaro is doing in each picture. As the students use

the *Vte + imasu* form, the teacher also attaches the vocabulary cards for the products used by Kentaro in his daily routines and repeats the sentences (with the students) using the correct Japanese vocabulary for the products. The teacher uses the *hiragana* or *katakana* on the vocabulary cards for pre-reading purposes only (early-stage recognition). The students do not formally study *hiragana* or *katakana* until grade 3, but are given ample opportunity in grades 1 and 2 to begin to recognize high-frequency *hiragana* characters used in vocabulary words.

よんでいます ほんをよんでいます

4. Comparison of American and Japanese students (10 mins.)

Students share with the class their own written interpretations in English of Kentaro’s daily routines and compare and contrast the products and cultural practices from the Japanese picture panels with those from their own daily routines in the United States.

Many of the students were surprised to see the Japanese students cleaning their own school. Several students thought it looked like the students were doing stretches. They also thought the students not only served but also cooked their school lunches, because they were wearing masks and aprons. Students in the United States never do that.

5. Evaluation

- ❖ Work sheet (Handout)
- ❖ The teacher gives of group of 3 students 3 picture cards from “A Day with Kentaro.” Each group of students is asked to stand in the order in which these daily routines would be performed. Each student produces one sentence describing the action taking place on the card they are holding. Each sentence produced is scored by the teacher using a 5-point rubric scale and the 3 scores are averaged together.

From the committee

Looking at the lives of Japanese children of the same age would certainly capture the interest of the students. It is good to point out not only differences between the two cultures but similarities as well. Another effective approach would be to bring the discussion closer to home by having the students compare their daily routines not only with those of Japanese children but with those of their classmates as well.

WORK SHEET

なまえ _____

In the box next to each picture, put the appropriate number as the teacher describes Kentaro's daily routine.



