

Takarabako

たからばこ

September 2011 No. 29



Contents

Takarabako History



"Japanese Culture and Daily Life Takarabako" e-Books



300 Responses to Questionnaire

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Takarabako is published and distributed by the Japan Forum. This publication follows the practice of placing the Japanese surname first.

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

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) article. Includes photos of him and his family, and text describing his experience of seeing all around him.

#3 The Lives of Japanese Elementary School Students



Time	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	児童朝会	児童朝会	児童朝会	児童朝会
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 (Living room (Japanese-style room)): 1018
- リビングルーム (Living room (Western-style room)): 1020
- ダイニングルーム (Dining room): 1060
- ダイニングキッチン (Kitchen and dining room): 104, 3
- キッチン (Kitchen): 1044
- 子供部屋 (Children's room): 104, 1
- 洗面所 (Washbasin room): 1009
- 玄関 (Entrance hall): 105
- 廊下 (Stairway): 1017
- 浴室 (Bath): 1003
- 書斎 (Study (father's room)): 106
- 和室 (Japanese-style room): 105
- 押入れ (Closet): 1018, 1020
- クローゼット (Closet): 1018, 1020
- ベランダ (Balcony): 1018, 1020

#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.

Country: Skill is ranked in ten *kyu* (ranging from 10 to 1) and six *dan* (ranging 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, it is being promoted in schools.

The roots of *kendama* are said to be found in the French *hiloopet* (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.

Kendama Around the World

Germany, Mexico, France, Venezuela.





#6 From Akiba to the World! Striving to Become a Top Digital Content Hub



#7 The Deai Photo Essay Cafe Japan Visitation Program

#8 Theme Parks: Out-of-the-Ordinary Worlds

Food
Food theme parks are indoor facilities gathering together from around the country well-known shops and restaurants in one place. Namji Town has other theme parks (e.g. massage) therapies. Nanaco also operates Harbor, the Yokohama Curry Museum. Other food theme parks all over the country.

The New Yokohama Ramen Museum, opened in 1994, was the first food theme park in Japan. Food theme parks have steadily increased in number throughout the country since 2000, and foods, too, have diversified, including ramen, gyoza, curry, sushi, ice cream, sweets, bread, etc. What is common among these parks is that their menus are popular among people regardless of gender and age.

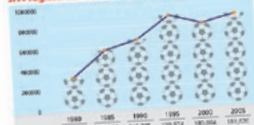
(mid-1950s to mid-1960s). What attracts visitors is the nostalgic evoking atmosphere and the fact that they can eat various types of specialties in one place. Namji Town has other theme parks (e.g. massage) therapies. Nanaco also operates Harbor, the Yokohama Curry Museum. Other food theme parks all over the country.



Other Theme Parks
Among notable parks on other themes are Space World, a station space experience facility in Kitakyushu, special training programs similar to that offered by NASA (a marine theme park in Gamaori, Aichi based on the images of ocean adventure and the discovery), and Ashikaga Flower Park in Tochigi prefecture.

Children's favorite sports

According to a 2010 survey entitled "Child care no sports natta" (Did you play sports when you were a child?), Young People's Participation in Sports 2010 (Data as of Young People's Participation in Sports 2010) conducted for a sample of 2,500 girls and boys aged 10 to 19 years old in the Saitama Sports Prefecture. The top three sports played on the weekends were 1) professional baseball, 2) basketball, and 3) baseball. Among girls, the sport played the most on a regular basis was 1) professional baseball, 2) high school or college basketball, and 3) league soccer. In addition, sports they wanted to see in the stadium were 1) professional baseball, 2) professional soccer, 3) professional basketball, and 3) volleyball.



Why do we call it soccer?
In England, where soccer was born and in many other countries, the game is called "football." Yet in Japan, it is generally known as "soccer." The word "soccer" is derived from the Latin word "socius," which means "partner" or "companion." It is a shortened form of the word "association football," which is the full name of the game in English.

Bathing facilities with a particular theme

"Spa resorts" (spa rizueto) are large-scale tourist facilities where you can enjoy not only jacuzzi, sauna, and open-air baths, but also restaurants, beauty care salons, sports gyms, and so on. From the 1980s on, entertainment-oriented spa resorts, which are different from conventional public baths and hot spring inns, have been attracting more and more customers.

Great Edo Spa Town
A bathing facility visitors can enjoy without staying overnight. Located on Tokyo Bay, its baths are fed by natural springs. Representing an Edo-period town, spread in 2011 and offers an open-air bath, a footbath, low temperature saunas with rock beds, sand etc. There are also a restaurant, beauty care salon, and amenities.



Spa Resort Hawaiians
Spa Resort Hawaiians, a large leisure spot in Fukui prefecture, consists of five theme parks, a hotel, a golf course, and other facilities. Its predecessor was the John Hawaiian Center; by adding "spa" to the original theme of "Hawaii" or "southern land," it was renewed and opened in 1990 under the present name. In the Spring Park, an Edo-style European-style indoor spa with bathing-suit bathing and a huge traditional style bath. There you can enjoy a variety of baths—open-air bath, treadle cypress-bath, utsugi waterfall bath, jacuzzi, cold water, etc.

#9 Soccer as a Popular Sport: Putting Down Roots in Japan

Community-based Soccer Teams
The JFA (Japan Football Association) is a national sports organization that accommodates over 10,000 people with nighttime lighting and a natural grass field, and establish an organization devoted to nurturing in lower leagues. In other words, to have teams that accommodate elementary, junior and senior high school students.

These requirements are closely related to the goals of the JFA. By drawing on the roots and by club teams in local communities, the JFA aims to make sports a part of people's daily lives, enriching the health and happiness in societies. The JFA Chairman Kawakuchi Saburo has said that he was moved by a young man by the sight of people of all ages playing soccer in grass fields in Germany. From then on, it became his center in grass fields in Germany. From then on, it became his center in grass fields in Germany. From then on, it became his center in grass fields in Germany.

#13 Manga: Japan's Favorite Entertainment Media

Characteristics of Japanese Comics
1) The mainstream is shounen manga. The mainstream of manga in Japan today is "shounen manga" that have clear narrative storylines and pictures dividing the pages into boxes containing dialogue, onomatopoeia, "action" effects, and other text. Reading through the frames, the reader experiences the sense of watching a movie.
2) Not limited to children. Manga magazines published in Japan generally target certain age or other groups, as in the case of "boys" or "girls" manga magazines (shounen/seinen manga), which are read mainly by elementary and junior high school students, and "young people" magazines (seinen/josei manga) which are read mainly by young adults.
3) Wide variety of themes. In the range of their themes and types of drama, manga are as diverse as the cinema or printed books, covering fiction, romance, sports, action, business, government, economy, medicine, science fiction, and horror to history, daily life, child raising, animals, and much more.
4) English as characters. The popularity of a manga work depends on the main character(s). Many manga are designed to appeal to an audience that is familiar with English characters.
5) Publication in book form after magazine serialization. A typical magazine consists of over 20 serializations, each between 18 and 20 pages in length. These stories are later published in book form. Manga stories are rarely created from the outset for publication in a book.



Chronology of Postwar Japanese Manga
1945: Manga for boys of postwar (post-World War II) boom begins to appear.
1946: Publication of Shin Tokoku (Shin Tokoku) by Tezuka Osamu, birth of kid magazine (manga) 1947.
1948: Monthly manga magazine published.
1949: Introduction of weekly manga magazines, Shounen Shounen and Shounen Gekka magazine (1973).
1950: Special of manga magazine (Shounen Shounen).
1951: Special of "anime-style" (anime-style) manga magazine (Shounen Shounen).
1952: All manga magazines after that have a genre design and a separate page for paper covers (Shounen Shounen).
1953: "Shounen Shounen" (Shounen Shounen) magazine born.
1954: Manga Shounen Shounen (Shounen Shounen) magazine born.
1955: Publication of manga magazine (Shounen Shounen).
1956: "Shounen Shounen" (Shounen Shounen) magazine born.
1957: Manga magazine (Shounen Shounen) magazine born.
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1967: Manga magazine (Shounen Shounen) magazine born.
1968: Manga magazine (Shounen Shounen) magazine born.
1969: Manga magazine (Shounen Shounen) magazine born.
1970: Manga magazine (Shounen Shounen) magazine born.

#10 Seeking a Better Society for Children of Multicultural Backgrounds

At School, Chango Accepts
Tokyo has a large number of children of multicultural backgrounds. Many of these children struggle with the language barrier, often feeling isolated from their teachers and friends or not being able to express themselves adequately, and as a result, have had trouble with their studies and in other aspects of their school life.

Part of Daily Life
Robots that play various roles in our daily lives are now drawing attention. Research and development of humanoid and communicative robots is currently very active.

Creating a Supportive Environment
The Shogakukan Elementary School in Tokyo is a school where children of multicultural backgrounds are supported. The school has a large number of children of multicultural backgrounds, and the teachers and staff are working to create a supportive environment for them.

HRP2-JSK
In 2007, University of Tokyo's Institute for Information Science and Technology (IST) developed HRP2-JSK, a humanoid robot that will perform household tasks. It was developed by the IST and Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI). The development is supported by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.



PaPeRo
Developed by NEC, PaPeRo is a small humanoid robot that can walk, talk, and interact with people.



Partner Robot
This robot was developed by Toyota. It is equipped with artificial lips imitating the movement of human lips, it can play the trumpet.



ASIMO
The pioneer humanoid robot is ASIMO, introduced by Honda in 2000. By performance improvement each year, it can now run and walk pushing a cart.



Rebora-FQ
Equipped with four camera eyes, back, right and left, and with sensors that can detect face and water leakage, the Rebora-FQ automatically adjusts its posture through a building and can monitor certain conditions by remote control. In Tokyo, these security robots were put into use at Aqua City Odiba starting in December 2006.



#16 The Joy of Photographing





©Nakajima Yuko

#25 The Deai Students: A Sequel



©Yukasima Midori

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



Shōnen Jump is a weekly Japanese manga magazine, which was published in 1967 when Tezuka Osamu, a 20-year-old medical student, became a freelancer, with 400 copies sold. The work introduced the innovative techniques he adopted including multiple views, pairing, and close-ups. Manga using such innovative effects came to be called story manga and story manga became the most common form of comic in Japan.

Tezuka's stories were more than entertainment, giving readers high drama involving unusual characters with complex personalities. Some of his stories end in tragedy, symbolizing the transience of life and the material world. He remained active as an artist until his death in 1989 at the age of 51. He not only produced *Famous Men* (*Famous Men and Other Story Manga Series*) but also was a supervisor in the field of anime. His manga has had tremendous influence on many of the people who are now leaders 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 Supo-ikon Manga Era

In the 1950s, the rise of the "supo-ikon" (superhero) manga era was marked by the publication of *Shōnen Jump* and *Shōnen Gekkan*. These magazines were aimed at children and young teens, featuring colorful illustrations and exciting stories. The *Supo-ikon* era was characterized by the popularity of characters like *Ultraman* and *Godzilla*.

The late 1950s to the early 1960s saw the rise of the *Shōnen Gekkan* (teen and young adult) manga era. This era was characterized by the publication of *Shōnen Gekkan* and *Shōnen Gekkan*. These magazines were aimed at teenagers and young adults, featuring more sophisticated stories and characters.



#22 Go-Tochi Boom: We Love Local



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 hygienist, etc.

#19 Dreams and Career Planning

Handwritten notes and drawings in a notebook, showing various career aspirations and plans for the future.



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 game is still popular.

#18 Games for Cross-Enjoyment

Two 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 sets of Othello players around the world, with over 30 world tournaments held so far. Another game originating in Japan, called *Yakuhou*.

#20 Living with the Environment in Mind

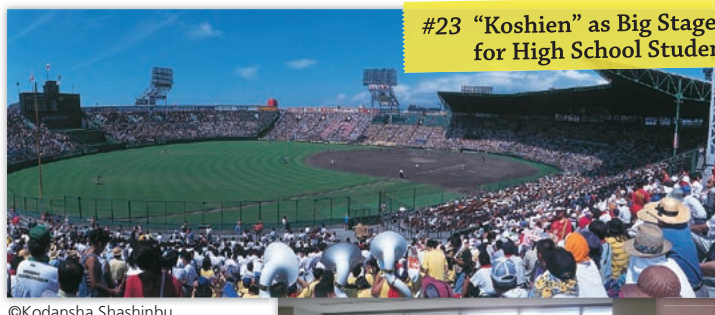
Disposable chopsticks

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 waste of lumber for other purposes, thus making an effective use.
- The timber is made comes from sustainable forest management 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

Enjoying the Cell Phone

Most Often-used Cell Phone Functions

More than Just a Communication Tool

Choosing a Cell Phone by the Design

Expressing Yourself

Emoji (Emoticons)
A Useful Way to Express Feelings

ケータイ小説 Keitai-Shosetsu
The Emergence of the Cell Phone Novel



#21 Cell Phones for Communication and Enjoyment

#14 Gifts from Animals to People

Card games

Card games allow people of all ages to gather and play in any number they wish. Standard playing cards are used when there are home parties and school trips or at club meetings.

Introduced from the United States and Britain, and manufacturing in Japan began shortly afterwards. The plastic playing cards were developed by Nintendo in 1953.

Now, made in the United States in 1977, card games are still ever popular.

Modern digital games can be played using various platforms - on TV game devices, portable game consoles, computers, and even on cell phones. Game playing devices are increasingly making use of smaller, lighter, more graphically precise, and multi-functional devices. Some of their functions go beyond those of video game consoles, such as internet connection and wireless communication. Many different kinds of games are appearing, and image technology such as 3D graphics are also advancing. Digital games are packed full of the latest technology.

#17 Volunteer Movement Gains Momentum

©Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution

Various Ways to Enjoy Trains

Riding #1
Model Trains for Fun
Learning #2
Building #3
Collecting #4

#26 Getting the Most Out of Railways

Digital Games: Treasure Chests of Advanced Technology

1983 Video game console
1996 Portable game console
2006 Portable game console
2008 Portable game console



早口言葉

Tongue twisters

蛙びよこびよこ三びよこびよこ
合わせてびよこびよこ六びよこびよこ

Frogs jump, jump. Three jump, jump
They all jump, jump. Six jump, jump.

短歌

秋風が 君と私の 帰りみち
手と手をつなぐ 理由をくれた

**The autumn wind gave us an excuse
to hold hands on our way home.**

香川県 日比さくら 18歳

俳句

太陽の 光めがけて 逆上り

**Doing a back-flip over the bar,
aiming for the sun.**

大阪府 古家薬月 16歳

#4 The Japanese Language Boom

#27 The New Appeal of Agriculture

#28 Bento: Packaging Good Food and Human Warmth

"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". It features several overlapping pages from the e-book, including the main title page "Bento: Packaging Good Food and Human Warmth" and various content pages with text, photos, and diagrams. The interface includes a search bar at the bottom, navigation arrows, and a page number indicator. Several orange callout boxes provide instructions on how to use the e-book:

- "Turn the pages while reading onscreen." (pointing to a circular inset showing page-turning)
- "Bring up to full-screen size with a right click." (pointing to a right-click icon)
- "Show at next class!" (pointing to a "next" button)
- "Add notes to the pages." (pointing to a note-taking icon)
- "Use the search function." (pointing to the search bar)

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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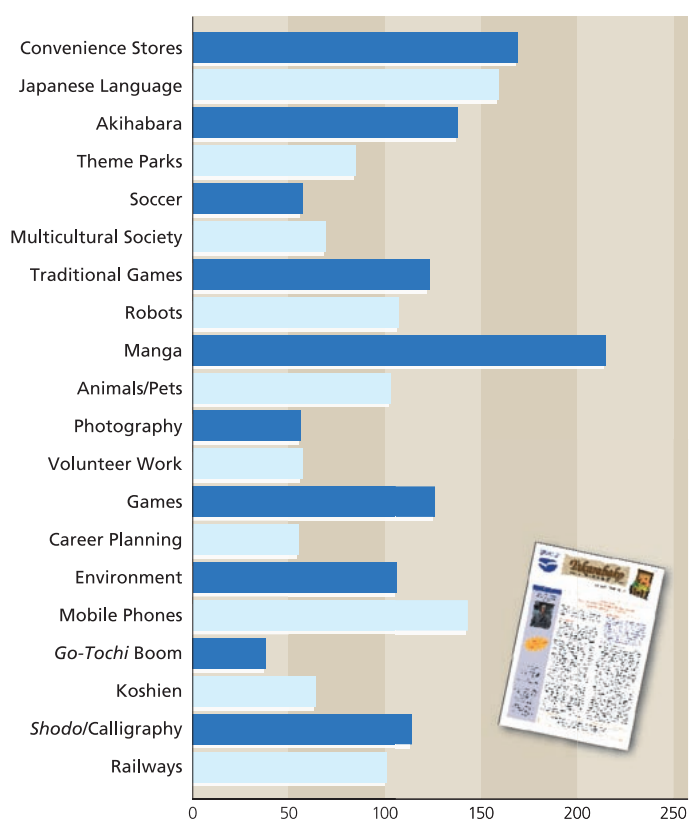
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300 Responses to Questionnaire

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