

Japanese Teachers' Association of NSW



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June 2010 Newsletter

Hi Everyone,

We hope that you are well and trust that you are looking forward to the end of an extremely busy term.

President's Message

JTAN の先生がたへ

The winter break is finally around the corner and I hope that all your assessment marking and report writing is going well.

A few weeks ago, it was reported that the latest research shows that there has been an alarming decline in the study of Asian languages in Australian schools. A study conducted by the Asia Education Foundation at Melbourne University, shows that between 2000 and 2008 the number of students studying one of the four-targeted Asian languages (Japanese, Indonesian, Chinese and Korean) was down from 24 per cent to 18.6 per cent. Japanese, once the pinup language, is waning seriously. My fingers are crossed that the Rudd Government's commitment of \$62.4 million over four years with the goal of doubling fluency in those languages at Year 12 level by 2020 prevails.

Meanwhile, we can also do something to promote Japanese. Many teachers run very successful Japanese Days or Undookai, host a group of Japanese students and organise annual school trips to Japan, hold incursions such as Karate demonstrations or Sushi classes, provide students with language immersion at the Tanken Centre, participate in many of Japan Foundation's creative competitions for students and even offer Japanese classes for parents after school. Most importantly, we must have the stories of these activities printed with photos in the school's newsletter!

On top of this, every semester I have been producing and publishing an additional departmental magazine with an AIS grant. It reports on all the language activities undertaken by students and a key article on the importance of language learning. They are distributed to the parents and students. YES, it all sounds like propaganda, but it is also about awareness and getting Japanese noticed within the school. There are so many little and BIG things we can do and it starts from at our very own schools.

Endeavour Language Teachers Fellowship applications for 2011 have now opened. I strongly recommend for all JTAN members to apply and experience this wonderful in-country experience. I was one of the past awardees two years ago. Not only was I treated with countless exquisite dining, sightseeing and study experiences but I was able to make an extensive Japanese teacher network with participants from other states, those whom I still keep in contact with and share ideas with. It's an opportunity you cannot miss. You can access more information from http://www.endeavour.deewr.gov.au/language_teachers_fellowships/

I wish all JTAN members HAPPY HOLIDAYS and see you all refreshed in Term 3.

Cathleen Jin
JTAN President

Listening Workshop

On 29th May, 17 teachers participated in a workshop focusing on creating global questions using past HSC Listening papers.

During the first session, everyone worked very hard listening to CDs and reading transcripts so they could create new questions for each text from past HSC papers. The second session focused on creating listening tasks from existing listening files.

During the sessions, participants were able to listen to the HSC audio files and collaboratively create questions.

JTAN would like to thank Teruko Sharif and Monica Wei for their expertise and assistance during these sessions. We would also like to sincerely thank the Sydney Japan Foundation and all the

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teachers who participated for their tireless efforts on the rainy Saturday afternoon.

The JTAN Committee would like to thank Naoko Henschke, for her efforts and sound organisation skills, which ensured the day was a success.

Year 12 Continuers Day

The annual Year 12 Continuers Day was held at NSBHS on Saturday 12th June and it was a great success. A total of 233 students from 41 schools attended the day. Students were tested in a similar format to the HSC Oral Examination. Students were given on-the-spot feedback about their performance and how they could improve for the HSC Oral Examination. Feedback indicated that the students found the day to be very worthwhile and felt more confident in tackling the sometimes frightening speaking examination.

JTAN would like to thank the participating teachers who gave up their Saturday and brought students to the Continuers Day, while others volunteered their expertise to help out even though they did not have any students. The day would not be successful without your generosity and we appreciate your assistance greatly.

The Committee would also like to thank Liz Sugimoto for her tireless and extensive organisation of the day, and thanks to her Year 10 students who gave up their Saturday to work hard all day. Without Liz's dedication the day would not have been as successful as it was. A HUGE thankyou from us all!

Year 12 Beginners Day

Once again we would like to thank members who have submitted their application forms and payment. We have developed programs that will ensure an invaluable experience for all participating students.

Planning for the day is nearly complete and teachers involved will continue to receive information regarding the day in due course.

Year 10 Day

Thank you to the members who have submitted their application forms and payment for the Year 10 Day. Applications have closed and we apologise that we will be unable to accept any further applications. Planning and organisation is well underway and with 16 schools and 200 students involved, it is sure to be an eventful and purposeful day.

JTAN is currently putting together an information pack for teachers, which will be emailed to participating teachers within the next couple of weeks. The pack will include registration, role descriptions, the program and any relevant information that will be required for the day.

JTAN Exams and Embargo Dates – **Please read carefully!!!**

All JTAN examinations have now been dispatched. Teachers who have purchased JTAN examinations would agree that the JTAN examination kits are of the highest quality, reflecting the aims and objectives of the relevant syllabus documents. JTAN would like to sincerely thank the Examination Directors, Teruko Sharif and Kyoko Kusumoto and their teams for their tireless effort in producing such wonderful examination papers.

Please note that JTAN holds the copyright of all JTAN examination kits, whether it is a hard or soft copy, word documents or sound files. Schools which have purchased the examination kits may freely alter the content to suit their internal examination specifications. The examination kits are only to be used by the purchasing schools. Please respect the copyright and refrain from making pirated copies for other schools or teachers.

Please be reminded that the Trial HSC Examination papers are **embargoed until 31st August** and the Preliminary Yearly Examination papers are **embargoed until 17th September**. It is of the utmost importance that the embargo rule is adhered to strictly so that the integrity of the exams can be maintained. Of course it is acceptable to discuss the examination papers with your students. However, please remember to **collect** the examination papers back after the discussion. Students are not allowed to keep the examination papers until **after** the embargo date.

JTAN does not sell its examination kits to coaching schools directly or via any third party. However, if teachers do not strictly adhere to the embargo dates, coaching schools may illegally obtain a copy of the examination from their students and so the confidentiality of the exams cannot be maintained. As you can imagine, one careless mistake can have a major disastrous impact on all schools that intend to use JTAN examination kits. **Please be vigilant!**

Website Resources

JTAN would like to thank those members who have uploaded some amazing resources to the Teaching and Assessment section of the JTAN website (www.jtan.org.au). Members are requested, due to technical difficulties, when uploading Word documents that the file extension used is .doc as opposed to .docx. If you have any questions regarding the above, please don't hesitate to contact JTAN at enquire@jtan.org.au.

Aaron McLuckie
JTAN Communications Officer