



JAPAN FOUNDATION

## Japanese Taster Sessions in 2013

If you would like to arrange a Japanese Taster Session at your school, please email [info.language@jpf.org.uk](mailto:info.language@jpf.org.uk) for more details.



Above: Photos from the Walthamstow School for Girls visit in December 2013

> **Walthamstow School for Girls, London** – The final JTS visit of 2013 was held in December at Walthamstow School for Girls as part of their enrichment day. Three volunteers went to the school to deliver the taster which started with a basic overview of Japan and then an introduction to the Japanese writing systems *hiragana*, *katakana* and *kanji*. The pupils then learned how to introduce themselves in Japanese, followed by the Japanese numbers 1-10. Next, they learned how to write their own names in Japanese, and finally the session concluded with a Q&A session. Ms Robinson, Gifted & Talented Coordinator, commented, *"The sessions were very well organised and delivered. The girls enjoyed them and learnt a lot."* Additionally, the pupils also gave feedback from the session. Some of their comments include:

*"I found the Japanese course truly inspiring. I found learning Japanese calligraphy a fantastic opportunity. I learnt the basics of Japanese culture, language and writing. I also learnt simple phrases such as hello, good morning and goodbye. I also found it really interesting that Japanese schools do not have cleaners. It is the children who have to clean their own school! Overall it was a fantastic experience and I thoroughly enjoyed it."* (Yasmin)

*"The Japanese Taster course was great fun and a unique experience. I learnt a lot about the culture of Japan and I was surprised that Japanese involves three different alphabets. If I could have this opportunity again, I would definitely apply for it. I thank the people who took the time to teach us. I am really happy that I learnt how to write my name in Japanese. I was also amazed to hear about the lifestyle of the school children. I would really appreciate it if I could have an opportunity like this again."* (Umairah )

> **NEW! Westminster Kingsway College, London** – After a student at the college who wanted to learn Japanese found out about the JTS Programme, the school arranged for two JTS volunteers to give a Japanese taster session to their student Language Society in November. The taster began with basic Japanese greetings, followed by giving self-introductions in Japanese. The volunteers then taught the numbers 1-10 in Japanese, followed by an introduction to basic Japanese grammar and script. Ms Grundle, Lecturer of English Literature at the college, said the session was "...extremely well paced session with content pitched at an appropriate level for beginners." The college is now interested in exploring the possibility of starting a Japanese club.

> **Alderwasley Hall School, Derbyshire** – For the first time, a JTS volunteer visited a school exclusively for pupils with Special Education Needs; Alderwasley Hall School in Derbyshire, which specialises in pupils Asperger's Syndrome and speech and language difficulties. The school held a Language Day for the pupils in November, and invited JTS to take part so the pupils could experience Japanese language. The taster began with an introduction to Japanese greetings, followed by the numbers 1-10 in Japanese. The volunteer then taught the names of colours in Japanese, which the pupils then practiced by saying the colours of different fruit. Finally, the volunteer introduced the Japanese writing system of hiragana. Mr Mewett, the Assistant Head, commented, *"Excellent volunteer, instant rapport with staff and students. Well planned and delivered sessions. Very impressed."* The school has now expressed an interest in starting extra-curricular Japanese lessons.

> **Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw, Torfaen** – This school organised a sixth formers' Languages Day in November for a number of secondary schools in South Wales, which was held in Cardiff. As part of the Languages Day, one JTS volunteer came to hold a Japanese taster, which she held in Welsh! The students first learned Japanese greetings, and then how to introduce themselves in Japanese. This was followed by an introduction to the Japanese writing system, including *hiragana*, *katakana* and *kanji*. Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw commented, *"Students really enjoyed the experience."*

> **Abbeymead Primary School, Gloucestershire** – One volunteer visited the school in September in order to give the pupils the chance to experience another culture. The taster began with an introduction to Japan, followed by greetings in Japanese which were practiced to the tune of *"Row, row, row your boat."* The volunteer then introduced the numbers 1-10 in Japanese, followed by an overview of the Japanese writing system. Finally, the class sang *"Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes"* in Japanese. The school has since expressed an interest in starting a Japanese club.

> **Holy Trinity and St John's Church of England Primary School, Margate, Kent** – One volunteer visited the school in September for the European Day of Languages and held Japanese language tasters for Key Stage 2 pupils. First, the volunteer introduced himself in Japanese, and then held a Japan quiz. The pupils then received their own pre-printed Japanese name badges which they coloured in themselves, and learned some basic Japanese phrases including *"douzo"* (here you are) and *"doumo"* (thanks). Finally, all the pupils learned the numbers 1-10 in Japanese. Mrs Suttle, MFL Co-ordinator at the school, commented, *"It was a very pleasant day. [The volunteer] was excellent. He had prepared his lessons very thoroughly and interacted with the children in a positive way. They loved it and still remember what they learnt. He was a natural though apparently he had not done that before. The children loved having their name written in Japanese and learning basic language. It was a very enjoyable day for children and adults alike."*

> **Langley Grammar School, Berkshire** – Four volunteers visited this school in September as part of the school's celebration of the European Day of Languages but with a special emphasis on languages with different writing systems. The volunteers' tasters included an introduction to how Japanese writing works (pupils had a chance to try writing it themselves), comparing Japanese grammar with English grammar, basic Japanese self-introductions and singing Japanese songs. Miss Torres, Lead Practitioner in MFL, said that *"students loved it,"* and the school are now interested in possibly introducing Japanese classes for their Year 10.

> **Boxgrove Primary School, London** – Two volunteers held a Japanese taster at this school in September as part of the European Day of Languages. The taster began with an overview of Japan, which was followed by learning the Japanese numbers 1-10. After then teaching greetings and self-introductions in Japanese (including bowing!), the volunteers then played a game of bingo with the pupils in Japanese to see if they remembered their number vocabulary – the prize for which was an origami *kabuto* (samurai helmet). Finally, the volunteers taught the pupils how to fold their own *kabuto*. Ms White, MFL Co-ordinator at the school, commented, *"It was fantastic and created a real buzz in the school! Well organised, well led and very engaging for all children from Year 1 - Year 6."* The school is now interested in setting up a Japanese Club.

> **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Northfleet, Kent** – Two volunteers held Japanese tasters at this school in September as part of a Languages Day for Key Stage 2. After introducing themselves, the volunteers held a quiz about Japan, and then introduced the numbers 1-10 in Japanese. They then played a ball game to introduce the Japanese words *dozo* ("here you are") and *domo* ("thanks"). Finally, all the pupils received certificates. Mrs Phatty, MFL co-ordinator at the school, commented, *"Very well prepared and delivered sessions...The children have thoroughly enjoyed the Japanese Taster sessions and were extremely motivated and inspired. They have eagerly participated in the games and activities planned by the volunteers (learning vocabulary and numbers, exploring facts about Japan, etc). The volunteers were very approachable and enthusiastic and this has made the learning fun!!!"*

> **Parkroyal Community School, Cheshire** – This school had two Japanese tasters – one in July, and a second one in September. The first volunteer who came in July held a Japan Quiz, taught Japanese greetings and self introductions (with bowing), and introduced Japanese writing. The second volunteer, who held a taster for a different group of pupils in September, held a Japan Quiz, taught Japanese numbers using a bingo game to practice, demonstrated Japanese self-introductions, introduced Japanese festivals and finally sang the *"Sakura (Cherry Blossom) Song"* with the pupils. Mrs Murphy, a Languages teacher at the school, described both tasters as *"brilliant."*

> **Green Dragon Primary School, London** – One volunteer held Japanese tasters at this school in July for Year 6. It was quite a busy day, including an introduction to Japan, an overview of the Japanese writing system, self-introductions and greetings in Japanese, learning how to bow and making origami dinosaurs and *kabuto* (samurai helmets)! Miss Pinkney, the International Coordinator at Green Dragon Primary School, commented, *"[The volunteer] was extremely efficient in her planning, forwarding me ideas. She produced an incredible [lesson] which engaged children throughout."* Miss Pinkney has also expressed an interest in starting a Japanese Club at the school.

> **Wayfield Primary School, Kent** – One volunteer visited this school in July as part of the school's "Japan Day." The taster began with an introduction to Japan, followed by teaching greetings in Japanese, as well as other basic expressions such as "arigato" (thank you). The taster concluded with an origami session, in which the pupils either made dogs or *kabuto* (samurai helmets). Mrs Nadesan, the Deputy Head Teacher, was *"very satisfied"* with the visit.

> **Swakeleys School for Girls, London** – One volunteer held a taster at this school in July as an enrichment activity for selected students. The volunteer began by teaching Japanese greetings, and then held a presentation about Japan. She then demonstrated the correct way to use chopsticks and Japanese table manners. This was followed by an introduction to Japanese writing. Finally, the pupils made origami dogs. The school described the taster as *"Very valuable and enjoyable"* and they are now interested in the possibility of offering regular Japanese classes.

> **Sandgate Primary School, Kent** – Three volunteers held Japanese tasters as part of the school's International Day of Languages in July. The tasters included Japan's geography and culture, Japanese greetings and Japanese numbers. The school was "*very satisfied*" with the tasters and has now applied for funding to start a Japanese club.

> **Wood End Academy, London** – Four volunteers visited this primary school in July to hold Japanese taster sessions for Years 4-6. The volunteers first taught the pupils greetings in Japanese, followed by the numbers 1-10. They then introduced the three different writing systems (hiragana, katakana and kanji) of Japanese. Finally, the volunteers ended their taster with a presentation about the country of Japan. The school commented that the volunteers were "*very well prepared, friendly and professional!*" The school has also expressed an interest in starting a Japanese club.

> **The Canterbury Primary School, Kent** – One volunteer held a Japanese taster at this school in July and held Japanese tasters for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 for a special Language Day. The tasters included an introduction to Japan, basic Japanese greetings, origami and Japanese numbers. The Year 2 taster included a game in which pupils made their own origami *kabuto* (samurai helmets) which they put on, and then played "Jan ken po" (rock, paper, scissors). The losers had to remove their *kabuto* until one winner remained. The visit had excellent feedback from the teachers:

- Mr Hawkins, the Language Co-ordinator at the school who organised the taster, said the volunteer "*...was very prompt in all correspondence and contacted us as soon as the taster date was agreed.*"
- The reception teacher said the volunteer "*...was very good, aware of the capabilities of our children and made the origami fun for the children.*"
- The Year 1 and 2 teachers said that the children were fascinated by the volunteer and are, several weeks on "*still greeting each other in Japanese!*"

The Canterbury Primary School is now interested in setting up a Japanese club.

> **Bishopshault School, London** – One volunteer held a taster at this school in June as an enrichment activity for top set languages students. The taster began with a DVD introduction to Japanese culture, followed by a lesson in Japanese greetings and self-introductions. They were then introduced to the Japanese kanji writing system using "karuta" (a Japanese card game similar to Snap), and were able to memorise 36 different characters! Finally, the students had the opportunity to try on *yukata* (traditional Japanese dress). Miss Martin, French teacher at the school said the students "*really enjoyed the lesson.*"

> **Downlands Community School, West Sussex** – After attending Japan Foundation's [Head Start](#) event, this school had a Japanese taster in June as part of their MFL day, and to explore the possibility of running a long-term Japanese club. After introducing Japanese greetings, the volunteer introduced the concept of the *kanji* writing system with some simple examples. She then taught the pupils how to say "I like [X]" in Japanese, and finally the pupils had a go at Japanese writing for themselves. The school commented, "*[The volunteer] was really helpful and well organised and very easy to deal with.*"

> **Meopham Community Academy, Kent** – One volunteer held Japanese tasters at this school in June for their Year 6 pupils about to go to secondary school. The volunteer first showed a presentation of Japan, and then taught basic Japanese greetings and phrases. She then taught the numbers 1 to 10 in Japanese. The pupils then all made origami hearts together. Finally, the volunteer showed the pupils how to bow in the correct Japanese manner. The Year 6 teacher, Ms Higham, commented, "*It was excellent – [the volunteer] was very calm, and the session had a good balance of information and interactivity. The information shared was interesting and relevant to the children. The children really enjoyed it!*"

> **Plumstead Manor School, London** – One volunteer held Japanese tasters at this school in June as a reward for able linguists, and to explore non-European languages. The volunteer first introduced herself in Japanese, and then introduced Japan's geography, food, industries and schools. She then taught the pupils how to introduce themselves in Japanese. Finally, the pupils sang *"Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"* (*kira kira boshi*) all together in Japanese. Miss Sullivan, MFL teacher at the school, commented, *"It was such an amazing experience and the girls were really inspired."* Plumstead Manor School is now interested in holding regular extra-curricular Japanese lessons.

> **Invicta Primary School, London** – Two volunteers held tasters at this school in June as part of their Japanese Day. The tasters included singing *"Atama, Kata, Hiza, Ashi"* ("Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" in Japanese), *kamishibai* (a traditional Japanese form of storytelling using pictures), a presentation on Japanese culture, and teaching the numbers 1-10 in Japanese. Mrs Chatterley, MFL co-ordinator at the school, said that the experience was *"fantastic."*

> **Alderwood Primary School, London** – Two volunteers held Japanese tasters at this school in in June. The volunteer teaching the younger year groups (Years 1 – 3) began by introducing Japanese geography, food and culture (including bowing), and then tried origami to make dogs, cats and finger puppets. This was followed by teaching Japanese greetings, which the pupils practiced by using the finger puppets they had made to bow when saying the greetings. For Year 3, the pupils learned the Japanese numbers 1-10 and sang the Japanese song *Denden-mushi* ("snail"). The volunteer teaching the older year groups (Years 5-6) first went over Japanese class rules (such as calling the teacher "sensei" and bowing), and then invited discussion about Japan. This was followed by teaching Japanese greetings, self-introductions and numbers in Japanese, which the pupils practiced with a game of bingo. The volunteer then introduced animals in Japanese, explaining the noises they make in Japanese. Finally, the volunteer taught the pupils how to say thank you in Japanese and gave the most enthusiastic students badges with their names written on in Japanese *katakana* characters. After the visit, the school commented that the volunteers *"...were well prepared and professional. They kept our children engaged and matched the activities well."* Due to the success of the taster, the school is now planning on starting a Japanese club.

> **Thomas More Catholic School, Surrey** – Two volunteers held Japanese tasters at this school in May as part of their international week. The volunteers began by showing a presentation of Japan, and then taught basic Japanese greetings and useful phrases. They then showed the pupils how to bow in the Japanese way, and finished the session by demonstrating how to use chopsticks. Mrs Tucay, Head of MFL at the school, was *"very satisfied"* with the visit.

> **The Manchester Health Academy, Manchester** – Two volunteers held Japanese tasters at this school in May. The volunteers first introduced themselves in Japanese and English, and then introduced Japan using photos. They then taught the pupils the numbers 1-10 in Japanese, with actions to help them remember, and played a game of bingo to practice the numbers they had learnt. Finally, the volunteers demonstrated how to introduce oneself in Japanese. Mrs Mitrea, the MFL Subject Leader at the school, commented that the taster was *"Brilliant and very well organised... we all found the sessions extremely engaging and interesting, all the resources were brilliant ,we just wish we had more time to do this!"*

> **Blair Peach Primary School, London** – Four volunteers visited this school in March as part of the school's Japanese Week. After giving an overview of Japan, the volunteers taught Japanese greeting, followed by Japanese numbers. They practiced their new vocabulary by playing games, including *karuta* (a simple Japanese card game), bingo and "fruit basket" (another Japanese game similar to musical chairs). Mr Baker, the MFL co-ordinator at the school, commented, *"The volunteers were all very prepared, flexible and enthusiastic."* The visit was reported in the school's newsletter [here](#), and photos from the taster can be viewed on the school's website [here](#).

> **Woodridge Primary School, London** – Two volunteers held Japanese tasters at this school in March. The volunteers first showed where Japan is located on a map, and then introduced Japanese greetings. This was followed by sessions in origami, in which the students made dogs and frogs. The volunteers then introduced the Japanese numbers 1-10, which they practiced through the game “Fruit Basket.” Finally, the class held a “Janken” (rock-paper-scissors) tournament. The school commented, *“The children really enjoyed the session, even though some of them already knew some Japanese (and some children are Japanese)! They found it interactive and interesting. It was good for our non-Japanese speakers to get a taste of the language as they have many Japanese friends.”*

> **Milton Court Primary School & Kemsley Primary School, Kent** – Two volunteers held Japanese tasters at these joined schools in March as part of a Cultural Week focusing on Japan. After introducing basic facts about Japan, including its geography and food, the volunteer taught the pupils Japanese greetings. This was followed by an introduction to the Japanese numbers 1-10. Finally, the volunteer taught the first few characters of the Japanese *hiragana* writing system. Mrs Child, the class teacher who booked the taster, commented, *“The sessions were very informative and inspiring for our pupils and pitched at just the right level for the age groups.”* Kemsley Primary School reported on the visit on their school newsletter [here](#).

> **Western Church of England Primary School, Hampshire** – As part of the school’s Japan Day and introduction to their topic of Japan, two volunteers held a Japanese taster session there in February. The session began with an introduction to Japan and quiz on life at a Japanese school. The pupils were then given their names written in *katakana* characters and copied them on to stickers to make name badges. The pupils then made some origami *kabuto* (samurai helmets) and stuck their names to them, and then played “*janken*” (rock, paper, scissors). After this, the volunteers introduced Japanese phonetics using the “*Hiragana Rap*,” and taught the pupils the numbers 1-10 in Japanese. They also learned basic Japanese greetings, self-introductions in Japanese and even directions in Japanese by singing and dancing. Mr Griffiths, the Year 4 class teacher, commented, *“The day was very fun and the children learnt a lot. The children were very engaged and enjoyed the activities that were done.”*

> **Drayton Manor High School, London** – This school wanted to open an extra-curricular Japanese language club, and requested a volunteer to hold a Japanese language taster in February in order to get the club up and running. The session began with an introduction to Japan, followed by a session on using chopsticks correctly to pick up beans. The volunteer then introduced Japanese writing, including *hiragana*, *katakana* and *kanji*, and the students learnt to write different Japanese words using the three Japanese alphabets. The volunteer has now begun to teach regular lunchtime Japanese classes at the school.

> **Lenham Primary School, Kent** – This school invited one of our volunteers to hold a Japanese taster in February as part of their Day of Culture. The session began with an overview of Japan and a Q&A session, followed by an introduction to Japanese phonetics using the “*Hiragana Rap*.” The volunteer then taught the pupils the numbers 1-10 in Japanese, followed by Japanese greetings sung to the tune of “Frere Jacques.” The older pupils finally had the opportunity to learn how to make an origami *kabuto* (samurai helmet). Mrs Green, the MFL co-ordinator at the school, said, *“[The volunteer] was brilliant. The sessions were well prepared, informative and fun. The children really enjoyed their time with her and didn't want her to go.”* The visit was also mentioned in the school newsletter [here](#). The school are now interested in offering Japanese as an after school club.

> **Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College for Girls, London** – Two volunteers held a Japanese language taster at this school in January as part of a Languages Day. The volunteers first explained some basic rules for a Japanese class, such as bowing, replying with “*hai*” instead of “yes,” and calling the teacher “*sensei*.” They then asked the students how much they already knew about Japan, and introduced basic Japanese greetings and phrases for self-introductions. This was followed by an introduction to Japanese numbers, which the students practiced by playing a Bingo game. The students then combined all their newly-acquired language knowledge to introduce themselves and say their age in Japanese. Finally, the students said “thank you” (*arigatou*) in Japanese, and were given their names written in *katakana* characters. Ms Alvarez, Head of Spanish at Norbury Manor, commented, “*Excellent activities. The students enjoyed all topics. Students want to explore and learn more about this language.*” The school is now looking into arranging an after-school Japanese club for Gifted and Talented students.

> **Virgo Fidelis Preparatory School, London** – After hearing about the successful Japanese language taster organised by JTS at Our Lady Of the Rosary School, this school invited two of our volunteers to offer tasters in January. After presenting an overview of Japan at an assembly for all students, the volunteers taught the pupils in Years 1 and 2 the Japanese numbers 1-10 and practised them with a racing game. The volunteers then introduced directions in Japanese, with the help of a catchy song, and finally made origami *kabuto* (samurai helmets). For Years 4 and 6, the volunteers also introduced the basic Japanese writing system. Mrs Bastos, French Teacher, said that the taster was “*Absolutely outstanding. Thoroughly enjoyed by all pupils and staff alike. The volunteers were so professional, warm, friendly and positive in all that they did at our school.*”

> **Barnhill Community High School, Middlesex** – This school invited two of our volunteers to offer Japanese taster sessions to the Year 7 pupils in January. The session began with an introduction to Japan’s geography and culture, followed by language lessons covering Japanese greetings, self-introductions and numbers. Finally, as revision, the students played simple games to practice their newly-acquired Japanese. Miss Summers, MFL Deputy Curriculum Leader, said it was a “*Fantastic experience and the students really enjoyed learning about the culture as well as the language.*” This school is now very interested in starting extra-curricular Japanese lessons. The visit was featured on the school newsletter [here](#), in which one of the students said, “*I enjoyed this session as I learnt some fascinating facts about Japan.*”

> **Bromstone Primary School, Kent** – Two volunteers visited this school in January as part of the school’s Japan Term. After an introduction to Japan’s geography, sports and culture, the volunteers taught the basic sounds of Japanese, followed by the numbers 1-10. The visit finished with an origami-making session. The school commented, “*After a whole term of using Japan as a main topic around the school, the Japanese free taster was a perfect way to reinforce and augment learning about Japanese language in our school.*” The visit was also mentioned on the school’s website [here](#). The school is now making plans to start its own Japanese lessons, taught by one of the volunteers.

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