



JAPAN FOUNDATION

Japanese Taster Sessions in 2014

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

NEW! The Heathland School, Hounslow

Four volunteers visited this school as part of their celebrations for the European Day of Languages. The activities each volunteer taught varied, including quizzes about Japan, counting in Japanese, how to use chopsticks, saying Japanese greetings with bowing, and an introduction to Japanese writing. The school commented that *"The pupils all seemed to enjoy themselves."*

NEW! St Michael's Church of England Junior School, Bath

The Headteacher at St Michael's C of E Junior School, Mr Goucher, has travelled to Japan on many occasions and is keen to share his enthusiasm of the language and culture with the pupils at this school. The school therefore invited two JTS volunteers to come in September and deliver Japanese language tasters, with a view to the school introducing Japanese classes in the future. The taster began with an introduction to Japan, followed by teaching Japanese body parts using the song *"Atama, Kata, Hiza, Ashi"* (Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes)! This was followed by introducing the numbers 1-10 in Japanese. After this, the pupils cut out autumn leaf shapes and wrote their names on them. Finally, the pupils played a game of *"Fruit Basket"* (similar to Musical Chairs) using vocabulary for Japanese autumn fruit. Mr Goucher said the taster *"...was absolutely fantastic and our children and staff loved it! The children loved the sessions and fully engaged in the follow up activities."*

NEW! Bootham Junior School, York

Two volunteers visited this school in September as part of their International Week. Their taster session started with a self-introduction and an overview of key phrases in Japanese. They then introduced the Japanese numbers 1-10, followed by colours in Japanese. Finally, they introduced the Japanese writing systems of *hiragana* and *katakana*. The Headteacher Mrs Todd said that the volunteers were *"Excellent, very professional and well organised."* The school has since expressed an interest in starting Japanese classes.

The Charter School, Southwark

One volunteer visited the Charter School in July. The taster began with a presentation about Japan, followed by teaching Japanese greetings with bowing. The volunteer then taught the pupils numbers in Japanese (using a game of Bingo to help), and then how to introduce themselves in Japanese. Finally, the volunteer introduced the Japanese *"Star Festival"* of *Tanabata*, and pupils had the opportunity to make their own *Tanabata* wishes. The school commented, *"[The volunteer] planned and delivered the taster exceptionally well. The students really enjoyed the activity."*

Kingshott School, Hertfordshire

Two volunteers visited this school in July as part of their International Day for Years 3 and 4. The taster began with an introductory presentation about Japan, followed by teaching Japanese greetings. The volunteers then introduced Japanese numbers. After this, the pupils combined the new words they had learned for greetings and numbers to make a self-introduction in Japanese, including their age. Finally, the pupils all had a chance to write their name in Japanese. The school commented that *"Volunteers were well prepared and the children really enjoyed having them in school...The smiles and comments from the children after the sessions said it all."*

Escomb Primary School, Durham

In June, two volunteers visited this school, which has a link with a school in Japan. The volunteers first did a quiz to test the pupils' knowledge of Japan, and then introduced Japanese greetings. They followed this by telling the pupils about the Japanese "Star Festival" of *Tanabata*, and pupils had the opportunity to make their own *Tanabata* wishes. Finally, the pupils learned how to write their own names in Japanese. Mrs Gill, the Headteacher, commented, "*The session was enjoyed thoroughly by our children. [The volunteers] were well-prepared and engaged the children.*" The school has since asked Japan Foundation for assistance with setting up a Japanese class.

Repton Manor Primary School, Kent

One volunteer held a Japanese taster at this school in June as part of the school's Cultural Day. The taster began with an introduction to Japan, followed by learning greetings in Japanese. The volunteer then taught the pupils the numbers 1-10 in Japanese, and finally taught them how to make their own origami samurai helmets! Mrs Hills, the HLTA who organised the taster, said "*The children had a fab day.*" The school has since expressed an interest in introducing extra-curricular Japanese.

Whyteleafe Primary School, Surrey

Having booked a successful JTS taster at her previous school, one of the class teachers at Whyteleafe Primary School decided to book another taster in June 2014. Two volunteers came and held a taster for Year 6, and introduced Japanese greetings, Japanese numbers, *origami*, body parts in Japanese, and animal sounds in Japanese. The teacher who booked the taster commented, "*It did go very well with the children and they all really enjoyed the activities.*"

Leysland High School, Leicestershire

One volunteer held a Japanese taster at this school in May. The taster began with a presentation about Japan, followed by learning basic Japanese greetings. The volunteer then asked each student's name in Japanese and gave them a name card when they responded correctly. The students were then introduced to the numbers 1-10 in Japanese, and finally learned some Japanese *kanji* characters. Mrs Hewson, the Head of MFL at the school, commented, "*It was excellent...[The volunteer] was lovely and the pupils really enjoyed the session and learnt a lot. She was also very warm and engaging with the pupils and happy to chat to them afterwards.*"

Richmond Park Academy, Richmond upon Thames



A JTS volunteer visited this school in May to deliver Japanese taster sessions for Years 7 and 8 pupils. The volunteer first taught the pupils Japanese greetings, accompanied with bowing, followed by a presentation on school life in Japan. Finally, she demonstrated the three Japanese writing systems of *hiragana*, *katakana* and *kanji*. Mrs Carbro, Head of MFL at the school, commented, "*Very enjoyable, well prepared. Pupils really enjoyed the writing and speaking elements of the session.*" The school is now interested in starting a Japanese club and is looking into [funding](#) from the Japan Foundation

for this. The visit was featured on the school's [website](#), including feedback from one of the Year 8 pupils who attended the taster: "Our Japanese class was excellent! Our teacher taught us what it was like to be a student in Japan. She also taught us how to speak Japanese and also write characters of the Japanese alphabets. Our teacher was really nice and answered all our questions. We learned a lot about Japan and what the school life is like. All of our class loved it and all got involved."

Midhurst Rother College, West Sussex

This school held a special enrichment day for able linguists from local primary schools in March, and invited two of our JTS volunteers to take part and hold Japanese taster sessions. The tasters included the numbers 1-10 in Japanese, basic Japanese greetings and origami. Mrs Hathaway, Administrator for Partnerships and Transition at Midhurst Rother College, said it was "an absolutely wonderful enjoyable day. The volunteers were fantastic and the children learnt so much." The school has expressed an interest in launching Japanese classes, and registered for our March [Head Start](#) event for schools interested in starting Japanese.

Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School, Northamptonshire

This school is interested in starting Japanese language sessions, and booked a JTS taster with us in order to get a better idea about what Japanese lessons are like. Two volunteers held the taster in March, which began with the traditional Japanese way of starting lessons with all pupils bowing to the volunteers. The volunteers then introduced Japanese greetings which they sung to the tune of "Frere Jacques" to help them learn, followed by teaching about Japanese writing and presenting children with name badges written in Japanese katakana characters. The volunteers then introduced Japanese numbers, from 1 all the way up to 99! This was followed by a Japan Quiz, and finally an elected "class captain" closed the lesson in the Japanese way, leading the pupils in the bowing. The school commented that the taster provided "...provided a balance of language learning and information about school life and the country."

New City Primary School, Newham

Three volunteers held Japanese tasters at this school in March in support of the school's spring topic on Japan. The tasters began with a general overview of Japan, followed by an introduction to Japanese greetings and the numbers 1-10 in Japanese. The pupils then learned about Japanese writing and even had a go at writing in Japanese themselves! The school commented that the tasters were "very well presented to the point, and at the right level." The school has expressed an interest in introducing Japanese classes.

Hillview School for Girls, Kent

Two volunteers visited this school in February to offer "mini tasters" in Japanese in support of the school's annual Language Conference, also regularly attended by members of other institutions including the Institut Français, Goethe Institute and the Department for Education. In each 10-minute taster, the volunteers first introduced the Japanese *hiragana* writing system, and then played a matching game with the students in which they had to match the right picture card with the right word written in Japanese. After just 10 minutes, many students found that they had



Japanese language taster served up for school kids

PUPILS at Edwinstree Middle School recently had the chance to spend a day learning Japanese.

Two volunteers working with The Japan Foundation came for a day to deliver the Japan Taster for Schools (JTS) programme at the Buntingford school.

JTS volunteers carry out school visits across the UK to introduce students at any level to the Japanese language, often as part of an international or Japanese day.

Headteacher Julie Michael said: "They gave every child a lesson in Japanese much to the pupils' delight."

"The pupils were excited about the day as they had already been involved in the autumn term in making 500 paper cranes to send out to the Children's

Peace Memorial in Hiroshima.

"The visitors were impressed by the pupils' knowledge and questions which related to Hiroshima and spirituality."

One of the main purposes of JTS is to give schools who do not teach Japanese the opportunity to find out what it is like to learn the language and to provide them with further information should they wish to start offering Japanese.

The Japan Foundation London works to deepen knowledge about Japan and encourage mutual understanding between the UK and Japan through programmes in arts and culture, Japanese language education and Japanese studies.

For more information visit www.jpf.org.uk.

grasped the basics of reading Japanese well! Mrs Troletti-Harlow, the Language Conference Coordinator, said the tasters were *“very engaging and extremely interesting both on a linguistic and cultural point of view.”*

Edwinstree Church of England Middle School, Hertfordshire

Two volunteers visited this school in January. The taster began with a warm-up game of *“Jan Ken Pon”* (Rock, Paper, Scissors), followed by teaching the usual daily greetings used in a Japanese school (including bowing). Pupils then learned how to introduce themselves in Japanese, followed by the numbers 1-10 in Japanese. The taster closed in the Japanese way, with the elected *“class captain”* telling the pupils when to bow and say *“arigatou gozaimasu”* (thank you). Mrs Michael, the Head Teacher, said, *“It was a wonderful and inspirational day.”* The school is now very interested in starting extra-curricular Japanese lessons, and the Head Teacher also booked a place on our [Head Start](#) event for schools looking to introduce Japanese classes. The visit was reported in the local Hertfordshire Mercury (*see left*).

Harwell Primary School, Oxfordshire

After attending the Japan Foundation’s Basic Japanese Language & Culture Course for Teachers in October 2013, Mrs Shorter, the MFL Coordinator at Harwell Primary School, decided to launch a Japanese club at the school in February 2014, and to celebrate this they organised a Japan Day in 2014. As part of the Japan Day, four JTS volunteers held Japanese language tasters, which introduced a variety of language aspects including the Japanese writing systems, self-introductions and the numbers 1-10. Mrs Shorter said the tasters were *“Fun and engaging for both pupils and teachers!”* The school is now looking to introduce Japanese language into the curriculum from September 2014.

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