

Japanese 02
Building Survival Skills in Japanese
Amherst College

Course Instructor

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Course Description

This course is a continuation of Japanese 01. The course will emphasize active learning by each student in the class by means of the materials in the course website and individualized or small group discussions with the instructor. Small groups based on the students' proficiency levels will be formed, so that instruction accords with the needs of each group. By the end of this course, students are expected to be familiar with most basic Japanese structures, to have acquired a substantial vocabulary, and to have gained sufficient speaking, listening, reading, and writing proficiency levels, which will enable the students to survive using Japanese in Japan. As for literacy, a few hundred new characters (*Kanji*) will be added by reading and writing longer passages. Two group meetings and two small group practice sessions per week are normally required throughout the semester. Prerequisite is the completion of Japanese 01 at Amherst College or its equivalent.

Required books

The Japanese Stage-Step Course (Wako Tawa, 2008)

1. *Grammar Book*;
2. *The Step Guide Book (Stage One)*;
3. *Writing Practice Book*

Students can purchase the above textbook at the department (Webster 110). The material cost will be charged to your account. If you prefer to pay cash, please indicate your preference to us as soon as possible.

Course Objectives

At Amherst, it takes three semesters for most students to master the following:

1. most of the essential structures of Japanese, including complex structures;
2. several hundred Kanji for writing and an additional few hundred for reading;
3. being able to engage in different kinds of conversations (some practical and some abstract) comfortably in Japanese;
4. being able to read different kinds of materials independently with the aid of dictionaries and instructors.
5. being able to write cohesive paragraphs using good structures in a culturally appropriate manner;

Course Organization

Monday	Either (1) Written quiz, or (2) Kanji/katakana quiz and Homework assignment will be scheduled.
Tuesday	The class meets in Webster 101. New material will be introduced. Before coming to the class, students are expected to read thoroughly the material to be covered in class. We do not expect the students to have learned the new vocabulary for this class.
Wednesday	Small group practice sessions will be held in Webster 115. The material introduced on the previous day, Tuesday, will be practiced. Before coming to this class, students are expected to have reviewed the Tuesday material and have learned the new vocabulary.
Thursday	The class meets in Webster 101. New material will be introduced. Before coming to the class, students are expected to read thoroughly the material to be covered in class. We do not expect the students to have learned the new vocabulary for this class.
Friday	Small group practice sessions will be held in Webster 115. The material introduced on the previous day, Thursday, will be practiced. Before coming to this class, students are expected to have reviewed the Thursday material and have learned the new vocabulary.

1. Division of Large classes and Small practice sessions:

The Japanese courses numbered 01 through 06 (sometimes even in Japanese 11-12) have large classes and small practice sessions. There is a good reason for us to have the two different classes. In the large classes, the students learn new material, which they learn how to use in the small practice sessions.

In Japanese 01 and 02, the use of some English in the large classes has proved to be more efficient than trying to do everything in Japanese because certain new concepts must be clarified, and some grammar or other questions must be answered efficiently. The use of English even in large classes, however, will be reduced as the class advances each semester.

In practice sessions, however, there is really no reason for the students and the teacher to be using English, even in Japanese 01 and 02, because this is where the students should be immersed in the language, and, in fact, this is the only place where they can be immersed.

2. What to bring to the class:

Please know the function of each book of this textbook series:

Grammar Book: This is the grammar book that you should study before coming to class. This book should also be used to review. There is no need for you to bring this book to class. In fact, you are not allowed to use this book nor the notes you made during class.

The Step Guide Book: This is essentially a workbook that will guide you in learning the material introduced in the *Grammar Book*. **You must bring this book to class** because each class will be carried out using this book.

Writing Practice Book: This is a practice book for writing Japanese scripts. No need to bring this book to class, unless otherwise specified in the Daily Schedule.

3. Practice session time (Wednesday and Friday):

For the first week, please sign up for one of the following sessions. We will then make a permanent session for everyone. Once we make the permanent schedule for the practice sessions, all students must stay in the same sessions.

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|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| (1) 9:00 – 9:40 | (2) 9:50 – 10:30 | (3) 10:40 – 11:20 | (4) 11:30 – 12:10 |
| (5) 1:10 – 1:50 | (6) 2:00 – 2:40 | (7) 2:50 – 3:30 | |

4. Things to remember in practice sessions:

- (1) **The students are required to study the material BEFORE coming to each practice session so that the practice sessions will move smoothly and meaningfully.**
- (2) **Come to every practice session.** This is probably the most important way to participate in class and learn.
- (3) **No English is allowed as soon as you enter your practice session.** Japanese should be used among the students in the room as well as with the teacher. Imagine the situation where you are among people who speak no English in Japan. You do have to speak Japanese to communicate. Your teacher or an English-speaking person will not be able to accompany you everywhere you go in Japan.
- (4) Please avoid any grammar questions. If you must ask, wait until the session is over. When you have other questions (such as a meaning of a certain word), ask in Japanese.
- (5) **Do not be afraid to make mistakes.** We will **not** take any points off for mistakes in the practice sessions. It is natural to make more mistakes when you speak more.
- (6) Do not take it personally when corrected. **Being corrected is one of the best ways to learn to speak.** In fact, you must get used to being corrected all the time.

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule will be posted in our CMS course site. You will find all assignment due dates and quiz dates in the daily schedule, and so **it is the student's responsibility to know these dates.**

Grade Distribution

Class attendance and participation (all four days)	10%
Practice sessions performance	10%
Homework Assignments (quantity/quality)	10%
4 Written Quizzes	40% (10% each)
2 Oral Quizzes (Mid-term and Final)	10% (5% each)
Final Written Examination	15%
Kanji/Katakana Quizzes	5%

Policies

Being successful in a Japanese language class requires meeting deadlines for frequent assignments and preparing thoroughly for quizzes and classes. We understand, however, that keeping up with frequent requirements for a Japanese class may be difficult at times. We have therefore made the following policies to have a little more flexibility.

1. Class Attendance and Participation

When you need to miss a class, please let us know beforehand. Your absence not only affects you but everyone in your class. We work hard to make each class as efficient and effective as possible and we may need to reorganize groups if someone will be absent. It is **not** possible to give a make-up class or practice session to a student who was absent. It is your responsibility to check the daily schedule and to know what you have missed. Please do not ask your instructor if you have missed anything important when you were absent because the answer is always YES. If you have **specific questions**, we would be happy to meet with you.

2. Practice Session Performance

Your performance in each practice session will be graded.

3. Homework Assignments

Each assignment will be graded ($\surd+$, \surd , $\surd-$).

For your final cumulative grade, the lowest grade of assignment **will be dropped**.

Correction: **When correction is required**, make corrections as much as you can and submit it on the **following Wednesday by 4 pm**. Please make sure to come to ask questions where you cannot correct yourself. **Second and complete** submission must be made **by Friday 4 pm**. Some points may be added to the original grade, and the number of points depends on the quality of corrections. An assignment with corrections unfinished or not-made by the deadline will be considered an incomplete work.

Late option: You are allowed to submit one homework assignment late per semester without any penalty. The late assignment must be completed by Wednesday of the same week or the time you and your instructor have agreed upon.

4. Four Written Quizzes

No make-up quiz will be given under any circumstances.

Correction: **When correction is required**, make corrections as much as you can and submit it on the **following Wednesday by 4 pm**. Please make sure to come to ask questions where you cannot correct yourself. **Second and complete** submission must be made **by Friday 4 pm**. Some points may be added to the original grade, and the number of points depends on the quality of corrections.

Late option: You are allowed to take one written quiz late per semester without any penalty. The late quiz must be completed by Wednesday of the same week or the time you and your instructor have agreed upon.

5. Two Oral Quizzes (mid-term and final)

No make-up quiz will be given under any circumstances.

No delays are allowed for the two oral quizzes.

6. Final Written Examination

No make-up quiz will be given under any circumstances.
No delays are allowed for the written final examination.

Self-scheduled examination during the final examination period, 5/11 (M)-5/15 (F), at a designated time and place by the college. Time and place will be announced in the Registrar's website later in the semester. It is the student's responsibility to check this information.

IMPORTANT: For five-college interchange students
Unfortunately, the academic calendar of the five-colleges is not uniform. It is our expectation, however, that all students who take Japanese at Amherst will follow the Amherst calendar, including the final examination schedule as well as the daily schedule. To be fair to other students, we will NOT be able to make special arrangements for the final examinations for the five-college students.

7. Kanji/Katakana Quizzes

No make-up quiz will be given under any circumstances.
For your final cumulative grade, the lowest grade of Kanji/Katakana quiz **will be dropped**.
Late option: You are allowed to take one Kanji/Katakana quiz late per semester without any penalty. The late quiz must be completed by Wednesday of the same week or the time you and your instructor have agreed upon.

8. Other Exceptions

Other exceptions can be made only with the class Dean's note or your doctor's note.

Recommendations

1. **Studying and practicing regularly is the single most important requirement for learning Japanese well for the course.** We have observed over and over again a strong correlation between steady study habits and performance in this class: we have **never** met a student who did well in this course without attending classes and evaluation sessions regularly. On the other hand, everyone who takes attendance seriously does well in the course.
2. **Use Japanese as much as possible in all sessions.**
3. **Communicate with your instructor regularly.** Everyone has problems in learning Japanese. Silence or absence from classes is not an effective way to communicate your issues. No problem is a small problem. We deal with every issue seriously, so please bring any issues you have to us as soon and as often as possible.

On-line Learning Tools

The following site gives you:

- (1) some useful learning tools for Japanese, as well as
- (2) instructions for setting up your computer so that you can use it to read and write in Japanese.

https://cms.amherst.edu/offices/it/teaching_research/resources/languages/japanese

Kanji (character) reference books – not required (optional)

The following books are not required, but for those who wish to have some reference books, especially on the characters, we can recommend any of the following three:

1. *Kanji and Kana: A Handbook and dictionary of the Japanese writing system.*

Wolfgang Hadamitzky and Mark Spahn. Charles E. Tuttle Company.

A concise Kanji dictionary, in which you can find all Joyo Kanji (the Kanji determined by the Japanese government to be necessary for all educated people to know – about 2000 Kanji) with necessary information, such as radicals, different readings, and example words for each Kanji. This is a very convenient first Kanji dictionary, but it is not a comprehensive one, so you will not be able to use it to look up words in Kanji compounds that you may need in intermediate and advanced Japanese classes. 394 pages total.

2. *A Guide to remembering Japanese characters.*

Kenneth G. Henshall. Tuttle Language Library.

This is a good source book for learning the origin of each character, or Kanji, which may help students of Japanese to learn Kanji more effectively. It even gives a mnemonic method for each character. A weakness of this book is that the model characters are not well drawn. It is very important for students to have well-formed models when practicing the characters. 673 pages total.

3. *Read Japanese Today.* Len Walsh. Charles E. Tuttle Company.

This is a very compact and fun book about Kanji characters. The book explains the system of Kanji, its origins, and provides readings of Kanji compounds. It is light reading and quite entertaining. But you should be aware that some of the Kanji that the author uses are old; knowing old Kanji could be helpful in some ways but is not necessary. 159 pages total.

☆ We have not ordered these books at any bookstores in town because we do not know how many students are interested in them. You can order any of them through any bookstore in town or via the internet. The basic information on characters are given in our textbooks and will be explained in class, but having a book that explains them in greater detail will certainly facilitate your learning of the characters.