

## BBC & Nihongo Centre create new KS3 digital resources



Learn Japanese with Tobu!

From this month, Key Stage 3 pupils studying Japanese in the UK could be swapping their textbooks for PCs and taking classes online through a DfEE-funded pilot project. The new resources are being developed by the BBC in partnership with the Nihongo Centre, after a successful bid for DfEE funding to create a UK-specific course for Japanese, to be delivered via Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

The pilot is designed to discover whether the availability of ICT-based resources could have a significant impact on the take-up of Japanese

in schools and go some way towards easing the MFL teacher shortage problem. The potential of ICT for motivating pupils, together with the flexibility it provides to teachers, will also be explored and it is hoped that the project will lead to the creation of innovative and stimulating resources, accessible both in and outside the classroom.

Steven Fawkes, Development Officer at the BBC, sees the KS3 Japanese project as providing an invaluable insight into what online materials, approaches and interactivity are most appropriate to the specific linguistic and motivational needs of language learners in this key age-group. Findings will be of interest to teachers of all languages in the context of the digital classroom of the future.

A comprehensive one year online course will be developed by a team of practising teachers, working with the BBC and the Nihongo Centre. The website content will be co-ordinated at the BBC by Claire Dugard, formerly of the Nihongo Centre. The target audience will be Year 7 pupils (age 11-12), starting Japanese for the first time. The pilot project will involve 20 schools throughout the UK and a number of independent learners. The cohort will include 5 schools without a specialist teacher of Japanese, where the teacher will learn alongside the class.

Mr Munehiro Waketa, Director General of The Japan Foundation in London, is delighted that the Nihongo Centre will be working in partnership with the BBC on the pilot project. "Teachers in the UK have long felt the lack of resources tailored to the needs of their pupils, and so it is particularly exciting to have the opportunity to develop a course specifically linked to the UK curriculum that can be accessed through the internet. I also look forward to the availability of multimedia resources which will enable younger pupils to study Japanese in an enjoyable and interactive way."

1月より英国では、キーステージ3の一部の生徒は教科書のかわりにパソコンを使って日本語の授業を受けられることになりました。このICT (Information and Communications Technology) を利用した新リソースは、英国における日本語教育のためにDfEEが出資する試行プロジェクトを受託し、BBCと日本語センターが提携して開発に当たります。

この試みは、ICTリソースの使用が、MFL教師不足の問題を解消できるか、また日本語を導入しようとする学校にインパクトを与えるものとなるか、そしてICTリソースが教師にとって活用しやすいものかどうか、またどれだけ生徒のやる気を起こさせるのか調査す

る予定です。授業時間外にもアクセスできる革新的リソースとなることが期待されます。

BBCのDevelopment officerのSteven Fawkesは、今回のプロジェクトはどんなICT教材がこのキーステージの外国語学習に効果的であるかを知る貴重な機会であり、今回の成果は今後の外国語教育のインターネット化において興味深いものであると考えています。

現役の日本語教師もプロジェクトに加わり、一年間で学習できる教材を開発していきます。教材の内容はBBCのClaire Dugard (元日本語センターアドバイザー) によってコーディネートされます。このプロジェクトの対象は初めて日本語を学習する7年生 (11~12

歳) です。試行プロジェクトではイギリス中から20の学校や個人の日本語学習者に参加していただきますが、その中には先生も全く初心者である5つの学校も含まれる予定です。

国際交流基金ロンドン事務所長の分田宗広は、日本語センターがBBCと提携してこの試行プロジェクトを行うことについて次のように述べています。「英国の日本語教師の皆様は教材不足に苦心されていたことと思います。この度、英国のカリキュラムに即してICTリソースを開発する機会を得たことは非常に喜ばしいことです。特に、11~12歳の生徒が楽しみながら対話形式で学習できるリソースをこれから開発していきたいと思っています。」



# Japan 2001 Special

Japan 2001 is now only a matter of months away – the series of activities and events will kick off in May with a Matsuri in Hyde Park to be followed by a number of similar festivals in different locations throughout the UK.

## Higher Education Seminar

On Saturday February 10, the Nihongo Centre will hold its first seminar for Japanese language teachers in Higher Education. The focus of the seminar is the Study Tour aspect of degree programmes and individual presentations will include how to prepare students for the Study Tour in Japan, by Dr Carol Hayes from the University of Durham and the importance of communication between universities in the UK and Japan when planning Year Abroad courses by Yoko Matsumoto-Sturt from the University of Edinburgh. Akiko Furukawa from Reading University will also talk on assessment issues in duals honours courses. After lunch, participants will have the opportunity to discuss their topic of choice further in group workshops. The seminar is open to all teachers of Japanese at HE level, although it is targeted in particular at institutions offering Single or Dual Honours in Japanese. For further details call Etsuko Yamada at the Nihongo Centre on 020 7838 9955 or send an email to: [etsuko@nihongocentre.org.uk](mailto:etsuko@nihongocentre.org.uk).

## Advancing with Japanese



Teachers compare notes at the joint Nihongo Centre/CILT national Conference *Advancing with Japanese*, held in London on October 12. The event explored strategies and skills for teaching Japanese at A and AS Level, drawing on current developments and best practice in the teaching of other modern foreign languages.

In the last issue of Mado, we incorrectly stated that Salvatorian College had received language college status, whereas in fact they are still in the process of applying for it. We apologise for any confusion this may have caused.

## Class Acts

### Success Stories from the UK Japanese classroom

One of the Nihongo Centre's major projects for Japan 2001, *Class Acts* will demonstrate the range of styles and approaches being used by teachers of Japanese in the UK. The aims of the project are to produce a video of teachers in action in the classroom to serve as both a training tool for student teachers, newly qualified teachers and even experienced teachers of Japanese and a showcase of best practice to inform head teachers and other decision makers, as well as educational organisations and language bodies of the current UK secondary Japanese scene.

The video will be 3 hours in length, divided into a series of focus areas such as target language use, effective drilling, teaching script, using ICT, teaching through games, teaching grammar, teaching translation, differentiation etc. Each area will be explored through a number of short clips backed up by teacher and pupil comment.

The *Class Acts* Team, led by Sally Lewis and consisting of Kitani Sensei as advisor and editor and Mineo Yamaguchi on the technical and production side, took to the road last November, working with teachers of Japanese around the country. Filming will continue until March and the aim is to launch the video at the sixth European Symposium on Japanese Language Education (organised by BATJ) at the University of Cambridge on September 8, 2001.



Lydia Morey and students being filmed at Colston Girls' School in Bristol



A joint programme of the Nihongo Centre and JFET, *Homestay UK* offers secondary school learners of Japanese the opportunity to spend a weekend with a Japanese family in Britain and provides a real context within which to practise their language skills. As we reported in the last issue of Mado, the pilot project proved extremely successful and we are currently recruiting Japanese host families and students interested in participating. *Homestay UK* will be launched in May and runs until February 2002. If your pupils haven't yet applied, call JFET to request forms which should be sent back to JFET as soon as possible, since the matching process has already begun. If you have any queries at all about the project or the application form itself, don't hesitate to call Kazuko Sato at JFET on the number on page 3.

If you've been looking for something to motivate your students, Japan 2001 could provide the perfect opportunity; it's the biggest celebration of Japan in the UK since the Japan Festival in 1991 and not only that but education, regionalisation and participation are at the heart of Japan 2001.

Although it's impossible to list all the events and projects being planned we have highlighted a few of the core education projects below. Contact the Japan Festival Education Trust (JFET) for further details of education programmes for Japan 2001 or see the official Japan 2001 website ([www.japan2001.org.uk](http://www.japan2001.org.uk)) for an events database which can be searched by date, type of event and region.



Shinjuku teenager tucks into lunch

## The Way We Are

A touring photographic exhibition consisting of 25 A1-size photo panels featuring portraits of 20 Japanese high school students as seen by their friends, *The Way We Are* offers insights into the everyday lives of Japanese teenagers and is accompanied by guidelines and support materials. It is hoped to provide an opportunity for British pupils to respond with their own photographs through a nationwide competition. *The Way We Are* will be available to tour to schools from May. Applications for free loan are invited for periods of two weeks from May 1 to March 31, 2002. Contact JFET for further details or fill in the flyer enclosed with this issue of Mado.

## Japan-UK Live

A structured internet exchange project for school-aged students in the UK and Japan, *Japan-UK Live* features a bilingual site with a rolling programme of themes including curriculum-linked materials, online discussions and 'ask the expert' sessions. Each of the five themes, which are currently being decided in consultation with teachers, will run for a period of five weeks. The first will start in May 2001, after an initial pilot stage. Being bilingual, *Japan-UK Live* will provide a rare opportunity for students in both countries to participate on equal terms. It is open to all schools who have registered as participants and can be accessed at each school's convenience. For further details, contact JFET.

## Teachers' Workshops on Japan

JFET will be holding a series of one-day Japanese studies workshops for teachers around the country both before and during Japan 2001, working closely with education advisory teams in authorities planning countrywide education projects. Forthcoming workshops will take place in Newbury on January 20, (Music, Primary and Geography), Wincanton from 17-18 March (Primary, Food Technology and Art); Stafford on 23 March (Geography) and there are also plans to run a cross-curricular day in Gloucester in April and a similar event in Cambridge. To find out more, contact JFET.

## Discovering Japan

An interactive exhibition of Japanese culture in themed sections (costume, design, gardens, food, a Shinto shrine, wrapping and writing), *Discovering Japan* will travel to venues throughout the country in 2001 and could provide a useful stimulus for classes learning Japanese. So far, confirmed bookings have been made for New Greenham Arts (February), Brighton Festival (May), British Museum (September - October), Poole Study Gallery (October - December). To find out more, contact JFET.



The JFET Team (l to r): Mark Smith, Michiyo Mitamura, Heidi Potter, Sam Flanders & Kazuko Sato

## JFET Contacts

JFET is co-ordinating the core education programmes for Japan 2001. Contact Mark Smith, Japan 2001 Education Co-ordinator ([mark@jfet.org.uk](mailto:mark@jfet.org.uk)) for details of any of the educational projects listed above or Kazuko Sato, Homestay UK Co-ordinator, ([hsuk@jfet.org.uk](mailto:hsuk@jfet.org.uk)), if you would like to apply for *Homestay UK*. For any general enquiries, contact JFET at Swire House, 59

Buckingham Gate, London, SW1E 6AJ; Tel: 020 7630 8696 Fax: 020 7931 8453; Email: [jfet@jfet.org.uk](mailto:jfet@jfet.org.uk); or visit the website at [www.jfet.org.uk](http://www.jfet.org.uk).

The JFET maintains a database of people wanting to be kept up to date with Japan 2001 education initiatives. If you would like to receive regular updates on Japan 2001, contact JFET and ask to be added to the mailing list.

## Matsuri

The Hyde Park Matsuri will take place on 19 and 20 May, featuring taiko drumming, food stalls, dancing, martial arts, music, games and workshops. Before and after the event in London, a series of Japanese festivals will be held at venues around the UK. Below is a list of events planned so far with provisional dates. If you are interested in linking an event you are planning to one of the regional matsuri, contact Ms Masako Iso at JICC, Embassy of Japan on 020 7465 6500.

**Bangor** (June 9), **Belfast** (August 31-September 1), **Birmingham** (August 19), **Brighton** (May 27), **Cambridge** (June 17), **Canterbury** (June 22-23 and October, or Feb/March 2002), **Cardiff** (June 9-10), **Cheltenham** (September 15-16), **Derby** (May, June, September or October), **Edinburgh** (June 2-3), **Exbury** (July 21-22), **Glasgow** (June 9-10), **Manchester** (May 25-27), **Newbury** (May 13), **Oxford** (June 9), **Peterborough** (June 23-July 8), **Portsmouth** (August 4 -5), **Reading** (October), **Stratford-upon-Avon** (June or July) **Washington** (July 7-8), **Whitehaven** (Summer) and **Winchester** (May 5).

## Science, Creativity and the young Mind

The Japan 2001 Workshop will involve 60 Japanese and British young people of sixth form age, working together in small groups in genuine science/engineering related projects which challenge their ingenuity and creativity. Student teams will be guided by specialists in a variety of fields and the workshop will culminate in students' public presentations of their work. For further details contact Dr Eric Albone, Director, Clifton Scientific Trust at [eric.albone@clifton-scientific.org](mailto:eric.albone@clifton-scientific.org) or on 0117 973 8536.



Teachers page



新年、あけましておめでとうございます。

2001年、最初の Teachers' page は、今までのトピックベースの活動から離れて、漢字の教え方について考えてみました。生徒の興味を引くような楽しい漢字の教え方、これはとても難しい問題です。今回は『漢字家族』という活動を紹介いたします。生徒といっしょにいろいろな漢字の共通部分を探しながら、漢字の『家族』を作ってみようという活動です。みなさんの教室を『漢字家族』のポスターできれいに飾ってみませんか？

What better time to start thinking about new strategies for teaching kanji than at the beginning of a new year! In this issue, I have outlined some ideas and approaches for teaching kanji through grouping which can often help students to memorise characters. One activity I have found particularly effective is *Kanji Families*, further details of which are given on the right. Use the examples on page 5 as a starting point to create your own *Kanji Families* which can be made into posters for the classroom.

# Kanji Families

かんじかぞく  
漢字家族

## Aims

Creating *Kanji Families* will help students to practise the following skills:

- Identifying key components in kanji, which provides a gateway to understanding the structure of kanji
- Grouping kanji by key components
- Recognising the shape of kanji
- Inferring the meanings of kanji from semantic components
- Using a dictionary (looking up kanji by number of strokes, radicals and readings)

## Level

This concept is applicable to all levels, although the reference chart inserted focuses on the kanji required from GCSE to A Level

## Ideas and Approaches for teaching Kanji through grouping

- Example A on page 5 shows a Kanji Family based on the radical 木 while B is an example of kanji grouped according to the 讠 family. These examples can be copied and used as a stimulus to encourage students to remember kanji in groups or enlarged to create posters for the classroom wall.
- You may like to move on to creating your own *Kanji Families* which could be

grouped by radical, as in the examples on page 5, or by another key component such as sound. You can even group kanji according to the number of strokes if you feel particularly creative! This activity will help to give your students a much clearer grasp of how kanji are constructed.

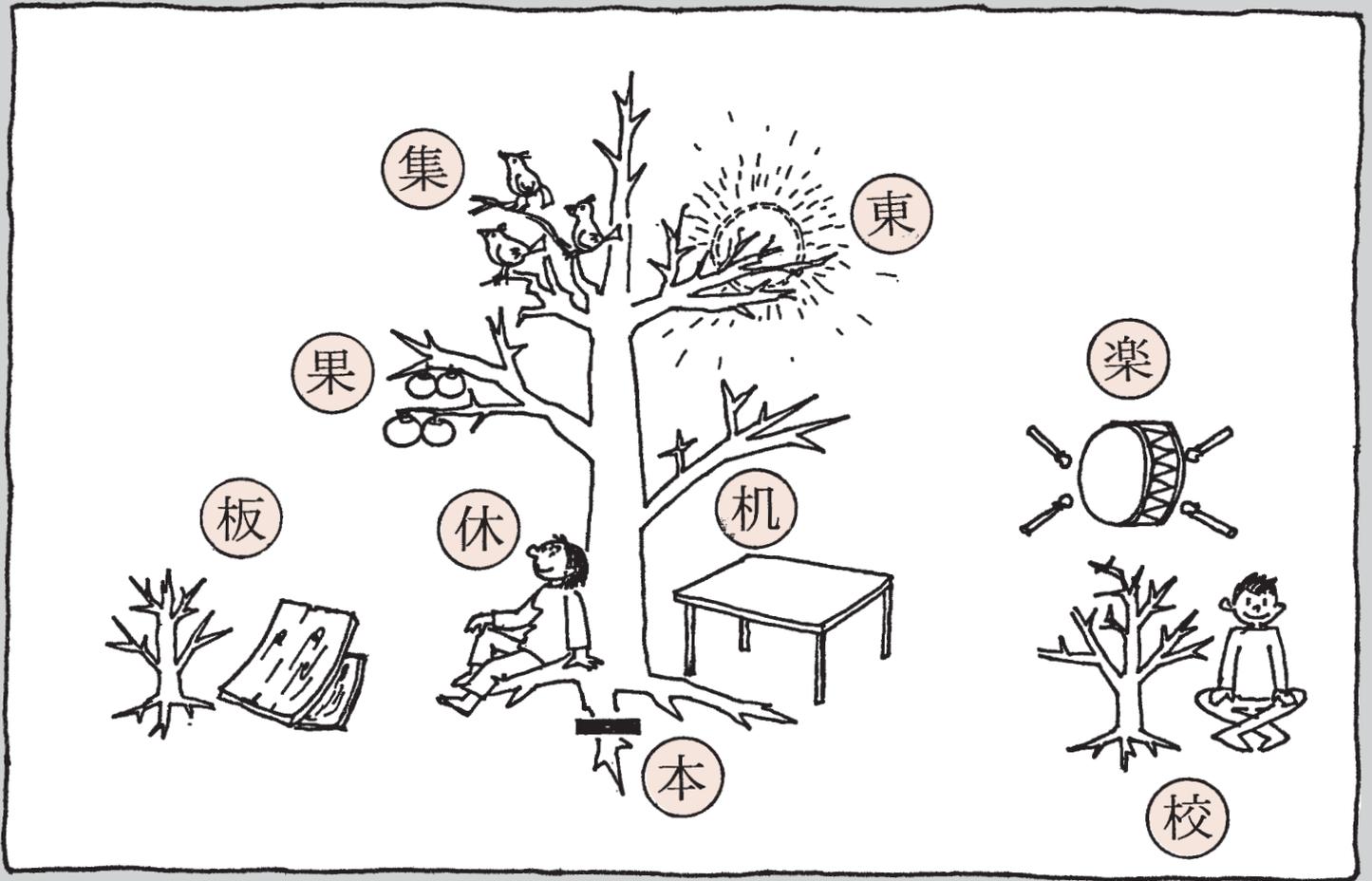
- Create a story or framework to help students memorise the kanji as you draw the basic outline of the picture and map each kanji onto the *Kanji Family*. Useful reference books include *A Guide to Remembering Japanese Characters* by Kenneth G Henshall and *Kanji isn't that hard!* – *Kanji Can be Mastered with the 24 Rules* by Yoshiaki Takebe. You don't have to finish filling in all the kanji together; students can add new characters to the family as they learn them.
- Encourage students to think up their own amusing stories and pictures to help them memorise groups of kanji. You don't need to follow radicals strictly when grouping kanji, since sometimes students can create more interesting stories with the 'wrong' key components. Note the example on page 5, where 休, which technically should belong to the 人 family, is added to the 木 family.

## Reference

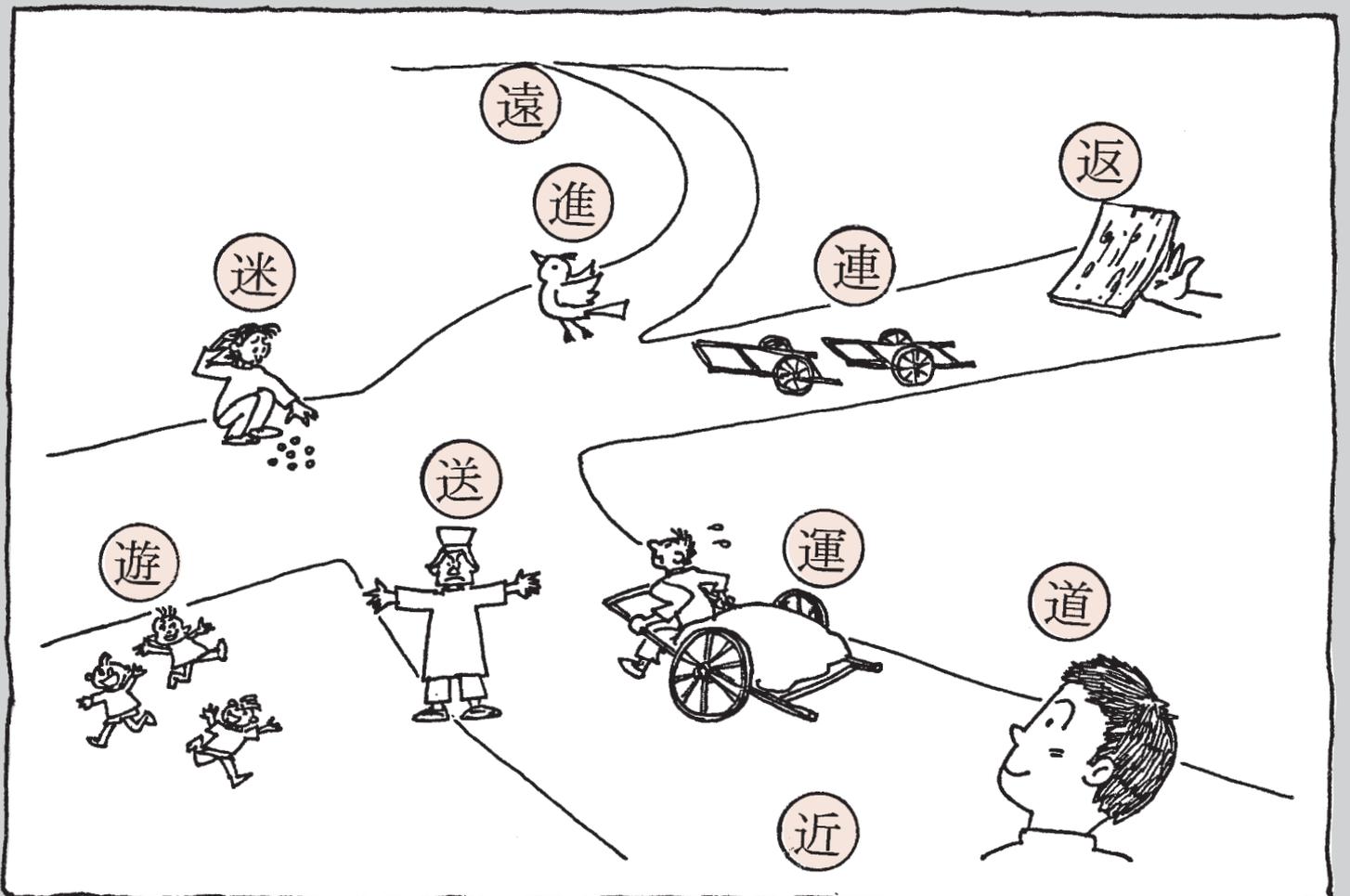
I have created a chart which groups kanji according to the 12 most common radicals, showing those which are required for GCSE, AS and A2 Level. This chart contains about a third of the 600 kanji your students will need to learn. If together, you can create *Kanji Families* for those 12 basic radicals, teaching and learning kanji will be much more fun and much less effort!



A



B





# Katharine Lady Berkeley's School

In 1996 Katharine Lady Berkeley's School (KLB) in Gloucestershire became a language college and moved from a three language to an eight language curriculum. Five new languages were added to the existing ones (French, German and Russian) and Japanese took its place alongside Spanish, Italian, Mandarin and Latin.

The position of Japanese at the school was reinforced in 2000, when a significant redesign of the curriculum made Japanese one of their "Big Four" languages. This curriculum expansion has been underpinned by the school's specialist staff: two British qualified teachers – Sarah Makins and Liz Parke – and an assistant teacher from Japan, Akiko Tanaka.

Currently, there are Japanese classes in all years except Year 13 with a total of approximately 210 pupils studying Japanese. In the new pattern, all pupils who enter the school will experience Japanese in Year 7. As Sarah Makins, Head of Japanese, notes: "This approach allows all pupils to make an informed decision about whether to continue

with Japanese, and gives us the chance to debunk myths about the alleged difficulty of the language."

In the Sixth Form the school offers the Certificate in Business Language Competence for those who have not had the chance to do Japanese lower down the school in addition to AS Level. For the last two years KLB has also started to take Japanese into its feeder primary schools. These lessons involve some language but also incorporate learning about Japan and Japanese culture.

KLB has established a strong link with Hikawa High School in Yamanashi, whose pupils it has hosted three times. KLB pupils have travelled to Yamanashi twice, once in 1998 and again last November. The school has found the link beneficial and motivating for everyone involved and it has given pupils a context in which to use their Japanese. In a wider context, the favourable impression made by the Japanese visitors in the school and town has helped to further the cause of good Anglo-Japanese relations.

Head Teacher Andrew Harris feels the introduction of Japanese has been



KLB students enjoying the Sayonara Party at Hikawa High School

particularly successful and notes that in the context of an increasing range of links with countries in the Far East, "those who have an understanding of the languages and cultures in that part of the world will be at the forefront of ensuring the positive relationships between our peoples that will be essential in the world wide connected community of the twenty first century. We are certain that our development of Japanese in the curriculum will do much to prepare our pupils for this global society of the future."

## JLC provides Japanese GCSE Focus at Language World

This issue we hear from Helen Gilhooly, who took over from Ross Warren as JLC Chair last September.

Following on from the success of last year's Japanese strand at the ALL Conference, the JLC will mark Japan 2001 with a Japanese programme at *Language World 2001*, which takes place in Manchester from 6 to 8 April. The main focus will be on the new Japanese GCSE. This is your big chance to hear the GCSE Examiner Mary Grace Browning outlining the revised specification, while Kitani Sensei presents a session on the new integrated speaking component and Lydia Morey provides ideas and activities for building your pupils' Japanese skills as they progress to GCSE. There will also be presentations on *Bridging the Language Gap through Culture* by Yukiko Isono, *Motivate your pupils with Manga!* by Naruki Enomoto and *Computer as Teacher – a case study in Japanese* by Claire Dugard and Steven Fawkes of the BBC. The JLC is offering a special reduced rate of £30 for one day (either Friday or Saturday) for teachers of Japanese, so don't miss out!

Another activity we are planning as part of Japan 2001 is a national Japanese Speech Contest, the finals of which will be held in London on December 10. Open to all non-native students of Japanese between the ages of 11 and 18, the competition will be divided into three categories: Years 7-9 (ages 11-14); Years 10-13 (ages 14-18) pre-GCSE; and Years 11-13 (ages 16-18) post-GCSE. Entrants will be asked to send a taped speech initially and finalists for each category will be invited to attend the contest. The JLC is currently seeking sponsorship for the event so that substantial prizes can be offered.

Finally, the JLC is supporting and contributing to the BATJ conference next September by organising a secondary school strand on the Saturday, to include an invited speaker from Australia and a case study of a language college teaching Japanese.

For further details about JLC, contact Helen Gilhooly, Chair, JLC, Fax: 01773 531969.

## BATJ Update

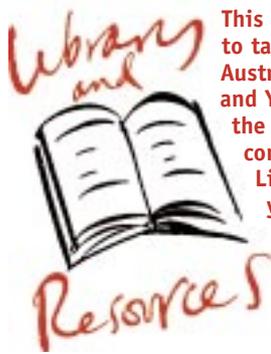
As part of its on-going programme of events designed to cater for the needs of teachers of Japanese in higher education, BATJ organised a seminar last November at which Professor Kawamura, currently visiting the University of Vienna, gave a presentation on *Using the Internet for Teaching Reading Skills*. The Association also held its first in-service training week at the University of Durham in September, at which teachers shared ideas and experience. The event proved extremely successful, and it is hoped to repeat it regularly.

The first few months of 2001 will see a rush of activity with a workshop on *Teaching Writing* at the University of Durham on January 20 and a Computer Workshop at the University of Edinburgh on February 24. In March, a talk by Professor Shimizu of Nihon Joshi Daigaku on the History of the Japanese Language is planned and we will also be holding seminars on *Japanese for Busy People* in Manchester on March 22 and in London on March 24.

After the success of our 3rd Annual BATJ conference in Birmingham last September, we are currently planning a Symposium on Japanese Language Education to be held in Cambridge from September 7 to 9. The event is being organised in conjunction with the Association of Japanese Language Teachers in Europe and the Japanese Language Committee of the Association for Learning Languages (ALL). All BATJ events are open to non-members, so we hope to see as many of you as possible there.

For further information about BATJ please contact Kazumi Tanaka at: Department of East Asia, SOAS, University of London, Thornhaugh Street, London WC1H 0XG. Fax: 020 7898 4233; E-mail: kt2@soas.ac.uk, or visit the BATJ website at: [www.essex.ac.uk/centres/japan/batj/](http://www.essex.ac.uk/centres/japan/batj/).





This term we have invited two guest reviewers to take a look at some recent textbooks from Australia. We are very grateful to Victoria Folkard and Yoshiko Ohta for taking the time to carry out the reviews, and we hope you find their comments useful. Both texts are available in the Library if you would like to take a look for yourselves. Don't forget that we can send you resources free of charge through our *Loan By Post* service. For general library enquiries, contact the Librarian, Françoise Simmons on 020 7836 9955 or send an email to [francoise@nihongocentre.org.uk](mailto:francoise@nihongocentre.org.uk).

## IMA!

Sue Burham, CIS Heinemann

Review by Victoria Folkard, Teacher of Japanese and Chinese, Tavistock College

(Currently available for review: textbook and workbook from level 1.)

At Tavistock College we tend to use *Kimono 1* for KS3 and *Kimono 2* for KS4 for the Japanese programme. Our Year 7 groups are mixed ability with subsequent years being set. Class size is usually around thirty pupils per class, with up to fourteen classes per year group, averaging two teaching hours per year group per week. It is in this context that I am comparing *Ima!* with our current key textbook *Kimono*.

*Kimono 1* and *Ima!* have many similarities: the introduction of hiragana without the use of romaji; the use of comic strips; and a similar range of grammar points and core topics including basic personal information, school life, free time, travel and transport. In fact, the author of *Ima!* was a consultant and co-author for the *Kimono* series.

Each of the seven chapters of the *Ima!* textbook is divided into ten sections including photo stories and comic strips; opportunities for pairwork and group spoken activities; reading practice and a reference section for grammar, vocabulary and kanji writing. Each chapter also includes realia such as posters and signs which in addition to reinforcing language points also enhance awareness of traditional and popular culture.

Picture stories set the scene and chapters are based on the activities of the Asano family, covering the four basic skill areas well. The textbook encourages listening and speaking skills with some reading, complemented by extra listening activities and reading and writing exercises in the workbook. *Ima! 1* delivers an introduction to hiragana, limited katakana and approximately 40 kanji. However, the amount of grammar and vocabulary covered in each chapter is quite advanced for an ab initio course and it would take a keen pace to complete *Ima!* before the end of KS3.

Like the *Kimono* series, *Ima!* assumes a knowledge of hiragana before starting the main body of the textbook. Whereas with *Kimono*, the class teacher has the option of introducing hiragana steadily whilst working through chapter one, this may not be an option with *Ima!* where students are required to understand hiragana fully before chapter

one. Class dynamics and teaching style would determine this as an advantage or disadvantage.

A brief summary of the strengths and weaknesses of *Ima!*:

### Strong points

- a full colour text with lots of realia-based exercises
- covers main National Curriculum topic areas in depth
- makes full use of hiragana, katakana (annotated with furigana) and kanji from the start
- lots of text to spur on and challenge high ability students
- priced cheaper than *Kimono* (*Kimono 1* textbook = £12.99; workbook £8.75; *Ima! 1* textbook = £10.99; workbook £5.50. Prices: Japan Centre Bookshop)

### Weak points

- requires full working knowledge of hiragana before starting chapter one, although the preface does contain an extensive introduction to hiragana
- when hiragana is introduced, it is by individual words, not in the gyo formation
- lots of text even in chapter one; not so useful for a mixed ability ab initio class
- introduces complex concepts very early on; for example family relationships and their various nomenclature; counters; mixing plain and -masu forms; little reinforcement or consolidation of complex issues.

Could it replace the *Kimono* series? It would depend on your average teaching class. Finances permitting, I would certainly have a few copies of *Ima!* in my mixed ability Year 7 classroom as a supplementary volume to *Kimono*.

Furthermore it is a superb series for challenging higher ability students and could be a possible main textbook for the upper sets in Years 8 and 9.



## WAKATTA!

David Jaffray & Masumi Sorrell  
Pascal Press

Review by Yoshiko Ohta,  
Teacher of Japanese at Wellington  
College

*Wakatta!* was published in Australia in 1999 and is designed for senior secondary level, which is the equivalent of A Level in the UK. It consists of a course book, two workbooks and seven audiotapes. The listening

material was not available for the purposes of this review. I have considered this text book from the point of view of how suitable it would be for teaching UK-based students preparing for AS and A2 level.

The course book is clearly presented and consists of twelve topic-based units, each containing a vocabulary section, kanji section, reading texts, language section, extended vocabulary section and *Naruhodo* Corner, which explains tricky Japanese words and expressions in English. The book introduces around 1600 words and expressions, with new vocabulary and kanji provided before the reading text in each unit, and a wider range of expressions introduced afterwards. Now that AS and A2 take a topic-based approach, this book will prove useful, in particular for AS Level, as seven of the nine language-based AS topics are covered.

*Wakatta!* is particularly good for teaching grammar and structures. The language section provides very clear explanations of grammar and syntax, with a range of example sentences, complete with English translations.

The course book contains a wide variety of reading texts including a good proportion of shorter passages such as diary entries and letters, which provide useful models for writing as well as good practice for reading. There are also essays, reports and speeches written in a style which seems particularly appropriate for the AS and A2. English translations are not provided, however, and since *Wakatta!* is designed for Australian students it is inevitable that some of the vocabulary and cultural references will not be relevant to British pupils.

*Wakatta!* is good for practising translation at A Level since the text starts with short sentences and builds up to medium length passages. Each unit of the course book has 25 to 30 pages of corresponding activities in the workbook including reading, writing and kanji practice, puzzles and exercises. The section on 'Reading and Responding' provides an effective exercise for continuous writing at AS level.

The major drawback of *Wakatta!* however is that since it is designed for the Australian syllabus, it introduces only 175 kanji – far fewer than the 600 which UK-based students need to learn for A2 Level. Therefore, while *Wakatta!* could be a very useful reference tool for both teachers and students, it may not answer all your AS and A2 Level needs, and supplementary material would have to be used, in particular to cover the required number of kanji.

Welcome to the New Year issue of *Mado* and the start of what promises to be a big year for Japan in the UK.

As you can see from our cover story, the Nihongo Centre is delighted to be working with the BBC on a ground-breaking DfEE-funded pilot to develop UK-specific web-based resources for KS3 Japanese and we will keep you updated on future developments. Our special focus for this issue is Japan 2001 - we hope that some of the projects outlined on pages 2 and 3 will inspire you to make the most of this exciting opportunity to raise the profile of Japan. For this issue's Teacher's Pages, Kitani Sensei shows you how to approach teaching kanji by grouping them into *Kanji Families*, while the Library and Resources page focuses on two recent text books from Australia. Many thanks to our guest reviewers and to Katharine Lady Berkeley's School, featured in *At the Chalkface*. Events this term include *Head Start* for heads of MFLs and our first Higher Education Seminar on February 10. Don't forget to put Language World 2001 in your diary - the JLC has organised an in-depth look at the new Japanese GCSE. We hope you enjoy this issue of *Mado* and look forward to your feedback.



「まど」新年号をお届けします。今年  
は英国において日本に関するイベント  
がたくさん予定され、非常に意義深い  
一年となることでしょう。巻頭にある  
ように、日本語センターではBBCと  
提携してDfEE出資のもとにキーステ  
ージ3の生徒を対象とした草分け的イ  
ンターネット教材開発プロジェクトを  
試行しています。皆様にはこの経過を  
これからも「まど」にてお伝えしてい  
きます。今回は2～3頁で「Japan  
2001」を特集しましたが、日本につい  
て関心を持ち積極的に参加していただ  
ければ嬉しく思います。Teacher's  
Pagesでは木谷先生による「漢字家族」  
を紹介し、Library & Resourcesではオ  
ーストラリアの最新テキスト(2冊)に  
焦点を当てましたが、いかがでしたか  
(教材紹介を担当して下さった先生  
方ありがとうございました)。At the  
Chalkfaceに参加して下さった  
Katharine Lady Berkeley's Schoolの  
皆様にもお礼を述べたいと思います。  
今月は外国語教育主任を対象にした  
Head Start、2月10日には初めての高等  
教育機関教師を対象としたセミナーを  
予定しています。JLCが新GCSEに焦点  
を当てたLanguage World 2001にもぜ  
ひご参加下さい。では、今年もどうぞ  
宜しくお願いします。皆様のご意見・  
ご感想をお待ちしています。

Dear Editor

I would like to let Mado readers know about The Japan Society's Japanese Conversation Group, the only monthly event in London to insist on Japanese as the common language. Meetings take place on the first Thursday of every month from 6.30pm onwards and combine lots of lively conversation with a full programme of fun events. Guests don't need to be members of The Japan Society, but your language level should be intermediate or above to really enjoy the evening. We tend to get a good balance of nationalities and the pub usually heaves with 50 to 60 people! If you would like to come and meet the crowd, we look forward to seeing you at The Mason's Arms, 38 Maddox Street, W1 (nearest tubes are Bond Street and Oxford Circus).

Madeleine Neave, c/o The Japan Society Secretariat (tel: 020 7636 3029; email: info@japansociety.org.uk)



## HEAD START

Wednesday 24 – Friday 26 January

An intensive introduction to Japanese and the issues associated with teaching it for Heads of Modern Foreign Languages and senior managers in secondary schools.

## HIGHER EDUCATION SEMINAR

Saturday 10 February

A one-day seminar focusing on the Study Tour (Year Abroad) for teachers of Japanese in Higher Education.

## JAPANESE SIXTH FORM WEEKEND

For 2001, the annual residential immersion course for sixth formers is being extended to include other age groups. Dates are as follows:

16 - 18 March Sixth Form Weekend  
18 - 20 March Year 7-9 Residential Course  
20 - 22 March Year 10 and 11

For further details, contact Lydia Morey on 029 20493997.

## JAPANESE GCSE FOCUS AT LANGUAGE WORLD 2001

6-8 April

JLC will run a special programme focusing on the new Japanese GCSE for this year's Language World Conference at the University of Manchester (see page 6). For further information or to book a place call ALL on 01788 546443.

## JAPANESE WEEKEND AT THE BRASSHOUSE CENTRE

28-29 April

An opportunity for students of all ages to immerse themselves in Japanese. For further information call the Brasshouse Centre on 0121 303 0114.

## SUMMER REFRESHER COURSE

Monday 16 – Friday 20 July

The Nihongo Centre's annual intensive immersion course for non-native teachers of Japanese. All levels.

*We regret that the Nihongo Centre course 'The New GCSE' scheduled for Thursday February 8 has been cancelled because of the special focus on the Japanese GCSE at Language World listed above.*

THE NIHONGO CENTRE NEWSLETTER  
Editor: Caroline Lewis Design: François Hall

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27 Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7LY  
Telephone: 020 7838 9955 Fax: 020 7838 9966  
Website: www.nihongocentre.org.uk

## Japanese Speech Contest at Eton

This speech competition, the finals of which will be held at Eton College, Windsor on Sunday March 4, is open to 15-18 year old students whose native language is not Japanese and who have not lived in Japan for more than 3 months. Candidates will be judged on a five-minute speech in Japanese on a topic of their choice, followed by a two-minute interview. The winner will receive an invitation to the JSA International Competition Language Study & Cultural Experience Programme in Japan. Students interested in participating should send a taped speech in Japanese with a short letter of recommendation from their Japanese teacher to the address below by January 19.

For further details, contact the JSA Committee Office, 1F Lawford House, Albert Place, Finchley, London N3 1QA. Tel: 07785 520 110 or visit the website (Japanese only) at [www.iware.ne.jp/jsa/](http://www.iware.ne.jp/jsa/).

日本語教師会 (Japanese Teachers' Network) では新しいメンバーを募っています。情報交換と親睦をかねたインフォーマルな集まりです。年に四回程度土曜日午後集まっています。次回会合予定: 1月27日(土) 14.30 ~ 17.30 大和ジャパンハウスにて。問い合わせはミラー浩子です。  
電話: 020 8856 1479