

## Japanese Teachers' Association of NSW



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### July 2010 Newsletter

Hi Everyone,

Welcome back to Term 3! We hope that you that you had a restful and enjoyable break. Term 3 is sure to be an extremely busy term with exams, marking and the often dreaded reporting time.

#### Year 10 Day

On the 22 July, JTAN held the Year 10 Japanese Day at the University of Sydney. 169 students participated on the day. They worked together in reading, writing and speaking activities, and ended the day by enjoying a Japanese drumming performance. The day was a great success, with students leaving the day with much greater enthusiasm and motivation to continue their Japanese studies.

We were fortunate enough to have Dr Olivier Ansart from the Department of Japanese Studies, University of Sydney, to open the day. He gave an interesting and informative talk on Japanese language learning at tertiary level and the opportunities our students have to use their language skills outside the school context. JTAN would like to sincerely thank Dr Ansart for giving up time out of his busy schedule to open the day.

JTAN would like to thank all teachers who assisted with the Year 10 Day. The day would not have been possible without your active participation and enthusiasm. We hope that this experience enhanced your students' learning experience as well as boosted their motivation to continue their Japanese studies. Once again, thank you all very much and we look forward to seeing you again next year!

The Committee would also like to thank the organising committee, Monica Wei and Liz Sugimoto, for their wonderful expertise in the organization of the day. Without their dedication, the day would not have as successful as it was. A HUGE thank you from all of us.

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## **Year 12 Beginners Day**

The Year 12 Beginners Day held at SHORE, North Sydney on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> July was an extremely successful event. All students who attended the day were tested in a similar format to the HSC Oral Examination. Students were given immediate feedback about their performance and how they could improve for the upcoming HSC Oral Examination. Feedback from students indicated that the day was worthwhile and students said they felt more confident in tackling the sometimes-frightening speaking examination.

Students also completed a session on listening skills. During this session students looked at strategies that will assist them in answering this section of the examination. This session also incorporated a section on interpreting questions correctly. This was done by revising and completing exercises using the Board of Studies' generic descriptive verbs.

In order to practise reading skills, students also completed a range of reading exercises that encouraged and enabled them to utilise higher order thinking skills.

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

JTAN would like to sincerely thank Tony Godden for his generous offer of his school as the location for the day. We are extremely grateful for your assistance and expertise in ensuring that the day was successful and students were able to have the best possible learning experience on the day.

## **Japanese Extension Results**

JTAN has received communication from the Office of the Board of Studies in response to our letter regarding the issue of the small percentage of students receiving Band E4 in the Japanese Extension HSC Examination, compared to other languages. The letter is attached to this newsletter. JTAN is currently replying to this letter and will keep members well informed of any further findings and communications.

## **2011 HSC Examination Committee – Expression of Interest**

The Office of the Board of Studies invites applications from teachers and academics with appropriate experience and qualifications who wish to take part in the development of the 2011 Higher School Certificate examinations and School Certificate tests.

Setting or assessing HSC examinations or SC tests is rewarding and challenging professional development. It is an opportunity to further develop understanding of assessment techniques and to enhance skills in setting examinations.

For more information, see the following link:  
<http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/jobs/#examcommittee>

## **Reminder of JTAN Examination Embargo Dates**

Please be reminded that the Trial HSC Examination papers are **embargoed until 31<sup>st</sup> August** and the Preliminary Yearly Examination papers are **embargoed until 17<sup>th</sup> 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.

## **Japan Foundation Student Contests and Resources**

Attached to this newsletter is an advertisement for some student contests and new resources that are available from the Japan Foundation. The contests include the Video Matsuri Contest see: [www.video-matsuri.jpf-sydney.net](http://www.video-matsuri.jpf-sydney.net) and the Art Speaks Japanese Comes Alive! Contest, see: [www.artalive.jpf-sydney.net](http://www.artalive.jpf-sydney.net). Members should be aware that the deadline for both of the above contests is **30<sup>th</sup> September 2010**.

## **2011 Teacher and Student Workshops**

The JTAN committee is currently planning for 2011 Teacher and Student workshops. It is essential that these workshops cater for our members and their students' needs. If you have any in-servicing needs or ideas for student or teacher workshops, please don't hesitate to send them to us at [enquire@jtan.org.au](mailto:enquire@jtan.org.au).

## **Expression of Interest – 2011 Committee Member**

JTAN is currently seeking expressions of interest from members who are interesting in becoming a 2011 JTAN Committee Member. JTAN encourages all members to consider becoming a committee member, as it is a most educational and rewarding experience. If you are interested in becoming a JTAN Committee Member in 2011, please send your expression of interest to [enquire@jtan.org.au](mailto:enquire@jtan.org.au).

## **The 41<sup>st</sup> Japanese Language Speech Contest**

This year Japanese Language Speech Contest will be held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September. The aim of the contest is to encourage learners who are studying Japanese to showcase their language skills in a challenging context. Contestants are required to register for the contest by filling out an application form. The closing date for applications is 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010. Attached to this email is some information that will assist in preparing students for the contest.

## **Japanese HSC Oral Examination Information from BOS**

Information from the Board of Studies website re Beginners and Continuers:

### **General information**

- For all examinations, examiners will not correct students or assist with sentence construction or vocabulary. Students should not ask the examiner to translate words or questions.
- Students should not identify themselves, their teachers or their schools to the examiner.
- Except for the examination paper in Extension courses, students may not bring any pictorial, print-based or hand-written materials into any examinations.

## **Beginners and Continuers**

In the oral examination, the examiner will ask the student questions about his or her personal world as it relates to the prescribed topics in the syllabus. Neither the number of questions nor the number of topics covered by the examination is predetermined. However, students can expect to be asked a range of questions sampling the content of the course. The questions the examiner asks may relate to a previous response made by the student or introduce a new topic.

Students should answer each question only with information related specifically to the question asked. Students are encouraged to respond in such a way that they demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of structures and vocabulary, but not through the inclusion of material irrelevant to the question asked. Students are strongly advised not to attempt to dominate the conversation with long, pre-learned monologues. In the interest of students, such monologues will be interrupted by the examiner at an appropriate moment. If students do not understand a question, they may ask for a question to be repeated, clarified or rephrased in the language being examined.

Once the allocated time for the examination has elapsed, students will be asked no further questions. Generally, the examiner will bring the examination to a close, but if necessary, students will be requested to draw their final response to a conclusion.

The duration of the Beginners oral examination is approximately 5 minutes and the duration of the Continuers is approximately 10 minutes.

## **Extension**

In the oral examination, students respond to one question from a choice of two printed on the examination paper. Students have 7 minutes' preparation time during which they may make brief notes in the space provided on the paper. Students may refer to these notes during the examination but must not read directly from them.

Students speak for approximately three minutes. After two minutes and thirty seconds the examiner will ring a warning bell. The examiner will ring a final bell at three minutes, at which time students must bring their response to a conclusion.

The Board of Studies has also released a short video that will assist students in preparing for the Oral Examination. This video can be found at:

<http://news.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/index.cfm/2010/7/22/New-advice-for-the-HSC-Oral-Languages-Examinations>

Enjoy the term and happy marking,

Aaron McLuckie  
JTAN Communications Officer