

Learning Targets: 9月28日～10月2日

- I can introduce the names ages of family and friends in order to exchange basic information with peers.
- I can use the Hiragana chart to read basic Japanese sentences in order to gather basic information about others.
- I can say dates when I see them AND I have notes in order to understand others' birthdays or other important holidays/events.

2. Education in Japan:

- a. Read the questions below.
- b. Find answers in the article below.
- c. Enter answers in English below each question (write on notebook paper first in case of computer crash).
- d. Then watch at least two of the videos linked.
- e. Respond to the prompts after the videos.

- ① How are Japanese elementary, junior high, and high school divided?
- ② How are Japanese grades numbered (for example, in America we have 1st-12th)?
- ③ When does the school year begin and end?
- ④ How do Japanese students get to school?
- ⑤ How do Middle School and High School students in Japan dress for school?
- ⑥ How is the school cleaned?
- ⑦ How is lunch distributed to students?
- ⑧ What choice do students have for what to eat for lunch?
- ⑨ Write at least 3 further questions you have about school in Japan below:

13 Ways Japanese Schools Are Different From American Ones

- Tokyo Five
- Jul. 17, 2014, 10:20 AM

Source: <http://assets.businessinsider.com/japanese-vs-american-schools-2014-7>

The only experience I have with the American public school system is when I was a student in the '70s and '80s in west-central Florida.

My experience with the Japanese school system is from having three teenagers who attended Japanese public schools from kindergarten to the high school they're currently attending.

Here are some differences between these countries' school systems.

1. In Japan, the school year begins in April and ends in March. In America, the school year starts in August or September and ends in May or June. Also, students in Japan have fewer days off than American students.
2. There are no school buses in Japan. In Japanese public kindergartens, mothers take their kids to school, often by bicycle. Public elementary schools and junior high schools are close enough for the students to walk to school. In urban areas like Tokyo, students must walk to school — no bicycles allowed. But in more rural areas of Japan, kids are often permitted to ride their bikes to school.
3. High schools in Japan require passing an entrance exam to attend, so these schools usually require the students to take a short commute by train. Private schools in Japan, on the other hand, aren't usually within walking distance from the students' homes. Kids who attend private schools can be seen commuting by train with their classmates.
4. In Japanese public schools, elementary school kids wear street clothes to school, like in American schools. But starting in junior high, they must wear a school uniform.
5. In Japanese schools, everyone must remove their shoes at the entrance and change into 上履き (*indoor shoes*).
6. In Japanese elementary and junior high schools students and teachers all eat the same school lunch. There are no choices. In most high schools, students and teachers are required to bring a 弁当 (*packed lunch*) from home. And very few Japanese schools have a cafeteria. Students eat lunch in their classroom at their desk.
7. In American schools, cafeteria workers prepare the school lunches and then serve the students, but in Japan, the cooks cook the lunch and students take turns serving lunch to their classmates.
8. There are no janitors in Japanese schools. The students clean their school everyday.
9. In junior high and high school in Japan, almost every student joins an after school club or team.

10. 夏休み (*summer vacation*) is about five weeks long in Japan. It's about twice as long in America.

11. During summer vacation Japanese students have to go to school many times for their school club or team practice. Also, Japanese students must do a lot of homework during summer vacation.

12. In American schools, there are no 入学式 (*school entrance ceremony*), and 卒業式 (*school graduation*) isn't until high school has been completed. In Japan, there are both — for kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, high school and college.

13. In America, school grades are counted as 1-5 for 小学校 (*elementary school*), 6-8 for 中学校 (*junior high*) and 9-12 for 高等学校 (*high school*). In Japan, elementary school is six years (grades 小 1-6), junior high is three years (grades 中 1-3), and high school is also three years (grades 高校 1-3).

There are many other differences, such as the way homework and tests are administered and checked, the manner that classes are arranged, the fact that Japanese students stand and greet their teacher at the beginning and end of each class, and the way that students are trusted in empty classrooms alone — even in kindergarten.

I'd say that schools in Japan and America have more differences than similarities. And I think education and school life that my children are getting in Japan is superior to what I had in America.

See videos below to complete instructions for #2: Choose 2 and watch then respond to prompts:

(if in Notebook, click the video itself and not the URL links. URL links are for those who have to open the page as a PDF)

1. Teaching Morals in School

https://youtu.be/S6_Anq-gN8I

2. School Lunch

<https://youtu.be/fze5s1SlqB8>

3. Impressions of an American Teacher in Japanese School

<https://youtu.be/5P4wGaKcYMg>

4. Elementary Student

<https://youtu.be/wfaQ79HdpAc>

Response:

Having watched 1 or 2 videos consider the following and write a short response of 3-4 sentences per prompt:

Which video(s) did you watch (enter numbers): _____

- Imagine you are an exchange student in Japan. What aspects of school life would be difficult for you? Which would you enjoy?

- Imagine you are a Japanese person. What aspects of American school would you find difficult or shocking? Which would you enjoy?

- What aspect of Japanese school would you like to have in American schools?
What aspect of Japanese schools would you least like to have in American schools?