Acing Your Language Class
Tips & Best Practices

Eating Authentically in Boston
Restaurant recommendations and recipes to try

Add to Your Playlist and Watchlist
Songs and Movies

Student Spotlight

Language of the Month
Film Discussion

Japanese

"If you don’t enter the tiger’s cave, you can’t catch its cub"

Language of the Month
Film Discussion

Literature and Authors
PRACTICE JAPANESE with the ERC

The ERC offers tutoring for Japanese! Peer Tutoring provides BU students an opportunity to meet with fellow students and ask questions related to their course material. Our tutors are here to guide, encourage, and support you in your learning process.

The ERC offers Language Link for Japanese! Language Link hosts several informal, half-hour discussions over Zoom each week. Sessions are led by a native speaker and are offered at three different levels: novice, intermediate, and advanced. Language Link will return in the Fall.
Meet our Japanese Language Link Leader, Maya. In addition to her role with Language Link, Maya acts as secretary of the Boston University Japanese Student Association. In her free time, Maya can be found cooking, studying for psychology, or doing research at the Social Learning Lab.
Q & A
A CONVERSATION WITH
JAPANESE LANGUAGE LINK
LEADER, MAYA
SIENKIEWICZ

What do you enjoy most about being a Language Link Leader?

As a Language Link Leader, I enjoy meeting new people throughout the semester while also developing meaningful connections with the students who attend every week. In terms of new students, it's always super fun to hear what they're majoring in, what their hobbies are, and why they decided to study Japanese. From freshmen to graduate students, the age range is wide as well, so it's always exciting to talk with everyone. With students who attend every week, it's wonderful to hear their Japanese improve. I also enjoy bonding over topics that we both have a passion for, such as a Japanese drama or movie that we happen to be watching at the same time.

What tips/advice do you have for people learning either a new language in general or Japanese specifically?

When you're learning a new language, it's expected that you won't know all of the vocabulary or grammar from day 1 -- and that's okay! I always emphasize during the sessions that no one's speech is perfect (honestly, even if you're a native speaker, not everyone's speech is perfect). That's why, during the Language Link sessions, I encourage students to try out new vocab or practice the grammar they have learned. The sessions are a space for students to practice speaking, and I try to remind students who come to my sessions that making mistakes in speech is a learning opportunity and nothing to fear.

What's your favorite aspect of Japanese culture?

My favorite aspect of Japanese culture is the food. From sushi, to miso soup, to tempura, you can never go wrong with a delicious dish from Japan! At the same time, I love all of the beautiful castles, temples, and shrines in Japan. Himeji Castle, which is one of the UNESCO World Heritage sites, and Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion) are two of my favorites!
Children's Day is celebrated annually in Japan on May 5. The holiday celebrates children's growth and happiness. It used to celebrate only boys, with a separate holiday for girls on March 3, but now, all children are celebrated on May 5. Although the holiday's main focus is on children, the day also honors mothers, fathers, and family in general.

*Koinobori*, windsocks in the shape of a carp, are raised on the day to celebrate. The wind makes the koinobori look like they are swimming. The symbol of the carp is a reference to a Japanese legend about a carp who traveled upstream and became a dragon, serving as a symbol of resiliency. The color of the windsocks represents different family members. Black = father, red = mother, blue and/or other colors = children. Some traditional foods served on Children's Day include *kashiwa-mochi* and *chimaki*, which are both types of sweet, sticky rice cakes.
Featured Recipe

Kashiwa Mochi

Kashiwa mochi is a traditional Japanese rice cake, typically filled with red bean and wrapped in an oak leaf. It is commonly enjoyed on Children's Day.

Significance of the Oak Leaf (Kashiwa)

Unlike other trees, the oak tree does not shed old leaves until new leaves grow. The Japanese view these trees as symbolic of the prosperity of one's descendants. Kashiwa leaves are not edible, but their fragrance transfers onto the mochi itself, imparting a delicate earthiness.

Ready to give it a try?

Check out Just One Cookbook for the recipe in both written and video form.
Restaurants

Click on the photos below to visit the restaurants' websites.

**Ittoku**, located in Porter Square, serves a number of authentic Japanese dishes.

**Yume wo Katare** in Porter Square serves ramen and sells a DIY ramen kit too.

**Futago Udon** in South Campus serves fresh homemade udon and Dashi broth.

**Tsurutontan** in Kenmore serves udon, Dashi broth, and various kinds of sushi.

Brookline’s **Japonaise Bakery** serves Japanese breads and pastries, including melon pans.

Brookline’s **Shiki** serves fine Japanese cuisine, such as gomokumumame.

**Gankara Ittetsu Ramen** in Brookline serves a variety of ramen dishes.

**Santouka**, located in Back Bay, serves various ramen dishes and appetizers such as gyoza.


**Maruichi Japanese Food & Deli** in Brookline for authentic Japanese food and pre-packaged meals.
The Museum of Fine Art's Japanese Garden, named Tenshin-en (the "Garden of the Heart of Heaven"), is a viewing garden that merges Japanese and New England Cultures together. Though currently closed, you can learn more about the garden on the MFA website.

Japanese art collections from the Peabody Essex Museum (PEM) contain some of the rarest and finest works from the late Edo and Meiji periods. Explore highlights such as A Nagasaki Geisha (pictured above), Kanban, and more from the PEM online exhibit.

Harvard Art Museum's Painting Edo exhibit, featuring art from the Feinberg collection, is currently on view until June 6. Learn more and view the virtual tour as well as various videos on their website.

Looking for a family-friendly activity? Check out Boston Children’s Museum's Japanese House when it opens up again (the museum is currently closed). The fully-equipped and functional house was gifted to the City of Boston by the City of Kyoto in 1979.
For further exploration, check out the Japanese animation film studio, Studio Ghibli.
Jiro Dreams of Sushi

In collaboration with BU Libraries, the ERC presents *Jiro Dreams of Sushi* with special guest Professor Merry White, Professor of Anthropology.

**Friday, May 28 at 9:00 AM ET | Register via Zoom**

**Jiro Dreams of Sushi**

*Jiro Dreams of Sushi* follows Jiro Ono, renowned chef and loving father. 85-year-old Jiro is widely regarded as the world's greatest sushi chef. His restaurant, Sukiyabashi Jiro, boasts a three-star Michelin Guide rating and a place on every sushi lover's bucket list despite its humble appearance as a 10-seat, sushi-only restaurant located in a Tokyo subway station. *Jiro Dreams of Sushi* is a reflection on work, family, and the art of perfection.
Beginner
もちろろう (Momotaro)
おむすびころりん (Omusubi Kororin)
うらしまたろう Urashima Taro (Tadoku level 1)
かぐや姫 Kaguyahime (Tadoku level 1)
サルとカニ Saru to kani (Tadoku level 2)

Intermediate
注文の多い料理店 (Chumon no ooi ryoriten)
by Kenji Miyazawa (Aozora bunko)
銀河鉄道の夜 (Ginga testudo no yoru)
by Kenji Miyazawa (Aozora bunko)
エルマーの冒険 (My Father's Dragon) by Ruth Stiles Gannett, translated by Shigeo Watanabe
蜘蛛の糸・鼻 by Akutagawa Ryunosuke
(adapted for Tadoku library, Tadoku level 3)
走れメロス by Dazai Osamu (adapted for Tadoku library, Tadoku level 4)

Advanced
坊ちゃん Botchan by Natsume Soseki (adapted for Taduko library, Tadoku level 4)
1Q84 by Haruki Murakami
わたしを離さないで (Never Let Me Go) by Kazuo Ishiguro, translated into Japanese by Masao Tsuchiya
Click on the titles below to be redirected to the song or artist page on Spotify.

**ARTISTS**
- Hikaru Utada
- Kyary Pamyu Pamyu
- Miku Hatsune
- Yoasobi
- Namie Amuro
- Kenshi Yonezu

**SONGS**
- Arashi - “Happiness”
- Official Higedan
dism - “No doubt”
- Back Number -
  “Mabataki”
Japanese is one of the most fast-paced languages, with a syllabic rate of 7.84. In other words, 7.84 syllables are spoken per second. English, by comparison, has a syllabic rate of 6.19. Out of eight languages surveyed, Japanese has the highest syllabic rate, just beating out the Spanish (Université de Lyon).
Enjoy these photos of shiba inus, a popular dog breed in Japan.