# JITCO ZE ~ Learning more about Japan ~

*April 2024 Spring Issue* 

## **Topics**

Let's Learn about Japanese Rules through Manga: Throwing Away Garbage Make Your Life in Japan More Enjoyable! ~Watch NHK WORLD-JAPAN~ How Hiragana and Katakana Came to Be Kokugonomori "Words with Similar Meanings"



"とも" provides helpful advice on living in Japan, tips for learning the Japanese language, and other such information, in Japanese with furigana and nine foreign languages (Vietnamese, Chinese, Filipino, Indonesian, Thai, Cambodian, Burmese, Mongolian, and English). The Japanese version is available on paper, and the foreign language versions are available in PDF format on JITCO's website for viewing on a smartphone, PC, or other such device. We hope you make good use of these resources. (https://www.jitco.or.jp/ja/tomo/)





JITCO

# Make Your Life in Japan More Enjoyable!

Acquiring accurate information is crucial for your daily life in Japan. NHK $\neg -\nu \models$  JAPAN, an international broadcast service operated by Japan's public media organization, NHK, provides a wide range of multi-language information via TV, radio, and the Internet. It also offers an app that provides helpful contents for learning the Japanese language. The app also sends emergency information to your smartphone in case of a major disaster such as an earthquake. You can scan the QR code and experience the app for yourself.



#### Download the NHK WORLD-JAPAN app!

- $\bigstar$  Offers a host of contents for learning Japanese
- $\bigstar$  Broadcasts NHK news in 19 languages
- $\bigstar$  Delivers simultaneous streaming of international broadcasts with multilanguage subtitles
- $\bigstar$  Provides on-demand streaming of TV and radio programs
- $\bigstar$  Sends notices of earthquake and tsunami emergency information to your smartphone



\*These notices are available in English, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Portuguese.

#### Living in Japan multilanguage information program

Also broadcast on NHK ラジオ第 2

Date/time: Sundays 13:10–13:30 [Rerun] The following Saturday

Languages: English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Portuguese (changes weekly)

Provides helpful guidance for international residents in Japan from the perspective of each language community.



#### Chatroom Japan

A program that invites international residents in Japan to share their thoughts and views about Japan.

In linkage with a website, the highs, lows, and concerns about living in Japan are addressed through fresh eyes. Share your opinions and concerns!



#### News

Live streamings of the following programs are available via the NHK WORLD-JAPAN website and app

■ NHK NEWSLINE (Monday to Friday) Every hour on the hour (XX:00) / (Saturday & Sunday) Every hour on the hour ※Except for 4:00 a.m. from Tuesday to Saturday

The core news program broadcast on NHK WORLD-JAPAN, delivering the latest world news, economic data, and weather forecasts, with a focus on Japan and Asia, at every hour on the hour, every day.

■NEWSLINE ASIA 24 (Monday to Friday) 3:00 p.m.

An expanded version of NHK NEWSLINE, including relays from various locations in Asia.

■NEWSLINE IN DEPTH (Monday to Friday) 8:27 p.m.

Delves into the truth behind various events and incidents, from an indepth look at headline news to local topics that spark interest.

■NEWSROOM TOKYO (Monday to Friday) 8:00 p.m.

A weekday-night news program that reviews the day's events in Japan and Asia and delivers news with depth and clarity, accompanied by commentary from experts and reporters.

#### ANIME MANGA EXPLOSION

Features a series of major anime and manga that are well-known by overseas fans, to close in on the secret behind the creation of anime and manga in Japan.



#### How Hiragana and Katakana Came to Be

Japanese has two types of phonograms (characters that do not hold specific meanings but simply represent sounds): hiragana and katakana. Both are uniquely Japanese characters derived from kanji characters, which are ideograms (characters that represent meanings). However, why do two types of characters, hiragana and katakana, exist for the same sound?

It is said that kanji was introduced to Japan from China around the 1st century. It was adopted in Japan because there were no written characters in Japan until then. However, since kanji from China could not fully express the Japanese language, the characters were separated from their meanings and their sounds were borrowed into Japanese. These characters were called manyogana. For example, the hiragana character " $\mathfrak{b}$ " was expressed using the kanji character " $\mathfrak{E}$ " in manyogana. The name is said to come from the Manyoshu, the oldest collection of Japanese poetry, which was written mainly in manyogana.

However, manyogana was so diverse and complex that many characters were difficult to write. Therefore, manyogana came to be simplified, and the simplified forms became hiragana around the 9th century. This was during the Heian Period, considered a period of aristocratic culture. Men used kanji in public, and hiragana was mainly used for private affairs or by women. Until then, only scholars and a small number of learned individuals could read and write, but the emergence of hiragana allowed more people to become literate. As a result, letter and essay writing and Japanese poetry developed, and women's literature became popular. The Tale of Genji is a representative literature of this period, written by female novelist Murasaki Shikibu, who is currently featured as the main character of the latest NHK epic drama series.

Meanwhile, katakana was invented by taking a portion from each manyogana character. It is said that men mainly used these characters to jot down memos to themselves when studying classical Chinese literature.

Few countries use three different types of characters the way Japan uses kanji, hiragana, and katakana, and this is why learning Japanese is said to be difficult. We hope that a bit of knowledge about how hiragana and katakana developed will deepen your interest in learning the Japanese language.



(Left) From manyogana to katakana: (Right) From manyogana to hiragana

# Kokugonomori

This is an exercise for learning Japanese words and kanji and their usage. Think of the correct answers while having fun! (Answers are provided on the next page.)



## Group Shot Full of Gentle Smiles



Technical intern trainees from Indonesia donned kimonos and participated in the "Celebratory Gathering of Twenty-Year-Olds" sponsored by Tsu City, Mie Prefecture. After the ceremony, they visited Todaiji Temple in Nara.

The foursome was thrilled to participate in the coming-of-age ceremony in Japan. They said they gained an unforgettable memory and expressed their heartfelt gratitude to everyone at their workplace for the precious opportunity.

※2024年1月投稿 実習実施者:旭電器工業株式会社(監理団体:ELC事業協同組合)

Every month, a photo is selected from among those which receiving/supervising organizations have contributed to "技能実習 Days" on the JITCO website. Scan the QR code at right to visit the 技能実習 Days page and learn about the entry guidelines.

(https://www.jitco.or.jp/ja/days/)



JITCO will begin accepting entries for the 32st Japanese Essay Contest on Monday, April 1. The deadline for entries is Friday, May 10. For contest details, please see the JITCO website (https://www.jitco.or.jp/) or the JITCO Japanese Teaching Materials ひろば website (https://hiroba.jitco.or.jp). We look forward to your participation!

### Inquiry and Consultation Services

If you need help... (https://www.otit.go.jp/notebook/)

The Organization for Technical Intern Training (OTIT) offers a variety of services and resources you can use when you need help. These include Native Language Consultation, information on local consultation services and disaster prevention, and convenient apps such as the "On-site Japanese Language" app and "Technical Intern Trainee Handbook" app.



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においcan refer to both good and bad odors, but かおり is used only for good smells. かがやく is used in reference to things that sparkle, shine, or glow. にぎる means to bend all of one's fingers inward toward the palm. It could also mean grabbing something in that condition. 叫ぶ is to say something in a loud voice, 怒鳴る is when a loud voice is emotional, and 喚く is when the loud voice becomes a persistent shouting.

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