

Chapter 2 Subjects

Section 1 Japanese Language

I. OVERALL OBJECTIVES

To develop in students the ability to properly express and accurately comprehend the Japanese language, to increase the ability to exchange their own ideas and opinions clearly, to develop cognitive and imaginative capacity and a sense of language, to deepen interest in the Japanese language and to cultivate an attitude of respect for the Japanese language.

II. OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT FOR EACH GRADE

[Grade 1]

1. Objectives

- (1) To enable students acquire the ability to speak about what they are familiar with in their daily lives, the ability to devise structures in accordance with the objectives and occasion, the ability to listen while thinking about the speaker's intentions, and the ability to converse while grasping the topic and direction of the conversation, as well as to develop an attitude of striving to organize one's thoughts while speaking and listening.
- (2) To enable students acquire the ability to write accurately about what they are familiar with in their daily lives while thinking about structures in accordance with objectives and intent, as well as to develop an attitude of readily striving to organize one's thoughts while writing .
- (3) To enable students acquire the ability to read various different books, written works and so forth and correctly comprehend their contents and main idea in accordance with the objectives and intent, as well as to develop an attitude of striving to broaden one's perspective and thinking about things through reading.

1. Content

A. Speaking/Listening

- (1) Instructions should be given on the following items in order to develop speaking and listening abilities
 - (a) To decide on topics taken from the students' daily lives and collect and organize materials for talking and conversing through interacting with other people.
 - (b) To structure conversations by paying attention to the relations between

the whole and its parts and between facts and opinions, and speak based on the responses from the conversation partner.

- (c) To talk apply students' knowledge of speaking rate and volume, the tone and pacing of words, selecting phrases which are easy to understand for the conversation partner, phrasing that is suitable for the partner and the occasion and so on.
 - (d) To comprehend while asking questions as needed, and arrange the similarities and differences between students' own thoughts.
 - (e) To speak accurately while grasping the topic and direction of the conversation, listen by paying attention to the conversation partner's comments and organize their own thoughts.
- (2) Instructions on the items listed in (1) above should be given through, for example, the following linguistic activities:
- (a) To report on and showcase topics from the students' daily lives, as well as listen to such presentations and ask questions and offer suggestions.
 - (b) To engage in discussions, debates and so on concerning topics from the students' daily lives.

B. Writing

- (1) Instruction should be given on the following items in order to develop writing abilities:
- (a) To decide on topics from the students' daily lives and organize their thoughts through collecting materials.
 - (b) To organize the collected materials such as by arranging it and make a composition while considering the role of paragraphs.
 - (c) To write about facts and matters that they would like to convey while clearly expressing students' own ideas, feelings as reasons.
 - (d) To reread the compositions that have been written and confirm the use of orthography and phrases and means of description in order to produce compositions which are easy to read and understand.
 - (e) To read each other's writings, state their opinions on matters like how the theme was perceived, how materials were used and the clarity of their reasoning, and use them to improve students' own compositions.
- (2) Instructions on the items listed in (1) above should be given through, for example, the following linguistic activities:
- (a) To write a composition about appreciating an artistic piece which they are

interested in.

- (b) To write expository and descriptive texts by using diagrams.
- (c) To write compositions which inform and report on events.

C. Reading

(1) Instruction should be given on the following items in order to develop reading abilities:

- (a) To accurately grasp and understand the meaning of phrases in context.
- (b) To distinguish things like the composition's central and supplementary sections and facts from opinions while reading, and summarize the piece and grasp its main idea in accordance with objectives and needs.
- (c) To read while paying attention to depictions of elements like the development of the events and the characters and use this to aid in understanding.
- (d) To form one's own thoughts about characteristics of the text's organization, development and expression.
- (e) To perceive ways of looking at and thinking about what is expressed in the text, and to broaden the students' perspective and thinking about things.
- (f) To enable the students acquire the ability to gather the necessary information from books and written works, and the ability to apply them read into the necessary information according to the purpose.

(2) Instructions on the items listed in (1) above should be given through, for example, the following linguistic activities:

- (a) To read aloud from and recite various types of written works.
- (b) To read expository and descriptive texts while considering the relation between the text and diagrams.
- (c) To read books with issues and make book reports with carrying a quotation from books.

[Items related to traditional linguistic culture and characteristics of the Japanese language]

(1) Instructions should be given on the following items through the instructions on "A: Speaking/Listening," "B: Writing," and "C: Reading."

a. Items related to traditional linguistic culture

- (a) To understand the rules for the written language and how the Japanese

readings of characters work, and to have an opportunity to be exposed to the world of classic literature by reading Japanese and Chinese classic literature aloud to get a taste for the unique rhythm of such literature.

(b) To understand that there are various different types of works when it comes to classic literature.

(b) Items related to the characteristics and rules of words

a. To have an interest in and deepen students' understanding of the function and workings of spoken language.

b. To refine sense of language by paying attention to the relation between a phrase's dictionary meaning and its meaning in context.

c. To understand of various phrases which express events and acts, as well as provide them with an interest in the lexicons found in spoken and written texts.

d. To understand the classification of words and pay attention to reference terms, conjunctions and other phrases which have similar functions to these.

e. To understand techniques for expressions such as metaphor and reiteration.

(c) Items related to Chinese characters

a. To read between around 250 to 300 other Chinese characters in common use in addition to those listed in the "List of Chinese Characters Classified by Grades" (hereinafter referred to the "Classified Chinese Characters") from Chapter 2, Section 1 "Japanese Language" in the Course of Study for Elementary Schools.

b. To read about 900 of the Chinese characters in the "Classified Chinese Characters" and to write and use them in sentences and compositions.

(2) Instruction should be given on the following items for penmanship:

(a) To write in a printed style by arranging the character forms with an understanding of character size and layout.

(b) To write with an understanding of the basic writing style for semi-cursive characters.

[Grade 2]

1. Objectives

(1) To enable students acquire the ability to speak about issues like those pertaining to their social lives based on differences in their position and thinking, the ability to listen while comparing ideas and the ability to converse while respecting the

listener's position in accordance with the objectives and occasion, as well as to develop attitude of striving to broaden one's thinking while speaking and listening.

- (2) To enable students acquire the ability to write in an easy to understand manner about issues like those pertaining to their social lives while devising structures in accordance with the objectives and intent, as well as to develop an attitude of attempting to write compositions while broadening one's thinking.
- (3) To enable students acquire the ability to read while paying attention to the text's content and means of expression and the ability to collect and effectively utilize information from a broad spectrum in accordance with the objectives and intent, as well as to develop an attitude of striving to use reading to benefit one's life.

1. Content

A. Speaking /Listening

- (1) Instruction should be given on the following items in order to develop speaking and listening abilities:
 - (a) To decide on topics taken from the students' social lives and collect and organize material for talking and conversing through a variety of methods.
 - (b) To organize one's thoughts while envisioning different positions and ideas, and talk while thinking about logical structure and development by paying attention to things like central and supplementary parts of the conversation.
 - (c) To talk while making effective use of materials and devices according to the purpose and occasion.
 - (d) To listen while paying attention to the logical structure and development of the conversation and compare it with one's own thoughts.
 - (e) To broaden one's own thinking by respecting the other speaker's position and ideas, conversing in line with a goal and mutually examining what the other is saying.
- (2) Instructions on the items listed in (1) above should be given through, for example, the following linguistic activities:
 - (a) To make presentations based on what they have learned from examinations and what they think, and express students' opinions when listening to these.
 - (b) To have discuss topics from the students' social lives by taking on roles such as that of a chairperson or proponent.

B. Writing

- (1) Instruction should be given on the following items in order to develop writing abilities:
 - (a) To decide on topics taken from the students' social lives and organize one's thinking by collecting materials through a variety of methods.
 - (b) To clarify students' positions and the facts and matters that they want to convey and devise a structure for their compositions.
 - (c) To write by adding explanations and concrete examples and employing techniques for description in order to effectively convey facts, matters, opinions and thoughts to the other party.
 - (d) To reread the compositions that have been written while paying attention to the use of phrases and sentences and the connection between paragraphs in order to produce compositions which are easy to both read and understand.
 - (e) To expand the students' thinking by having them read one another's written compositions, state their opinions and provide suggestions on the composition's structure, the way materials are utilized and so on.
- (2) Instructions on the items listed in (1) above should be given through, for example, the following linguistic activities:
 - (a) To devise means of expression by writing poetry and stories.
 - (b) To write a composition by determining one's position on a matter open to various different opinions and stating one's view on the subject.
 - (c) To write the letters which are necessary in one's social life.

C. Reading

- (1) Instruction should be given on the following items in order to develop reading abilities:
 - (a) To read while paying attention to phrases which express abstract concepts and those expressing emotion.
 - (b) To think about the relations between the whole and its parts, the effect of examples and depictions and the significance of the words and actions of the characters and use these to aid in understanding the content.
 - (c) To form one's own thoughts by clarifying the reasoning for a text's structure and development and its means of expression.
 - (d) To form one's own thoughts by connecting personal knowledge and experience to viewpoints and ways of thinking that are expressed in

the text.

- (e) To obtain the appropriate information from selected books, written texts and so on through a variety of methods and organize one's thoughts.
- (2) Instructions on the items listed in (1) above should be given through, for example, the following linguistic activities:
 - (a) To read poetry, stories and other works and exchange impressions concerning the content and means of expression.
 - (b) To read explanations, criticisms and other such texts and state one's own opinion on the content and means of expression.
 - (c) To compare information acquired from using newspapers, the Internet and facilities such as school libraries.

[Items related to traditional linguistic culture and characteristics of the Japanese language]

(1) Instruction should be given on the following items through the instructions on "A: Speaking/Listening," "B: Writing," and "C: Reading."

(a) Items related to traditional linguistic culture

- a. To enjoy the world of classic literature, for example, through reading aloud by utilizing the characteristics of works .
- b. To have an opportunity to be exposed to the viewpoints and ways of thinking expressed in classic literature and imagine the characters and author's thoughts.

(b) Items related to characteristics and rules of language:

- a. To understand the differences between spoken and written language, the role played by a common language and dialects and the function of honorific expressions.
- b. To understand phrases which express abstract concepts, synonyms and antonyms, homonyms and phrases which express an equivocal meaning, and refine the students' sense of language and enhance students' vocabulary.
- c. To think about the order of and correspondence between sentence components within sentences, as well as sentence structure.
- d. To understand the use of words and take note of the function of particles and auxiliary verbs.
- e. To understand that there are differences in the configuration and development of spoken conversation and written texts according to the

other party and the objective.

(c) Items concerning Chinese characters

- a. To read between about 300 to 350 other Chinese characters out of the Chinese characters in common use in addition to those learned up through Grade 1.
- b. To read the Chinese characters indicated in the “Classified Chinese Characters” and use them in sentences and compositions.

(2) Instruction should be given on the following items for penmanship:

- (a) To understand how to write Chinese characters in a semi-cursive script and how to write Kana in a way that is congruous with this, and to quickly write in a legible manner.
- (b) To write by choosing either a standard script or semi-cursive script in accordance with the purpose and need.

[Grade 3]

1. Objectives

- (1) To enable students acquire the ability to speak in accordance with the listener and occasion about issues pertaining to their social lives, the ability to listen while assessing skills for expression and the ability to converse with a view towards resolving problems, in accordance with objectives and the occasion, as well as develop attitude of striving to deepen one’s thinking while speaking and listening.
- (2) To enable students acquire the ability to write about issues pertaining to their social lives by devising logical developments in accordance with the objectives and intent, as well as develop attitude of attempting to deepen one’s thinking while writing compositions.
- (3) To enable students acquire the ability to read while evaluating things like the development of the composition and its means of expression in accordance with objectives and intent, as well as develop attitude of striving to improve oneself through reading.

2. Content

A. Speaking/Listening

- (1) Instruction should be given on the following items in order to develop speaking and listening abilities:
 - (a) To decide on topics taken from the students’ social lives and organize their thoughts by arranging their own personal experiences and knowledge and

to use phrases and sentences effectively and speak persuasively by utilizing materials.

- (b) To speak in accordance with the circumstances of the occasion and the attitude of the listener, and use honorific expressions appropriately.
 - (c) To evaluate the discerned content and means of expression in order to deepen their own perspective and thinking about things and to use this in expressing themselves.
 - (d) To make the appropriate current of the proceedings on discussions so that the conversation develops effectively, and to apply one another's ideas with a view towards resolving problems.
- (2) Instructions on the items listed in (1) above should be given through, for example, the following linguistic activities:
- (a) To give speeches according to requirements over the time and occasion, as well as listen to such speeches and use them to improve expressing themselves.
 - (b) To state opinions to one another in order to convince the listener about topics taken from the students' social lives.

B. Writing

- (1) Instruction should be given on the following items in order to develop writing abilities:
- (a) To decide on topics take from the students' social lives and to deepen their thinking by repeatedly collecting information, as well as devising appropriate structures by choosing the format for compositions.
 - (b) To write persuasive compositions by devising logical developments, properly quoting from materials and so on.
 - (c) To reread the compositions and adjust these compositions as a whole.
 - (d) To evaluate methods for logical development and the means of expression by reading one another's written compositions and use this for expressing themselves, while also deepening their perspective and way of thinking about things.
- (2) Instructions on the items listed in (1) above should be given through, for example, the following linguistic activities:
- (a) To write compositions that comment on issues which are interested in.
 - (b) To collect, devise and edit various written texts in accordance with

objectives.

C. Reading

(1) Instruction should be given on the following items in order to develop reading abilities:

- (a) To read while paying attention to expressive techniques, such as ways of effectively utilizing phrases in context.
- (b) To grasp methods for developing texts logically and establishing setting and characters, and use this to aid in understanding the content.
- (c) To evaluate means for structure, development and expression through comparative readings of written texts.
- (d) To consider humanity, society, nature and so on, while reading texts in order to form students' own opinions.
- (e) To read books and written texts according to objectives in order to broaden students' knowledge and deepen their own thinking.

(2) Instructions on the items listed in (1) above should be given through, for example, the following linguistic activities:

- (a) To read and critique stories and novels.
- (b) To read by comparing the information contained in editorials and press coverage.
- (c) To reflect back on students' own reading habits and think about how they choose and read books.

[Items related to traditional linguistic culture and characteristics of the Japanese language]

(1) Instruction should be given on the following items through instructions on "A: Speaking/Listening," "B: Writing" and "C: Reading."

- (a) Items related to traditional language culture
 - a. To read classic literature while paying attention to students' historical backdrop, and enjoy the world of classic literature.
 - b. To write simple compositions related to classic literature, such as by quoting passages from them.
- (b) Items related to word characteristics and rules
 - a. To understand the changes in words brought about by the passage of time and differences in words between generations, as well as the appropriate use of honorific expressions in social life.

- b. To expand knowledge related to common expressions and four-character idiomatic phrases, and to take note of the proper usage of Japanese words, Chinese words and foreign loan words so that refine the sense of language and enhance students' vocabulary.
- (c) Items related to Chinese characters
 - a. To read approximately all of the other Chinese characters in common use in addition to those learned up through Grade 2.
 - b. To become accustomed to using the Chinese characters indicated in the "Classified Chinese Characters" in sentences and paragraphs.
- (2) Instruction should be given on the following items for penmanship:
 - (a) To take an interest in the various characters which are all around them and to write them effectively.

III. SYLLABUS DESIGN AND HANDLING THE CONTENT

1. In designing the syllabus, consideration should be given to the following:
 - (1) Concerning the instruction on items included in the "Content" for each grade in Section II, these can be dealt with in the grades preceding or following the grade in question as needed.
 - (2) Concerning the items indicated in the "A: Speaking/Listening," "B: Writing," "C: Reading" and "Traditional linguistic culture and characteristics of Japanese language" indicated in the "Content" for each grade in Section II, these should be taught effectively in a closely related manner with one another. In doing so, teachers should make efforts to use school libraries systematically and utilize their functions. Also, efforts should be made to increase the effectiveness of guidance by, for example, providing students with opportunities to use IT equipment.
 - (3) Concerning the school hours allocated for instruction on "A: Speaking/Listening" of the "Content" for each grade in Section II, approximately 15 to 25 school hours per year should be allocated in Grade 1 and Grade 2, and approximately 10 to 20 school hours per year should be allocated in Grade 3. In addition, efforts should be made to increase the effectiveness of instruction by, for example, proactively developing and utilizing materials for spoken language.
 - (4) Concerning the school hours allocated for instruction on "B: Writing" of the "Content" for each grade in Section II, approximately 30 to 40 school hours per year should be allocated in Grade 1 and Grade 2, and approximately 20 to 30 school hours should be allocated in Grade 3.
 - (5) Concerning the instruction on "C: Reading" of the "Content" for each grade in

Section II, the students should read a variety of written texts so that use this in expressing themselves.

- (6) Based on the objectives of moral education listed in Sections I-2 of Chapter 1 “General Provisions” and in Section I of Chapter 3 “Moral Education,” instructions concerning the content listed in Section II of Chapter 3 “Moral Education” should be given appropriately. The instructions should be in accordance with the characteristics of Japanese Language and should be related to the period of moral education.
2. Instruction on “Items related to traditional linguistic culture and characteristics of the Japanese language” of the “Content” for each grade in Section II should be dealt with as follows:
 - (1) The items listed in (1) related to “Traditional linguistic culture and characteristics of the Japanese language” should be dealt with as follows:
 - (a) Consideration should be given to having the students learn things which must be taught by compiling knowledge or taught through repetition by only dealing with those things in particular.
 - (b) Concerning items related to word characteristics and rules, emphasis should be laid on having the students notice word characteristics and rules by reflecting back on language activities in their daily lives, and to use this to aid them in improving their linguistic habits.
 - (2) The items listed in (2) related to “Traditional linguistic culture and characteristics of the Japanese language” should be dealt with as follows:
 - (a) Consideration should be given to enabling students to write letters correctly, neatly and quickly, as well as to fostering an attitude of harnessing their penmanship abilities in their studies and lives.
 - (b) Instruction on penmanship using a pen or pencil and writing brush should be provided in every grade. Instruction for penmanship using a writing brush should cultivate a foundation for the ability to write characters using a pen or pencil.
 - (c) The school hours devoted to instruction on penmanship should be approximately 20 school hours per year for Grade 1 and Grade 2, and approximately 10 school hours per year for Grade 3.
3. Concerning teaching materials, care should be taken for the following points:
 - (1) Concerning teaching materials, proper topics and themes should be carefully selected in a harmonious manner in accordance with the developmental stages of the students, with an aim for the balanced acquisition of various language skills,

including speaking/listening, writing and reading, and to establish reading habits by developing an attitude of familiarity with books. Furthermore, teaching materials should be selected in such a way so that linguistic activities listed in (2) of “A: Speaking/Listening,” “B: Writing” and “C: Reading” of the “Content” for each grade in Section II can be sufficiently executed.

- (2) Teaching materials should be selected with due consideration to the following points:
 - (a) To be instrumental in deepening awareness of the Japanese language and developing an attitude of respect for the Japanese language;
 - (b) To be instrumental in developing the ability to exchange students’ own ideas and opinions clearly, cognitive and imaginative capacities and a sense of language;
 - (c) To be instrumental in developing the ability to make fair and proper judgments and a creative mentality;
 - (d) To be instrumental in developing an attitude to have scientific and logical views and ideas and to broaden perspectives;
 - (e) To be instrumental in deepening thinking about life, fostering a rich sense of humanity and cultivating a robust will to live.
 - (f) To be instrumental in deepening thinking about humanity, society , nature and so on.
 - (g) To be instrumental in deepening interest in and understanding of Japanese traditions and culture and to develop attitude which respects these.
 - (h) To be instrumental in deepening international understanding from a broad perspective, raising self-awareness as Japanese citizens and cultivating a spirit of international cooperation.
- (3) Concerning the teaching materials for “C: Reading” of the “Content” for each grade in Section II, in each grade a variety of writing styles should be used in a harmonious manner, covering commentary-style works and literary works.
- (4) Works by representative authors since the modern age should be covered in every grade in order to familiarize students with Japanese language culture.
- (5) With regard to teaching materials related to classic literature, materials like the original texts of classics should be covered, as well as their translations into modern language and written texts that interpret them.