

## ALT Job Skills

JET Pre-Departure Orientation  
June 30, 2012

### What's an ALT?

- a. Assistance in classes taught by Japanese Teachers of English (JTEs) in elementary schools, junior and/or senior high schools.



#### Every Situation is Different!

- Elem. / Junior High / Senior High
- One school vs. Multiple
- One-shots vs. Regular classes
- Set vs. Changing schedule
- Based in a BOE vs. Based at a school

### What's an ALT?

- b. Assistance in English language education, usually conversation training, at elementary schools
- Eikaiwa = English Conversation . . . Usually Adults
- c. Assistance in the preparation of supplementary materials for teaching English
- Varying freedom
- d. Assistance in the language training of Japanese Teachers of English
- Mostly during the mid-year seminar

### What's an ALT?

- f. Providing of information on language and other related subjects for people such as Teachers' Consultants and Japanese Teachers of English (e.g., word usage, pronunciation, etc.)
- Recordings and in-class readings
  - Grading
- g. Assistance in English language speech contests
- Coach, writer/editor, & trainer

### What's an ALT?

- h. Participation in local international exchange activities
- Festivals
  - International fairs
  - Not restrictive to events
  - Maybe the **MOST** important role!!

**You are an "Ambassador" of USA**

### What's an ALT?

- i. Other duties as specified by the contracting organization
- School festivals & events
  - Human playground
  - Sister-City activities
  - Etc.



## Know Your Environment: Japanese Schools

- 6-7 periods
- Morning meeting & Bulletin board
- Teacher's room & desk arrangement
- Teachers move from class to class
- Kyushoku
- Lunchtime Broadcasting
- Cleaning time
- Inside / Outside Shoes
- Juku (Cram school)
- Uniforms & Inspections
- Enkais (food & drink parties) for everything
- Responsible for moral education of students
- Different degrees of strictness (on students and on you)



## Be Likeable!

Remember: what you represent  
is greater than yourself!

- You already have all that you need!!!
  - Bring your energy, enthusiasm
  - Always smile
  - Stay conservative in appearance
    - Clothes, makeup, shoes, piercings, etc.



## Lesson Planning: Factors to Consider

- Size, English level, Grade, and mood of class.
- Participation of JTE
- Goal: grammar, vocab, to have fun?



Run through several ideas with JTE to see what may or may not work. Don't be afraid to try new things.

In the case of last minute requests, have something to fall back upon.

Teachers have crazy lives.

## General Tips

- When reading aloud:
  - Be loud, be clear be creative!!
    - "Backwards"
    - High/low voice



*The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog.*

- Pronunciation
  - Speed, annunciation
  - Draw on the board??

## Relativity is Key

- Lessons: You are not starting from scratch!
  - Nationwide textbooks are required in ES/JHS programs
- Reflect the lessons learned
  - If you can, ask JTE for upcoming lesson plans/ tests



## You Don't Have to Reinvent the Wheel: Lesson Resources

- JET Community
  - National AJET Books
  - Regional JET Guides
  - Prefectural Orientation & fellow JETs
- Predecessor and JTEs
  - What's at your desk?
  - Ask questions
- Websites, Blogs, and Newspapers
- Reach back to your childhood



## Instructing

- Step-by-Step
  - Chalkboard first
- Instruct by demonstration
  - Execute
- Remember this is their second language!



## School Events

- Sports Day
- Culture Festival
- Parents Day
- Shinjinsen
- Ekiden/Marathon
- Enkais to follow...

## Favorite (Successful) Lessons

- Elementary
  - Singing! Dancing!
    - Head Shoulders Knees & Toes
    - Hokey Pokey!
  - Pictionary
  - Art
- JHS/HS
  - Teams, games, points!
    - Jeopardy-like
    - Price is Right
    - Pictionary
    - Listening from films/Q&A



## Culture Lessons

- Using film clips for listening practice and culture exposure
  - Sharing holiday movies from your childhood not only bring a personal element to your lesson but also suddenly *your* world becomes real to your students!
  - Acts as a comprehensive listening test/indicator!



## Culture Lessons!



- We are here for more than just grammar and pronunciation purposes.
- Sharing our traditions is equally as important
- Plan cultural activities if your JTE allows it!
  - “Gingerbread” house making (improvised with Japanese ingredients), holiday card making, making New Year’s resolutions, etc.

## Extra Credit! “Showing Off” A Little 😊



- Schools will ask you what you can do! Can you play an instrument, sing live, or play a sport?
  - Perform at your school’s culture festival
  - During your free period, be a special guest for the swimming/music classes!

## Reaching Out

- Clubs
- Bulletin Board
- English Room
- Message box
- Journal swap
- What are your talents/interests?



## Getting Involved—Meeting Your Town!

- Visit your Community Center
  - Hanging out here, you are bound to run into all your students. This is a place where some go to wait for their parents to pick them up as an alternative to the school. Eikaiwa classes for the townspeople are also held here.
- Try as many local restaurants as possible until you find your niche. Sit at the bar and chat up the chef.
  - Having “regular” status at your own restaurant makes for a nice winding down spot.
  - Great environment to get to know locals unrelated to school/work.
- Say YES to everything!
  - My first day at JHS, teachers went kayaking together!



## Take Initiative!!



- If it's not there, it starts with you
  - E.g. Ask your JTE to purchase an English Board. The English department has a school budget so they can definitely purchase supplies/materials for you.
- Lunch time (Kyushoku)
  - Elementary schools are almost always assigned classrooms however, JHS may just keep you in the staff room if you don't ask to eat with the students
- Want to attend your students' away games?
  - Students and teachers (/coaches) often meet first at the school and leave together. Ask the teacher/coach if you can board the same bus as the students or hitch a ride with the teacher/coach.
- Bottom line: if you want something (to change), ASK ☺
- Asking opens your doors
  - Leads to invitations from teachers/coaches and parents!
  - Teachers/parents/students are all happy that you want to be a part of their lives. Trust me!

## Remember . . .

- Things take time. You're not going to be an ALT goddess/god and lesson planning genius overnight.
- You have lots of support & resources.
- If you respect, you'll be respected.



## Good Luck & Thanks!

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