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To the Student

The idea for *This Is Japan* began many years ago, when some of my students went to do homestays in the UK. They had a great time there, but they were often embarrassed, because they couldn't answer many of the questions that their homestay families asked them. Sometimes they lacked language, and sometimes they lacked knowledge. When they returned to Japan, I started making worksheets that would help them to explain about their lifestyles and culture.

I thought these topics would be easy for them, but actually it was quite challenging. My students had visited many temples and shrines, but had never stopped to think about the differences between Shinto and Buddhism. They used *kanji*, *hiragana* and *katakana* every day, but never stopped to think about how to explain them. People asked them about wedding ceremonies and funerals, but many of the students hadn't yet experienced these events.

Little by little, the worksheets became longer and the topics became deeper. Little by little my students became more confident in their ability to explain—not just to answer questions, but to give more information, and to actively teach their non-Japanese friends about the wonderful culture and customs of Japan.

This Is Japan will help you to explain Japanese lifestyle and culture more fluently in English. Being able to communicate your culture will open doors to new friendships and new experiences. I hope you enjoy using this book and that it brings you closer to your classmates and friends. Good luck with your language learning.

When you are using *This Is Japan*, remember the key points on the right page. Check (✓) each box to show that you have read and understood the advice.

<input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrase!	Try not to use your dictionary in face-to-face communication. Sometimes it will be difficult to explain yourself clearly, but try to stay in English, and learn to paraphrase (explain using other words, talk your way around a problem).
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare!	Prepare as much as you can. Ask your teacher for the <i>This Is Japan</i> workbook and use it to prepare for class.
<input type="checkbox"/> Don't rush!	Don't race through the activities—it's not a competition to see who can finish first— the winner is the one who communicates best .
<input type="checkbox"/> Say more!	Don't just give short answers—always try to give more information . Ask yourself “What more can I add?” “What more can I tell them about ...?” Be a good guide and a good friend.
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicate!	Be an active listener. React nonverbally to your partner's answers, and comment on them. Ask your partner to explain more, and above all, communicate!

Acknowledgements

I'd like to thank Takami Takeuchi and all the members of Hiroshima JALT, for their friendship, support and encouragement over the years. Thanks also to Danny, Lizzy and Alice Haruko Rennie, we wish you many happy returns to Japan!

My sincere thanks to National Geographic Learning and to Tsuyoshi Yoshida in particular, for their faith in this project and for breathing new life into *This Is Japan*.

Simon Capper

The Japanese Red Cross Hiroshima College of Nursing

How to Use This Textbook

This Is Japan will help you to explain a variety of topics related to Japanese lifestyle and culture. Conversation with foreign friends can sometimes be difficult, but after practicing the topics in this book, you should be ready to start conversations on themes that *you* feel comfortable talking about: “Have you ever eaten Japanese food?” “Do you know much about Japanese manners?” “Have you ever seen Japanese writing?” If your homestay family or new friends aren’t familiar with Japanese culture, they’ll be happy if you can explain or “teach” them about these topics.

Each unit in *This Is Japan* consists of eight sections:

The **Warm Up** section encourages you to start thinking about the topic and express your thoughts. It’s also a good chance to get to know your partner(s), so don’t simply answer the questions. Give your partner(s) more information and, if you have time, ask them more questions on the topic.

The **Vocabulary** section introduces the key words that you’ll need when you practice with your partner(s). Why not highlight the words that you already know and can use. Then, you can focus on the words that are new to you (and highlight them when you’re confident that you know and can use them).

The **Listening** section offers a chance to hear the language used in context. It’s not designed to “test” you, so please access the audio and listen to it as many times as you can before class. You will answer the listening comprehension questions about the **Conversation**.

The **Conversation** section offers a chance to practice talking about the topic. Be sure to check your pronunciation, rhythm, stress and intonation with the audio and with your partner.

The **Speaking** section gives you the opportunity to test your communication skills in a safe environment. Practice as much as you can with your partner(s), and when you’re in a genuinely intercultural situation, you’ll be ready. Don’t make the mistake of racing to finish

quickly. Always think “What more can I add?” “What more can I tell or ask my partner(s)?” And if you finish the task before your classmates, please keep chatting *in English!*

The **Wrap Up with Danny/Kayla** section works as a reading activity that checks your understanding and provides some more useful vocabulary. This time, it may be a good idea to highlight the words that you *don’t* know.

The **Your Turn** section asks you to look outside Japan, do a little research, and get some information and insights about the unit’s theme from the perspective of a different culture. After you’ve prepared “Your Turn” (using the worksheets at the back of the book), be ready to tell your partner(s) about what you’ve learned.

The **Get Ready** section introduces key vocabulary for the next unit. Try to review these words regularly before starting the new topic. “Meeting” a new word regularly is an important part of learning it. You can see this key vocabulary again in the worksheets at the back of the book. Check (✓) the words you already know and look up any words that you don’t know to write their meanings in the blanks.

How to Access the Audio Online

With a smartphone:

1. Scan the QR code on the right to visit the website for the audio.
2. Click a triangle (▶) to play each audio.



With a computer/PC:

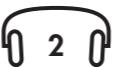
1. Visit the website below.
<https://ngljapan.com/samples-2021/>
2. Click a triangle (▶) to play each audio.

Introduction

Cast of Characters

Who's Who?

Listen to the descriptions of the characters in this book. Fill the gaps with the missing information.



DANNY is a British student spending a year in Japan as part of his B.A. in (1) Studies. He's studying Japanese language and culture. In his free time he enjoys (2) , music and traveling. It's his first time in Japan, and he'll stay with the Harada family for three months before moving into student accommodation.



Homestay mother MAKI HARADA lived and worked in Britain as a tour guide. She spent three years there before returning to Japan, getting (3) and starting a family. She now works part-time in the office of an international exchange center. She's a great (4) and is also learning Spanish.



Homestay father YUKIO works for JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) and spends long periods of time overseas. He obtained a Master's (5) in the US and now works as an agricultural economist. When he has time, he enjoys playing golf, doing (6) work with an environmental group, and watching documentaries.



Elder sister KUMI is studying international (7) at university. She spent a year studying in Seattle and has also done a homestay in Korea. She is a member of the university lacrosse team. In the future, she's hoping to work for the Red Cross or the (8) . She likes Korean music and dramas, and is learning Korean.



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Younger brother TAKUYA is a high-school student. He enjoys listening to hip hop music and dancing with his friends. He's a

(9) snowboarder and soccer player, and he hopes to talk about soccer with Danny. He enjoys school life, but he's not too keen on (10) . He has no idea what he wants to do in the future.



KAYLA is from Seattle. Over the years, her family hosted lots of Japanese students (11) Kumi, and Kayla became curious about visiting Japan. She's now traveling around Japan, and is visiting the Harada family in Hiroshima. She worked for an (12) company in Austin, Texas, but is now between jobs. In her free time she enjoys running, eating out and watching movies. She's also crazy about rabbits!

Get Ready

Before starting Unit 1, look at this important vocabulary. Go to page 96 for the worksheet.

adjective	anxious	appearance	bald
beard	brother-in-law	definitely	department
describe	gran	grin	heavy-set
idiot	keen (on)	look alike	occupation
outgoing	personality	petite	the black sheep (of the family)

Unit 1

Getting to Know You



Warm Up

Introduce yourself to your partner(s) by answering their questions. Try to give more information about yourself. Then, change roles. Comment on your partner's answers, and try to ask back-up questions. For example:

A: How do you spend your free time?

B: I go shopping, watch YouTube, sometimes go to karaoke with friends.

A: Oh! Who do you follow on YouTube?

B: No one special, just make-up stuff, fashion, some music, that kind of thing ...

A: Oh, that sounds like me! Do you know ...?

Here are some questions your partner(s) will ask you and your possible answers:

1. Where are you from? (Are you from around here?)

— Yes, I live in ... / No, (I'm not.) I'm from ...

2. Do you have any interests? How do you spend your free time?

— I enjoy _____ ing ... / I like _____ ing ...

3. What's your major?

— I'm studying ... / I'm in the department of ...

4. Have you joined any clubs or circles?

— Yes, I'm in the ... and the ... / Not yet, but I'm planning to join the ...

5. Do you have a part-time job? Are you working anywhere now?

— Yes, I'm working in a(n) ... / Yes, I work at ...

— No, not yet (but I'd like to get a job ...).

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Vocabulary

This vocabulary will help you to describe people. We can talk about their features:

Features	Typical words
character	loud, talkative, quiet, confident
accessories	glasses, earrings, clothes
build or body type	well-built, heavy-set, slim, petite
special features	bearded, bald, tattooed
hair length	short, long, medium-length, shoulder-length
hair style	straight, curly, spiky, wavy
hair color	dark, fair, gray, silver, blonde
face type	round, thin, long, red
smile	friendly, cute, nervous, nice
expression	serious, friendly, nervous, shy, angry, quiet, kind

Work with your partner to match the descriptions (1–8) to the people below.

1. The bald, silver-haired guy with the beard: _____
2. The friendly-looking woman with curly hair and the nice smile: _____
3. The guy with glasses and the friendly smile: _____
4. The young man with the thin face and short dark hair: _____
5. The heavy-set guy with the tattoos: _____
6. The woman who's laughing, with short blonde hair: _____
7. The serious-looking woman with dark, shoulder-length hair: _____
8. The round-faced woman with the beautiful smile: _____



Don



Kristina



Mohammed



Hannah



Aisha



Gus



Ayana



James

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Listening

Before You Listen

Before you listen to Danny talking about his family, look at the picture on the next page and discuss the answers to these questions with your partner(s).

1. Which ones do you think are Danny's sisters?

2. How do you think Danny will describe them?

While You Listen



Listen to the conversation and check your answers.

1. Who is the guy with the beard?

2. How did Danny describe himself?

After You Listen

Match each person (1–7) to one of the choices (a–g).

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Danny's father | (a) The one in the dark sweater |
| 2. Danny's mother | (b) The one next to Danny's mom |
| 3. Danny's gran | (c) The one who is studying nursing |
| 4. Danny's younger sister | (d) The one with the big grin |
| 5. Danny's older sister | (e) The one who is good at art |
| 6. Danny's friend | (f) The one with the earring |
| 7. Danny's older sister's boyfriend | (g) The tall one at the back |

Conversation



Danny is telling Maki about his family.

Danny: Maki? Do you want to see some of my family photos?

Maki: Oh, yes please. I've been looking forward to seeing them.

Danny: Here we are then ...

Maki: Is that your mom? The one in the dark sweater?

Danny: That's right, and that's my gran next to her. She and her mom look alike, don't they.

Maki: Mmm, they do. And you look like your mother, don't you.

Danny: Yes, I do—in some ways. And that's my dad, the one at the back, next to the door.

Maki: Oh yes, you definitely look more like your mother. Your father's very tall, isn't he.

Danny: Yes, he's taller than me, anyway. The one next to him is my younger sister, Claire.

She's really smart, she's studying nursing. And the one on the left is my older sister,

Chris. She's the artist of the family. She works for a design company.

Maki: She's very pretty.

Danny: I suppose so, yeah. She's really talkative and outgoing. She's getting married next year. The guy with the beard and the earring is my future brother-in-law, Max.

Maki: So if Chris is the artist of the family, what are you?

Danny: Me? I don't know. Maybe I'm the black sheep of the family!

Maki: I'm sure you're not! Oh! Who's that?! The one with the big grin?

Danny: Oh yeah, that's my friend, Steve. He's an idiot! I've known him since we were kids.

Maki: Your family looks very nice.

Danny: Yeah, they're great. I miss them a lot.



Speaking 1 Getting to Know You

Help each other to get to know class members. Ask your partner(s) about other students in the room. For example:

A: Who's that girl/boy?

B: Which one?

A: The one ... (*explain by appearance, clothes, location or actions*)

B: Which one?

A: The one ... (*explain again. Give more information*)

B: Oh! That's ... S/he ... (*give more information*)

We can use the following patterns to identify people:

	with	wearing	in
appearance	The one with long hair.		
accessories	The one with glasses.	The one wearing glasses.	
clothes	The one with the red top.	The one wearing the red top.	The one in the red top.
current actions	The one (who's) talking to John. / The one who's playing with her hair.		
past actions	The one who said "Hi!" / The one who was talking to the teacher.		
location	The one near the door. / The one next to [behind/at the front/etc.] ...		

Speaking 2 Talking about Your Family

If you have English-speaking guests or make friends overseas, you might need to talk about your family. Talk with your partner(s) about your family. Try to make extra comments. The examples below will help you.

Ask about occupations: What does your brother [sister/etc.] do?

He works for a construction company. I don't think he enjoys his job very much.
She's a public servant—she works for the prefectural government.

Ask about personality: What's your _____ like?

He's a bit shy, but he's quite friendly when you get to know him.
She's really nice. She has a really good sense of humour and loves ...

Ask about family interests: What does your _____ like doing?

He's crazy about fishing and golf, but he doesn't have much free time.
She loves traveling, so she goes abroad whenever she has a chance.

Wrap Up with Danny

Read the passage and answer the questions below.

1 How much do you know about your family history? I'm sure you know about your parents, aunts and uncles, and grandparents. But do you know about your great-grandparents? Or your great-great-grandparents?!

2 The Internet has given us many chances to learn about the world, but in recent years it's also given us the chance to dig back into history and learn about our family history. For example, in Britain, every 10 years, there's a national survey called a census. This



census records everyone's personal information (occupation, age, marital status, birthplace, and so on), and all the records from 1841 until 1911 are available online. We can even order copies of our ancestors' birth, marriage and death certificates.

3 For this reason, genealogy (the study of family history) has become a really popular hobby. Searching the archive is fascinating, and I've learnt a lot about my family history. For example, my great-great grandfather had 12 children! What do you know about your family history? Was your great-great grandfather a *samurai*??

- Which word could best replace the phrase "dig back into history and learn about" in Paragraph 2?
(a) create (b) research (c) tell
- Which of the following sentences is true?
(a) "Marital status" refers to how long someone has been married.
(b) "Marital status" refers to if you are married, single, divorced or widowed.
(c) "Marital status" refers to who is the boss of the house, the husband or the wife.
- What does "fascinating" in Paragraph 3 mean?
(a) quite expensive (b) really interesting (c) very difficult

Your Turn

Choose one of these activities. Be ready to explain your chosen topic to your partner(s). Go to page 97 for the worksheet.

- What do you know about your family history? Make a family tree.
- Find some old family photos and explain them to your partner(s).

Get Ready

Before starting the next unit, look at this important vocabulary. Go to page 98 for the worksheet.

agriculture	climate	coast	delicacy	dialect
earthquake	historic	hot spring	industry	inland
landslide	natural disaster	prefecture	region	rural
shrine	surrounding area	temple	volcano	weird

Introduction

Get Ready for Unit 1

Check (✓) the words you already know and look up any words that you don't know to write their meanings in the blanks.

adjective	<input type="checkbox"/>		grin	<input type="checkbox"/>	
anxious	<input type="checkbox"/>		heavy-set	<input type="checkbox"/>	
appearance	<input type="checkbox"/>		idiot	<input type="checkbox"/>	
bald	<input type="checkbox"/>		keen (on)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
beard	<input type="checkbox"/>		look alike	<input type="checkbox"/>	
brother-in-law	<input type="checkbox"/>		occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
definitely	<input type="checkbox"/>		outgoing	<input type="checkbox"/>	
department	<input type="checkbox"/>		personality	<input type="checkbox"/>	
describe	<input type="checkbox"/>		petite	<input type="checkbox"/>	
gran	<input type="checkbox"/>		the black sheep (of the family)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

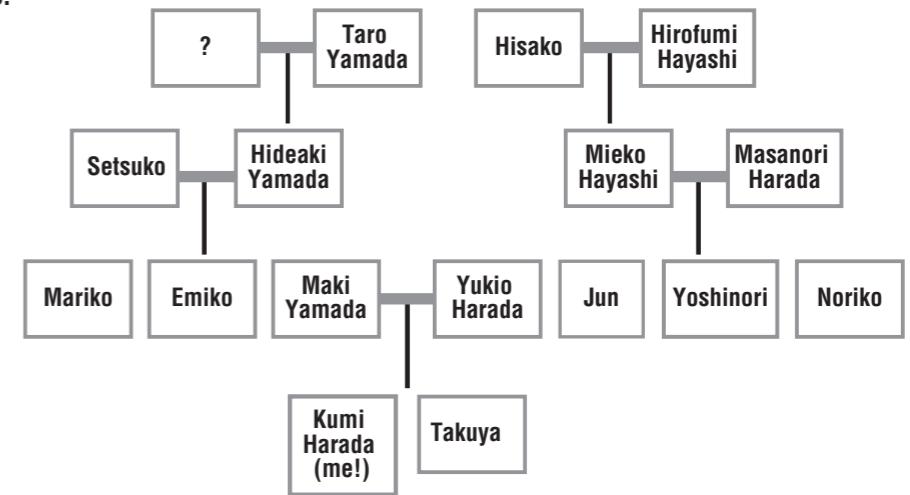
Unit 1 Getting to Know You

Your Turn

Choose one of these activities. Be ready to explain your chosen topic to your partner(s).

- (a) What do you know about your family history? Make a family tree.

Example:



(This page will be perforated in the actual book.)

- (b) Find some old family photos and explain them to your partner(s).

Example:

This is a picture of my great-grandparents' wedding. I think it's the oldest photo that we have in our family. I'm guessing it was taken sometime around 1925. It's interesting because the little boy in the photo was my great-grandfather's son. This was my great-grandfather's second marriage, because his first wife died. I think they met because they went to the same church. The man with the mustache is my great-great-grandfather. What do you think of the clothes they wore?

