

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Absolute Beginner S1 #17

Asking Somebody's Age in Japanese

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#17

INTRODUCTION

Jessi: Asking Somebody's Age in Japanese. ジェシーです。(Jeshii desu.) Jessi here!

Naomi こんにちは！なおりです。(Kon'nichi wa! Naomi desu.) Hi everyone, Naomi here!

Jessi: Thanks again for joining us for this Absolute Beginner series! In the last lesson, we learned a lot of different phrases used for responding different ways to what someone says in Japanese. And in this lesson, we're going to learn some numbers, and with those numbers, we'll learn how to talk about age.

Naomi: Sounds good! So Jessi, what's going on in this conversation?

Jessi: In this conversation, Kaori and Masato meet Sarah - Taylor's young daughter - for the first time!

Naomi: Oh, a new character!

Jessi: Yes! We finally get to meet Taylor's daughter. Okay, let's listen to the conversation!

LESSON CONVERSATION

かおり：ねえ、テイラーさん、サラちゃんはどこですか？(Nē, Teirā-san, Sara-chan wa doko desu ka?)

テイラー：こっちです。(Kocchi desu.)

かおり：(in a soft voice) あ、かわいい〜。(A, kawaii.)

まさと：ちいさいですね。なんさいですか？(Chiisai desu ne. Nansai desu ka?)

テイラー：1 さいです。(Issai desu.)

(Sarah starts to cry)

かおり：ごめんごめん！うるさい？ごめんね〜。(Gomen gomen! Urusai? Gomen ne.)

English Host: Let's hear the conversation one time slowly.

かおり：ねえ、テイラーさん、サラちゃんはどこですか？(Nē, Teirā-san, Sara-chan wa doko desu ka?)

テイラー：こっちです。(Kocchi desu.)

かおり：(in a soft voice) あ、かわいい〜。(A, kawaii.)

まさと：ちいさいですね。なんさいですか？(Chiisai desu ne. Nansai desu ka?)

テイラー：1 さいです。(Issai desu.)

(Sarah starts to cry)

かおり：ごめんごめん！うるさい？ごめんね〜。(Gomen gomen! Urusai? Gomen ne.)

English Host: Now, let's listen to it with the translation.

かおり：ねえ、テイラーさん、サラちゃんはどこですか？(Nē, Teirā-san, Sara-chan wa doko desu ka?)

Jessi: Hey, Taylor, where's Sarah?

テイラー：こっちです。(Kocchi desu.)

Jessi: She's over here.

かおり：(in a soft voice) あ、かわいい〜。(A, kawaii.)

Jessi: (in a soft voice) Ah, how cute!

まさと：ちいさいですね。なんさいですか？(Chiisai desu ne. Nansai desu ka?)

Jessi: She's so small. How old is she?

テイラー：1さいです。(Issai desu.)

Jessi: One year old.

かおり：ごめんごめん！うるさい？ごめんね〜。(Gomen gomen! Urusai? Gomen ne.)

Jessi: Oh, I'm sorry! Are we loud? I'm sorry!

LESSON FOCUS

Jessi: So we finally get to meet another member of the family!

Naomi Yes, サラちゃん (Sara-chan).

Jessi: Sarah, Taylor's daughter. In Japanese, she is referred to as サラちゃん (Sara-chan).

Naomi: That's right! サラ (Sara) plus the suffix ちゃん (chan).

Jessi: In Lesson 6, you learned the name suffix さん which is used to show respect to someone.

Naomi: Yes, like テイラーさん (Teirā-san), or まさとさん (Masato-san).

Jessi: ちゃん (chan) is a suffix that works like さん(san), but it is used to show affection and familiarity.

Naomi: Exactly. In many cases it is used with young children, especially young girls.

Jessi: So instead of just being called サラ (Sara), she is called サラちゃん (Sara-chan). And how old is she, by the way?

Naomi: We found out in this conversation that she is one.

Jessi: Right, one year old. Speaking of age, we'll learn how to talk about age in the Lesson Focus later on! But before we talk about age, there's something important we need to go over.

Naomi Ah, I know what you're talking about. Numbers, right?

Jessi: Exactly! We haven't studied numbers yet.

Naomi: Okay, so here, let's study basic numbers in Japanese.

Jessi: Sounds good! Let's start with the numbers 1 through 10. Naomi will give you the word, and I'll follow with the translation, okay? Here we go.

Naomi: いち (ichi)

Jessi: One.

Naomi: に (ni)

Jessi: Two

Naomi: さん (san)

Jessi: Three

Naomi: よん (yon)

Jessi: Four

Naomi: ご (go)

Jessi: Five

Naomi: ろく (roku)

Jessi: Six

Naomi: なな (nana)

Jessi: Seven

Naomi: はち (hachi)

Jessi: Eight

Naomi: きゅう (kyū)

Jessi: Nine

Naomi: じゅう (jū)

Jessi: Ten. Okay, now let's do that one more time. This time, listeners, be prepared to repeat after Naomi. Here we go.

Naomi: 1 [pause] 2 [pause] 3 [pause] 4 [pause] 5 [pause] 6 [pause] 7 [pause] 8 [pause] 9 [pause] 10 [pause]

Jessi: Great! So that was numbers 1 through 10. Basically, the numbers from 1 through 10 are something that you have to memorize. Now let's practice saying them in groups. Let's start with 1 through three. Repeat after Naomi.

Naomi: 1、2、3 [pause]

Jessi: Next, from 4 through 6.

Naomi: 4,5,6 [pause]

Jessi: And finally, from 7 through 10.

Naomi: 7,8,9,10[pause]

Jessi: Okay. And let's try them all together from 1 through 10.

Naomi: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10.[pause]

Jessi: Okay, there you go. You can count from 1 through 10 in Japanese now.

Naomi: It means you can count up to 99.

Jessi: Yes! Believe it or not, it's really not that hard. Counting in Japanese involves patterns, so once you know numbers 1 through 10, you just follow a pattern to make even bigger numbers.

Naomi: That's right. For example to say eleven, we say 10, 1 .

Jessi: Right. For example, ten is...

Naomi: じゅう (jū)

Jessi: One is...

Naomi: いち (ichi)

Jessi: So if we line them up

Naomi: じゅういち (jū-ichi)

Jessi: Ten-one – eleven! That's it! One to ten are your building blocks, now you just have to arrange them! And by using this system, you can count all the way to 99. Let's try another.

Naomi Okay. How about twelve?

Jessi: That would be ten and two, right?

Naomi: Right.

Jessi: So, ten isじゅう (jū), and two is に (ni)...

Naomi: So that would beじゅうに (jū-ni)

Jessi: Literally, ten-two. So, thirteen would be?

Naomi: じゅうさん (jū-san)

Jessi: Literally, ten-three. Fourteen, ten-four is?

Naomi: じゅうよん (jū-yon)

Jessi: And the pattern continues on like this. There are charts with the rest of the numbers in the lesson notes for this lesson, so make sure to check those out. Okay! I know that was a lot of information.. a lot of numbers...

Naomi: Feel free to listen to this section again until you get used to the numbers.

Jessi: Definitely, and looking at the lesson notes while listening will help too. All right. Let's move on to the lesson focus.

In this lesson, you'll learn how to ask and tell how old you or someone else is. Naomi, what's the word we need to talk about age?

Naomi: さい (sai). It comes after the number of years. So for example, に (ni) is 2, and so 2さい (ni sai) is...

Jessi: 2 years old.

Naomi: Right! さん (san) is 3, so 三歳 (san sai) is

Jessi: Three years old.

Naomi: よん (yon) is 4, so 四歳 (yon sai) is

Jessi: Four years old. And it just keeps on going like that - you just add さい (sai) to the number, and that means ____ years old. But there are a few exceptions, aren't there, Naomi?

Naomi: That's right. We hate to break it to you.

Jessi: But they shouldn't be that hard to remember. So Naomi, could you tell us the exceptions when talking about age?

Naomi: 1, 8, 10.

Jessi: Right. The numbers 1, 8, and 10.

Naomi: Remember that the word for "one" is いち (ichi) , but the word for one year old is いっさい (issai).

Jessi: Yes, so it's not just いち (ichi) plus さい (sai), but instead it's いっさい (issai)。

Naomi: Right. The word for "eight" is はち (hachi), but the word for eight years old is はっさい (hassai).

Jessi: Yes, はっさい (hassai), eight years old.

Naomi: And the word for "ten" is じゅう (jū), but the word for ten years old is じゅっさい (jussai).

Jessi: Yes, so you don't prolong the vowel. It's short - じゅっさい (jussai). Okay, so now that you know how to talk about age... how would you ask about someone's age, Naomi?

Naomi: Good question! To ask how old someone is, we say... 何歳ですか？ (Nansai desu ka?)

Jessi: 何歳ですか？ (Nansai desu ka?)

Naomi: 何歳ですか？ (Nansai desu ka?) なん (Nan) is what, さい (sai) is age, so 何才 (nansai) is what age or how old?

Jessi: Now, if you just say this by itself to someone, you are usually referring to the person you are talking to. "How old are you?" But, just know that, just like in English, it's not considered polite to suddenly ask someone "how old are you?"

Naomi: Right. I'd avoid doing that. But people sometimes ask about somebody else's age right? Like "how old is Sarah?" or "how old is Taylor?"

Jessi: True. if you're asking someone about someone else's age...

Naomi: You use the pattern Aは何歳ですか？ (A wa nansai desu ka?)

Jessi: In place of A, you would put who you are asking about. For example...

Naomi: テイラーは何歳ですか？ (Teirā wa nansai desu ka?)

Jessi: How old is Taylor? Listeners, repeat after Naomi.

Naomi: テイラーは何歳ですか？ (Teirā wa nansai desu ka?)

[pause]

Jessi: Okay, great! Now, let's try one with the listeners. How would you say, how old is Sarah?

[pause]

Jessi: And the answer?

Naomi: サラは何歳ですか？ (Sara wa nansai desu ka?)

Jessi: サラは何歳ですか？ (Sara wa nansai desu ka?) Great! Now, let's say she is 9 years old. Let's remind everyone, what is 9 again?

Naomi: きゅう (kyū)

Jessi: きゅう (kyū). So how would you say, she's nine years old?

[pause]

Jessi And Naomi, the answer is?

Naomi: 9歳です。 (kyū-sai desu.)

Jessi: きゅう (kyū), nine, plus the counter for age, さい (sai), plus です (desu).

9歳です。 (kyū-sai desu.)

Naomi: Excellent!

Jessi: All right, do you feel confident asking and talking about age now?

Naomi: Just remember that it's the number plus さい (sai).

Jessi: Thanks for listening as always, everyone, and we'll see you next time!

Naomi: Until next time everyone, じゃまた！ (Ja mata!)

LESSON CONVERSATION

かおり：ねえ、テイラーさん、サラちゃんはどこですか？ (Nē, Teirā-san, Sara-chan wa doko desu ka?)

テイラー：こっちです。 (Kocchi desu.)

かおり：(in a soft voice) あ、かわいい～。 (A, kawaii.)

まさと：ちいさいですね。なんさいですか？ (Chiisai desu ne. Nansai desu ka?)

テイラー：1さいです。 (Issai desu.)

(Sarah starts to cry)

かおり：ごめんごめん！うるさい？ごめんね～。 (Gomen gomen! Urusai? Gomen ne.)