



All Japanese All The Time
● com

QRG

Quick Reference Guide

Version 1.0

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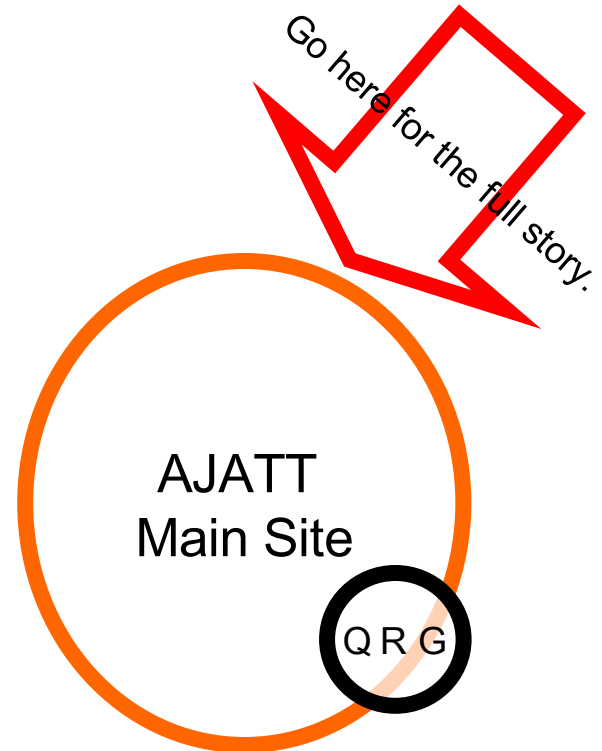
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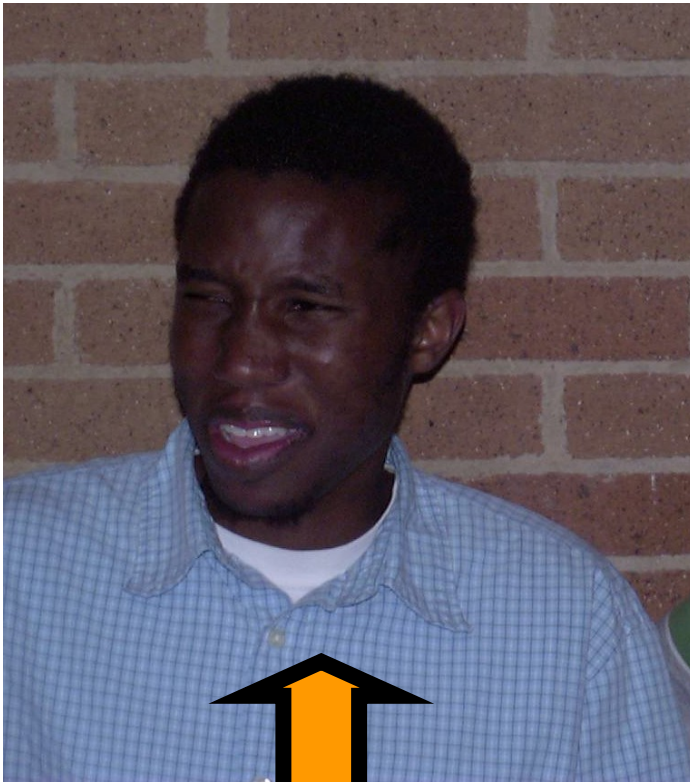
Introduction

Over the past couple of years, All Japanese All The Time (AJATT) has grown into a site vast in scope, length and detail. One small but significant problem it causes is that it tends to leave people at a loss as to **what they should do now.**

This guide is intended not as a summary of the contents of the [main AJATT site](#), nor as a replacement, but rather as a **funnel**, to help you narrowly direct yourself into the very the small, narrow space we call “The Present Moment”, where all actual action takes place.



Don't Trust Me, Trust You



No trusty.

This guide is **not for following**, it's **for using**.

The idea is to give you a simple pencil outline of actions to take, over which you will draw and color in your own language-acquisition picture.

Ultimately, feel free to add, remove and/or modify things for yourself. It's more fun that way. And **fun is efficiency**.

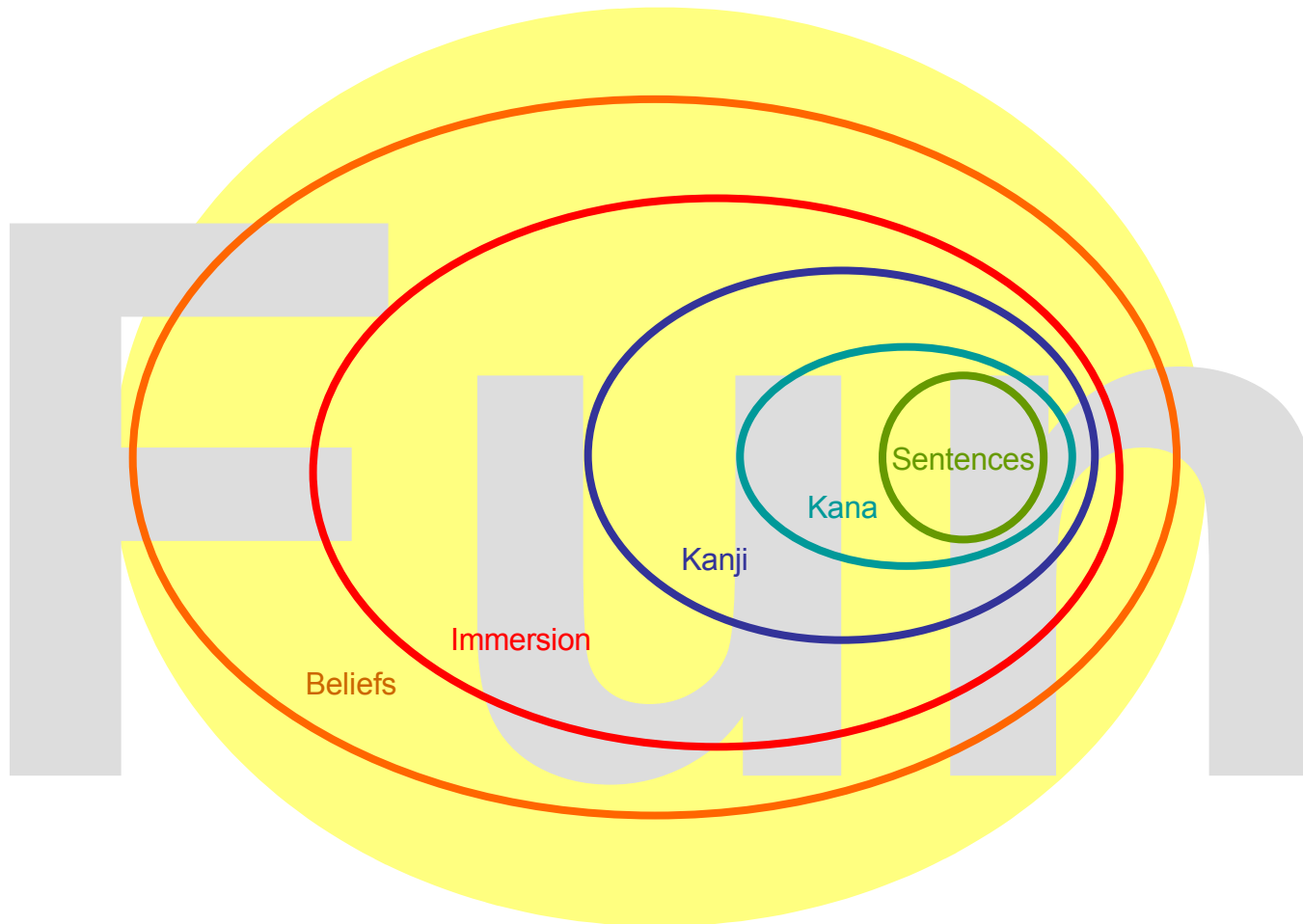
Trust yourself and your own judgment. You may (will) be wrong sometimes, but in the long run, it's the right way to go.

OK, here we go.

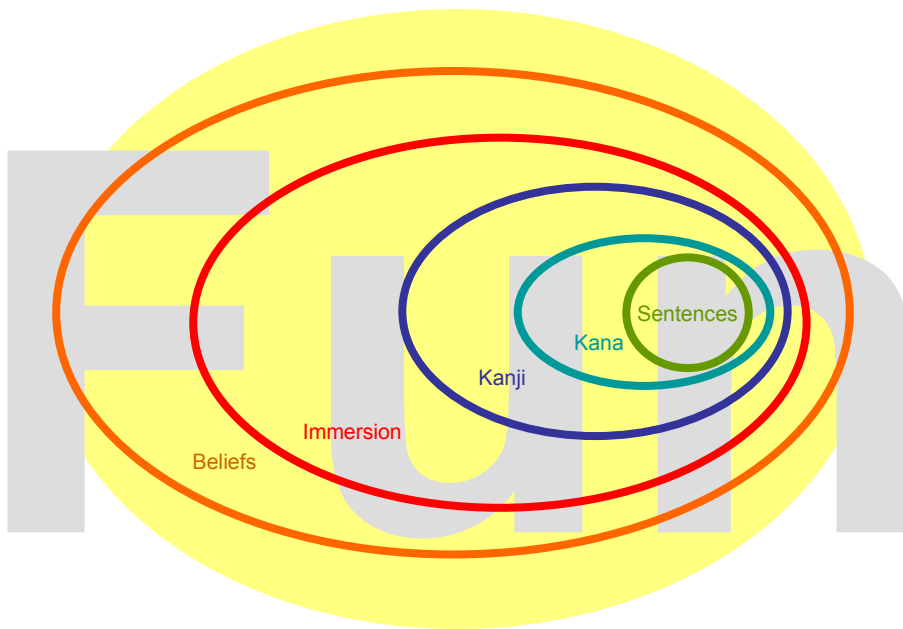
OVERVIEW

俯瞰圖

AJATT Phase Overview



About The Phases



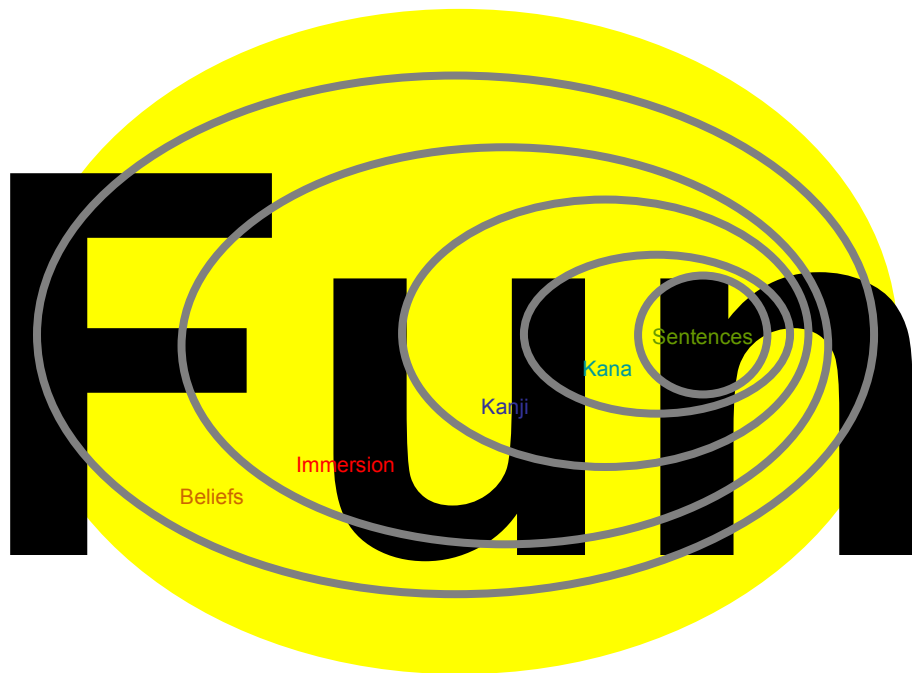
The word “phase” gives the impression that there is a clear point where you stop doing one thing and move on to the next.

In actual fact, the phases are more like layers. You **start from the outermost phase and move inward**, adding one phase/layer at a time. Outer phases always remain ongoing (although usually in a less concentrated form).

Generally speaking, each outer phase does need to reach a certain level of completion before introducing the next phase into the mix.

Let’s do a little phase-by-phase intro now.

Fun



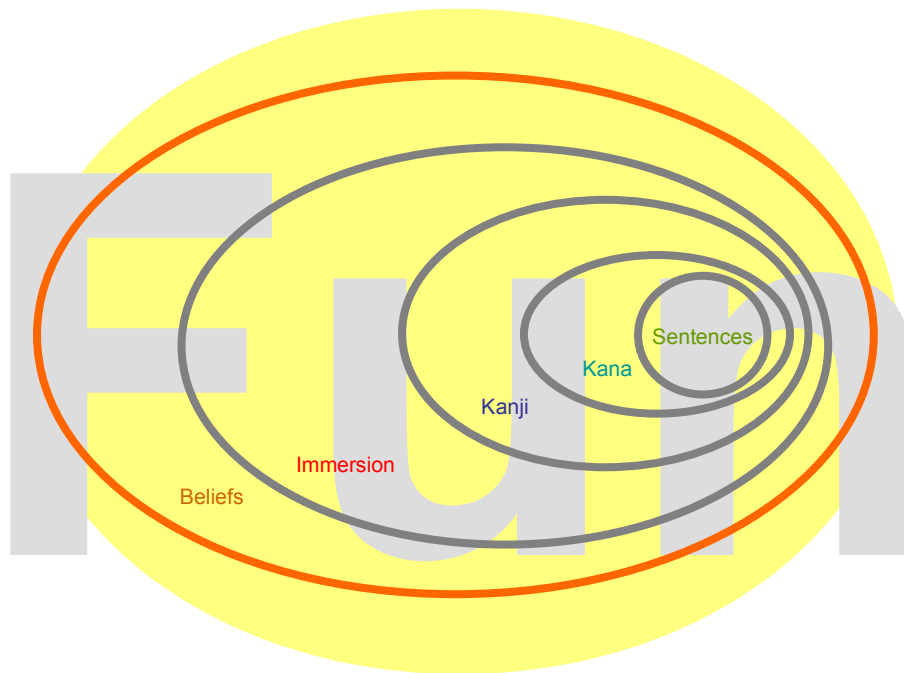
“Fun” is not a phase *per se*. But it is the very basis of your entire AJATT project. it is everywhere, all around you, even in this room 😊.

Find out what’s fun for you. Think of what you like, and what you’re into. The books and TV shows and movies you like, the types of music you like – these shall be your learning materials.

If something is not fun for you, then change how you’re doing it, or stop doing it altogether. Remember the “Two Laws of AJATT”:

- 1. Have fun**
- 2. in Japanese**

Beliefs



Believe you can learn Japanese.

Believe you will learn Japanese.

Believe it is your *destiny* to learn Japanese.

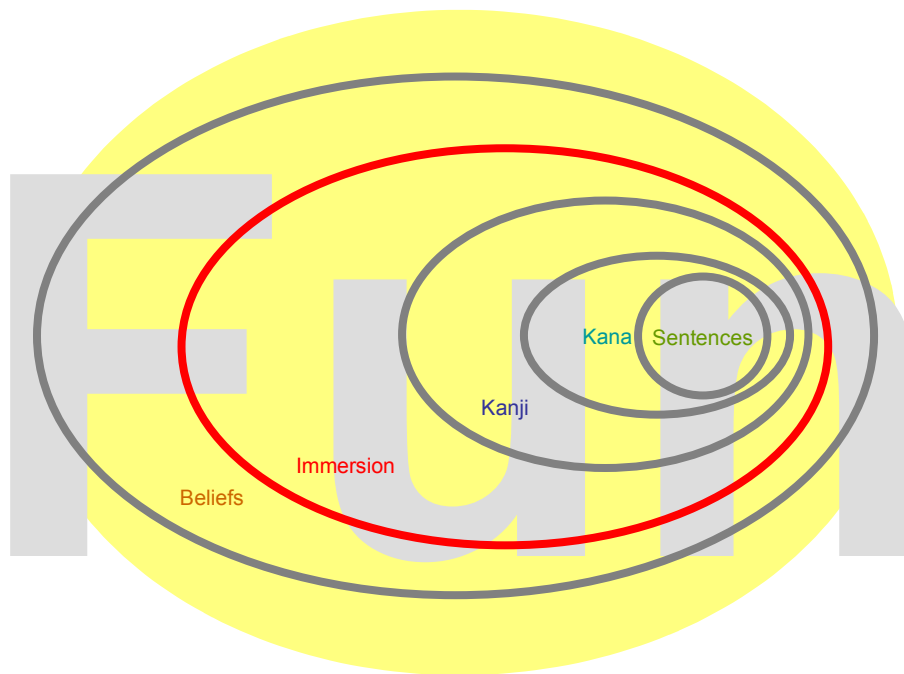
Believe you already know Japanese.

Believe you *are* Japanese.

To quote Geoff Colvin of *Talent Is Overrated*:

“What you really believe...becomes the foundation of all you will ever achieve”

Immersion Environment



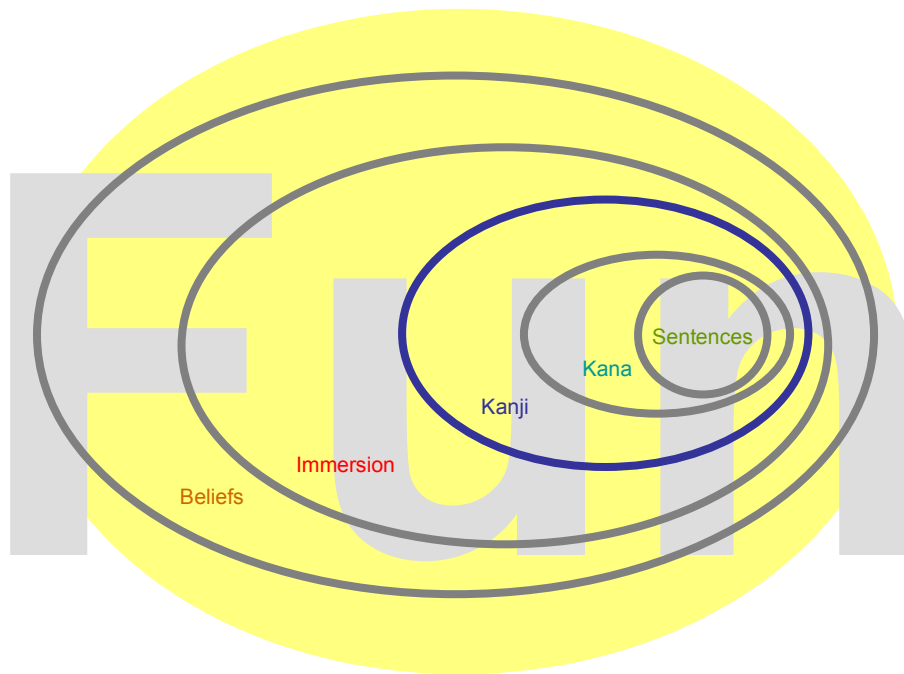
The idea of the immersion environment is to create yourself a Japanese microclimate. You see, it turns out that in order to learn a language,

it doesn't really matter what country you're in – all you need do is to alter the language of the three-meter radius around you.

“If only I had been born and raised in Japan”,
“If only I could go to Japan” – thanks to the Internet and modern audiovisual technology, these are no longer valid excuses.

In addition to constantly watching and listening to Japanese stuff, **reading** is also a crucial part of the immersion environment. More on that later.

Kanji



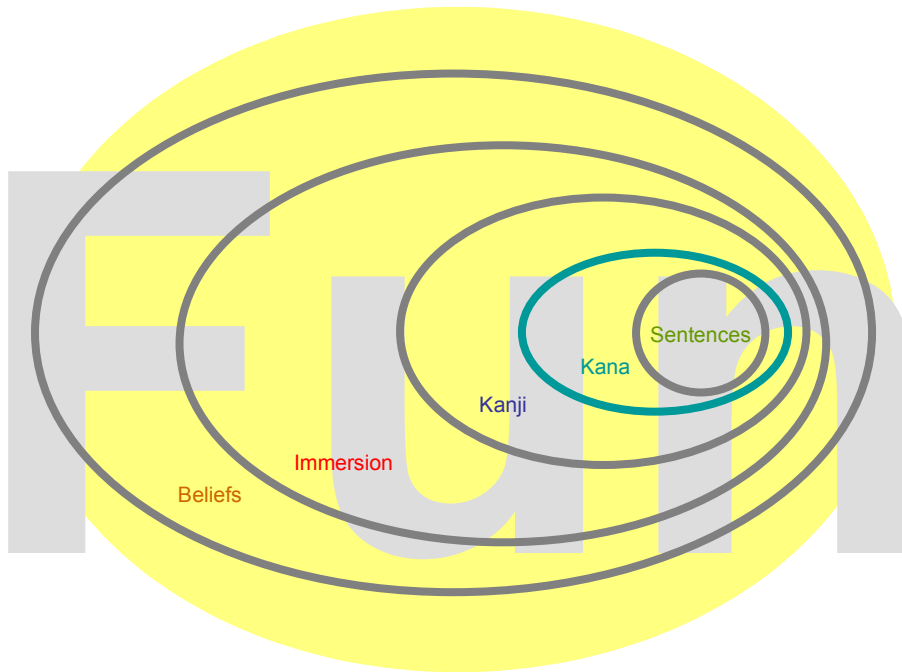
The kanji phase is simple. Basically, using the book *Remembering The Kanji* and a type of intelligent electronic flashcard software known as an **SRS**, you will learn to write out a kanji from memory, given an English keyword and mnemonic story.

You don't learn the readings (sounds) of each kanji until later (in context, in the sentences phase). The concept is to give yourself the same advantage as people from China and Korea have when coming to Japanese.

Kanji carry meaning that does not fundamentally change across different words or even across different languages. The method is simple, logical and counterintuitive – but devastatingly effective.

Kana:

Hiragana and Katakana

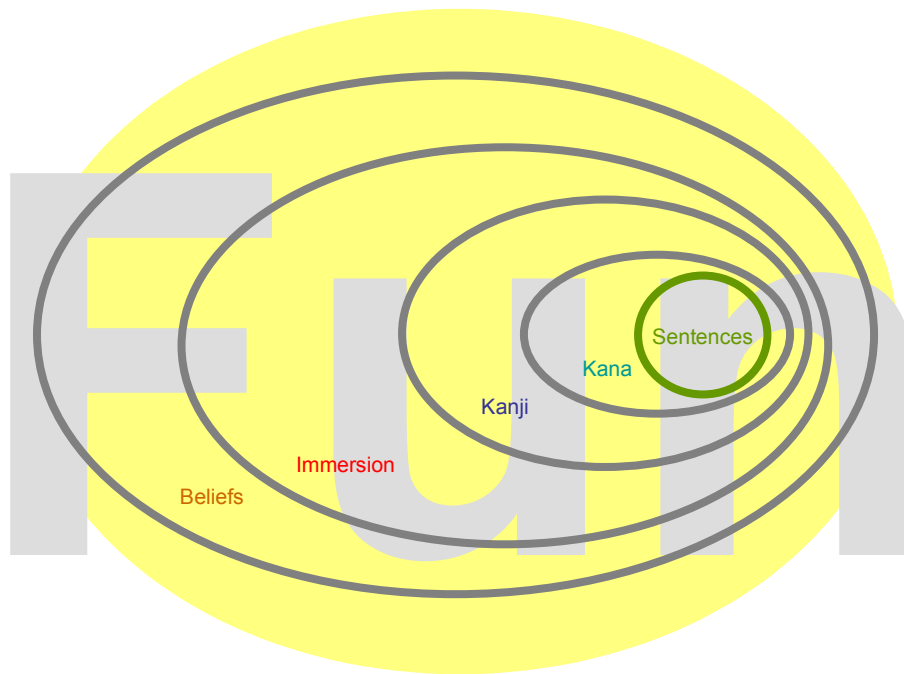


Why kana after kanji? No particular reason, except that the mnemonics in *Remembering the Kana* presume a grounding in kanji. Also, it's worth noting that kana are merely a highly stylized form of kanji that are used only for their sound, rather than their meaning.

For getting nicer hand-written kana, I also recommend the Jimi books (*hiragana* and *katakana*).

As with kanji, you will use an SRS.

Sentences



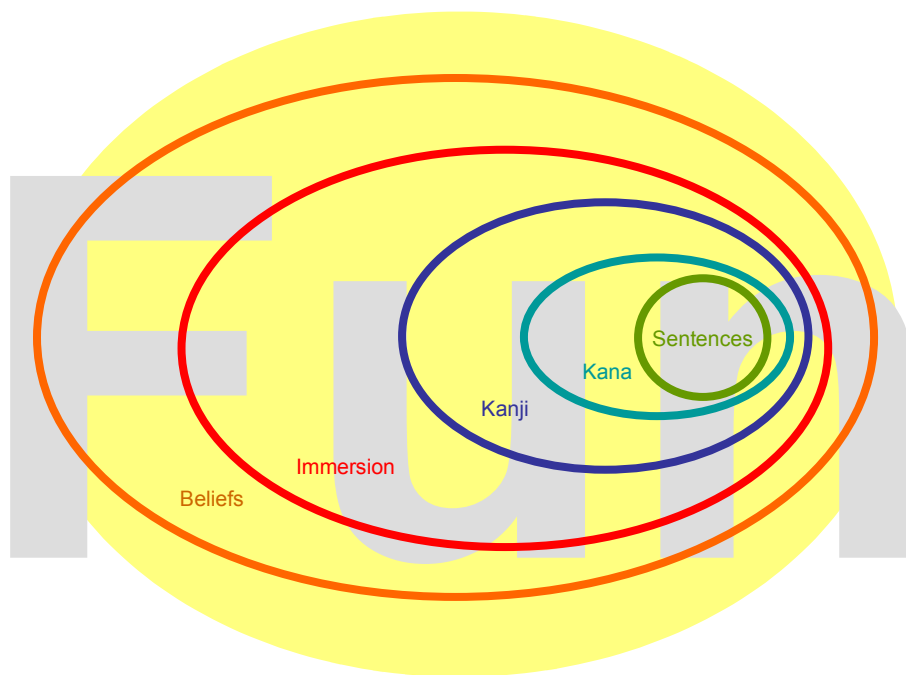
Perhaps the most famous part of AJATT is the sentences phase, which actually owes itself to [AntiMoon](#).

The idea and rationale are simple, and covered extensively [here](#). Again, an SRS is involved.

Your first ~500 sentences are bilingual (pre-prepared translation attached), thereafter you move to monolingual sentences only. Relax. It'll all make sense in time.

Do note that SRSing sentences, while an immensely powerful exercise in building reading (and speaking) ability, is not a substitute for straight listening and reading.

FOCUS ONLY ON THE PHASE YOU'RE ON



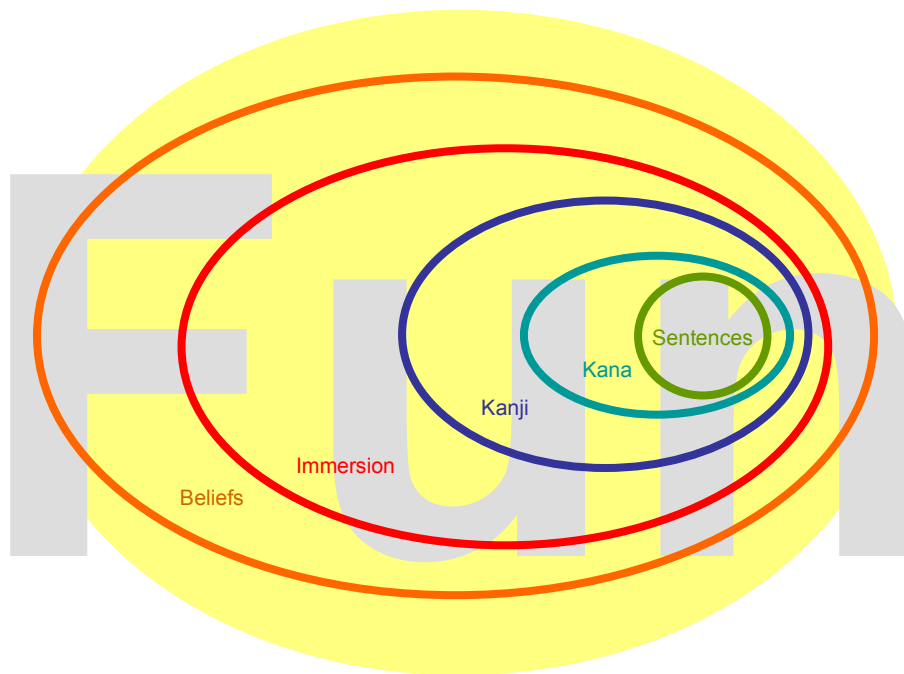
I often get questions about the sentences phase from people who haven't even started the kanji.

This is a bad thing.

While we've just gone over all the phases, the key really is to only **focus on the phase you're on**. You don't actually need to know anything else. It may be *nice* to know, but to the extent that it's confusing you, it's of no help.

Yes, your knowledge is incomplete now. It's supposed to be. When the time comes, it' I all make sense with little or no explanation.

Move, Don't Rush



Consistency is the new speed.

Impressive results in your Japanese will be a long time in coming, particularly as you **get past the very beginning** of your journey.

The road is longer than you wish it were, but also shorter than you fear it might be. The key is to **always move, but never rush**. Don't get worked up. Don't try to be everywhere and everything right now. Don't even try to "get" somewhere as such. Relax.

Simply **do something small but useful, now**. In the end, that's all one ever can do.

TIME USAGE

時間活用




All The Time? Part 1

Before we go into even more detail on each phase, let me just take a moment here to address an issue that I know has worried the pretty little heads of many a lad and lass – the issue of **time**.

Can a normal adult with a normal life go **all Japanese all the time**?

Says “normal adult”: “Well, maybe young African men who make funny faces and write eBooks can **spend 24 hours a day on Japanese**, but I have a job and school and a life and a picket fence and a credit card. I can’t spend that kind of time, homie!”.



All The Time? Part 2

First, stop calling me “homie”. Second, **stop finding excuses**. Now. Today. There will never be a shortage of disabling excuses. You need to start finding **enabling** excuses instead.

Thirdly, fear not. For unto you I bring good tidings, of great joy. It turns out that **you can do amazing things with your time**, when you make Japanese an absolute necessity in your life.

I know. I did it. And I suck at life. And I had other stuff to do, too. So you can do even better. Allow me to elaborate...

Time: High and Low Energy

As discussed in books like *The Talent Code* and *Talent is Overrated*, the parts of AJATT that some might consider “productive”, core activities (such as SRSing), while extremely important, are ones that can only be sustained by normal human beings like you and me, for about 1 to 4 hours per day, give or take. And even then, they may need to be split into multiple sittings/servings.

So what about the other 20 to 23 hours of the day? As I boast so brazenly on [the “About” page](#), I spent 18-24 hours a day doing something, anything, in Japanese. This is not because I am superhuman (publically, at least), but because there are two types of activity:

High-energy and low-energy. Pedalling and coasting.

If Japanese is a long cycling journey, then high-energy activities are where you **pedal**, and low-energy activities are where you **coast**. So just because you can’t always be pedalling, that doesn’t mean you get off the bike. Just stay on and coast. Yes, you can’t always pedal. But **coasting** counts: you are still moving, and that’s what will make all the difference.



Time: High-Energy

High-energy, “**pedalling**” activities are things that are in the foreground. You give them your full concentration and attention. They are what most people usually think of when they talk about “studying” or “learning” a language.

Examples:

- Any **SRS** activity
- Singing along to a song, watching for and correcting errors
- Reading a book and looking up new/unknown words on the spot
- Watching a movie with a lot of focus and concentration



Time: Low-Energy

Low-energy, “**coasting**” activities are things that are generally in the background. Often, you may do them while doing something else. Often, you don’t give them your full concentration or attention. You don’t actively try to get anything out of them, but you do keep them in your life.

This may not seem like a big deal. But, over time, **the accumulation of tiny, effortless-seeming, apparently meaningless bits of effort produces massive results**. Lung cancer, obesity, prodigious skill – all are achieved like this.

Examples:

- Having Japanese audio play all day and all night
- Having Japanese text pasted all over your walls
- Reading nonchalantly – no dictionary, no concerns, skipping freely
- Having all your electronics’ user interfaces in Japanese
- Basically, **experiencing** rather than **processing**

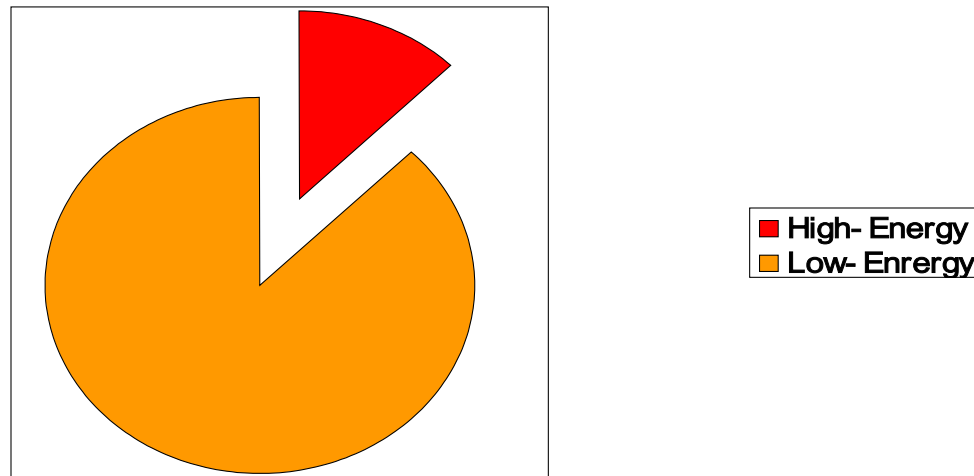


Time: The Ideal

So don't get too worked up over your high-energy time. You can only have so much of it before you exhaust yourself for the day.

The ideal would be that you spend **all day every day on Japanese**, exactly like a person raised in the language, with about 1.5 to 2 hours of high-energy/pedalling, and the rest of your day, every day, given to low-energy/coasting activities.

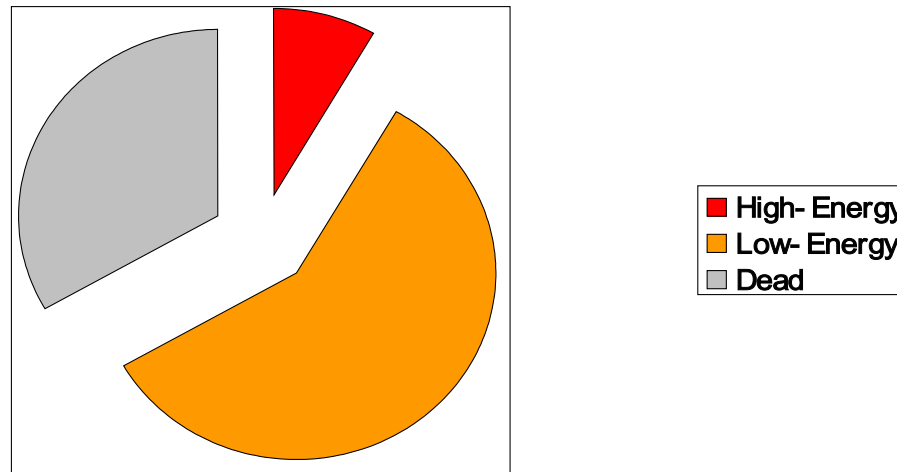
This is not at all unreasonable and quite doable. We all want to be doing something as close to this as possible.



Time: The Common Reality

But the current common reality for many people is a significant lack of control over sizeable chunks of their time – at least on some days. You may have a job (please accept my condolences) or school commitments – i.e. large blocks of time where you don't have complete control over where you are and what you're doing.

The typical response is to give up on this time, making it **zero-energy**, **dead** time. Motionless time. Bad move. Unnecessarily bad move. You are not going to get to your destination by standing still. **You don't have to give up that easily!**

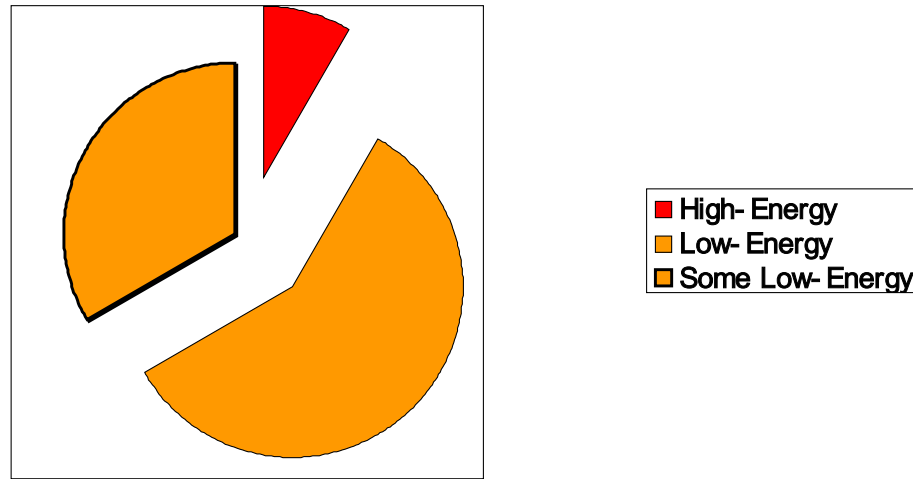


Time: The New Reality

You don't have to bend over and accept dead time as dead. You can bring it back to life. You can **make dents and cracks in the dead time**. Like a plant growing through concrete.

- So you have a job – listen to Japanese on headphones while you're doing it.
- So you eat dinner with your family – play Japanese news in the background while eating it.
- So you have non-Japanese-speaking friends – play J-music/read manga while you hang out.

Don't simply accept what is as is. Yes, sometimes we need to let go, but **instant capitulation is a nasty habit**. Take responsibility. Take control. And be surprised by how much power you actually have and how close you can actually get to the time usage "ideal". **Find enabling excuses**.

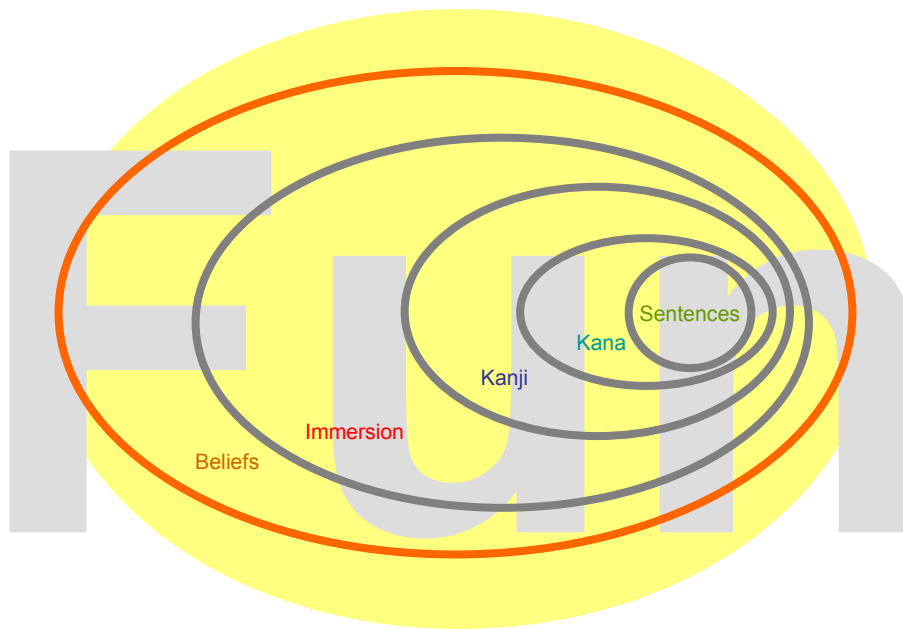


ACTION STEPS

After all that explanation, we finally get to some simple phase-by-phase action steps you can start taking right now.

実践

Action List: Beliefs



1. Read the whole

“[Mental Tools/For the Start of the Journey](#)” section of the main AJATT site.

2. If you still want more, you might try these books and articles as well:

- [The Pygmalion Effect](#)
- [The Talent Code](#)
- [The Now Habit](#)
- [Talent Is Overrated](#)

But of course, this is completely optional. Don't run to your parents crying about how “Khatzumoto forced me to read books” 😊.

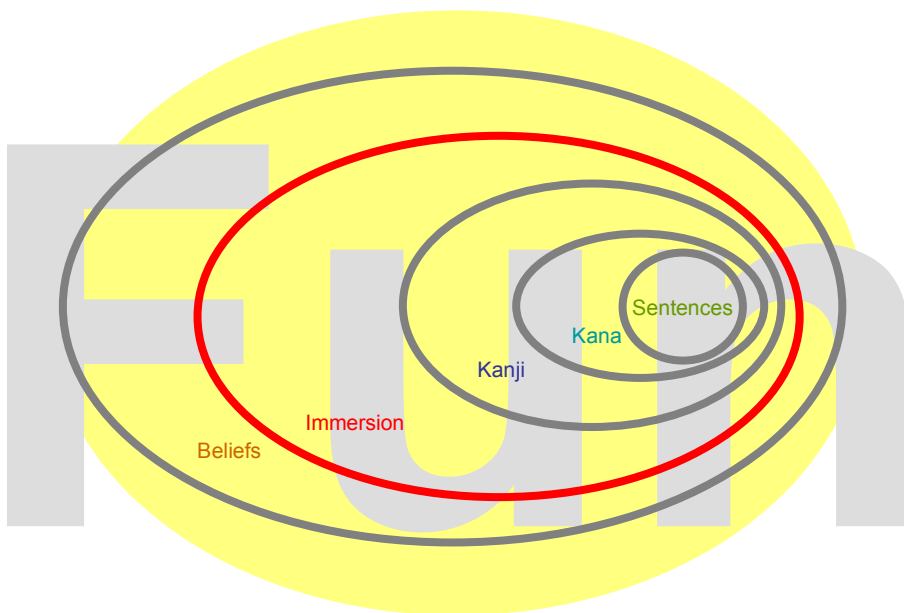


DO. NOT. READ. ANY. MORE. OF. THIS. QRG.

Until you've taken the action steps in the previous list.

You may be an exception, but most people are only confused by the extra information.

Action List: Immersion



1. Start now. [Play these](#) Youtube videos.
2. Get some J-dubbed [American TV shows](#).
3. Get some [Japanese music](#).
4. Coast. Play Japanese media **all the time**.
5. [Change your surroundings](#). Post pages from a [newspaper like this](#) all over your walls.
6. Make a habit of [frequently getting more media](#). A fresh, steady supply is crucial.
7. Get a copy of [Remembering the Kanji, Book 1 \(RTK1\)](#). Read the [introductory sections](#).



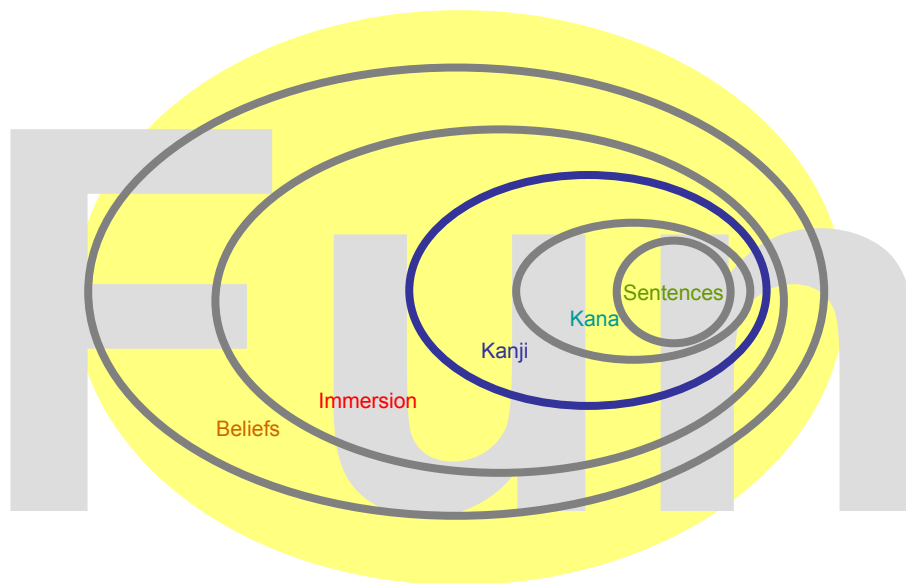
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You don't need more theoretical information now. You need action.

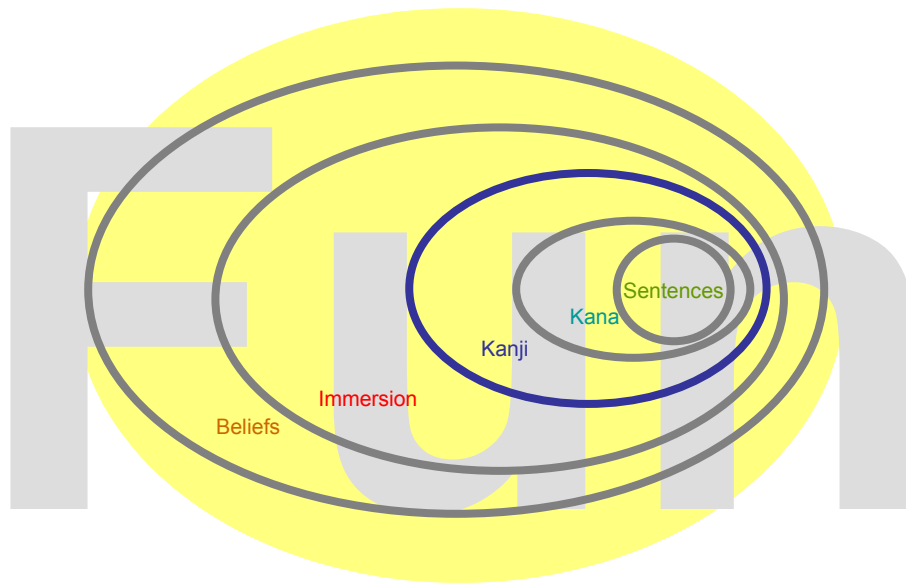
Action List: Kanji



While continuing immersion...

1. Get an [SRS](#) (e.g. [Surusu](#)).
2. Get this [kanji data file](#).
3. Open your RTK book, read the kanji story, and write out the kanji once or twice by hand.
4. For each kanji, make a new SRS card (see next page for format).
5. Do your SRS reviews (“reps”) -- given a keyword and story, your task is to write out the kanji from memory.
6. Score yourself according to [this scale](#).

Kanji Card



Front

ONE
ONE horizontal LINE

Back

—



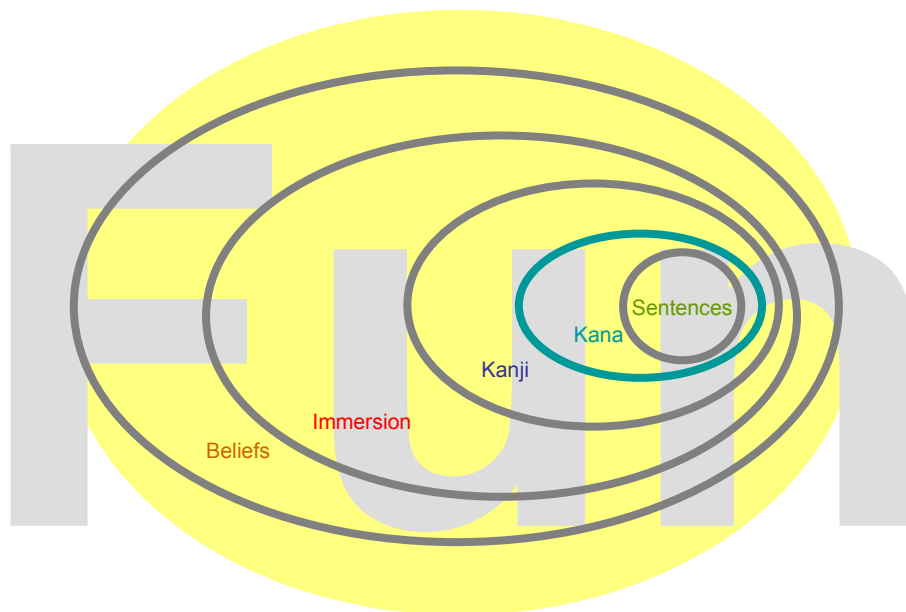
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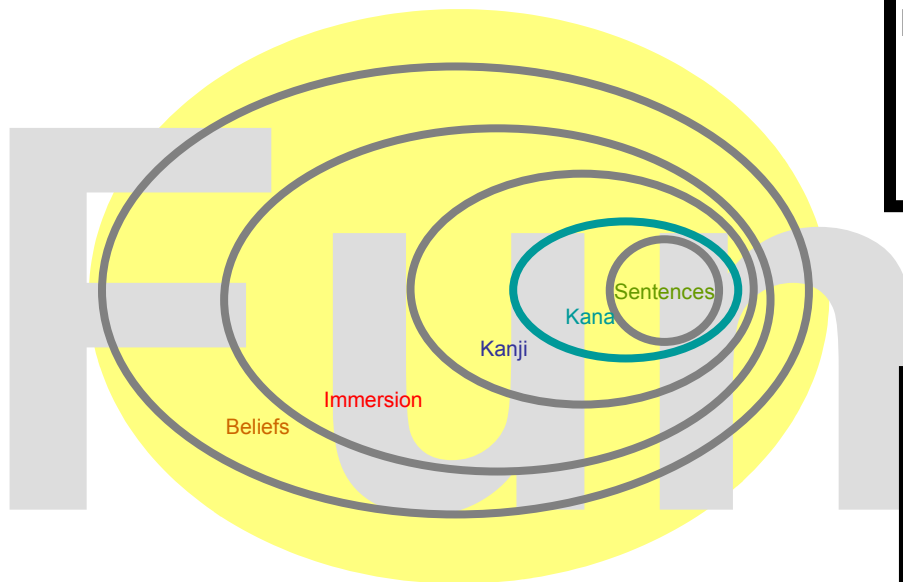
Action List: Kana



Congratulations! You have now learned 2046+ kanji! Now, while **continuing immersion and kanji SRS reps** (outer phases)...

1. Get a copy of *Remembering the Kana* and copies of the Jimi kana books (*hiragana* and *katakana*).
2. In a new SRS deck/category, make kana SRS cards (see next page for format).
3. Do SRS reps as with kanji.

Kana Card



Front

a

Back

あ



DO. NOT. READ. ANY. MORE. OF. THIS. QRG.

Until you've taken the action steps in the previous list.

You may be an exception, but most people are only confused by the extra information.

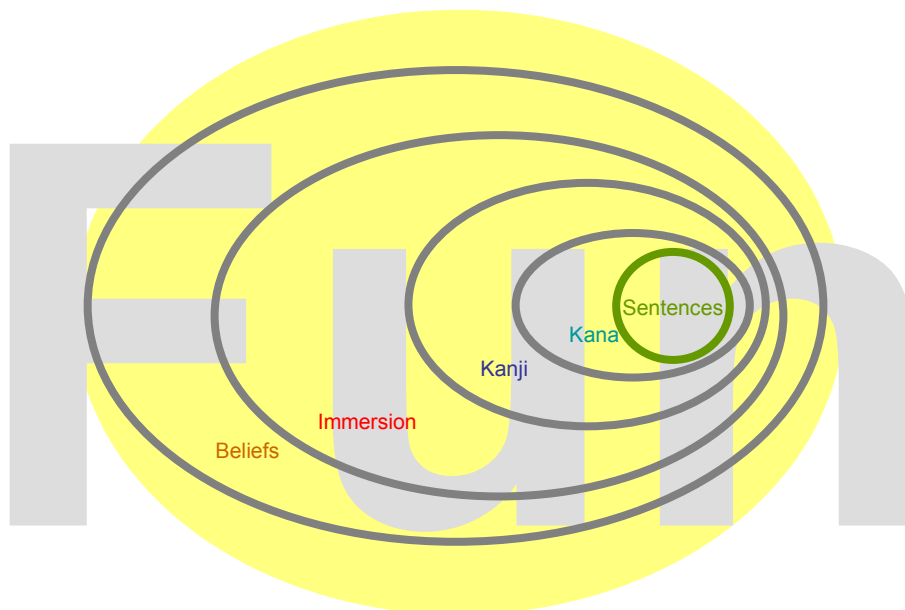
You don't need more theoretical information now. You need action.

Action List: Sentences

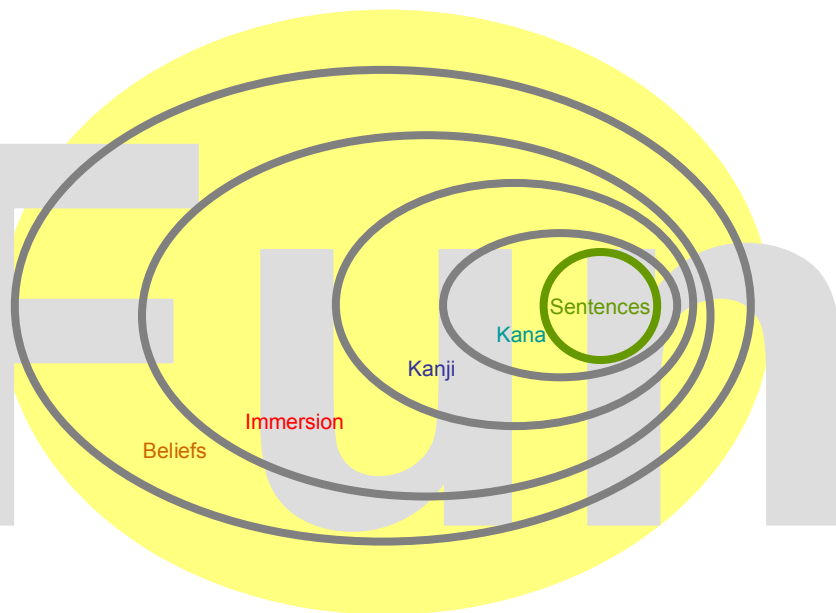
Part 1: Bilingual

Continuing immersion + kanji and kana reps
(i.e. outer phases)...

1. Get a “**starter source**” of sentences.
2. In your SRS, make a new category or account.
3. For your first ~500 cards, make bilingual cards using your starter source (card format on next page).
4. Do SRS reps as before (same scoring).



Bilingual Sentence Card



I have occasionally offered some more intricate card formats in the past. But ultimately, **simple is best**. See the next page for some more pointers.

Front

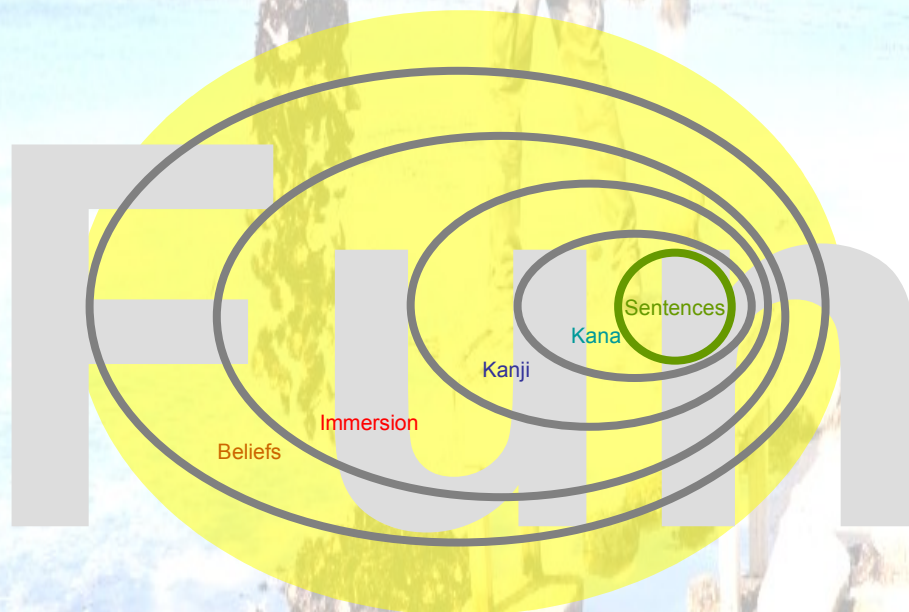
殺すぞ！

Back

ころすぞ

I'm going to kill you!

The Delete Button Is Your Friend



With kanji, you need(ed) all of them. You can't just go dropping kanji.

But that is absolutely not the case with sentences. Sure, the words *within* the sentence might be useful, but that's immaterial.

Sucky sentences will drag you down. So, **if in doubt, throw it out.** A deletion rate as high as 25~50% is not abnormal. For a detailed, multi-part discussion of this and other sentence-SRSing issues, see the [Secrets to Smoother SRSing](#) series as well as [other sterling articles](#); I hear the guy that writes these is a genius!



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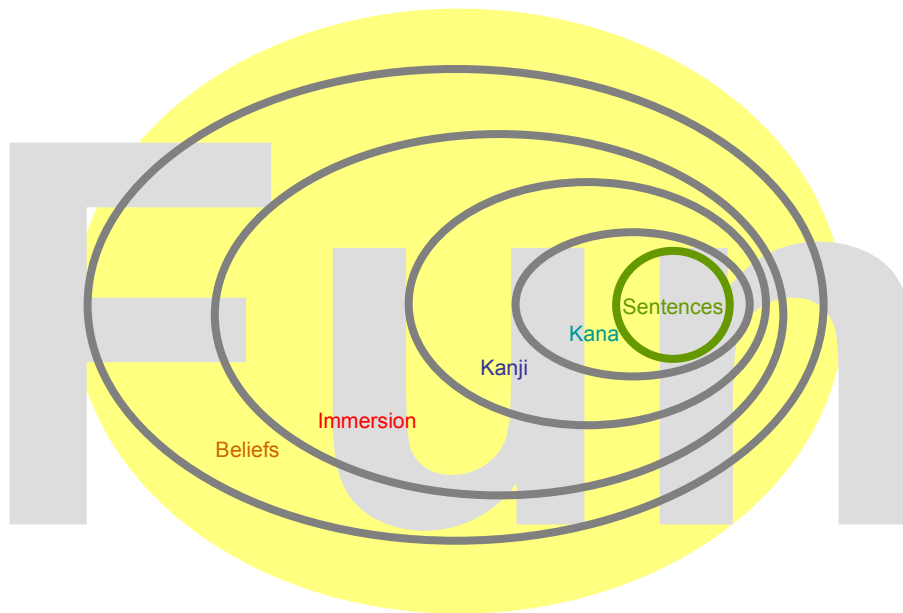
Until you've added ~500 sentences and done ~1500 reps with them.

But do come back because there's a second, really cool part to the sentences deal.

Anyway, you don't need more theoretical information now. You need action.

Action List: Sentences

Part 2: Monolingual



ういっす ! Welcome back! How's it going?

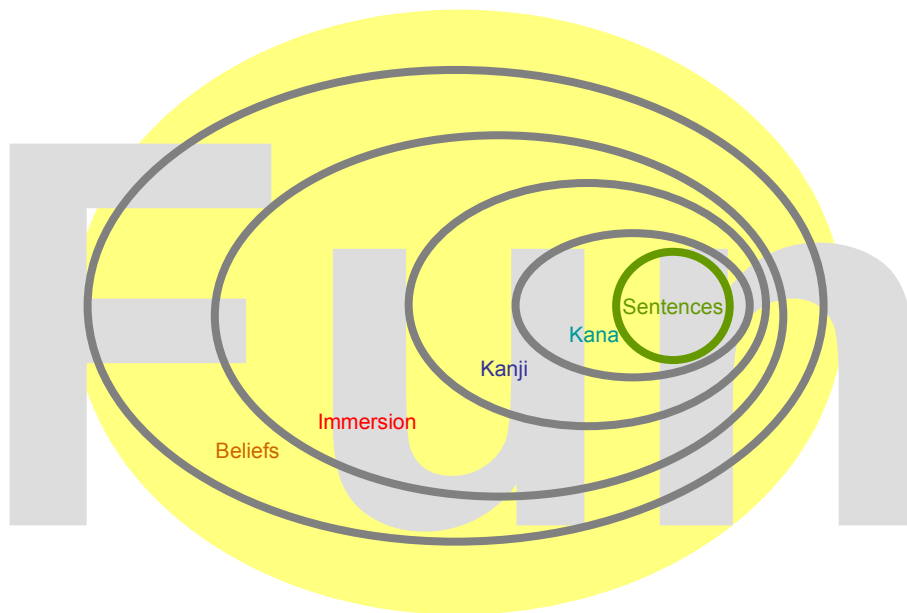
OK, in terms of high-energy/deliberate-practice/peddalling activities, we are now reaching the core of the core of the core!

The process here is the same as that for bilingual sentences, **only the card format changes** (see next page).

On the back of the card, instead of readings and a translation, you will have **readings** and **definitions** from a monolingual dictionary. Here is [how to make that transition smoothly](#) and painlessly.

Monolingual Sentence Card

Example 1



Front

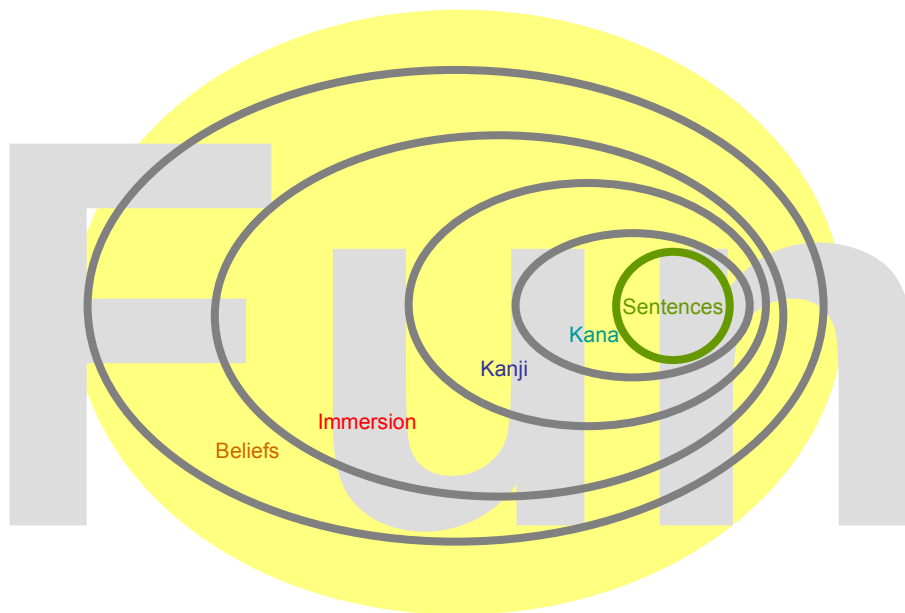
殺すぞ！

Back

ころす 【殺す
命を取る。

Monolingual Sentence Card

Example 2



Front

命を取る

Back

ころす 【殺す】

命を取る。

いのち [命]

(1) 生命 .

とる【取る】 殺す。

「命を-る」



DO. NOT. READ. ANY. MORE. OF. THIS. QRG.

Until you've started making some monolingual cards.

You may be an exception, but most people are only confused by the extra information.

You don't need more theoretical information now. You need action.

The Road Ahead

Look at you! You've changed your beliefs; you've Japanized your life; you've learned kanji and kana, and you can even use a monolingual Japanese dictionary now!

So where to now? **When does fluency come?** Well, that's not a very cut-and-dry issue, but here's a rough numerical guide:

- Listening: **10,000 hours** of Japanese
- SRS: **10,000 sentences**; ~40,000+ reps
- Reading: 1,000,000 words (?)
- Kanji: ~3000 characters; ~12,000+ reps

Remember that the numbers are merely guides. They are concise and convenient, but not almighty. Whenever you feel as if you're going nowhere, it helps to realize that "well, duh – my stats still suck". So, they can be a good reality check.

Anyway, that's about all for this guide. See you at the [main AJATT site](#)!

Your Opinion Matters!

What did you think of the QRG?

1. What did you like the most?
2. What did you dislike the most?
3. If you could change one thing about the QRG, what would it be?

Email your answers to

qrg@alljapaneseallthetime.com, or comment at the
[main site](#).



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Quick Reference Guide
Version 1.0

Your feedback will be used to improve future
versions of the QRG 😊 **And** it'll get you big
discounts!

亮