

Week 11 – Japan's School System



Schooling in Japan

- American occupation set about changing the Japanese education institution
- The intent was to model the Japanese system off of the American system
- This meant that grades 1-6 were elementary, 7-9 were middle school, and 10-12 were high school

Schooling in Japan

- The Americans wanted to rid any institution of its militaristic values that had been developed prior the occupation
- Also went about instilling American values in Japan's post-war culture
- Japan's schooling during the war was more about indoctrinating rather than teaching
- Are schools today centers for indoctrination or does it create free thinking individuals?

Schooling in Japan

- While elementary and middle school are compulsory, high school and beyond are optional
- This is very similar to most developed countries with some minor exceptions
- Why do we stop at middle school/grade 9?





Schooling in Japan

- School year generally starts in April and classes go from Monday to Friday, with a six week summer vacation in there
- However, extra curricular activities, clubs, and other school oriented events sometimes take place on Saturday
- At the same time, students have to arrive early and leave fairly late
- Japanese student spend about 240 days of the year in school, 60 more than the American counterpart
 - http://spice.fsi.stanford.edu/docs/daily_life_in_japanese_high_schools#getting

- How does this compare elsewhere?

Clubs

- Clubs are generally a mandatory element of the Japanese school system
- Can range from sports clubs, anime clubs, fishing clubs, Gundam clubs, reading clubs, video game clubs, Jpop idol clubs, etc. a lot of alternatives
- Level of mandatory clubs is different per school, but are generally after school meetings





O Soji/Student Janitors

- Many schools often employ the uses of their students when it comes to janitorial services
- Many children at the older ages are tasked with cleaning assignments throughout the school from classroom cleaning to hallways to school pools, etc
- The intention of teaching students about responsible behaviour



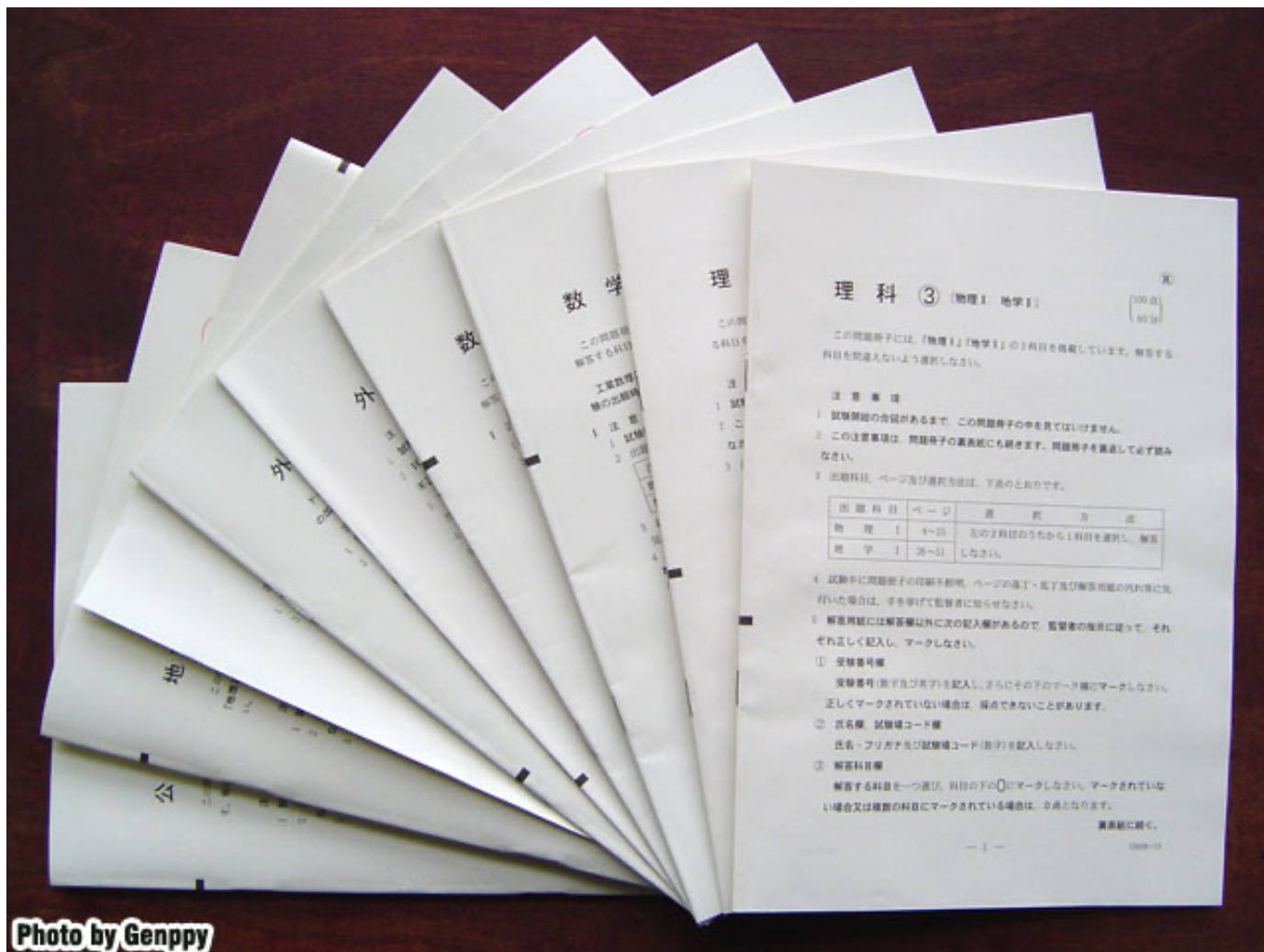


Photo by Genppy

Rigorous Testing System

- Testing begins at age 12 and becomes a normal and incredibly stressful aspect of many Japanese lives
- At the end of middle school, students write the high school entrance exams to determine which high school they will go to
- At the end of high school as well as throughout, the testing system determines which university the student will go to
- A lot of social, parental, and societal expectations are forced on the students that go through this process



Rigorous Testing System

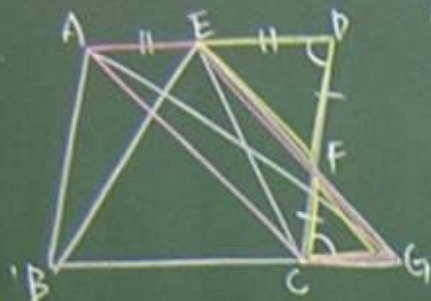
- Is mass testing a great indicator for intelligence or academic worth?
- What are the benefits of rigorous testing and what are the negative aspects, give me your experiences?
- Could this be one of the reasons why we develop the perceptions we do today about Japan

Juku/Extra Schooling

- Basically cram schools
- Many Japanese youth already spend long hours in school and are faced with extra school from private cram schools once they get home
- School isn't considered enough, but further school to maintain practice is seen as essential

P127

1.



$\triangle DEF$ と $\triangle CGF$ で

仮定から $DF = CF \dots ①$

$AD \parallel BG$ より $\angle EDF = \angle GCF \dots ②$

対頂角は等しいので $\angle DFE = \angle GFC \dots ③$

①②③から1辺とその両端の角が等しいので

$\triangle DEF \cong \triangle CGF$

よって

$EF = EG$

KUMONSM

MATH. READING. SUCCESS.

Juku/Extra Schooling

- However, often times, most parents do not necessarily subscribe to the idea that their children are going to increase their intelligence with cram schools
- Often times, cram school are seen as social class indicators
- Parents will shell out big money to get their kids into cram schools so that it looks like they are economically well off
- Also has the expectation of the purchased education element that comes along with private schools and admittance into prestigious universities

Private Schools

- Private schools have also grown in popularity since the 1990s in Japan, just like everywhere else in the world
- Again, comes with the expected image of well off families, higher education, and better chances of admittance into Universities
- Is this beneficial for students or is it not? The great debate

Assistant Language Teachers

- ALTs are generally used for English classes in Japan
- Usually assists the head English teacher with their duties and teachings, sort of a novelty but also there as they can further enhance the learning experience
- Generally work for the school board

Eikaiwa/English Conversation Schools

- Are usually private after schools or weekend businesses that provide extended learning of the English language
- These can provide services to school youth or even business professionals to retired old ladies, whoever will pay
- Many of the teachers work long hours and are usually not as well paid as ALTs working for the school board

Eikaiwa



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- ② 少人数クラスと担任制による責任感
- ③ 忙しいでも大丈夫、無理なレッスン制
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平日
初めての英会話
お持ちし
お持ちし



JET

- Japanese government organization that cooperates with Canada and many other English speaking nations to send recent graduates or people with university degrees to teach in Japan
- Has always held a great reputation
- Hard to get the placement you want and screening can be difficult
- <http://www.jetprogramme.org/e/introduction/index.html>

Non-Reliable Companies

- Private companies in Japan have given the English teaching business a bad name over the last decade or so with shady business practices
- Ex. Withholding pay from teachers, misleading foreigners into the country and not sponsoring for Visas, faulty placement promises, working past government standardized hours
- The industry is on the rebound, but never fully recovered from the 80s and 90s

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZRXAOpv5jA>

Next Class

- We will talk about
 - School System and etiquette
 - Societal expectations and the stress it puts on Japanese youth
 - Suicide rate and the reasons for this
 - Teacher/Student relationship, the 3rd parent



Japanese School Life

Getting to School

- Japanese students do not drive cars or take busses
- For the most part, Japanese students travel to school using trains, busses, bikes, or just plain ol'walking
- Based on the high school they are admitted to, many students have to travel even greater distances than they would like to

Getting to School

- Often trains or busses fill in for the commute
- What do you do on such a long commute and how does this impact Japanese culture?
- How does this compare with the West?

Clothing Styles

- Generally most schools in Japan, if not all schools, have a dress code intending for its students to wear uniforms
- The more traditional schools and public schools can be seen wearing the more militaristic style suits while girls wear the sailor suits
- Private schools and more modern school generally use the traditionally more European styles

ネクタイ

活発なエンジ、落ち着いた紺、知的なグレーの3種類。

ブレザー

ブレザーは3つボタン動きやすく、歪くずれにくい素材。

スラックス

グレーのチェック柄が2種類、夏素材のものもある。親しみやすく過ごしやすいコーディネート。

リボン



グリーンと紺の2種類のリボンと形の違うグレーのリボンがあります。お気に入りのものでアレンジしちやおう！

ブレザー

3つボタンブレザーは知的な印象。成長期を考えたフィッティングや実しさが採り入れられている。

スカート



上品な紺チェック、親しみやすいグリーンチェック。夏用はグレー系とグリーン系がある。









At School

- Students first reach a kind of locker system or shelf system in which they can put belongings, but primarily used to put in outdoor clothing, especially outdoor shoes, in exchange for indoor shoes/slippers called uwabaki
- Majority of schools in Japan assign students at the start of a school year to a specific classroom and the teachers move from room to room while the students remain in that class year round, ie. 2-1 or 2-A, etc
- Some classrooms assign a class president/representative while other schools will take turn in class chores/duties



At School

- At school, most students eat lunch with each other in their homeroom classes
- Most schools do not have cafeterias
- Students find often bring their food from home, made by themselves or parents.

At School

- “Japanese students spend 240 days a year at school, 60 days more than their American counterparts. Although many of those days are spent preparing for annual school festivals and events such as Culture Day, Sports Day, and school excursions, Japanese students still spend considerably more time in class than American students. Traditionally, Japanese students have attended school for half a day on Saturdays; however, the number of required Saturdays each month is decreasing as the result of Japanese educational reforms”
- -http://spice.fsi.stanford.edu/docs/daily_life_in_japanese_high_schools#getting

Extracurricular Activities/Free Time

- Clubs form the fun element of school in Japan, however, they can be just as much work
- While most clubs are either centered around sports or academics, some schools offer a variety of alternatives to generate interest

- “It is the responsibility of the *senpai* to teach, initiate, and take care of the *kohai*. It is the duty of the *kohai* to serve and defer to the *senpai*. For example, *kohai* students in the tennis club might spend one year chasing tennis balls while the upperclassmen practice. Only after the upperclassmen have finished may the underclassmen use the courts. The *kohai* are expected to serve their *senpai* and to learn from them by observing and modeling their behavior. This fundamental relationship can be seen throughout Japanese society, in business, politics, and social dealings.”
- -http://spice.fsi.stanford.edu/docs/daily_life_in_japanese_high_schools#getting

- Japanese student free time can range from anything such as playing sports, going to the arcade, shopping mall, internet cafes, generally hanging out like any other kids of the world











Juku/Cram School

- “Although it would seem natural for students to dread the rigor of additional lessons that extend their school day well into the late evening hours and require additional homework, many students enjoy *juku* and *yobiko*, where teachers often are more animated and more interesting than some of the teachers in their regular schools”
- How true can this statement be?

- “In Japanese schools, there is the tendency to pass students with their grade cohort. Therefore, without the supplemental *juku* lessons, some students could fall well behind their classmates”
- ?

Entrance Exams and the Stress of it

- Again, all this effort and stress for a test
- How damaging to the psyche can it be?
- “Success or failure on an entrance examination can influence a student's entire future, since the prospect of finding a good job depends on the school attended. Thus, students experience the pressure of this examination system at a relatively early age.”

JapanToday Article

- “For some positives in Japanese education, one need look no further than the local kindergarten or the local elementary school. For everything other than English education, they are doing a good to great job of educating the children of Japan. Classes are creative, teachers are caring, on the whole, and students are happy and learning.
- Were the whole education system to be like this from kindergarten to the end of university, the Japanese people would be happier, healthier and more productive, both in GDP and creative terms.”

JapanToday Article

- “Those are the years that exam hell starts and from which students never really recover. The standardized test-based education system of Japan that starts in the junior high school years kills any kind of initiative, creativity and especially thinking outside of the box.”

JapanToday Article

- “When you next meet a Japanese, just for fun, ask them their opinion on something. If they are able to give an opinion, then do this: Ask them why? Why do they feel that way? In many cases, they will be stumped”
- What kind of perspectives are we developing of blanket statements like this? Is there possibly some truth to this or can we tell?

Suicide

- “However, perhaps the most pressing problem is the psychological health of the citizens.”
- Monday morning rush
- Rampant suicides and cases of Hikikomori
- However, suicide rate is going down and Japan is no longer #1 in suicide rate, South Korea is.

Teacher Parent

- Teachers become, in some cases, a person students can reach out to for social and helpful advice
- Because students spend so much time in class, around school, and among their peers, the teacher becomes responsible for them throughout that time
- Parents at home have often been bothered with family issues due to Salary Man lifestyles, long hours, broken households, etc. leaving it to the teachers to contribute
- One of the reasons that you see teachers play larger parts in TV dramas and animes, like GTO

Japanese Pop Culture

