# AP Japanese A (Upper School) Syllabus

## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Please go to your course to access detailed instructor information.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding your assignments or course content. Course facilitators respond to emails within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends. If you don't receive a response at that time, please reach out again just in case I did not get your message.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All learners must have computer and internet access. Participants in online classes must be comfortable with the basic functions of word-processing software, including Google Docs. Learners must be equipped with a means to capture images, and mobile phones are a suitable option.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

AP® Japanese Language and Culture is designed to provide students with a learning experience equivalent to that of a college-level course. The course develops proficiency across the three modes of communication—interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational—as described in the ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners.

In addition to communication, the course addresses the other goal areas of the Five C's: developing cultural competence, making connections to other disciplines, comparing Japanese language and culture with students' own languages and cultures, and using Japanese in multilingual communities beyond the school setting.

The course is conducted almost exclusively in Japanese to strengthen students' receptive and productive language skills while deepening the cultural knowledge necessary to communicate effectively with and understand native speakers and writers of Japanese.

## COURSE GOALS

1. The course goals for listening and reading comprehension skills in this course encompass developing learners' ability to understand and interpret spoken and written Japanese language and culture. The course aims to help learners achieve a high level of proficiency in comprehending various forms of Japanese communication. In the AP Japanese course, while developing

listening and reading comprehension skills, the goal is also to foster cultural understanding and awareness. This aspect of the course emphasizes the importance of understanding not only the language but also the cultural context in which the language is used. The aim is to enable students to interpret and appreciate the nuances of Japanese communication within its cultural framework.

2. The goal for the speaking in this course is to develop learners' ability to communicate effectively in spoken Japanese across a range of topics and situations. This skill is essential for real-life interactions, as well as for success on the AP Japanese Language and Culture exam.
3. The goal for the writing in this course is to  to develop learners' ability to express themselves effectively in written Japanese. This skill is essential for conveying ideas, opinions, and information in a clear and coherent manner, both in formal and informal contexts.

**STANDARDS MET**

This course meets  World Languages Standards for California Public Schools. Specific standards met for each assignment are listed with the assignment in the course itself. Also, the complete list of course-wide standards is provided below.

**Communication (Superior)**

- **WL.CM1.S**
  Demonstrate understanding and infer meaning from complex, authentic, multi-paragraph texts on topics of broad general interests. Demonstrate understanding of unfamiliar, abstract, and hypothetical areas of specialized professional and academic expertise, in texts that are spoken, written, or signed.
- **WL.CM2.S**
  Participate fully and effectively in real-world, spoken, written, or signed discussions and debates, on topics ranging from broad general interests to unfamiliar, abstract, and hypothetical areas of specialized professional and academic expertise. Use a wide variety of text types with cohesive discourse in informal and formal settings, and problem situations.
- **WL.CM3.S**
  Deliver complex presentations with precision of expression in culturally appropriate ways, for a wide variety of audiences, on topics ranging from broad general interests to unfamiliar, abstract, and hypothetical areas of

specialized professional and academic expertise. Use a wide variety of text types with cohesive discourse through spoken, written, or signed language, using the most suitable media and technologies to present and publish.

- **WL.CM4.S**
  Sustain opportunities to use culturally authentic, real-world, and academic language on topics ranging from broad general interests to unfamiliar, abstract, and hypothetical areas of specialized professional and academic expertise within target-language communities in the United States and around the world.
- **WL.CM5.S**
  Demonstrate understanding of topics ranging from broad general interests to unfamiliar, abstract, and hypothetical areas of specialized professional and academic expertise. Use knowledge of sentence-level elements (morphology and syntax of common and uncommon structures) and extended discourse (text structure).
- **WL.CM6.S**
  Communicate about topics ranging from broad general interests to unfamiliar, abstract, and hypothetical areas of specialized professional and academic expertise. Use knowledge of sentence-level elements (morphology and syntax of common and uncommon structures) and extended discourse (text structure).
- **WL.CM7.S**
  Identify similarities and differences in sentence-level elements (morphology and syntax of common and uncommon structures) and in extended discourse (text structure) of the languages known.

**Connection (Superior)**

- **WL.CN1.S**
  Research, analyze, discuss, and hypothesize in the target language about topics ranging from broad general interests to unfamiliar, abstract, and hypothetical areas of specialized professional and academic expertise across disciplines.
- **WL.CN2.S**

Research, analyze, discuss, and hypothesize in the target language about diverse perspectives and distinctive viewpoints on topics ranging from broad general interests to unfamiliar, abstract, and hypothetical areas of specialized, professional, and academic expertise language through authentic materials from the target cultures.

**Culture (Superior)**

- **WL.CL1.S**
  Improvise in culturally appropriate ways in unfamiliar and unpredictable situations, in informal and formal settings, and in specialized academic and professional contexts.
- **WL.CL2.S**
  Research, analyze, discuss, and hypothesize about the relationships among target cultures' wide ranges of products, practices, and perspectives—concrete and abstract, general and specialized, and academic and professional—from different viewpoints in culturally appropriate ways.
- **WL.CL3.S**
  Research, analyze, discuss, and hypothesize about the products, practices, and perspectives of the target cultures—comparing concrete and abstract, general and specialized, and academic and professional topics with the mainstream cultures of the United States, and the students' own cultures.
- **WL.CL4.S**
  Research, analyze, discuss, and hypothesize about a wide range of products, practices, and perspectives—including concrete and abstract, general and specialized, and academic and professional— and how they change when cultures come into contact.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

All materials are available online in the course. Access to the internet is required. Also, please refer to the RESOURCES/MATERIALS USED IN THIS COURSE section below.

## COURSE OUTLINE

AP Japanese offers six exciting themes to explore:

1. Families and Communities
2. Language and Culture
3. Art and Creativity
4. Science and Technology
5. Contemporary Life
6. Global Contexts

In AP Japanese A, learners dive into the first three themes. Then, in AP Japanese B, learners delve into the other three themes.

Throughout the course, students engage in interdisciplinary learning by exploring Japanese language and culture through perspectives from sociology, literature, history, visual arts, science, technology, environmental studies, and contemporary global issues.

[Unit 1: Families and Communities]

- Block 1: Family
    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)
    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)
- Block 2: Traditions and Celebrations
    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)
    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)
- Block 3: School Life
    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)
    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)
- Block 4: Communities
    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)
    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)

[Unit 2: Language and Culture]

- Block 5: Vertical Society

    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)
    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)
- Block 6: Modesty
    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)
    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)
- Block 7: Midterm Project
    - Create a Cultural Perspective Presentation on Japanese housing and architecture, conveying their personal viewpoint through a standard video or audio recording.
- Block 8: Famous People
    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)
    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)
- Block 9: National and Ethnic Identities
    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)
    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)

[Unit 3: Art and Creativity]

- Block 10: Seasonal Appreciation
    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)
    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)
- Block 11: Traditional Art
    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)
    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)
- Block 12: Modern Art
    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)

    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)
- Block 13: Pop Culture
    - Comprehension Assignment (Engage in vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading practice)
    - Speech Assignment (Engage in speaking practice)
    - Writing Assignment (Engage in writing practice)
- Block 14 & 15: Final Project
    - Compare and contrast Japanese culture with the learner's own, then create a slide presentation featuring written Japanese sentences to illustrate their findings, followed by verbally presenting them.

**RESOURCES/MATERIALS USED IN THIS COURSE**

[Unit 1: Families and Communities]

- Block 1: Family
    - Article: Family and Values and Traditions
    - Article: What's Nisetai Jyuutaku?
    - Video: Our multi-generational family life.
    - Article: Japanese 'oyakoukou' – being dutiful towards one's parents
    - Video: The Sazae-san Anime Series
    - Infographic: The Sazae-san Family Tree
    - Video: Family
    - Slide Presentation: Family
- Block 2: Traditions and Celebrations
    - Article: Celebrating Japanese Traditions with Your Family
    - Video: The History of Japanese New Year and the Wishes Behind Its Traditions
    - Video: Driving Out Demons Across Japan!
    - Video: What is Valentine's Day like in Japan?
    - Video: What is Children's Day? Tango no Sekku and the Meaning Behind the Koinobori Carp Streamers
    - Video: Shichi-Go-San Visits Peak at the Shrine
    - Audio: Valentine's Day
    - Video: To Give and Receive in Japanese: Learn ageru/kureru/morau
    - Video: Traditions and Celebrations
    - Slide Presentation: Traditions and Celebrations
- Block 3: School Life
    - Video: Japanese High School Life
    - Video: Come to School with Me!

    - Video: Seishun Academy 101: Come To School With Us
    - Video: The Strictest School Rules of Japan!
    - Article: School Life in Japan
    - Article: International Student Roundtable
    - Video: School Life
    - Slide Presentation: School Life
- Block 4: Communities
    - Article: What is Chonaikai (Neighborhood Associations) and How Can Foreigners Join?
    - Video: The Neighborhood Association’s Summer Festival Is Back! What Made It Happen?
    - Article: Memories for Children - Local Summer Festival Made from Scratch by Residents
    - Video: Let's try doing crime prevention volunteering
    - Video: Volunteer activities starting from now
    - Video: Communities
    - Slide Presentation: Communities

[Unit 2: Language and Culture]

- Block 5: Vertical Society
    - Article: Japan's Vertical Society and Social Ranking
    - Article: Hierarchy, or Jouge-kankei
    - Video: The Culture of Respect
    - Video: What Senpai Want to Tell Their Kouhai
    - Article: In Japan the customer is God
    - Video: Job Seniority System in Japan
    - Article: Keigo - the Honorific Speech in Japanese
    - Video: Keigo Practice - Brush Up on Keigo Using Real Examples from TV!
    - Video: Vertical Society
    - Slide Presentation: Vertical Society
    - Slide Presentation: Honorific Forms of Nouns and Adjectives!
- Block 6: Modesty
    - Article: What is "kenson"?
    - Article: Kenson/Kenkyo
    - Video: Nihon no Bunka “Kenson
    - Video: Improve Your Japanese - Kenson
    - Video: Japanese humility
    - Video: Modesty
    - Slide Presentation: Modesty

- Block 7: Midterm Project
    - Learners are responsible for preparing the materials for their project independently
- Block 8: Famous People
    - Article: The Famous People - Japanese
    - Video: Shohei Ohtani's Interview – What motivates you to embrace and enjoy challenges?
    - Video: How the inventor of Mario designs a game
    - Video: Naomi Osaka Reaches Her First US Open Semifinal Since Giving Birth
    - Video: Yoko Ono - the Untold Truth
    - Video: Famous Japanese Person?
    - Article: Top 10 Most Influential Japanese Celebrities Now
    - Reading: Famous Japanese People
    - Video: Famous People 1
    - Video: Famous People 2
    - Slide Presentation: Famous People
    - Article:  Using the Passive Voice in Japanese
- Block 9: National and Ethnic Identities
    - Video: What's it like being a foreigner in Japan?
    - Article: Hafu: The Ups and Downs of Being 'Half Japanese' in Japan
    - Article: Why do some in Japan's hafu community say some mixed-race people say they feel like foreigners in their own country?
    - Video: A trailer for the film "Hafu"
    - Video: Common Experiences of Being Biracial in Japan
    - Reading: Hafu? Mikkusu? Daburu?
    - Video: Learn Japanese - "should do" and "shouldn't do"
    - Video: National and Ethnic Identities
    - Slide Presentation: National and Ethnic Identities

[Unit 3: Art and Creativity]

- Block 10: Seasonal Appreciation
    - Video: Crowds Flock to Tokyo's Popular Hanami Spots
    - Video: Autumn Colors Reach Their Peak on Mount Kurikoma's "Carpet of the Gods"
    - Video: Four Seasons in Shirakawa-go
    - Video: Tsuyu "梅雨" ~The Rainy Season in Japan~
    - Article: Haiku Poem: Definition, Format, History, and Examples
    - Article: The Most Famous Haiku Poems in Japn
    - Video: Understanding Kigo - The Seasonal Essence of Haiku

    - Reading: Nature’s Gifts
    - Video: Seasonal Appreciation
    - Slide Presentation: Seasonal Appreciation
- Block 11: Traditional Art
    - Article: 6 Traditional Japanese Art Styles and Where to See Them
    - Video: Sado - the Way of Tea
    - Video: Shodo Brush Calligraphy – Writing from the Heart
    - Video: Ikebana - Japanese art of flower arrangement
    - Video: Why Bonsai Are So Expensive
    - Video - Ukiyo-e Explained
    - Video: The Printing Process of Japanese Woodblock Prints
    - Video: HIROSHIGE: Van Gogh’s Favorite Japanese Artist
    - Reading: Ukiyo-e to wa?
    - Video: Traditional Art
    - Slide Presentation: Traditional Art
    - Article: How to use youni, youna, and youda in Japanese Grammar
- Block 12: Modern Art
    - Video: Tracing the Life of Yayoi Kusama, Who Died at 97
    - Video: The Hysteria of This Flower Explained
    - Video: Interview with Takashi Murakami: “Art Is My Livelihood”
    - Video: Yoshitomo Nara - All My Little Words
    - Video: Haze Days: The Unique Method of Yoshitomo Nara
    - Video: "Each viewer can create their own story from my piece." Artist Tabaimo
    - Video: Tatsuo Miyajima: Innumerable Life
    - Reading; Japanese Modern Artists
    - Video: Modern Art
    - Slide Presentation: Modern Art
    - Article: Japanese Grammar - Hearsay -soudesu
- Block 13: Pop Culture
    - Article: All about Japanese Pop Culture
    - Video: What is Anime?
    - Video: What is Manga?
    - Video: How Japan DOMINATED the Gaming Market?
    - Video: World Cosplay Summit 2026 Official Trailer
    - Video: How Kawaii Manipulates Your Mind
    - Video: An American professor reveals surprising features of Japanese J-POP music!
    - Reading: Japan’s Pop Culture

    - Video: Pop Culture
    - Slide Presentation: Pop Culture
    - Article: Nazenara
- Block 14 & 15: Final Project
    - Learners are responsible for preparing the materials for their project independently

## METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

This is an online course, and while there is flexibility in how and when you do assignments, it is best to log in and complete work each day according to the posted pacing schedule. Each BLOCK in a course is worth about 1 week of work during the regular semester. You can find our suggested pacing guide at ileadonline.org under 'CALENDARS'. It is highly recommended that learners follow the pacing schedule posted. Please be sure to check in with your teacher of record (coach/EF/Guide/ES) for guidance with scheduling.

This course uses project based learning to encourage an authentic, developed appreciation of the topics covered. That means that while it may include quizzes and some traditional assessments, the bulk of the coursework focuses on projects that require learners to display their learning in a thorough and creative manner. If you are struggling to complete your work or you need some assistance with an alternate schedule or workload, please contact me as soon as possible. I am more than happy to help support your success in the class!

## LEARNER EXPECTATIONS

Learners are expected to participate in the course via email, discussion boards (or other communication) with the facilitator, by reading the assigned readings, submitting assignments and completing and submitting original work. Learners are expected to check their course and email account every day and complete work on time as assigned with designated dates and time. Learners are expected to communicate with their instructor and each other in a respectful manner. Please follow the guidelines below:

1. **Make sure identification is clear in all communications**. If you are emailing or messaging your instructor or each other, please be sure they know who you are and what class you're in. That really helps with clear communication.
2. **Review what you wrote and try to interpret it objectively.** When we speak face to face and are misunderstood, we have an on-the-spot

opportunity to rephrase our words. In writing, we must strive twice as hard to be understood, as we do not have the benefit of modifying or elaborating in real time. All caps ("I'M SHOUTING") and exclamation points ("Give me a break!!!") can be misinterpreted as intense anger or humor without the appropriate context.

3. **If you wouldn't say it face to face, don't say it online.** When you're working online, you're safe behind a screen, but that's no excuse to be ill-mannered or say things you would never say in public.
4. **Use emoticons when appropriate.** In casual chat room settings, emoticons can help convey feelings that may otherwise get lost in translation, including humor, exasperation, exhaustion and even confusion. These aren't the best choice for formal assignments or projects though.
5. **Respect others' voices and be kind.** We all come from different backgrounds and have our own stories. Assume the best of each other and always be kind in your communication.
6. **Remember, if it's on the internet, it's everywhere.** Don't share personal information about yourself in a public online forum, especially something that could put your safety or security at risk.
7. **Practice Patience.** All your facilitators are doing their best to grade work in a timely manner. We also want to give you meaningful feedback, which takes some time. If you feel like there has been an error or an assignment was missed, please reach out with your name and class and we will do our best to sort it out.

## GRADING

Each assignment is given a specific number of points. The number of points earned by the student is determined and a percentage is calculated. The raw score is recorded in the grade book. An overall grade in the course will be determined according to your school's grading scale.

## SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

All work must be submitted to Brightspace, our learning management system. This is very important for record keeping and compliance. You have access to directions on how to do this in the 'Course Resources' folder of this class and in your Orientation class. If you need any help submitting work, please reach out to your instructor and we will make time to ensure that you're able to turn in work to Brightspace.

**HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM**

Academic Integrity is essential to authentic learning. We want you to get the most out of your courses, and a BIG part of that is learning how to:

1. Come up with your own ideas
2. Use technology (like AI and other online resources) to inform your original ideas
3. Research in ways that help you develop your thoughts
4. Give credit where credit is due
5. Explore and use tools (like AI, citation generators, etc.) that help you grow as a person and a learner

Please review this resource for more information on plagiarism and this guide for choosing, using and citing resources.

Our goal is to support you so that you can learn in a meaningful, authentic way. Any plagiarized work (this includes work generated solely by AI) will be given a zero and referred to your EF/COACH/GUIDE for review. From there we will work with you to support you as best we can.

**PRIVACY POLICY**

All work submitted is the property of the author and is not available to anyone not in the class. If work is to be submitted or viewed outside of this website, I will obtain permission from the author. FERPA INFO