

## Comprehensive Course Syllabus

# Japanese III (WLG 430)

2012/2013

### Course Description:

Japanese 3 is somewhat of a departure from the topical curriculum used in levels 1 and 2 that focuses on students' lives here. Instead, there are two organizing ideas or themes that guide curricular and learning decisions, pointing toward Japan and Japanese culture. The first is "Going to Japan". Having this as a theme means that students will be focused on learning Japanese for use in situations that they would likely encounter if they were studying, living or working in Japan. The second theme is "Things any Japanese person would know" [日本人誰でも知っていること]. It could be something practical like knowing how to "do" math in Japanese, or knowing about the Japanese public transportation system. Or it could be something not especially useful, like knowing Japanese proverbs or tongue twisters, or knowing how to sing the Japanese national anthem. With this theme, students will have the opportunity and responsibility to choose what they want to learn, provided that it meets the criteria of being something that any Japanese person would know. In fact, as Japanese 3 is essentially an elective course taken almost exclusively by seniors, it is my intention to give students many opportunities to decide the direction we will take or the content of units of study, either as a group or for themselves individually.

### Virtual Exchange Program:

A major component of the Japanese program at IMSA is what we are calling our Virtual Exchange Program [VEP], which has been closely aligned with the curriculum of IMSA's Japanese language program at all levels. All IMSA students studying Japanese will work and interact with a VEP partner from a high school in Japan. IMSA has had a relationship with a school called Ritsumeikan High School in Kyoto, Japan. Their Partners at Ritsumeikan will be studying English there. This exchange is designed to accomplish several things. First and perhaps most importantly, student can be motivated to learn because of the relationships they can build with their Japanese VEP Partners. Secondly, through giving both IMSA and Ritsumeikan students the opportunity to interact with native speakers of the language that they are studying so that they can work at developing their language skills and proficiency in a real world context. Thirdly, it provides both side with the chance to increase their awareness of Japanese and American culture, respectively—especially that of their peers in another country.

### Instructor Information:

Name: Jonathan Besançon / ベサンソン・ジョナサン  
Office: A134  
Office Hours: 1 days from 1:00 to 3:00  
on other days by appointment, but walk-ins are welcome  
Telephone: 630.907.5085  
E-mail: sensei@imsa.edu

**Meeting Times:**

Japanese III	WLG430	A/C days	10:50 — 11:35
		B/D days	10:25 — 11:35

**Text & Course Materials:**

All texts and course materials will be in the form of teacher-created handouts, exercises & activities, homework, grammar materials, and so on. Students must have a three-ring binder to contain all of these materials (to be used for Japanese class only).

I strongly recommend the following two resources:

Kodansha's Furigana Japanese Dictionary: Japanese–English, English–Japanese

ISBN: 4770024800

This dictionary was designed with English speakers in mind, not native speakers of Japanese, which is often the case. A unique feature of this dictionary is that entries use kanji where appropriate, but give their pronunciation. Entries also include sample sentences in both English and Japanese, to aid in understanding how to use the word you've looked up.

Kodansha's Kanji Learner's Dictionary

ISBN: 4770028555

This is the best reference for kanji (Chinese characters). It has an easy and intuitive look-up method, and entries are set up with the language learner in mind.

**Essential Experiential Aspect:**

At the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy®, one of our main objectives in teaching foreign languages is for students to engage, on a deep, intellectual, and personal level, in new ways of seeing, thinking, interacting, and communicating. In order for this objective to be realized, students must encounter a communicative system and cultural perspective different from their own. It is essential for our students' growth that they engage in immersion-based learning experiences where they are supported in going beyond normal comfort levels, and where they learn to function within a system that is unfamiliar to them, thereby developing real-world proficiency in another language and in other cultures.

As a result of language learning, our students think and act globally, are cosmopolitan in their outlook, and international in their understanding. They will be ethical leaders who advance the human condition. When students speak another language, they think and act differently. Their perspective is widened and horizons are expanded. Students have a greater capacity to empathize, to make friends, to imagine what it would be like to be in another person's shoes. Imagination is stretched. Students no longer see "aliens" or "others", but rather they see real people with differences and similarities. If students stop studying a language, they may forget the words and grammar details. However, learning another language and its culture, learning how to effectively communicate with other human beings, and learning how meaning is constructed through words other than one's native tongue, will remain for a lifetime.

The IMSA World Language Learning Standards, in which the five unifying concepts (Communication, Cultures, Communities, Comparisons, and Connections) are embedded, are the guiding principles of the program. Our standards are adapted from Standards for foreign language learning: Preparing for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1996.

Students studying foreign language at IMSA will:

- A. communicate in multiple modes (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational).
- B. understand the relationships among the practices, products, and perspectives of the cultures studied.

- C. reinforce and further knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.
- D. acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its culture.
- E. understand the nature of language through comparisons of their own language and the language studied.
- F. understand the concept of culture through comparisons of their own culture and the culture studied.
- G. use knowledge of language and culture both within and beyond the school setting for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

In addition, the World Languages Team guides students in the development of their metacognitive skills, their ability to collaborate, and their ability to accurately assess learning—skills which are applicable to all of their learning experiences.

### **Standards of Significant Learning and Outcomes:**

- I.A. Students are expected to demonstrate automaticity in skills, concepts, and processes that enable complex thought, by...
  - controlling the linguistic system (syntax, morphology, phonology, semantics, lexis).
  - expressing feelings and emotions.
  - engaging in oral and written discourse.
  - exchanging opinions.
  - compensating for linguistic inadequacies and cultural differences when they occur, and applying knowledge of cultural perspectives governing interactions between individuals of different age, status, and background.
  - directly accessing knowledge and information generated by other countries and cultures.
  - using strategies that enhance the effectiveness of communication.
  - applying content knowledge to create with the target language.
  - providing and obtaining information.
  - decoding written and spoken language on a variety of topics.
  - presenting information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.
  - transferring content knowledge in alternate scenarios and new problems.
- II.A. Students are expected to identify unexamined cultural, historical, and personal assumptions and misconceptions that impede and skew inquiry by...
  - recognizing that language learning is not simply a word—for-word translation process, but rather the acquisition of an entirely new set of concepts.
  - processing information on the nature of language and/or culture.
  - identifying patterns among language systems.
  - demonstrating mutual cultural understanding and respect.
- IV.B. Students are expected to write and speak with power, economy, and elegance by...
  - providing and obtaining information.
  - presenting information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.
  - controlling the linguistic system (syntax, morphology, phonology, semantics, lexis).
  - using strategies that enhance the effectiveness of communication.
  - engaging in oral and written discourse on given topics.
  - recognizing the linguistic and cultural differences that contribute to the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

- compensating for linguistic inadequacies and cultural differences when they occur, and applying knowledge of cultural perspectives governing interactions between individuals of different age, status, and background.
  - expressing feelings and emotions.
  - exchanging opinions.
  - decoding written and spoken languages on a variety of topics.
- IV.D. Students are expected to develop an aesthetic awareness and capability by...
- recognizing that language learning is not simply a word—for-word translation process, but rather the acquisition of an entirely new set of concepts.
  - recognizing that people of other cultures view the world from a perspective different from their own.
  - experience more fully the artistic and cultural creations of other cultures.
  - identifying patterns of behavior among people of other cultures.
  - applying knowledge of the perspectives, artifacts, and practices of a culture.
- V.A. Students are expected to identify, understand, and accept the rights and responsibilities of belonging to a diverse community by...
- recognizing the existence of other peoples' world views, their unique way of life, and the patterns of behavior which order their world.
  - assessing the linguistic and cultural differences that contribute to the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.
  - applying knowledge of the perspectives, artifacts, and practices of a culture.
  - engaging in oral and written discourse.
  - providing and obtaining information.
  - expressing feelings and emotions.
  - exchanging opinions.
  - compensating for linguistic inadequacies and cultural differences when they occur, and applying knowledge of cultural perspectives governing interactions between individuals of different age, status, and background.
  - explaining the process of stereotyping and the role stereotypes play in forming and sustaining prejudice.
  - demonstrating mutual cultural understanding and respect.
  - engaging in meaningful direct interactions with members of other cultures.
  - sharing their knowledge of language and culture.

### **Instructional Design and Approach:**

World Languages teachers establish an immersion classroom where the goal is correct, uninhibited, creative expression and communication in the target language. "Communication" includes speaking, reading, listening, and writing. We denote, and help students to develop skills in, three modes of communication: presentational, interpersonal, and interpretive. Our instructional design provides the opportunity for students to develop core competency learner characteristics. We empower and enable students to discover what they personally need in order to acquire and use a foreign language; we place responsibility on the individual student to collaborate, utilize problem-solving skills, and critical and creative thinking. We ask students to persist through frustration, and to maintain a tolerance for ambiguity; we demand that they look at problematic situations from various viewpoints and perspectives; and we design instruction so that they must develop and go beyond automaticity, actively construct meaning, seek connections and interactions that deepen understanding, and appreciate the value of knowledge from multiple sources and perspectives. We help students develop the cultural sensitivity that is necessary to guard against miscommunication or misunderstanding. We assume that students will display the motivation, maturity, and personal responsibility necessary to participate in this sort of language acquisition environment.

The *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* defines “immerse” as “to plunge into something that surrounds or covers”, and “immersion” as “an act of immersing: a state of being immersed...” Immersion-based instruction means that students will be surrounded and covered by Japanese that is at an appropriate level for them.

Furthermore, foreign language classes are built on the premise of “learning together”, where students are active participants in every aspect of learning and instruction. In practice, this means that:

- active participation in all learning activities is required and expected.
- frequent and ongoing interaction with classmates and the teacher are integral components of each lesson.
- pair activities and small group interactions for practicing Japanese are the most common learning strategy.
- self-reflection is promoted as means of self-assessment, especially for, but not limited to, the evaluation of video assessment performances. This is often done with the use of rubrics designed by the students themselves.
- lectures or formal presentations are not a core element of the instructional strategy.
- passive listening, mechanical note-taking or other tasks lacking in individual engagement and personal meaning-making, are not featured in the course.

### **Student Expectations:**

As a student of Japanese at IMSA, you are to develop communicative competency within the immersion environment of our class. I will provide you with many, daily opportunities to learn and practice Japanese in individual, paired, group, and whole-class activities. I expect active and extensive class participation, and in fact, it is essential to student success in the course.

Students are expected to treat each other and the instructor with respect. They are expected to be a positive contributor to the community of learners that is the Japanese classroom. Students are to speak Japanese to the best of their ability and do not speak English unless instructed to do so. Students are expected to be in class, to be punctual, and to be prepared, i.e., with assignments completed, and have with them the necessary materials. Students should understand that being prepared does not just mean completing written homework assignments which are turned in to the teacher for review or being ready for a quiz or test (although those things are important), but also includes thinking about language, practicing (alone or with partners), learning, studying, and even memorizing.

The amount of time that a student needs to spend outside of class in order to attain the desired level of proficiency in Japanese and to succeed in the course, varies from individual to individual. However, a reasonable expectation for daily practice, study and work is 20 to 30 minutes. Consistent, daily effort is known to be much more effective for language acquisition than longer, less frequent practice and study sessions.

### **Assessment Practices, Procedures, and Processes:**

Assessment involves both the teacher and the student. The teacher provides regular feedback on student performance: the student considers and responds to that feedback, engaging in self-assessment. There will also be occasions when students will be asked to assess each other and share constructive criticisms. The focus of assessment in the Japanese classroom is on the students' continued efforts to improve their language proficiency and communicative competency. Students are assessed daily on their production of written and spoken language. Informal assessment occurs through observations of students' participation in classroom activities (most notably, pair and group work), and through interactions with the teacher. Oral performance is more formally assessed through video assessments. Written proficiency is assessed in a variety of ways, including writing practice sheets, written homework, and quizzes and tests.

Letter grades will be assigned to student performance and achievement according to how letter grades are defined in the student handbook:

- A = exceeds course requirements  
 B = meets course requirements  
 C = credit awarded, but needs improvement  
 D = does not meet course requirements, no Academy credit awarded

To help make the connection between the above definitions and the World Language classroom, consider the following two charts:

<b>Oral Proficiency</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
Use of the Target Language	Always remains in the Target Language.	Usually remains in the Target Language.  Only uses English to ask for help.	Speaks English frequently, even when asked no to.  Engages in English conversation with others.	Speaks English almost exclusively, even during directed activities.
Participation	Always participates fully in class activities.  Always volunteers to lead or model oral activities in class.	Generally participates fully in small group activities.  Frequently volunteers to lead or model activities.	Participates only when called upon, often reluctantly.  Is generally off task and unengaged.  Rarely volunteers.	Participates reluctantly even when called upon, or refuses to participate.  Is consistently off task and unengaged.
Pronunciation	Conscientiously reproduces Target Language sounds, expressions, and pronunciation.  Has an authentic, native—like sound.	Makes efforts to reproduce TL sounds, expressions, and pronunciation.  With some exceptions, sounds authentic and native—like.	Makes little effort to reproduce TL sounds.  Does not sound very authentic or native—like.	Does not make efforts to reproduce TL sounds.  Does not sound at all authentic or native—like.
New Vocabulary	Correctly incorporates new vocabulary where appropriate.	Uses new vocabulary occasionally, usually in directed activities.	Uses new vocabulary only in directed activities.	Demonstrates minimal acquisition of new vocabulary.
Use of the Target language outside of class	Speaks the Target Language outside of class with instructor and other students.	Frequently uses the Target Language outside of class.	Seldom uses the Target Language outside of class.	Never uses the Target Language outside of class.

<b>Written Proficiency</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
Handwriting	Is conscientious about good handwriting.  Uses correct stroke order, direction and style, especially when writing kanji.	Is generally careful about handwriting.  Generally uses correct stroke order, direction and style.	Is not careful about handwriting.  Does not pay enough attention to stroke order, direction, and style.	Has bad handwriting.  Pays little to no attention to stroke order, direction, and style.
Use of Japanese phonetic scripts (hiragana & katakana) and Chinese characters (kanji)	Correctly uses both phonetic syllabaries.  Always uses known kanji, and can write them correctly.	Correctly uses both phonetic syllabaries.  Generally uses known kanji, and generally writes them correctly.	Does not always correctly use phonetic syllabaries.  Rarely uses kanji, and usually writes them incorrectly.	Cannot correctly use either phonetic syllabary.  Does not use kanji, and cannot write them correctly.
Attention to detail	Pays conscientious attention to grammar, syntax, and "spelling".	Pays attention to grammar, syntax, and "spelling".	Pays little attention to grammar, syntax, and "spelling".	Pays no attention to grammar, syntax, and "spelling".
New vocabulary & grammatical patterns	Consistently and correctly employs new vocabulary and grammatical patterns.	Generally employs new vocabulary and grammatical patterns correctly.	Struggles to correctly employ new vocabulary and grammatical patterns.	Cannot correctly use new vocabulary and grammatical patterns.

## Overall Themes:

### “Going to Japan”

Students begin by imagining that they will go to Japan and live with a host family. Then we will learn Japanese that will help them navigate their imagined life there. Situations or contexts we might consider could be things like: banking & ATM use, ordering in a restaurant, etc.

Throughout the year, students will write numerous letters, including a letter of introduction to their host family, a letter to me from Japan describing their experiences, and a thank you letter back to their host family.

### “Things any Japanese person would know”

The list of things that would fit into this category is unending, but examples of some of the things that have been explored by students in the past are:

- tongue twisters
- proverbs
- joking, punning
- surnames
- given names for boys and girls
- regional dialects, Osaka dialect, Kansai dialect
- adolescent slang
- sushi bar lingo
- table manners
- etiquette, social protocol
- famous people & celebrities
- Japanese geography
- Japanese government
- popular music
- Japanese TV programs
- mathematics, how to do math in Japanese
- big numbers (beyond the thousands)

Students are certainly not limited to things in this list.

## Sequence of Major Topics and Activities:

### Semester I

#### Geography — Phase I

1/2 week

This is the first phase of an extended investigation into Japanese geography. In it, students will learn to identify the four main islands and locate them on a map.

Assessment: discrete item quiz

#### Letter I — Self Introduction

2 weeks

Students will write a letter introducing themselves to their imaginary Japanese host family. Students will learn basics of letter writing and formal letter protocols.

Assessment: letter to VEP Partner's family

#### Geography — Phase II

1 week

In the second phase of our geography investigation, students will learn to identify and locate on a map the five regions of Honshu (Japan's main island). As part of this phase, students will study Kansai dialect (Japan's main, non—



	standard dialect), learning to understand and speak in this dialect at a basic and rudimentary level. Assessment: first video assessment — employing Kansai dialect
Kansai Dialect 4 weeks	Students will learn Final Product: Assessment:
Going Shopping 3 weeks	
Exchange Program Interview Phase I 2 weeks	In this unit students will prepare questions for interviewing each other as candidates for an imaginary exchange program to Japan. In Phase I they will learn how to find out about each other's past experiences as it might pertain to their qualifications to be an exchange student living in Japan with a Japanese host family. [V-た こと が ある／ない pattern] Assessment: in-class written & oral assessments
Exchange Program Interview Phase II 2 weeks	In Phase II of this unit students will learn how to find out about each other's skills, abilities and talents as they might pertain to their qualifications to be an exchange student living in Japan with a Japanese host family. [V-る こと が できる／できない pattern, the Potential form of verbs, 上手／下手, できるようになる／なりたい pattern] Assessment: in-class written & oral assessments
Letter 2 — Recommendation 1 week	Students will write a report or a recommendation letter for the student who they believe to be the best candidate for the exchange program. Assessment: written report based on interviews or letter of recommendation to Exchange Student Selection Committee
<b>Semester 2</b>	
New Years 4 weeks	We will read an essay about a folk saying about the new year and Japanese traditional beliefs about the first dream of the new year. We will study the vocabulary, grammatical patterns and Chinese characters found in the essay. Assessment: written exam
Geography — Phase III 2 weeks	In this phase, students will investigate the prefecture where their imaginary host family lives and present basic information about it. Oral Assessment: in-class presentation Written Assessment: travel/promotional brochure
Japanese Names 2 weeks	
At a Sushi Bar 2 weeks	
Proverbs 2 weeks	

Letter 3 — to Sensei  
3 weeks

Students will write a letter to me from Japan, telling me all about their experiences living in Japan. They will describe their Japanese host family and their interactions with them, as well as describing their school experiences.  
[verbals of giving and receiving, more on honorific verb forms]  
Assessment: letter to Sensei

Geography — Phase IV  
3 weeks

In this final phase of our geography investigation, students will learn about the city of Kyoto (where our VEP sister school is located). They will produce a detailed, single-day itinerary.  
Assessment: in-class oral presentation & a written itinerary.

Letter 4 — Thank You  
1 week

Students will write a letter thanking their host family for all that they did for them while they were in Japan. This letter will be much less formal than the first letter they wrote to them before getting to Japan.  
Assessment: thank you letter to student's host family