

## EAST-240D1/D2-003 FIRST LEVEL JAPANESE

### General information

Term and Year: Fall/Winter 2025-2026

Course prerequisite(s): None. This course is for students who have no previous knowledge of the Japanese language. All students are required to take a placement test on the first day of class.

Number of credits: 9

### Instructor information

Name and Title: Tomoko Ikeda, Faculty Lecturer

Email: tomoko.ikeda@mcgill.ca

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Office Location: 680 Sherbrooke, Room 252

### Course overview

Introduction to the basic grammar and sentence patterns of the Japanese language in both oral and written forms. In reading and writing skills students will be introduced to katakana, hiragana and kanji. Students will learn Japanese characters (hiragana and katakana) in the first three weeks. After that, no Latin alphabet will be used in class. About 140 Kanji will also be introduced by the end of the course.

### Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- 1) give a basic, short, rehearsed presentation on a familiar subject, such as yourself, your friends or your home country.
- 2) write a short composition on a familiar subject with short phrases and simple vocabulary.
- 3) follow speech on a familiar subject which is very slow and carefully articulated.
- 4) read and understand a short and simple essay on a familiar subject.

### Instructional methods

This course is taught in person. Class meetings will NOT be recorded.

This course employs a "flipped classroom" methodology. This means that previewing and studying materials thoroughly before each class is essential. You will need to study kanji, vocabulary, grammar points, and/or readings PRIOR to seeing them in class. The purpose of this is to ensure that class time can be used as effectively as possible for communicative practice, interactive activities, and to check and/or go over any difficult points. As such, it is crucial that you dedicate plenty of time to a combination of homework, preview, and review activities every day. Your success, and the success of the class as a whole, depends on your coming to class prepared to engage with the materials that you have studied in advance.

You should plan on spending at least 2 hours each day (not just the day before class) to do preparation activities, review, and homework for each class. If you are not able to dedicate the time required, this course may not be suitable for you.

Classes will include lectures as well as pair and group practice activities and projects.

Be sure to check MyCourses daily and turn on notifications. If you are new to MyCourses, check out this video on [getting started with MyCourses](#).

### **Required course materials**

**(Available for purchase at Paragraphe Bookstore, 22220 McGill College Avenue)**

1. Oka, Mayumi Et.Al. Tobira 1 Beginning Japanese. Kurosio, 2021.
2. Oka, Mayumi Et.Al. Tobira 1 Beginning Japanese Workbook I. Kurosio, 2022.
3. Oka, Mayumi Et.Al. Tobira 1 Beginning Japanese Workbook II. Kurosio, 2023.

You will also need to refer regularly to the Tobira I website to access various course materials, including audio files and preview videos:

<https://tobirabeginning.9640.jp/>

### **Course content (subject to change)**

#### **Fall Semester:**

Lesson 0: 1) Everyday expressions 2) Words and expressions used in the classroom 3) The sounds of Japanese 4) The Japanese writing system: Hiragana

Lesson 1: 1) Greet and give a simple self-introduction to people you are meeting for the first time 2) Ask and answer questions about basic information such as people's names, hometowns, etc. 3) Briefly talk about things you like

Lesson 2: 1) Tell someone about your daily life and what you plan to do 2) Expand conversations about familiar topics by adding follow-up questions 3) Talk about the frequency of actions in daily life

Lesson 3: 1) Ask and answer simple questions about family structure 2) Ask and answer questions about things someone did in the past 3) Invite your friends to an event and decide on the details

Lesson 4: 1) Do your shopping and order food by referring to things around you 2) Briefly describe the things around you 3) Share impressions about things you have done 4) Talk about how to do something

Lesson 5: 1) Describe who or what is in a place that you are familiar with 2) Describe in detail a place that the listener does not know well 3) Ask and answer questions about the locations of things and people 4) Ask and answer questions about possessions and events

#### **Winter Semester:**

Lesson 6: 1) Talk about your daily life by connecting multiple actions 2) Ask and answer questions about what you are/were doing 3) Talk about a person's physical characteristics, occupation, place of residence, etc. 4) Talk about what you have already done and what you have not done yet 5) Ask and answer questions about what you do on a regular basis and with what frequency.

Lesson 7: 1) Talk in detail about things around you and things you want 2) Talk in detail about presents you have given and received 3) Talk about what you want to do

Lesson 8: 1) Ask and answer questions about preferences, skills, and abilities 2) Talk about the reason for or purpose of an activity 3) Ask and answer questions about plans in casual speech 4) Request a favor or ask for permission with the appropriate level of formality

Lesson 9: 1) Talk about past events in casual speech 2) Talk about a situation in detail by providing more explanation 3) Give impressions and opinions on a familiar topic 4) Report on things you have heard people say 5) Talk about experiences

Lesson 10: 1) Ask and answer questions about changes in yourself and things around you 2) Compare three or more things and talk about which you think is at the top of a certain category 3) Compare two things and talk about differences and similarities 4) Contrast two things to express your opinion about something

### **Assessment:**

Homework	20%
Independent Study Assignments	5%
<i>Yoshuu</i> (preview) quizzes	8%
Written quizzes	18%
Written Tests (2 Fall Tests, 2 Winter Tests 4% each)	16%
Dialogue presentations (Fall) (2 dialogues, 2% each)	4%
Group presentation (Winter)	4%
Final Exam	25%

### **Attendance and punctuality**

Attendance is essential to your success in this course, as it will increase your opportunities for communicative practice and thus increase your proficiency. You are allowed to miss up to twelve (12) classes over the course of the year before your grade will be affected. If you are absent beyond the number of allowed absences, a penalty will be incurred in the form of a deduction from the final course grade. Absences of more than 40% of scheduled course meetings may result in a penalty of failure of the course. A doctor's note will be accepted only if you are absent for 5 or more consecutive days. No other documentation or reason will be accepted to excuse absences.

Students are expected to arrive to class on time. Ideally, you will arrive a few minutes early and be prepared to start at class start time. If there is an issue which you expect may cause you to be late regularly (e.g. prior class in a building far from the classroom), please inform the instructor in advance and provide relevant documentation.

If a student is more than 10 minutes late from class without permission (including being away from the classroom more than 10 minutes during class time, or leaving class more than 10 minutes early), it will be counted as an absence.

Combined Fall/Winter absences:

- 0-12 classes missed (no reduction from final grade)
- 13-15 classes missed (1% deducted from final grade)
- 16-18 classes missed (2% deducted from final grade)
- 19-21 classes missed (3% deducted from final grade)
- 22 or more classes missed (4% deducted from final grade)

## Homework

You must submit your homework before class starts. If it is submitted during class or after class, it is considered one day late. If you are absent from class, you can submit your homework by email by the due date/time in order to receive full marks (you must bring the hard copy the next time you are in class).

- Written homework and voice-recorded homework fully completed and submitted by the due date/time: In general, 2 points each, unless it is very poorly done.
- One day late: half points will be given.
- 2 days late: corrected but no points.
- 3 or more days late: No corrections, no points.

## Independent study assignments

Approximately twice a month, students will be given an "independent study assignment". The format may include creating videos, blog posts, etc., and may include topics such as hobbies, interests, and so on. The assignment must be submitted by 6pm on the independent study day. Late submissions (up to 24 hours late) will receive a penalty of 50%. Assignments submitted more than 24 hours late (or not submitted at all) will receive a score of zero. Additional guidelines will be provided in advance.

## *Yoshuu* (preview) quizzes

Students are expected to preview materials before coming to class. *Yoshuu* (preview) quizzes are designed to ensure that you have previewed the assigned materials and will thus come to class prepared and ready to practice using the language you have previewed. *Yoshuu* quizzes must be completed on your own time prior to coming to class (due time: 11:00a.m.) using MyCourses "Quizzes". Late submissions (up to 24 hours late) will receive a deduction of 50% from your score. You will not be able to access *yoshuu* quizzes on MyCourses 24 hours after the due time, and you will receive a grade of 0 for these uncompleted quizzes. Your lowest 5 scores (Fall and Winter semesters combined) on *yoshuu* quizzes will be dropped.

## Written quizzes and tests

Written tests and quizzes are administered during class hours and must be taken at the scheduled time. There will be no "make-ups" for quizzes; instead, your two lowest scores over the course of the year will be omitted. If you miss a test, you must contact the instructor on the same day to request approval for a make-up. Make-up tests, if approved, must be taken on the first day you return to school, and within one week of the scheduled test date. Please note that a penalty may apply. The final exam will be a cumulative written exam, held during the final exam period in April.

## Dialogue presentations (Fall) and group presentation (Winter)

There will be two dialogue presentations in the Fall semester, and one group presentation in the Winter semester. Students will be assessed on factors such as the quality of the script (e.g. accuracy and variety of grammar and vocabulary), speaking skills such as pronunciation, fluency, and memorization of the script, and effective cooperation with partner/group members. A schedule of oral presentation dates will be provided on MyCourses each semester, and detailed guidelines for preparation as well as the grading scheme will be provided in advance.

## **AI and translation tools policy**

Unless explicitly stated otherwise by the instructor, it is strictly forbidden to use AI tools such as ChatGPT, or translation tools such as Google Translate or DeepL for homework, scripts, or compositions (including for tests). The use of such tools will be treated as an academic offence (cheating, plagiarism, etc.).

## **Important notes:**

- Students do not have the option of doing extra work to make up or improve their marks.

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#). (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003) (See McGill's [guide to academic honesty](#) for more information.)

In accord with McGill University's [Charter of Student Rights](#), students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives. (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009)

Conformément à [la Charte des droits de l'étudiant](#) de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté, sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue. (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 21 janvier 2009)

The University is committed to maintaining teaching and learning spaces that are respectful and inclusive for all. To this end, offensive, violent, or harmful language arising in course contexts may be cause for disciplinary action.

As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and/or the [Office for Student Accessibility & Achievement](#).

Many students face wellness challenges that can impact not only their academic success but also their ability to thrive in our campus community. The university offers many resources to support students' well-being, such as the [Student Wellness Hub](#), the [GuardMe Student Support Program \(GMSPP\)](#) or the [SSP app](#) on your mobile device.

McGill University is located on unceded Indigenous lands in Tiohtià:ke, a site that has long served as a gathering place for Indigenous peoples. The Kanien'kehà:ka of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy are recognized as the traditional custodians of these lands and waters. Today, this area is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We honour, recognize, and respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, assessment tasks in this course are subject to change, provided students are sent adequate and timely communications regarding the change.