

NewsLetter August 2024

Introduction of regular students' activities



Japan trip 2024 has been successfully done.

5 students attended the Japan tour in May and visited Hokkaido, Tokyo, and Gifu.

In Hokkaido, we enjoyed the sceneries of Sapporo, Noboribetsu, and Hakodate. In Gifu, we experienced a homestay program, swinging down real samurai swords and deepened interactions with local people.

The trip to Japan was life changing and extremely fun! It was very planned out, and I enjoyed seeing Japan in a way most tourists will never see. Trying out speaking to locals for the first time was nerve-wracking but surprisingly easy after all the lessons I've had. Gifu was my favorite part of the trip. Staying with our home stay family was an amazing experience. I enjoyed conversing with locals and using the skills I had learned.

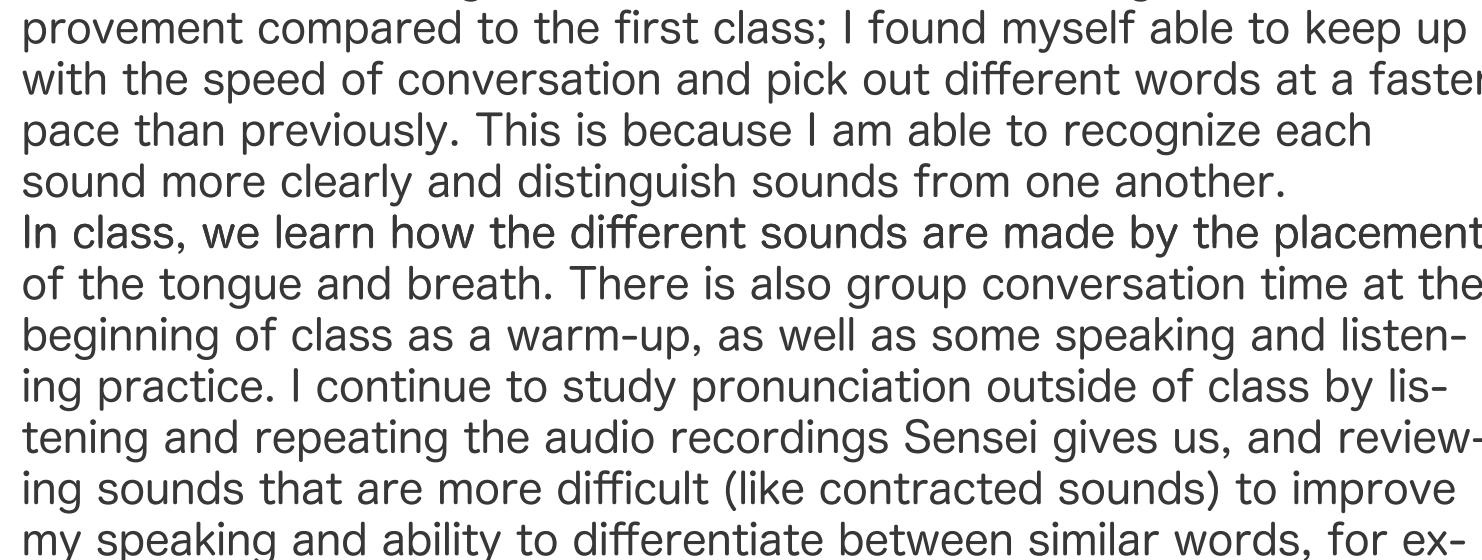
Stephanie

Before going to Japan for the first time, I was informed I have a chance to see a real katana. I was really excited. It was lighter than I thought it would be, and was very interesting to look at. Japanese swords are made so well that even very old ones are still beautiful and sharp. I really enjoyed watching other people use it though. I am so thankful for letting me hold a real katana!

Devin

Finally going to Japan after all these years was absolutely incredible! The food, the culture, the people, the architecture. The opportunities to spend time with Japanese natives speaking Japanese were truly special. As difficult and anxiety-inducing as being restricted to Japanese for communication might have been, I've already seen how it's improved my skills and, more importantly, my confidence. I've also made friendships that have continued since returning home, giving me more opportunities to learn about the culture and practice my speaking.

Sam



Do you care about Pronunciation and listening skill? Special lecture is available for the theory.

Pronunciation class has been very helpful for me to improve all areas of language study. As Sensei said, "if you cannot hear you cannot speak or write." Having taken this class I now understand how the importance of having a strong grasp on pronunciation is a necessity for improving my Japanese study.

Prior to attending the pronunciation class, I had some difficulties catching what was being said in audio recordings, which made my listening comprehension weak. I had to ask for things to be repeated more frequently which could be discouraging at time especially if it was something I knew I had the grammar and vocabulary necessary for comprehension. Now that I am able to identify the different sounds in the Japanese language, I have noticed a significant improvement in my ability to understand spoken Japanese from a variety of sources (textbook audio, in person conversations, songs, etc). As well as the speed at which conversations were had. This has helped my conversation practice go more smoothly because I don't need to stop and have things repeated as much, and I don't stumble over my words because of a difficult sound that I'm not used to making because it doesn't exist in English or have a similar sound or placement in the mouth to English. With this improvement feel more comfortable when listening to dialogues and having conversations in Japanese. Even during group conversations with higher level students I noticed a significant improvement compared to the first class; I found myself able to keep up with the speed of conversation and pick out different words at a faster pace than previously. This is because I am able to recognize each sound more clearly and distinguish sounds from one another.

In class, we learn how the different sounds are made by the placement of the tongue and breath. There is also group conversation time at the beginning of class as a warm-up, as well as some speaking and listening practice. I continue to study pronunciation outside of class by listening and repeating the audio recordings Sensei gives us, and reviewing sounds that are more difficult (like contracted sounds) to improve my speaking and ability to differentiate between similar words, for example; ひょういん and ひょういん. I am surprised how much I have improved in such a short period of time. I recommend people try to study pronunciation to improve their speaking and listening skills.

Emma

