

Departure OC I Revised Edition

Happy Teachers Make Happy Students

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Recently, I spoke with a British friend about his experiences as an ALT. As well as the many rewards of the job, we also discussed some of the pitfalls. He explained how hard it can be finding time to liaise with JTEs and I must confess his comment: “Time is the biggest frustration.” stuck with me.

It would appear that lack of time to prepare for team-teaching lessons can be a very big source of frustration for ALTs in Japan and an understandable one at that. Teachers who are serious about their work do not want to walk into a lesson “cold.” Obviously, a teacher cannot play a truly active role in the classroom unless he or she understands *everything* in the students’ textbooks and hence the activities the class will engage in. However, considering that Oral Communication textbooks almost always give instructions, comprehension questions and the like in Japanese, it is virtually impossible for an ALT to prepare a lesson by him or herself unless he or she can read Japanese. Those of us who have been down that road know reading Japanese is a very different kettle of fish to speaking it!

It is my firm belief that *Departure Teacher’s Book* will go a long way towards ameliorating this less than ideal situation for both ALTs and JTEs.

Perhaps the single most useful feature of the *Teacher’s Book* is the fact that everything is presented in English on the relevant page. Answers are given in red, instructions in green and CD listening scripts in black, eliminating the need to flip to another page to check scripts or find answers. As the *Teacher’s Book* is in English, the ALT can read the targets for each lesson by him or herself and understanding the aims of the lesson will surely lead to more effective teaching. In addition, all the instructions have been translated into English so the ALT can monitor students more efficiently. If some of the instructions are to be given to the class in English, the ALT can decide how to rephrase them in advance, if necessary. With *Departure Teacher’s Book*, an ALT will be able to prepare efficiently for the lesson by himself or herself and perhaps even use the *Teacher’s Book* and student’s textbook to learn Japanese. Furthermore, meetings to plan lessons should be both smoother and shorter based on the *Teacher’s Book*. If any changes or additions are to be made to the lesson, they can be done quickly and easily.

Another novel feature of the *Teacher’s Book* is that it is identical to the student’s textbook in size and color. The illustra-

tions are full size and in full color, making it easy to engage students with questions about the color of illustrations and photos. Using the same textbook will help to create a sense of unity between teachers and students, emphasizing that everyone in the classroom is working towards the same goal.

The *Teacher's Book* will also be of help to Japanese English teachers, in view of the Ministry of Education and Science's new directives regarding the teaching of English classes in English. I know that one of my Japanese colleagues regularly consults *Departure Teacher's Book* for hints about how to give instructions in English.

Finally, another aspect of *Departure* that I like very much is the characters that appear throughout it. The main one is Suzuki Kazuaki, a Japanese high school student. The first eight lessons deal with school life in Japan, as Kazuaki befriends Chris, an exchange student from the USA. In the second half of *Departure* Kazuaki goes to Chicago as an exchange student. He meets his host family, the Wilsons, and makes a new American friend, John. The last unit brings us back to Japan, where Chris is involved in school activities and preparing to return home. The Japanese students are finishing their first year in high school. It's the perfect time to talk about memories.

In reality, these are the times that most Japanese high school students will use English — talking with exchange students or ALTs at school. Some students, of course, may have the opportunity to go overseas on a homestay themselves or have an

教科書 p.42

Lesson 8

This Is Chris Speaking.

Have you ever made a phone call in English? We use telephones every day, but when it comes to talking in English, we may feel nervous. Let's learn some basic expressions that are often used on the phone.

Get Ready

Listen to telephone conversations (1) – (5) and select the correct situation from pictures a. – e. to match each conversation.

1 **What's up?** どうしたの?

2 **What's up?** どうしたの?

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

Get Ready Script

(1) A: Is the 20th of this month OK for you?
B: I'm afraid not. We have another meeting then, but the next day is fine.

(2) A: Hello. This is Shibata Electric. May I help you? B: My name is Sano. I live on 5th Street. Our washing machine doesn't work well. Would you come and look at it, please?

(3) A: Where are you now? B: In front of the station.

(4) A: May I speak to Dr. Adam Thompson? B: I'm afraid you have the wrong number.

(5) A: Hi, Kyoko, what's up? B: Will you help me with my math homework? I can't solve some of the problems.

▲ *Departure OC I Teacher's Book*

exchange student to stay in their home. The way *Departure* introduces English using these realistic situations is bound to resonate with students.

“Job,” “occupation,” “career,” “vocation,” whatever we may choose to call it, work is a very important part of life for most people; how we feel about it can affect our mental and even physical health. Perhaps the French memoir writer Françoise de Motteville was right when she wrote: “The true way to render ourselves happy is to love our work and find in it our pleasure.” All in all, I believe that *Departure*, and the *Teacher's Book* in particular, are invaluable aids with the potential to help a lot of English teachers find even more pleasure in their work.

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