



**Japanese Language Center**  
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# JLCC 通信

Japanese Language Center (つうしん)  
**Newsletter January 2012**

## 新年あけましておめでとうございます

**俳句 (はいく)** Haiku by Charlie Smith New Year's dusk  
strawberry sunset  
dragon's breath

**辰年 (たつどし)** Year of the Dragon 1952 1964 1976 1988

Those born in the Year of the Dragon are honest, trustworthy, and have lots of energy. Everyone likes dragons.

There are twelve symbols of the Chinese zodiac based on the twelve years that Jupiter takes to circle the heavens; the ancient Chinese were able to indicate a season by the position of this mysterious star in the sky. After this system came to Japan, the Japanese used animal names to designate the twelve positions. They are rat, cow, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog, and boar. This zodiac cycle was also used to tell the direction, the hour and the day as well as the year. As a matter of fact, instead of asking directly how old you are, people are likely to ask in what year of the zodiac you were born. Thus they are able to guess your age almost correctly. So some ladies answer that my zodiac is "cat" or "Panda bear." How old is she?



- |          |  |                |
|----------|--|----------------|
| Rat:     | Forthright, tenacious, and shrewd. Can be manipulative and self-destructive. | 1960 1972 1984 |
| Ox :     | Dependable, ambitious, and tenacious. Can be stubborn and hot-tempered.      | 1961 1973 1985 |
| Tiger:   | Predictable, rebellious, and moody. Can be restless and impatient.           | 1962 1974 1986 |
| Rabbit:  | Gracious, good friend, and kind. Can be moody and superficial.               | 1961 1975 1987 |
| Snake:   | Deep thinker, wise, and mystic. Can be lone and possessive.                  | 1963 1665 1977 |
| Horse:   | Cheerful, popular, and quick-witted. Can be fickle and childish.             | 1964 1966 1978 |
| Sheep:   | Righteous, sincere, and sympathetic. Can be indecisive and worrier.          | 1955 1967 1979 |
| Monkey:  | Inventor, motivator, and improvise. Can be egotistical and arrogant.         | 1956 1968 1980 |
| Rooster: | Acute, neat, and meticulous. Can be over zealous and puritanical.            | 1957 1969 1981 |
| Dog:     | Honest, intelligent, and straightforward. Can be cynical and cold.           | 1958 1970 1982 |
| Boar:    | Honest, gallant, and sturdy. Can be naïve and self-indulgent.                | 1959 1971 1983 |

### **アニメ紹介 (しょうかい)** Anime Millennium Actress (千年女優 せんねんじょゆう)

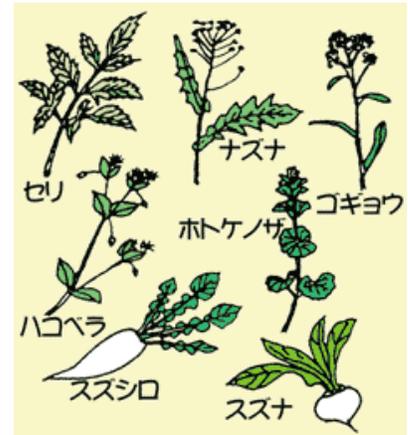


It is a 2001 Japanese anime by director Satoshi Kon and animated by the Studio Madhouse. It tells the story of a documentary filmmaker investigating the life of an elderly actress in which reality and cinema become blurred. Millennium Actress received the Grand Prize in the Japan Agency of Cultural Affairs Media Arts Festival, tying with Spirited Away, and it won the awards of Best Animation Film and Fantasia Ground-Breaker at the 2001 Fantasia Film Festival. The movie took home the prestigious Ofuji Noburo Award at the 2002 Mainichi Film Awards. The film is ranked in the Top 50 Animated Films on the Internet Movie Database.

## 七草 (ななくさ) Seven herbs of spring

This practice came to Japan from China, where there was a custom that on January 7 all family members eat rice porridge with seven herbs of spring for breakfast to drive evil spirit away and pray for health during the year.

It's also been around in Japan for a long time, since there is a mention of it in **Makura no soshi** written about a thousand years ago by a lady-in-waiting of the Japanese Empress. It is the first festival of **Go Sekku** or five seasonal festivals of the year. The seven herbs vary from region to region and also from era to era, but today they commonly consist of the leaves of **Seri** (Japanese parsley or dropwort) **Nazuna** (shepherd's purse), **Gogyou** (cottonweed), **Hakobera** (chickweed), **Hotoke-no-za** (henbit), **Suzuna** (Japanese turnip), **Suzushiro** (Japanese radish).



Eating these greens in the New Year was thought to replenish the body with energy from nature and to promote good health and longevity. It's a time-honored custom that's also very practical, since the herbs are a good remedy for indigestion from having had too much **Mochi** (rice cakes) over the holidays.



## 歌舞伎 (かぶき)

### Kabuki –History

For over four hundred years Kabuki has remained a major form of artistic expression for Japan's mercantile, urban societies. Essentially it has always been a popular theatre, reflecting not just the fashions and cultural tastes of the people, but also the political and socio-economic

conditions of each age through which it has evolved.

Following centuries of civil war that ravaged the country, the ascendancy of the Tokugawa shogunate at the beginning of the seventeenth century at last brought peace in the form of a centralized military dictatorship. The shogun maintained his power by an unforgiving, hierarchical control of nearly all aspects of Japanese society. With the samurai warrior class at the top, the Confucian class system descended through farmers and craftsmen and finally to merchants, the latter despised particularly for their association with such vulgar matters as usury and trade.

In such constrained social circumstances, the Kabuki theatre was one of the only officially sanctioned forms of entertainment for the general public, and in particular for the grass roots of society. As such Kabuki became a vital channel of expression against government repression. Although strict censorship ensured that nothing negative could be stated openly, nevertheless the subjects of many plays were subversive in content, often criticizing the contemporary social system under ancient historical guise. The real intentions and subjects of such stories, however, were perfectly obvious to the audiences of the time.

As time passed, Kabuki actors became increasingly popular with the public and were, in effect, the bright superstars of their day. They were appreciated not only for their acting skills, but also for the spirit of freedom and individuality that they embodied, as well as for their roles as true fashion icons.

(From Shochiku Kabuki)

## コーススケジュール Course Schedule

JLC announced the Course Schedule of Spring 2012 and the registration has already begun.

Lesson Fees for a group course are \$230 (110 minutes lessons and 8 sessions) and Private lessons are \$450 (110 minutes lessons and 5 sessions). Registration & Lesson fees are due 72 hours prior the first lesson.

Our schedule is getting tight quickly. So please sign up early before it becomes booked up.

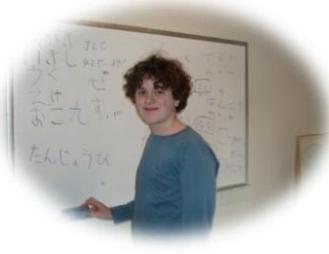
The schedule may change without notice, so please visit the website for the updated schedule, <http://www.japanese-language.net/schedule.htm>.

### Japanese Language Center

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Course	Day	Start	End
JPN 101	Thu	5:50 PM	7:40 PM
JPN 102	Sat	12:10 PM	2:00 PM
JPN 103	Fri	7:10 PM	9:00 PM
JPN 104	Sun	8:10 AM	10:00 AM
JPN 201	Sun	10:10 AM	12:00 PM
JPN 301	Wed	7:10 PM	9:00 PM
Advanced	Mon	7:10 PM	9:00 PM
Teens 100	Fri	5:10 PM	7:00 PM
Teens 200	Sun	10:10 PM	12:00 PM
Teens 300	Wed	7:10 PM	9:00 PM

## 生徒紹介 (せいとしょうかい) Students of JLC



## 作文 (さくぶん) Essay

一月四日という日本では、お正月の三が日も明け仕事始めであろう。元日になってあわてて書いた年賀状が配達される時期でもある。年賀状のおかげで、一年間のご無沙汰も解消できるというわけである。駅や空港や高速は、帰省先から戻ってくる家族でさぞかし込み合っていることであろう。私がY氏に電話した時、彼もまた郷里から東京への帰路にあり、駅の雑踏の騒音がケータイを通して聞こえていた。

昨年の夏、帰国した際たまたま訪れたみちのくの温泉旅館で、たまたま出張のついでに一人立ち寄ったというY氏に、何十年かぶりに偶然出会った。もうチェックアウトしないと出発の時間に間に合わないからと、彼は名刺を私に差し出し、あさって東京で会おうと言って立ち去った。丁寧に名刺の携帯番号に丸を付け、ここに電話をしてくれと言いつ残し、数歩行ったところですぐまた、メールでもいいと言うためにわざわざ戻ってきたが、私はケータイにしるメールにしる、連絡を取ろうという気にはなれずそのままになってしまっていた。そして、年が明けた。

その日、私はジョージクルーニーの映画を見てとてもいい気分だった。ジョージクルーニーは確かに美形ではあるが、前からこんなに鼻の下が長い顔だったろうかと思ったりもしていた。ハワイアンミュージックも捨てたもんじゃないなと思った。若いころの派手なアクションもラブシーンもないジョージクルーニーがよかった。地味なストーリーに涙し、私の心もちょっと温かくていい気分だった。帰りがけにパブでアイリッシュコーヒーを飲みながら、なぜかふと Y 氏にハッピーニューイヤーの電話をしてみようかと思いたち、そして私はその思いつきにすっかり舞い上がってしまった。アイリッシュコーヒーだけにすればよかったものをビールまで飲んでしまったからかもしれない。

古いアルバムを見る時のような興奮... またあのころに戻れるかもしれない。今はすべて懐かしく思える。将来も過去も何も変わらないだろうが、あのころの自分に戻れるとしたら、これは何よりのエキサイトメントに違いあるまい。何十年かのご無沙汰を一本の電話で解消してもいいのではないだろうか、私は思った。

(J)

### おしらせ Remarks

- Lesson fees for Group Lessons are \$230, however an early registration with payment by check/cash before your present course ends can get \$6 gift card.
- Please bring your friends to JLC. Any referrals signing up for a class results in a \$23 gift card for you and your friend.
- Free materials are available. Please check the Course Descriptions page of website, [http://www.japanese-language.net/course\\_descriptions.htm](http://www.japanese-language.net/course_descriptions.htm). If you can't find any sub material what you need, please request it your instructor. We are more than happy to help you. We may create a new free material for you.

### ミーティング Japanese Language MeetUp

JLC supports a Japanese Language conversation group in the community and JLC's instructor Junko is the organizer of **Japanese Language MeetUp**. The regular meeting is usually on the second Tuesday at the region Library. The field trip is on the fourth Tuesday.

We will have Kakizome (the first calligraphy of the year), and your calligraphy arts will be exhibited on our website. Organizer will bring materials, but any additional equipment/materials are appreciated.

Of course, we enjoy free conversation in English also, but we'd like to speak/listen more Japanese and have a little more focus. Self-introductions are not enough by themselves and we'd like something more than just chatting. However, it's open to anyone who like Japanese language regardless the skill levels. Please join us even if you don't know any Japanese words.

#### Next Meeting

When: 6:30PM-8:30PM on Tue 24 January.  
Where: Conference Room of Redmond Library  
Event fee: \$1.00 (your guest for first visit is free).

Please visit the website, <http://japanese.meetup.com/17> for more information.



あいいうえおかきくけこさしすせそたちつととなにぬねのはひふへほまみむめもやゆよりるれろわんあいいうえおかきくけこさしすせそたちつととなねのはひふへほまみむめもやゆよりるれろわんあいいうえおかきくけこ



### 日本語センター (JLC)

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Japanese Language Center provides

Japanese Language Instruction

and Translation Services