

Japanese Language Speech Contest Victoria 2024 - Entry List

Afternoon Session (12:30-5:30)

Open Beginner Division

Entry 1: Hugo Jakobsson

きりかえる **The reason why I am studying Japanese**

The speech will begin with a brief introduction about myself. After the introduction, I will share my experience learning a new Japanese word from my Japanese teammate during a challenging soccer season. This lesson significantly boosted our team's mentality, enabling us to overcome hardships and defeat the best team in the league. The speech will conclude by expressing my passion for continuing to learn Japanese, as it benefits me both in professional and personal manner.

Entry 2: Brave Khazayuka

日本に旅行するかどうか **To Visit or Not To Visit Japan**

My speech talks about the things that would need to be considered before going to visit Japan through my own personal experience going there. Mainly the difference in culture, the language barrier, and the maze-like train stations, which would pose a problem to many tourists visiting the land of the rising sun. I will be mainly sharing my experiences as well as a few tips for travelling.

Entry 3: Nicholas Abhimata Silalahi

ウルトラマンはみんなのショー **Ultraman is a Show for Everyone**

Ever since its introduction in the Showa era, Ultraman has been known as a show for kids. While that is true for the most part, in recent times, Ultraman has evolved to be a show for everyone whether young or old. It has easy messages and morals for children and yet the stories can take on complex adult problems. Ultraman currently should be known as a show for everyone and be a choice for something to watch with the entire family. This speech is for the sake of reintroducing Ultraman to everyone so that more would give the show a chance, especially as all recent series are completely available on Youtube.

Entry 4: Piero Baracchi

新しい世界 **A New World**

I am half Chinese but I cannot speak Chinese. Growing up, this language barrier made it hard for me to connect with my Chinese speaking relatives. However, as a result of this, from a young age I had always been fascinated by Asian cultures. During high school, my friends introduced me to Japanese culture which re-sparked my childhood interest in Asian cultures. I was eager to learn more. Unfortunately however, my high school did not offer Japanese, so I put my interest in Japan aside. Now, at university, I am finally pursuing my interest in Japan. Each class is interesting and I have had the opportunity to meet many new people with similar interests. My message to everyone is this: If you have an interest in another country or culture, please follow it. Language is a challenge, but a worthwhile one that can lead you to discover a new world.

Entry 5: Siqi Tao

北の国から **From the North**

Last year, I visited Furano, Hokkaido, the filming location of the Japanese TV series "北の国から." This experience highlighted the beauty of slowing down and reconnecting with nature, themes deeply explored in the series. In my speech, I aim to demonstrate the resilience found in living harmoniously with nature, the strength of community that comes from slow living, and the importance of appreciating simple things, like the effort required to bring tap water to a home. These lessons, reinforced by my time in Furano, encourage a life rich in meaning, connected to nature, and filled with gratitude for the world around us.

Entry 6: Jinyi Zuo

アニメ: 私の成長の途中にある安全な避難所 **Anime: A Safe Haven on My Road to Growth**

I have heard many times from people around me, saying that "anime is for kids, and you should pay more attention to your studies, and achieving high scores and goals." I think this is cliché, while anime can promote a country's economic development, and give energies that one can't even imagine to people who are struggling in life. Anime should not be a "privilege" for kids only, but also a reassuring shelter for adults.

Entry 7: Lucy Grimes

毎日自分にごっかり **Everyday I fail**

Every day I fail. I have bad habits and grow frustrated at myself. When I am alone, I dream about having a fulfilling life. However, to protect ourselves we try to forget these emotions. But we cannot let ourselves forget about them, because we are human. We fail, and that is okay. I am proud of everyone who can fail, as it shows how strong humans are. Learning from failure is better than giving up. Evolving as a person and seeing new views makes me incredibly happy. Please, everyone, trust in what I say and do not be afraid to fail.

Entry 8: Sarah Johannesen

未知の道 **The unknown path**

The unknown path can be a scary one to tread, but taking it can lead you to places you never thought you could go. We can't see the future—we don't know what lies beyond the here and now—yet in our lives there will be many opportunities where we will choose either to stay on the path in front of us, or to take the unknown one, through the fog of uncertainty. It requires us to have faith in ourselves to take the leap, the compassion for ourselves if we miss, and an understanding that from both success and failure comes discovery and growth.

Entry 9: Johnson Ren

木も見て森も見る **Process or Product**

In this speech, I'll talk about how I transit from treating results as the most important things to learning to cherish the process throughout the journey of learning Japanese. I will discuss how in the process of learning Japanese, particularly being able to immediately apply what was learned into real-life situations, brought a sense of achievement and joy. This new perspective led to a deeper appreciation of the language and culture, as well as meaningful interactions with the teacher, which made the learning experience more enjoyable and fulfilling.

Entry 1: Amy Yang

お婆ちゃんへの手紙 **A Letter to Grandma**

This is a letter I wrote to my late Grandma, expressing my gratitude. In this letter, I shared my life as a student in Melbourne, mentioned the warm care from my family and friends on my birthday. Then I talked about how I'm taking care of myself so that my family doesn't worry. Also, my experience traveling to Kyoto last winter break, since my grandma has a dream of seeing the red leaves. At the end, I expressed my regrets at not being able to see her due to covid. However, My grandma is still with me in my heart, and we will see each other one day, I always believe.

Entry 2: Lily Anderson

私の中からたのびじ **My Karate Journey**

I will explain briefly about karate's origins while expanding upon its arrival into Japan and the popularity it gained. I will move on to speak about Okinawa where different styles of karate emerged. I will go into detail about one of them (*tomarite* - とまりて), explaining the characteristics of it.

I then shift gears into my own life where karate has had a large impact on my life in all aspects of it. I provide insight into my life and how karate has changed it as well as the culture of it within the dojo I go to and how it sparked my interest in Japanese.

Entry 3: Celline

摂食障害を乗り越える **Overcoming my Eating Disorder**

Eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder, are complex mental health conditions that can have severe physical and psychological consequences. Though it's not easy for me to admit, I have personally struggled with anorexia nervosa during high school, so I understand the immense challenges that people with eating disorders face. Eating disorders are a significant public health issue, affecting millions of individuals, particularly adolescents and young adults. I hope to share my experience with an eating disorder and provide insights on the healthy coping strategies for those struggling with these debilitating conditions.

Entry 4: I-Jen (Irene) Wang

敏感すぎる社会 ? **An overly sensitive society?**

"Given that doing exercise by taking a stroll along the perimeter of a school can be potentially treated as a suspicious act, and that using colours to describe the natural state of objects and matters can raise eyebrows, would it be fair to say that we are living in an overly sensitive society?"

It is of great importance not to ignore but acknowledge that the way we live changes as time goes by and as a result, there is the need to make an adjustment to how the society functions and an adjustment of how we view things. Appropriate levels of care and precaution are necessary. At the same time, if we overly address or emphasize a matter, it is not an overstatement to say that we possibly are creating a society full of neurotic people.

Entry 5: Sun Terry

SNS は僕らの社会にどんな影響を与えてくれるのか **The impact of Social Media on Communication**

Social media has dramatically transformed communication by making it faster, more accessible, and far-reaching. It allows individuals to connect instantly across the globe, breaking down geographical barriers and enabling real-time conversations. This has democratized the spread of information, empowering ordinary people to share their voices alongside traditional media. However, it also brings challenges such as the spread of misinformation, echo chambers, and the blurring of lines between personal and public life. The brevity and immediacy of social media platforms often lead to shallow, polarized discussions, reducing the depth and quality of communication. Despite these challenges, social media fosters global communities, supports social movements, and enables people to stay connected with friends and family, reshaping how society interacts and shares information in the digital age. Overall, its impact is profound, influencing both the positive and negative aspects of communication.

Entry 6: Maria Alexandra

いきがいの発見：言語から科学へ、アイデンティティの形成 **Discovering Ikigai: Shaping Identity from Language to Science**

My speech reflects on how learning Japanese has become a crucial part of shaping my identity and career aspirations. What started as a simple fascination with Japanese language and culture evolved into a transformative journey, leading to a full-ride scholarship in Australia. Through my experiences with Japanese language learning and competition endeavours, I have embraced three core values: curiosity, resilience, and confidence. These values have ultimately guided me to discover my 'Ikigai' – the intersection where my passion for Japanese language and science meets with a meaningful purpose. This path has inspired me to pursue a fulfilling career that bridges these two passions, aiming to contribute to society while continuing to explore the endless possibilities that learning can offer.

Entry 7: Irvin Yeung

僕の自由 **My Freedom**

This speech explores the theme of "What is freedom?" to me by reflecting on personal choices and worries about the future. It talks about the freedom (choices) and constraints one faces, and concludes that focusing on what can be done now, rather than overthinking the future and things out of my control.

Entry 8: Tristan van Paddenburg

日本のメンタルヘルスの状況 **The Current State of Mental Health in Japan**

Certain types of Japanese pop culture and music reflect and highlight the deeply rooted issue regarding the mental health of the Japanese people and especially the youth. While this issue is not specific to Japan, what may be specific to Japan is its lackluster capability in addressing this problem and how progress is somewhat behind most other developed countries. For the benefit of the Japanese people and their future, careful imperative action must be taken in order to solve the root cause of current social issues instead of relying on symptomatic treatment.

Entry 9: Haven Tse

心の叫び- さよなら、昨日のわたし **Cry of My Heart- Farewell, Yesterday's Me**

This is a story you might have known or even encountered before—a soul striving to reach the star that lies beyond the universe. When the burning passion dims to embers, some people say it's the moment when a boy becomes a man. I, too, came to a realization and paused my journey. But this soul refuses to settle for such an end. By the end of his journey, even if he falls from the heights of the cosmos, he seeks no regrets from the bottom of his heart. He wishes to move on, even if it means getting lost along the way. He is determined to keep going forward until those embers finally turn to ashes. "I lived, and I tried"

Entry 10: Marcus Dubsky

詩と心 **Poetry and the Heart**

Poetry is an art form that has been fading in recent years. While all forms of Poetry have their charm, Japanese poetry is a particularly beautiful and, often, underappreciated art. Moreover, reading and writing Japanese poetry isn't just good for the spirit and soul, but can also be a powerful therapeutic tool for treating mental illness.

Entry 11: Liam Ricketson

安全を選ぶことの危険 **The Risk of Playing It Safe**

These days, we take very few risks because we're held back by what others around us think. This speech explores how restricted we become in our lives when we fall victim to social inhibition, and challenges the audience to imagine a new version of them: one that is free to take the reins of their own life. This speech also discusses conformity in society, and how easy it is to get caught up in other people's standards. It also discusses the idea of implicitly having control over one's reactions, and how the application of this idea is a crucial asset when being open to new opportunities. The speech concludes with a message to the audience that we don't live forever, and that our goal should be to get the most we can out of our one lifetime.

Entry 12: Sophia Chu

歪められた正義感 **Distorted Sense of Justice**

In today's 'attention economy', a new wave of 'Justice Heroes' has emerged on the internet, bringing with them a distorted or drunk sense of justice. The speech utilises the case of a Japanese YouTuber to explore the reasons why this is an issue and how it became increasingly prevalent. It then encourages us to reflect on our role as internet users and how we should react to these, by prompting us to contemplate the fundamental question of how we determine what is right and what is wrong.

Entry 13: Van Phuc Nguyen Tran

言葉のメロディー **Melody of the language**

The speech will be about how the Japanese language and its pop culture has left a great influence over my life. This will follow my first exposure to the Japanese media, firstly anime, during my primary school years. And then, it will unravel how other pop cultures such as J-pop and J-drama have left an impact on my life. Interleaving in this is the story of experiences that I had interacting with real Japanese people from various opportunities.

Entry 14: TK Reekie-Buckland

アイデンティティの再発見：日本語を通じて見つけた文化の誇り Rediscovering Identity: Finding Cultural Pride Through Japanese Studies

Culture is a defining part of most people's sense of identity. It is what allows us as people to interconnect and gives us a base point for understanding others around us. For me, however, culture was a point of confusion. As someone who is Anglo, Indigenous and Chinese Australian, for the longest time, I struggled to wade through the pool of cultures around me. However through my Japanese learning journey I was able to free myself of the stresses and worries I had surrounding how my identity would be seen by others. As such, I will discuss the ways in which learning Japanese as a foreigner with no heritage based connections enabled me to understand the importance of accepting my heritage into my identity and allowed me to do so.

Entry 15: Samantha Xu

茶道: 忘れられない経験、京都へ An Unforgettable Tea Ceremony Experience in Kyoto

When I turned 20, I came to ponder the meaning of happiness. It seemed that even though I was achieving new milestones, I couldn't help but feel unsatisfied or unhappy. Reflecting on a tea ceremony I had participated in during the fall of 2022 in Kyoto, I realised that I perhaps was doing too much and not truly embracing the present or practicing mindfulness. In my speech, I will draw upon the lessons I learnt during that tea ceremony and talk about the 'beauty of simpleness' and the 'beauty of mindfulness.' I will also talk about what it means to be truly happy.

Entry 16: Rachel Young

オーストラリアと日本の農業 Farming in Australia and Japan

Farming is a very important part of society, and I will be looking at farming in Australia and Japan and how they differentiate as well as their similarities. In Australia the most common form of farming is mixed farms in comparison to Japan where it is small family farms as well as aquaculture. How overall production in each country differs, what each country favors production wise and why and also how much they contribute to their own country's economy. It is important to understand that whilst they may be quite different, both country's way of farming is suited for that country and are equally important for the lifestyles of those who live there. The differences and similarities are interesting and whilst it is a broad overview of farming from each country hopefully, I can pique everyone's interest in this topic.

Entry 17: James Chen

日本のスポーツ Sports in Japan

The differences between sports in Japan and other countries. The different values and objectives, structures and participations.

Entry 18: Arrifa Nasarudin

私の価値 My Worth

Exploring different perspectives to understand myself and my worth. To convey that I still deserve all the love right now as I am, in my failing stage, as I do when I am in my succeeding stage. I will cover areas such as the discovery of falling in love, failure and shame, dreams, and nihilism - I will continue to live even if I don't know what I'm holding onto. I may include quotes from Erich Fromm, Ono no Komachi and Sadhguru.

Entry 19: Sydney Tang

日本語が私を選んだ **Japanese Chose Me**

Why does history repeat? Why does intergenerational trauma perpetuate and how is it healed? My story explores the fate of one individual caught between an inheritance of bitter resentment resulting from historical conflict, and the potential for a brighter future of intercultural awareness and peace.

Entry 20: Estelle Abis

決して「美しい」になれない **You Can Never Be 'Pretty'**

This speech will discuss my opinion on the impact of beauty standards and the pressure to maintain a 'pretty' appearance. I will be drawing on my own experiences of dealing with this issue in the modern world, as well as discussing the wider physical expectations society places on women in particular. Through this speech, I wish to communicate that judging people by their 'prettiness' is extremely damaging. Yet, I also hope to enforce a positive message to those experiencing the pressure of beauty standards. Specifically, I hope that by hearing my speech they depart with an understanding that they are not alone and that true beauty comes from embracing your natural self.

Entry 21: Anirudhh (Arnie) Kaushal

日本語の旅 **A journey of learning Japanese**

I have studied Japanese for almost 10 years. There have been a lot of challenges and many rewarding moments. Yet sometimes, I wonder if pouring so much energy into this journey has been worth it. When someone asks me why I study Japanese, I don't have a good answer. In fact, I don't really have an answer at all. In this speech, I would like to reflect on this journey and about how Japanese has become a big part of me. As this is my last semester studying Japanese at university, I also want to share how, even if it has been challenging, I will greatly miss studying Japanese in a classroom.

Entry 22: Waylon Lin

「能力主義」に潜む恐ろしい事実 **The Terrifying Truth behind Meritocracy**

There is a significant faction of young impressionable Japanese people who are being convinced that seniority by length of service should be replaced by a system of meritocracy (as seen in the opinions of famous 2chan founder Hiroyuki Nishimura). This assumption is predicated on the assumption that ability is the ultimate measure of merit, where those who are capable should be rewarded the most. In a society that is already academically meritocratic, Japan is facing its next major moral dilemma. This is an invisible form of prejudice, and is all pervasive. How are we to face this invisible prejudice?

Entry 23: Wendy Zhang

日本で漫画が人々に与える影響 **impact of manga on people in Japan**

This speech explores the influence of manga on people in Japan through its rich storytelling and the ability to resonate with readers. This speech will also discuss how manga expresses emotions, presents the culture, and challenges the society

Entry 24: Yutong Yao

ひとりぼっちの私 **The Lonely Me**

In my speech titled "The Lonely Me," I explore how loneliness becomes a common experience as we grow older, affecting our personal relationships, professional life, and inner growth. With age, increasing responsibilities often lead to a weakening of connections with others, deepening our sense of solitude. However, I emphasize the positive aspects of loneliness, seeing it as an opportunity for self-discovery and personal growth. By embracing solitude, I can delve deeper into my true self, build emotional resilience, spark creativity, and reconnect with my core values. Rather than viewing loneliness as a burden, I encourage myself and others to use it as a tool for reflection and development, ultimately finding balance and fulfillment in life. I urge us to embrace these moments of loneliness as a path toward greater independence and inner strength.

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