

Compelling Conversations



*Questions & Quotations for
High-Intermediate Japanese English Language Learners*

Chapter Four: Eating and Drinking



Eric H. Roth, Shiggy Ichinomiya, and Brent Warner

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EATING AND DRINKING



VOCABULARY WARM-UP

Which words do you already know? Underline them, and circle the words you are unsure about. Then review your answers with a partner.

chef culinary decaffeinated edible famine
fast feast gluttony savor vegetarian

ACTIVITY 1: SHARING EXPERIENCES

Everybody eats. Food is both a necessity and a pleasure. It is also a safe and interesting way to learn more about people. Discuss your eating and drinking experiences with a partner.

1. Do you consider eating an activity that you look forward to, or just a necessity?
When do you think it is a pleasure? When is it a chore?
2. What did you eat yesterday for breakfast, lunch, and dinner? Was it a typical day?

3. Do you drink juice, tea, or coffee in the morning? Do you prefer regular or decaf* tea or coffee?
4. Do you eat at the same time every day? Or do you eat when it fits your schedule?
5. Do you prefer salty snacks or sweet snacks? Do you have a sweet tooth?
6. How much do you care about what you eat?
7. What drinks do you enjoy with your evening meal?
8. Which kind of food do you like: Beef? Pork? Poultry? Or do you not like meat?
9. What is your favorite vegetable? Are you a vegetarian? Vegan? Do you know any vegetarians?
10. What is your favorite fruit? Which fruits do you find delicious?
11. Can you name two non-Japanese dishes that you really savor?
12. Which Japanese dishes would you recommend to a tourist? Why?
13. Can you think of some junk food? When do you eat junk food?
14. Do you think Japanese food is healthier than Western food? Why or why not?
15. Do you ever buy food from a convenience store? Why or why not?

*Most people say “decaf” as an abbreviated version of decaffeinated.

ACTIVITY 2: EXPANDING VOCABULARY

Look at the definitions and example sentences below. Do the definitions match what you and your partner expected in the vocabulary warm-up list? If not, what is different?

chef, *noun*: a professional cook; the head cook in a restaurant.

◆ *Our chef is a professional who prepares and cooks delicious meals on a budget.*

culinary, *adjective*: having to do with cooking and food; concerning superior preparation of food.

◆ *Study the culinary arts if you want to become a chef.*

decaffeinated, *adjective*: containing no caffeine; a drink with the caffeine removed.

◆ *Sue drank decaffeinated coffee because regular coffee made her hyperactive.*

edible, *adjective*: something that can be eaten.

- ◆ *Some people find all parts of a fish to be edible.*

famine, *noun*: excitement; a passion for someone or something.

- ◆ *The terrible famine caused thousands of deaths.*

fast, *adjective*: moving with speed, advancing or progressing rapidly.

- ◆ *Junko is a very fast runner. She ran a 10K marathon in under 35 minutes.*

fast, *noun*: a period of time without eating; verb: to go without eating.

- ◆ *Michi went on a fast for three days.*

feast, *noun*: a large, excellent meal; an abundance of well-prepared food.

- ◆ *My mother prepared a delicious feast to celebrate my graduation.*

gluttony, *noun*: an excess of eating or drinking; greedy or excessive indulgence.

- ◆ *Gluttony can be a dangerous habit for overweight people with diabetes.*

savor, *verb*: to really enjoy; to experience satisfaction and pleasure in taste or smell.

- ◆ *I eat very slowly in order to savor my favorite food.*

vegetarian, *noun*: one who eats no meat; a meatless diet.

- ◆ *As a vegetarian, Kazuko doesn't eat meat.*

ACTIVITY 3: ASK MORE QUESTIONS

A. Select five vocabulary words from the list above and write a question for each word. Remember to start your question with a question word (Who, What, Where, When, Why, How, Is, Are, Do, Did, Does, etc.). You will also want to end each question with a question mark (?). Underline each vocabulary word.



Example: Who is the chef in the new Italian restaurant?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

B. Take turns asking and answering questions with your partner.

ACTIVITY 4: PHOTOGRAPHS TO START CONVERSATIONS

Photographs capture moments, inform viewers, and start conversations. In small groups, examine the photograph and discuss the questions that follow.



Japanese tourists are often surprised at the huge portions served in the United States. The Sidewalk Café, a famous beachside American restaurant in Venice Beach, California, serves many international tourists.

1. What is happening in this picture?
2. What kind of food do you like to eat when you travel?
3. How much food is too much food for you?
4. Can you think of some fast food restaurants that change their menu to adjust to local tastes?

5. What foods do you think show up in Japanese fast food restaurants that appeal to tourists?
6. With your partner, can you list the last five fast food restaurants you ate in?

ACTIVITY 5: PARAPHRASING PROVERBS

A. We have many expressions about food. Read the following expressions, and discuss them with your partner. What do they mean? Circle your favorites. Explain your choices.

1. Eggs and promises are easily broken. —Japanese

Meaning:

2. Laughter is brightest where the food is best. —Irish

Meaning:

3. Eat less, live longer. —German

Meaning:

4. One must eat to live, not live to eat. —Spanish

Meaning:

5. A bath refreshes the body; tea refreshes the mind. —Japanese

Meaning:

B. Can you add another proverb about food, drinks, and meals?

1.

**Culture Corner:
Fun with Puns**

Puns are word jokes. English has many puns. Understanding the puns can be difficult for many language learners because words can have multiple meanings and some sounds have different meanings. Understanding puns can be like solving a puzzle. Here are a few puns about food.

1. I'm on a seafood diet. I see food and I eat it.
2. Are you nuts for peanuts?
3. A hungry clock will go back four seconds.

Can you find another pun about food in Japanese or English?

.....
.....

ACTIVITY 6: PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE

You can speak English with a distinctly Japanese accent and still be clearly understood. However, reducing confusing sounds can greatly improve your communication with English speakers and help to eliminate confusion and misunderstanding in your English conversations.

“W” AND “U”

While Japanese has the sound “wa,” there are no other vowel combinations that go with the “w” sound. However, in English, there are many “w + vowel” combinations. To make up for this, the Japanese often try to replace the “w” sound with the “u” sound in order to make an approximate match. Unfortunately, this is very confusing for many native speakers.

Some words create no problems: Wine, for example, is very easy because the pronunciation matches the Japanese “wa-in.” Wood, however, cannot be understood when pronounced as “uddo.”

To make the “w” sound, begin as you would with pronouncing “wa” and change the shape of your mouth as you leave the sound.

WORD / NOT A WORD

Take turns reading the words from your lists below. The first words in the shaded boxes are NOT real words. They have been written in “*Katakana* English.” The word in (parentheses) is the real word. After you read each word, have your partner guess if you are saying a real word or not.

Partner A		Partner B
wood	Use your hand to cover your partner’s list.	wolf
uuru (wool)		welcome
wink		uddo (wood)
wave		wafer
urufu (wolf)		ueebu (wave)
ueedo (wade)		ueeru (well)
west		uinku (wink)
uefaa (wafer)		wool
uerukomu (welcome)		wade
well		uesuto (west)

Note: This activity contained many words that do not exist, but that Japanese speakers might say. Be careful with “w” words as they can cause confusion.

ACTIVITY 7: THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES

Let’s continue to explore eating and drinking with one or two classmates. Use complete sentences to respond.

1. What is your favorite restaurant? Do you go there more than twice a month?

2. How often do you eat at a fast food restaurant? Which is your favorite?
3. Are American fast food chains popular in Japan? What do Japanese like about American fast food?
4. Do all members of your family eat dinner together? Who cooks? Who serves the food?
5. In Japan, what special foods or drinks are associated with weddings?
6. Do you prefer coffee or green tea?
7. What happens to your eyes or nose when you eat too much wasabi?
8. Have you ever fasted? Why? Were you very hungry after skipping two meals?
9. Do you eat hamburgers and pizza with a knife and fork? Or do you use your hands?
10. Do you have your own cup and your own chopsticks that you use at your family's house?
11. Have you ever tried to go on a diet to lose weight? What did you do?
12. Do you eat local cuisine (Kobe beef in Kobe) when you travel?
13. Do you think that restaurants should ban smoking? What about bars? Why?
14. Do you usually read food labels? Why?
15. Does your family share recipes? Which recipe would you like to share?

ACTIVITY 8: DISCUSSING QUOTATIONS

Take turns reading these quotations out loud and discuss them with your partner. Do you agree with the quotation? Disagree? Why? Afterwards, pick a favorite quotation by circling the number and explain your choice. Remember to give a reason or example.

1. "The eating of meat extinguishes the seed of great compassion."
 —*Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama (563 BCE–483 BCE), philosopher*
 Agree Disagree
 Why?

2. "Tea ... is a religion of the art of life."
 —*Okakura Kakuzo (1862–1913), Japanese scholar*
 Agree Disagree
 Why?

3. “Understand, when you eat meat, that something did die. You have an obligation to value it.”
 —*Anthony Bourdain (1956–), American chef and TV star*
 Agree Disagree
 Why?

4. “Live. Love. Eat.”
 —*Wolfgang Puck (1949–), American celebrity chef*
 Agree Disagree
 Why?

5. “If it’s beautifully arranged on the plate, you know someone’s fingers have been all over it.”
 —*Julia Child (1912–2004), American chef and author*
 Agree Disagree
 Why?

6. “More die in the United States of too much food than of too little.”
 —*John Kenneth Galbraith (1908–2006), American ambassador and economist*
 Agree Disagree
 Why?

7. “Making sushi is an art, and experience is everything.”
 —*Nobu Matsuhisa (1949–), Japanese celebrity chef and restaurant owner*
 Agree Disagree
 Why?

8. “Every time I look into his eyes I just want to take the ice cream or whatever I’ve got in my hand and rub it into his face. That’s how much I like him.”
 —*Banana Yoshimoto (1964–), Japanese author*
 Agree Disagree
 Why?

9. “You can’t just eat good food. You’ve got to talk about it too. And you’ve got to talk about it to somebody who understands that kind of food.”
 —*Kurt Vonnegut (1922–2007), American author*
 Agree Disagree
 Why?

10. “Japanese chefs believe our soul goes into our knives once we start using them. You wouldn’t put your soul in a dishwasher!”

—Masaharu Morimoto (1955–), Japanese chef

Agree Disagree

Why?

My favorite quote was:

Why?

ACTIVITY 9: TELL ME ABOUT JAPAN ... IN ENGLISH

People want to know about Japan and Japanese culture. Next time you travel abroad or meet a foreigner, you can tell them about Japan in English.



FAST FOOD!

What do you eat when you want to eat something tasty yet also filling? In the United States, we often eat hamburgers for a tasty, filling, and affordable meal. You can add fries, a salad, or fruit for a full meal.

In Japan, *donburi* (rice bowl dish) seems as common as hamburgers are in the U.S. Both have many variations from region to region and remain popular with young and old.

Can you list three types of *donburi* you like? Have you ever made your own unique *donburi*? What was it like?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Would you count *donburi* by itself as a whole meal, or does it need other sides? What would you add with *donburi* to make it a complete meal? List three choices.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

ROLE PLAY

Night Out at a Fancy Restaurant in Miami

Find online reviews of upscale restaurants in Miami, Florida, for a fun night out with a group of friends. Use the reviews to select a restaurant.

Role Play Preparation: Asking Questions

Eating out can be fun and satisfying, especially if ordering in English. What are three typical questions to ask a waiter at a your selected restaurant?

1.
2.
3.

What are three questions you might ask a friend at dinner?

1.
2.
3.

Role Play: Accidents Happen!

Everybody wants to have a good time when they go out, but sometimes bad things happen to good people—even in nice restaurants!

Let's imagine this situation: It's very busy at a fashionable Miami restaurant on Saturday night. A new waiter, Pedro, has just started. He's very nervous. Two friends arrive for dinner, and they want to talk. At the restaurant, everybody wants to have a good time, but accidents do happen.

- What will happen? Who are the friends?
- What do they want to talk about?
- Which Miami restaurant are they going to?
- Who is the waiter?
- Why is the restaurant so busy?
- What accident will happen?
- What will happen next?

“You can say the service is good when it isn't intrusive, but comes straight away when required.”

—*Nobu Matsuhisa (1949–),
Japanese celebrity chef*

Can you create a fun skit? Answer the questions and act in your own play. Have fun.

SEARCH and SHARE
Choosing a Local Restaurant

____ / 10

Student Name: Date:
Class: Teacher:

Can you recommend a good place for dinner around here? Find and share a positive review for a local restaurant that you like. Pick a favorite local restaurant, do some research, and pick the best review—in Japanese or in English. Use this worksheet to tell us about the review. Remember restaurant reviews should provide examples and details. Tell us about a special restaurant—in English—and help us find a place to eat delicious food.

Restaurant: Location:
Review: Reviewer:

1. Why did you pick this review?
2. How does the reviewer describe the restaurant? What kind of food does it serve?
3. When was the review written?
4. What do you know about the reviewer?
5. What does the reviewer say about the restaurant’s atmosphere?
6. How did the reviewer describe the restaurant’s service?
7. What did the reviewer eat?
8. What was the best part of the restaurant review?
9. Does the reviewer recommend the restaurant? Why?
10. How often have you been to the restaurant? What makes this restaurant special?

“One man’s meat is another man’s poison.”
—Latin proverb

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*Questions & Quotations for
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Chapter Eleven: Learning in School



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LEARNING IN SCHOOL



VOCABULARY WARM-UP

Which words do you already know? Underline them, and circle the words you are unsure about. Then review your answers with a partner.

academic adversity bully campus dormitory
dress code elementary field trip role model tutor

ACTIVITY 1: SHARING EXPERIENCES

We have spent thousands of hours in schools, learned many skills, and collected numerous stories. Many people have their fondest memories from years in school. Share your school stories with a classmate.

1. Approximately how many hours a week were you in school? Did you go to school on Saturdays?
2. How did you usually get to school? Did you walk, take a bus, ride a bike, or use another form of transportation?

3. How long was your commute to high school?
4. How many students were in your class? What do you think is the perfect class size?
5. Did you have a favorite teacher? Why was this teacher your favorite?
6. What is your favorite memory about school?
7. Was there a dress code at your school? What were some of the other rules?
8. How would you describe your high school? Did you enjoy it?
9. Were your parents involved in your studies? How?
10. What does P.E. stand for? What was your favorite P.E. class?
11. Can you describe your high school? College?
12. Which was your least favorite class? Why?
13. What was your favorite class? Why?
14. How can you be a better student?
15. What does success in school mean to you? Why?

ACTIVITY 2: EXPANDING VOCABULARY

Look at the definitions and example sentences below. Do the definitions match what you and your partner expected in the vocabulary warm-up list? If not, what is different?

academic, *adjective*: educational, related to school.

- ◆ *Academic life can continue after high school and college with online classes, evening classes, workshops, and continuing education classes.*

adversity, *noun*: harsh conditions, suffering; bad luck or hardship.

- ◆ *Adversity can build character and make people stronger.*

bully, *noun*: an aggressive person who threatens weaker schoolmates or coworkers.

- ◆ *Bullies must be disciplined by school authorities.*

bully, *verb*: to scare or threaten a person.

- ◆ *Tim bullied his classmates and later was expelled from school.*

campus, *noun*: school grounds.

- ◆ *The campus is the center of academic life at many universities.*

dress code, *noun*: rules on what clothing is allowed in school.

- ◆ *The school dress code prohibits short skirts.*

elementary, *adjective*: primary, basic; fundamental.

- ◆ *Elementary school begins with kindergarten.*

field trip, *noun*: an organized trip a class takes away from campus.

- ◆ *We took several field trips to local museums.*

report card, *noun*: the academic record of students.

- ◆ *Miyuki's report card shows that she got all As.*

role model, *noun*: a person to admire or imitate; one who sets a good example.

- ◆ *My father is a great role model because he works hard and spends time with his family.*

tutor, *noun*: a private teacher who helps a student outside of regular class.

- ◆ *My TOEFL tutor gave me extra help with my English lessons after school.*

ACTIVITY 3: ASK MORE QUESTIONS

A. Select five vocabulary words from the list above and write a question for each word. Remember to start your question with a question word (Who, What, Where, When, Why, How, Is, Are, Do, Did, Does, etc.). You will also want to end each question with a question mark (?). Underline each vocabulary word.



Example: Where is the school campus?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

B. Take turns asking and answering questions with your partner or group members.

ACTIVITY 4: PHOTOGRAPHS TO START CONVERSATIONS

Photographs capture moments, inform viewers, and start conversations. In small groups, examine the photograph and discuss the questions that follow.



1. Can you describe this picture?
2. Have you ever seen a yellow school bus? Where?
3. Do you prefer taking a public bus or a public train?
4. As a student, have you taken a tour bus? Where did you go?
5. Would you prefer to ride on an American yellow school bus or a British red double-decker bus? Why?
6. What do you think is the best way to get to school? Why?

ACTIVITY 5: PARAPHRASING PROVERBS

A. Read the following proverbs, and discuss them with your partner. What do they mean? Circle your favorites. Explain your choices.

1. One written word is worth a thousand pieces of gold. —Japanese

Meaning:
.....

2. Character first, ability second. —Japanese

Meaning:
.....

3. He who is afraid to ask is ashamed of learning. —Danish

Meaning:
.....

4. We learn to walk by stumbling. —Bulgarian

Meaning:
.....

5. To teach is to learn. —Japanese

Meaning:
.....

B. Can you add another proverb related to learning and schools?

1.

ACTIVITY 6: PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE

You can speak English with a distinctly Japanese accent and still be clearly understood. However, reducing confusing sounds can greatly improve your communication with English speakers and help to eliminate confusion in your English conversations.

“DR” AND “DOR”

In Chapter 10 we discussed the problem of putting the “o” sound after a “d” at the end of words. This pattern should be avoided in the middle of words too. In English, when two consonants are put together, we want to make a blended sound, such as the “dr” in words like drive.

To make the “dr” sound, position your tongue so it is ready to make the “d” sound, but instead of dropping your jaw, let the air pass by your tongue as you pull it back to the “r” position.

WHICH IS RIGHT?

Try to say the following words correctly (with the “dr” pronunciation) three times and incorrectly (with the “dor” pronunciation) once. Try to mix up when you say the word incorrectly. Your partner will mark an X when they hear the incorrect version. Then switch roles.

“dr” word	1	2	3	4
drive				
drip				
drain				
drag				
drill				
drumbeat				
dry				
drop				
drown				
drew				

ACTIVITY 7: THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES

Let's continue to explore learning in school with one or two classmates. Use complete sentences to respond.

1. Did you ever have a tutor, join a study group, or go to a cram school? Why?
2. What is your earliest memory from elementary school?
3. Do you remember taking field trips? Where did you go?
4. Which school trip was your favorite? Why?
5. Do you remember any bullying at school? Do you think bullying is a problem? Why?
6. Were you often given homework? Was it too much, too little, or just right?
7. What do you usually bring to school? Why?
8. What after-school activities, clubs, or sports did you participate in?
9. What are you proud of doing in your academic studies?
10. What did you enjoy most about school? What is your favorite memory from your high school days?
11. Did you find a role model or mentor (teacher, coach) at your school? Who? Why did you choose this person?
12. Have you kept in touch with anyone from your high school? Who? How?
13. Would you want your children to attend the same schools you attended? Why or why not?
14. What makes a good school? Why? What makes a great school? Why?
15. Do you have ideas on how to change or improve schools in Japan?

ACTIVITY 8: DISCUSSING QUOTATIONS

Take turns reading these quotations out loud and discuss them with your partner. Do you agree with the quotation? Disagree? Why? Afterwards, pick a favorite quotation by circling the number and explain your choice. Remember to give a reason or example.

1. "Education is an ornament in prosperity and a refuge in adversity."

—*Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E), Greek philosopher*

Agree Disagree

Why?

2. “Only the educated are free.”
—*Epictetus (55–135), Greek philosopher*
 Agree Disagree
Why?

3. “The most important thing we learn at school is the fact that the most important things can’t be learned at school.”
—*Haruki Murakami (1949–), Japanese author*
 Agree Disagree
Why?

4. “Education in Japan is not intended to create people accomplished in the arts and science, but rather to manufacture the persons required by the the state.”
—*Mori Arinori (1847–1889), Japanese statesman and Japan’s first education minister*
 Agree Disagree
Why?

5. “The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you.”
—*B.B. King (1928–2015), American blues guitarist*
 Agree Disagree
Why?

6. “The highest result of education is tolerance.”
—*Helen Keller (1880–1968), author and activist*
 Agree Disagree
Why?

7. “[In school] I encountered authority of a different kind than I had ever encountered before, and I did not like it. And they really almost got me. They came close to really beating any curiosity out of me.”
—*Steve Jobs (1955–2011), American entrepreneur and co-founder of Apple*
 Agree Disagree
Why?

8. “A child miseducated is a child lost.”
—*John F. Kennedy (1917–1963), 35th U.S. President*
 Agree Disagree
Why?

9. "I'm passionate about learning. I'm passionate about life."

—Tom Cruise (1962–), American actor and producer

Agree Disagree

Why?

10. "When love is deep, much can be accomplished."

—Shinichi Suzuki (1898-1998), violinist and world famous music educator

Agree Disagree

Why?

My favorite quote was:

.....

Why?

ACTIVITY 9: TELL ME ABOUT JAPAN ... IN ENGLISH

People want to know about Japan and Japanese culture. Next time you travel abroad or meet a foreigner, you can tell them about a Japanese tradition in English.



Jukus are very well known in Japan, but many people from other countries do not have similar institutions or cram schools. How would you explain what a *juku* is to a person visiting Japan? What do you know about *jukus*? For example:

Some students only go to the *juku* to improve in problem areas, and others go for all subjects.

Think of three more things visitors to Japan might want to know about *jukus*. How can you explain these ideas?

1.
2.
3.

With your partner, can you ask and answer three questions about *jukus*?

For example: What subjects do they teach in a *juku*?

- 1Q.
A.
- 2Q.
A.
- 3Q.
A.

GRAMMAR REVIEW: CAN, MIGHT, SHOULD, MUST

Finish the sentences below in a way that reflects your opinion.

- A good school can
- A good school might
- A good school should
- A good school must
- A good teacher can
- A good teacher might
- A good teacher should
- A good teacher must

SEARCH and SHARE

Collecting Academic Advice on the Internet

Student Name: Date:

Class: Teacher:

Find a video online that provides tips for success in school or college. The video might suggest ways to improve test scores, get better grades, choose a college, get along with a roommate, or some other aspect of succeeding in school. Watch the video, take notes, and review the video for your classmates.

Video title:

Web address:.....

Length: Creator:

1. Describe the video.
2. What tips did the video provide?
3. Where do you think the video was produced? Why?
4. How practical did you find the advice? Why?
5. What was the strongest part? Why?
6. What was the weakest part? Why?
7. Who do you think is the best audience for this video?
8. Why did you choose this video?
9. On a scale of 1–5, with 5 being the highest, how do you rate this video? Why?

“Education is learning what you didn’t even know you didn’t know.”

—Daniel J. Boorstin (1914–2004), historian



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