

MANGA UNIVERSITY presents...

漢字 で マンガ  
**kanji de Manga**

The Comic Book That Teaches You  
How To Read And Write Japanese!

volume  
**1**



半スキャン

Created by Glenn Kardy Art by Chihiro Hattori

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*Japanime*

TOKYO SAN FRANCISCO

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*How To Read And Write Japanese!*  
*Volume One*

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*For our families*





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## FOREWORD

**S**tudents are usually taught that the easiest way to memorize kanji is to think of the characters as little pictures of the objects, actions and ideas they represent. For instance, the kanji for “tree,” 木, really does look like a tree trunk with a couple of outstretched branches, and 山 does sort of resemble a mountain.

But what about the hundreds of other everyday kanji you will need to know if you want to read a menu, map or manga in Japanese? Can anyone honestly say 食 really looks like “food,” 行 obviously means “to go,” or 友 reminds you of a “friend”? So much for simplicity!

“Kanji de Manga” takes a refreshingly different approach. Instead of relying on tired, outdated memory aids, the authors introduce kanji in an exciting format millions of young people can’t seem to get enough of: Japanese comics. Each page features a manga

drawing with fun dialog showing a single kanji character “in action.” An English translation of the comic strip helps reinforce the reader’s vocabulary, stroke order is demonstrated step-by-step, and useful compounds are also provided.

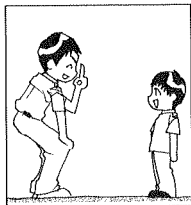
By learning how to read and write the 80 kanji presented in this volume, you will have taken the first step toward mastering the Japanese writing system. So don’t bother with the “little pictures.” Look at the BIGGER pictures—the manga on the pages of this exciting book—and memorize kanji today!

**Tomonori Morikawa, Ph.D.**

*Professor, School of International Liberal Studies*

*Waseda University*

*Tokyo, Japan*



## INTRODUCTION

**W**hen you opened this book, you opened the doorway to a new frontier. That frontier is kanji, and it holds the key to reading and writing the Japanese language.

At first, these characters may look difficult, mysterious and even a little intimidating. But “Kanji de Manga” is here to help sort it all out for you in a simple, fun way.

There are nearly 50,000 kanji. You could literally spend a lifetime learning kanji and still not know every character. But don't give up hope just yet. Even most native speakers of Japanese know only a fraction of these 50,000 kanji by heart.

In fact, Japanese students are required to learn just 2,000 of those characters. You need to know only about half of those to read the typical Japanese newspaper—and even less than that to

be able to read your favorite manga books in the original Japanese.

Of course, that still leaves plenty to learn, especially when you compare all those characters to the mere 26 letters of the English alphabet. But “Kanji de Manga” contains everything you need to get started, and hopefully you’ll have a little fun along the way, too.

By the time you reach the end of this book, you’ll be able to read and write the 80 kanji featured in Level 4, the most basic level, of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test. (For more information about the test, please see page 94.) These are the same characters studied in Japan by first- and second-grade students, and include some of the most common and important kanji that you will need to know.

Before we begin, let’s take a quick look at the origins of kanji.

Kanji is based on the ancient Chinese writing system. In many cases, these characters are still in use today in China. But don’t try to learn both languages at once: While some kanji share the same meaning in both languages, many do not, and the sentence structures of the two languages are profoundly different.

Most kanji have at least two common pronunciations: a purely Japanese pronunciation, called kun-yomi, and one based on the original Chinese, called on-yomi. The Japanese began borrowing kanji many centuries ago, so the on-yomi pronunciations—Japanese versions of Middle Chinese—usually sound very different from the modern Chinese pronunciation of each character.

You will find both pronunciations in this book. Like many Japanese-language textbooks, we will show you the kun-yomi in hiragana and on-yomi in katakana. And if you haven’t gotten your hiragana and katakana down yet, don’t worry—simply get out your copy of “Kana de Manga” for a quick refresher.

You may have noticed that we said that each character has *at least* two pronunciations. Some characters have even more. Many of those are obscure and seldom-used pronunciations, and we have omitted them from this lesson to help move things along. You won't miss them!

Even when we narrow each character down to its two most common pronunciations, figuring out whether to use the on-yomi or kun-yomi can still be tricky. At first, it may seem random and unstructured. And, in some ways, it is.

But soon you'll begin to notice some trends. Compound words, or words made up of multiple kanji, are generally read using the on-yomi pronunciation. Kanji occurring in isolation, or next to only kana characters, are generally read using the kun-yomi pronunciation. Japanese place names and family names also tend to be pronounced using the kun-yomi pronunciations.

There are, of course, exceptions—and plenty of them. In fact, the very name of the country—Japan—is read using the on-yomi pronunciation: "Nihon," or 日本 in kanji. And when it comes to given names, even native speakers often need a little help trying to figure it all out.

But don't be daunted. The task may be difficult, and the journey long, but with "Kanji de Manga" as your guide, you'll also find it rewarding and fun.

So let's get started on the journey of a lifetime—a journey into the magical world of Japanese culture. And when you are ready to graduate to the next level, "Kanji de Manga" will be ready to take the next step with you with our more advanced lessons.

Ready? Set? Gambatte!

# PAGE GUIDE


- ① The featured kanji  
 ② Common definition  
 ③ Readings: kun-yomi (Japanese readings) are written in hiragana, while on-yomi (Chinese readings) are in katakana.  
 ④ Examples of compounds containing the featured kanji, their pronunciations (written in hiragana) and English definitions. (An asterisk next to a compound

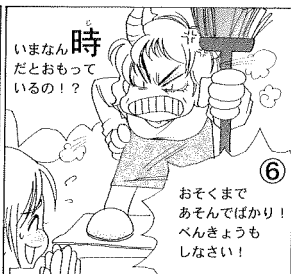
時 ①

**② TIME**  
とき、ジ ③  
 ex. 時計\* (とけい) - watch, clock  
 ex. 一時 (いちじ) - one o'clock ④

丨	丨丨	丨丨	丨丨	丨丨
丨+	丨+	丨+	時	時

⑤

もうごん  
時かん。  
  
 どうしようー。

いまなん時  
 だとおもっ  
 ているの!?  
  
 おそくま  
 であそん  
 でばかり!  
 べんぎや  
 うも  
 しなさい!  
 ⑥

*Schoolgirl:* もうごん  
 時かん。 どうしようー。  
 Look at the time.  
 I'm gonna be in trouble.

*Mother:* いまなん時だとおもっているの!?  
 おそくまであそんでばかり! べんぎやうも  
 しなさい!  
 Do you know what time it is? Quit playing  
 around all the time! Do some studying for  
 a change!  
 ⑦

indicates that one or more of its kanji are not featured in this volume of the "Kanji de Manga" series.)

⑤ Stroke order: In general, the strokes are written from top to bottom and left to right. For a list of additional stroke-order rules, please refer to the chart at the back of this book.

⑥ The manga. All dialogue is written in hiragana and katakana except for the single featured kanji. The proper pronunciation of the kanji is indicated in furigana (tiny hiragana) written above the character.

⑦ Translation of the dialogue and selected onomatopoeia.

012 ページ

漢字 で **kanji** マンガ **Manga**



**STUDY SECTION**

# ONE

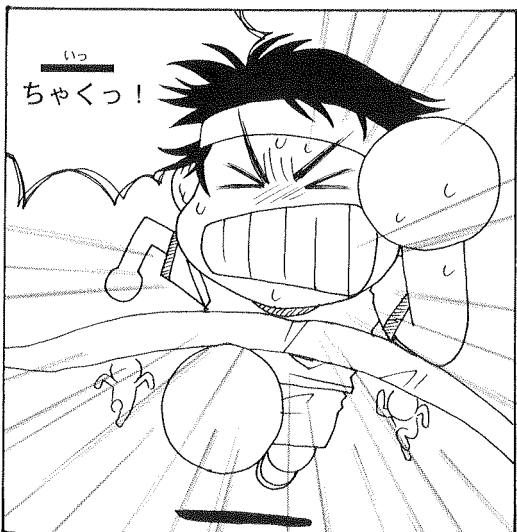
ひと、ひとつ、イチ、イツ

ex. 一つ (ひとつ) - one (object)

ex. 一月 (いちがつ) - January



→				



だっ たた た だだだだ

(Onomatopoeia for the sound of heavy footsteps or running.)

Onomatopoeia are very common in the Japanese language and especially in manga, and can be found throughout this book.)

ーちゃくっ!

First place!



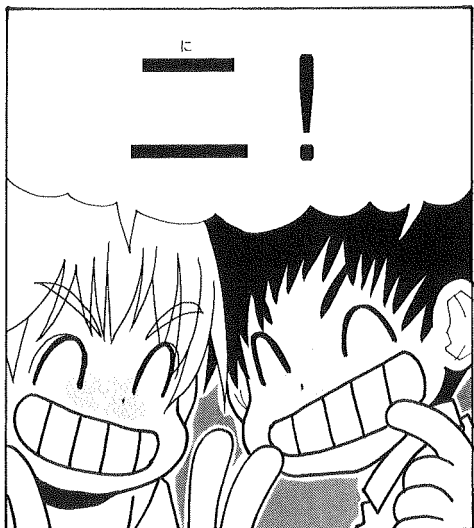
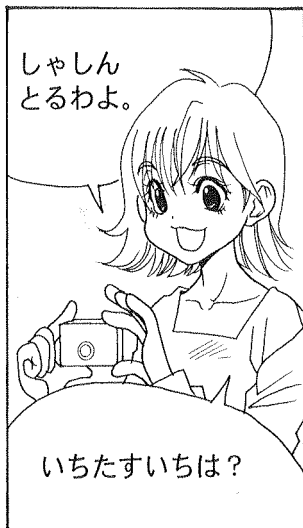
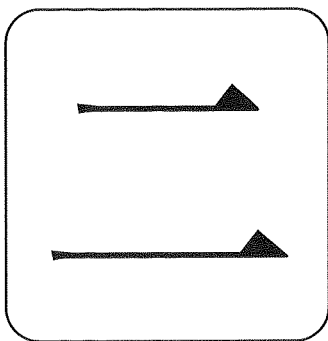
# TWO

ふた、ふたつ、二

ex. 一つ (ふたつ) - two (objects)

ex. 二月 (にがつ) - February

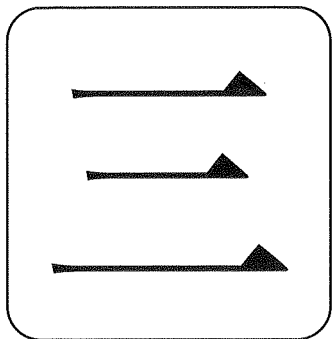
一	二			



Mother: しゃしんとるわよ。  
いちたすいちとは？  
Time for a photo.  
One plus one equals?

Children: 二 !  
Two!

(In Japan, it is common for children to flash two fingers—in the "V for Victory" sign—when posing for photographs.)

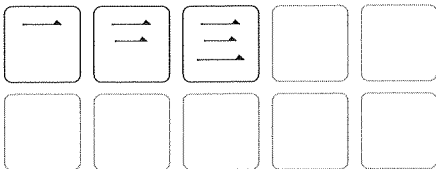


# THREE

み、み(つ)、みっ(つ)、サン

ex. 三つ (みっつ) - three (objects)

ex. 三月 (さんがつ) - March



Schoolboy: 三じって  
たのしみなんだ。  
I can't wait till 3 o'clock!

Schoolgirl: なぜ?  
Why's that?

Schoolboy: 三じといえぱおやつのはじかんだろ! はやくならないかな?  
Because 3 o'clock is snack time!  
Is it time yet?

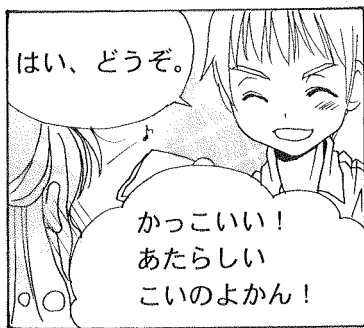
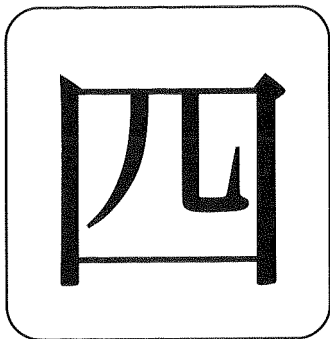
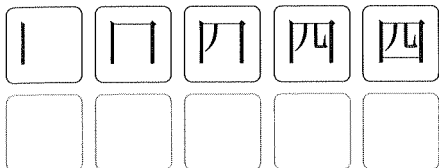
Schoolgirl: キラキラしてる...  
There are stars in his eyes...

## FOUR

よ、よ(つ)、よっ(つ)、よん、シ

ex. 四つ (よっつ) - four (objects)

ex. 四月 (しがつ) - April



Girl: わ、四つばのクローバー。  
 なにかいいことがありそう...  
 Wow, a four-leaf clover! I think I've  
 got some luck heading my way...

Boy: すみません。ハンカチを  
 おとされましたよ。はい、どうぞ。  
 Excuse me. You dropped your hanky.  
 Here you go.

Girl: かっこいい！あたらしいこいの  
 よかん！  
 He's so cute! I think I'm in love!

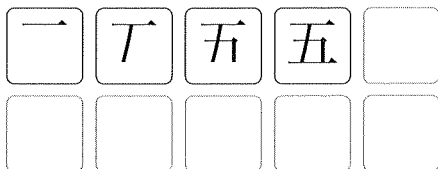
# FIVE

いつ、いつ(つ)、ゴ

ex. 五つ (いつつ) - five (objects)

ex. 五月 (ごがつ) - May

五



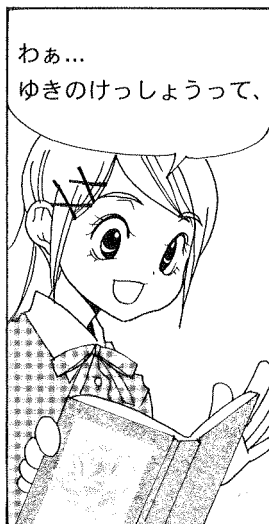
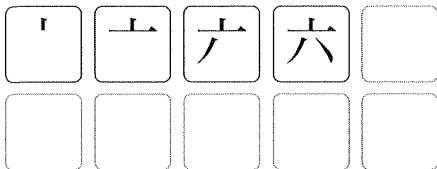
Boy: 五ほんのわかれみち。  
どれをいこうかなあ。  
Five different roads.  
Which one should I take?

## SIX

む、む(つ)、むっ(つ)、むい、ロク

ex. 六つ (むっつ) - six (objects)

ex. 六月 (ろくがつ) - June



Girl: わあ... ゆきの  
けっしょうって、  
Ah, falling snowflakes...

きれいな六かけい!  
...are beautiful hexagons!

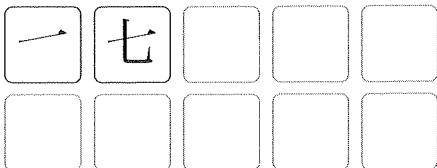
# SEVEN

なな、なな(つ)、なの、シチ

ex. 七つ (ななつ) - seven (objects)

ex. 七月 (しちがつ) - July

# 七



Boy: 七ってえんぎのいいすうじ  
だな。

Seven is a lucky number, right?

ラッキーセブン。

Lucky seven.

七ふくじん。

The Seven Gods of Fortune.

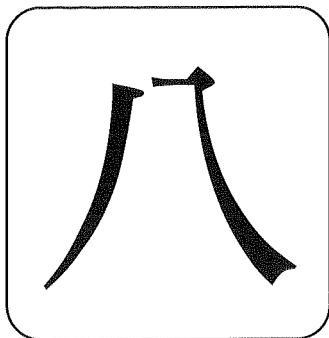
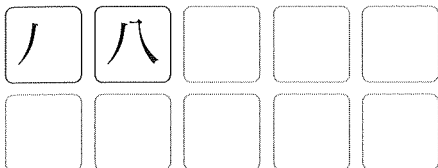
(The "Shichifukujin" are Ebisu [god of commerce],  
Daikokuten [wealth], Bishamonten [warriors],  
Hotei [abundance], Benzaiten [music]  
Fukurokuju [wisdom] and Juroujin [longevity].)

## EIGHT

や、や(つ)、やっ(つ)、よう、ハチ

ex. 八つ (やっつ) - eight (objects)

ex. 八月 (はちがつ) - August



Boy: もうすこしたべたいけど...  
I'd like to eat a bit more, but...

Boy: はら八ぶんめっていうし、  
やめておこう！ごちそうさま。  
They say a stomach that is only 80%  
full is best, so I better stop! Delicious!

Mother: そんなにたべて？  
(Only 80% full) after eating all that!

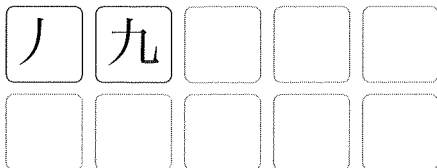
# NINE

ここの、ここの(つ)、キュウ、ク

ex. 九つ (ここのつ) - nine (objects)

ex. 九月 (くがつ) - September

# 九



おおっと!  
ピッチャー  
おいつめられた!

きゅう

九かいのうら  
2アウト...



まんるい!

Radio announcer: おおっと!  
ピッチャーおいつめられた!  
九かいのうら2アウト...  
The pitcher is in a jam.  
Bottom of the 9th, 2 outs...

...まんるい!  
...and the bases are loaded!

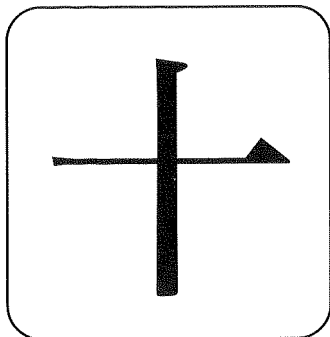
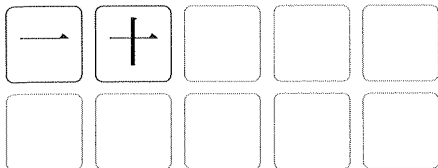


## TEN

とお、と、ジュウ、ジツ

ex. 十 (とお) - ten (objects)

ex. 十月 (じゅうがつ) - October



ばんっ (sound of door slam)

Mother: おきなさい!

あさよ!

Wake up! It's morning!

Son: えー...

Huh?

うーん (thump)

Son: あと十ぶんだけねかせて。おねがい...

Let me sleep another 10 minutes. Please...

Mother: がっこうちこくするわよ。

おきなさい!

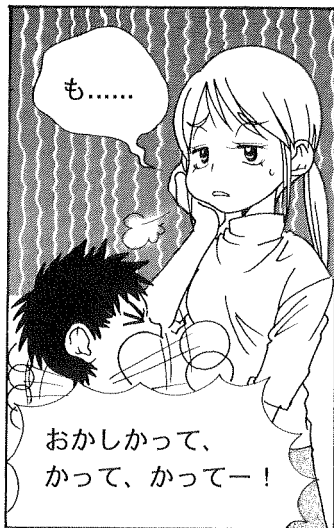
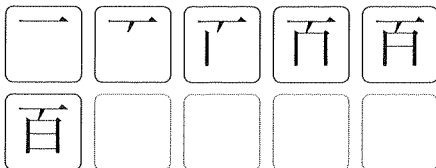
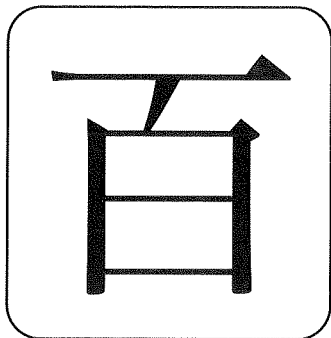
You'll be late for school. Get up now!

# HUNDRED

ヒヤク、ビヤク、ピヤク

ex. 百円 (ひやくえん) - ¥100

ex. 百万 (ひやくまん) - one million



も.....

おかしかって、  
かって、かってー！



ひやく  
百 えんまでよ！

わーい！

Babysitter: も...

Ugh...

Boy: おかしかって、  
かって、かってー！

Buy me some candy!

Babysitter: 百えんまでよ！

OK, but only 100 yen.

Boy: わーい！

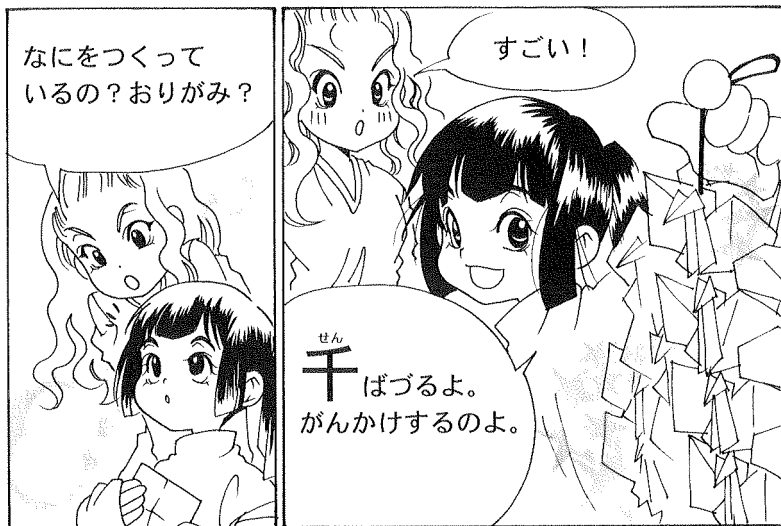
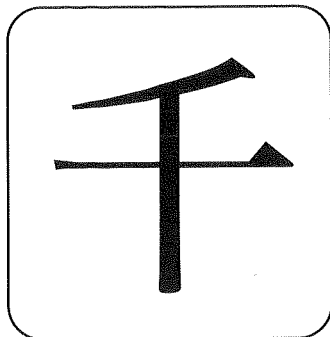
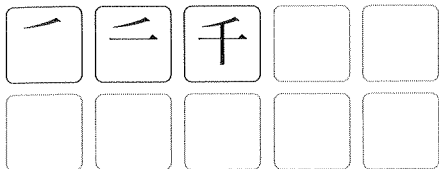
Yay!

## THOUSAND

ち、セン、ゼン

ex. 千年 (ちとせ) - millennium

ex. 千円 (せんえん) - ¥1,000



Big sister: なにをつくっているの？おりがみ？  
What are you making?  
Origami?

Little sister: 千ばづるよ。がんかけするのよ。  
I'm making a thousand paper cranes.  
It's for good luck.

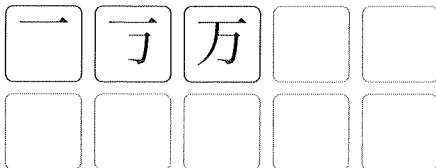
Big sister: すごい！  
Wow!

# TEN THOUSAND

マン、バン

ex. 一万円 (いちまんえん) - ¥10,000  
 ex. 万国 (ばんこく) - the whole world

# 万



Athlete: いち万ぼめざしてあるくの  
 がんばるぞ!

I'm going to walk 10,000 steps!

Cheerleader: おー!

Right on!

Athlete: も...もうだめ...

That's it... I'm beat...

Cheerleader: まだ5ふんしか  
 たっていないでしょ!

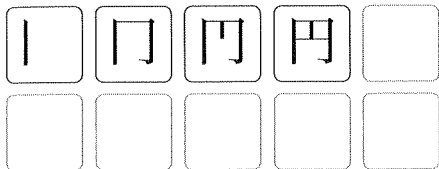
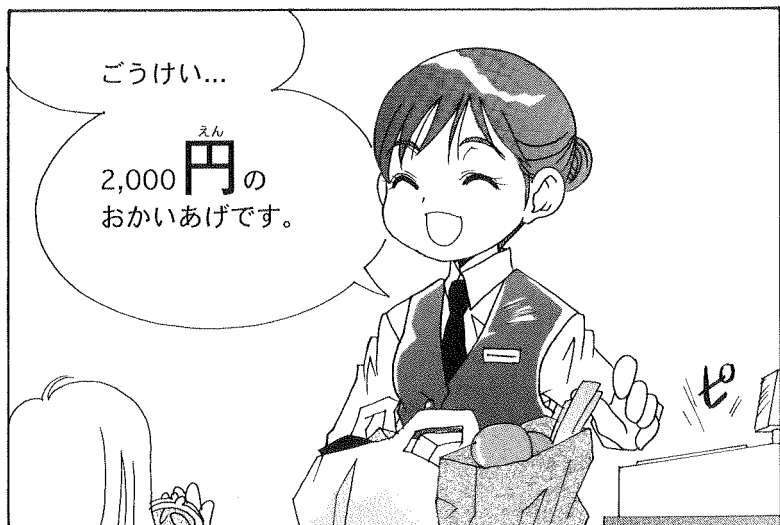
It's only been five minutes!

## CIRCLE / YEN

まる(い)、エン

ex. 十円 (じゅうえん) - ¥10

ex. 円い (まるい) - round, circular

Store clerk: ごうけい...2,000円のおかいあげです。

Your total comes to...2,000 yen.

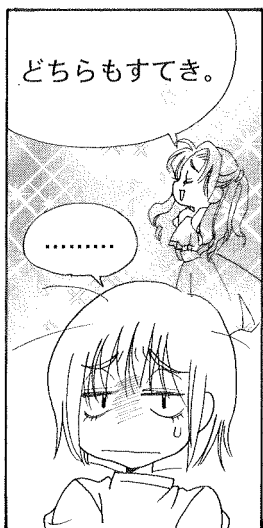
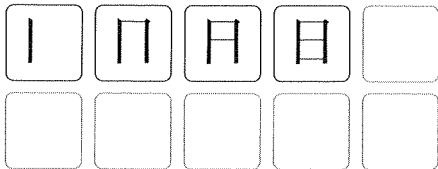
# SUN / DAY

ひ、か、び、ニチ、ジツ

ex. 日の出 (ひので) - sunrise

ex. 日曜日\* (にちようび) - Sunday

日



Girl: 日ひのでのうみ。  
 日ひのいりのうみ。  
 Sunrise at the beach.  
 Sunset at the beach.

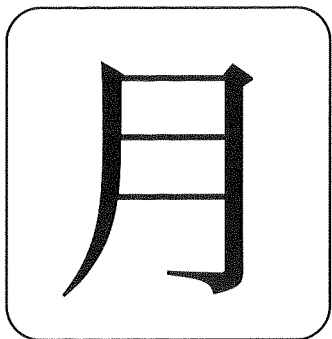
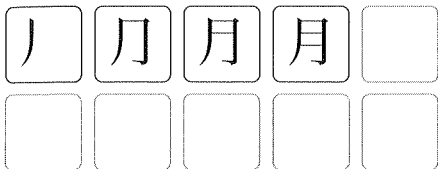
Girl: どちらもすてき。  
 Both are beautiful.  
 Boy: (speechless)

## MOON / MONTH

つき、ゲツ、ガツ

ex. 毎月 (まいつき) - every month

ex. 月曜日\* (げつようび) - Monday



Father: 月にはうさぎがすんでいるんだよ。

You know, rabbits live on the moon.

Children (in unison): ほんとー? すげー。ステキ。

Really? Wow! How romantic!

(While Westerners say they can see the face of a man on the moon, Japanese claim to see the image of a rabbit making rice cakes.)

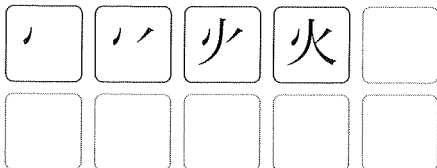
# FIRE

ひ、び、か

ex. 花火\* (はなび) - fireworks

ex. 火曜日\* (かようび) - Tuesday

# 火



ふゆのだいごみ  
といえば...



Girl: ふゆのだいごみ  
といえば...  
The best thing about  
winter...

Girl: たき火でヤキイモよね! おいしいね。  
Roasting sweet potatoes on an open fire!  
Boy: おいしいね。  
Delicious!

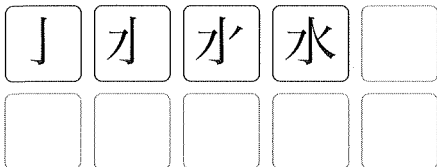


## WATER

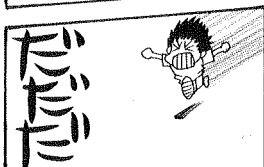
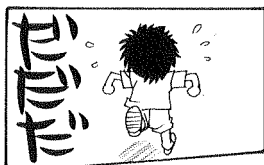
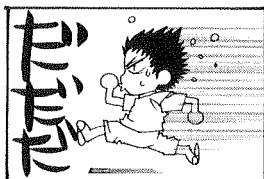
みず、スイ

ex. 飲み水 (のみみず) - drinking water

ex. 水曜日\* (すいようび) - Wednesday



水



だだだ だだだ だだだ  
(sound of heavy running)

ぜーはー ぜーはー ぜーはー (panting)

Boy: た...ただいま。み...水をいっぱい  
ちょうだい。

I...I'm home. Gimme lots of wa...water.

Mother: うわ... はい、どうぞ。

Yikes! Here you go!

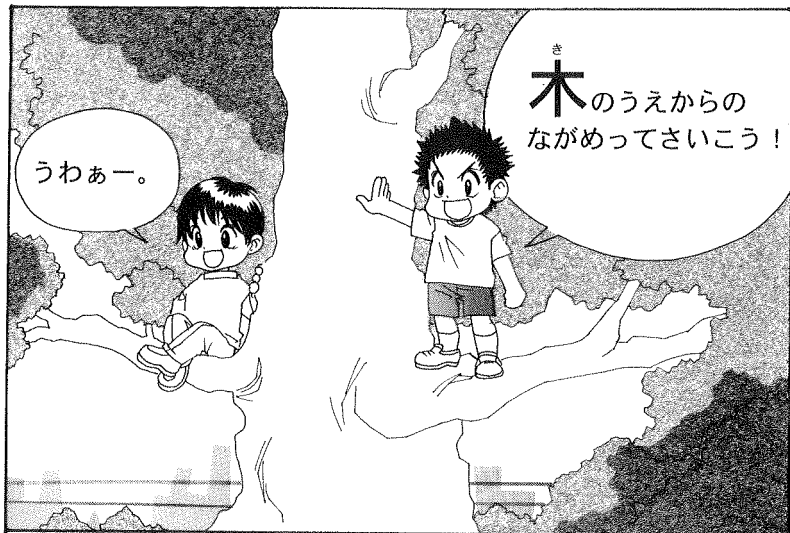
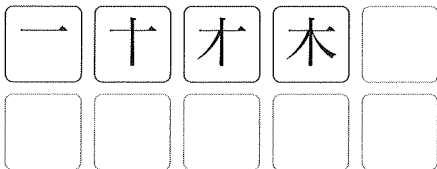
# TREE / WOOD

き、ぎ、こ、ボク、モク

ex. 木登り\* (きのぼり) - tree-climbing

ex. 木曜日\* (もくようび) - Thursday

# 木



Boy on left: うわあー。  
Wow!


Boy on right: 木きのうえからのながめって  
さいこう!  
The view from the top of this tree is  
awesome!

## GOLD / MONEY

かね、かな、キン、コン

ex. お金 (おかね) - money (polite form)

ex. 金曜日\* (きんようび) - Friday


Boy: うわー！ほしかった  
ゲームだ！  
Wow! It's that game I've  
been wanting to buy!

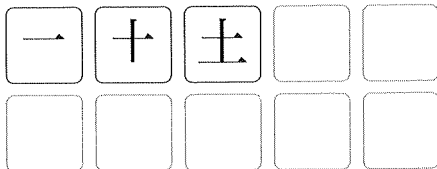
ほしいけど、お金がたりるかな。  
しんぱい。  
I really want to get it, but I wonder if I  
have enough money on me.

# SOIL / GROUND

つち、ド、ト

ex. 土地\* (とち) - a plot of land

ex. 土曜日\* (どようび) - Saturday



Man: てつだうって  
いったけど...  
いったけど...  
I know I said I'd help, but...

Man: こんなにひろい土ちをたがやすの？  
ひろすぎだよー！  
We have to plow this whole field!  
It's TOO big!

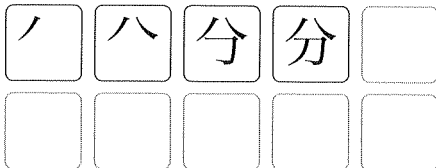
Farmer: うん。そう。  
Yep. Yessiree.

## MINUTE

わ(ける)、わ(かる)、フン、フン、フ

ex. 一分 (いっぶん) - one minute

ex. 分かる (わかる) - to understand



分



トポポ...  
(sound of water  
being poured)

Boy: カップラーメンというのは、できあがる  
までのすう分ぶんがまちどおしいな。  
It's those few minutes of anticipation while it cooks  
that make instant ramen taste so good!

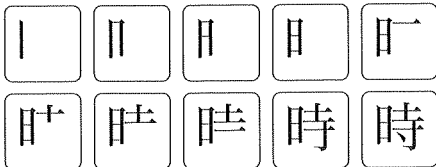
# TIME

とき、ジ

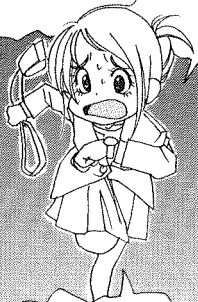
ex. 時計\* (とけい) - watch, clock

ex. 一時 (いちじ) - one o'clock

# 時



もうこんな  
時かん。



どうしようー。

いまなん時  
だとおもっ  
ているの!?



おそくまで  
あそんでばかり!  
べんきょうも  
しなさい!

Schoolgirl: もうこんな  
時かん。どうしようー。  
Look at the time.  
I'm gonna be in trouble.

Mother: いまなん時だとおもっているの!?  
おそくまであそんでばかり! べんきょう  
もしなさい!  
Do you know what time it is!? Quit playing  
around all the time! Do some studying for  
a change!

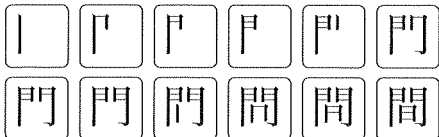
## INTERVAL

あいだ、ま、カン、ケン

ex. 時間 (じかん) - time

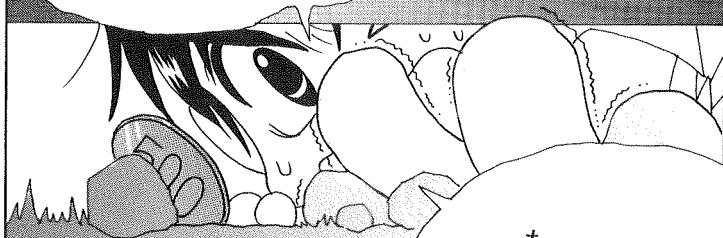
ex. 中間 (ちゅうかん) - midway

ex. 人間 (にんげん) - human



間

すき<sup>ま</sup>間におかねを  
おとしちゃった。



も...  
もうすこし...

Boy (reaching into a storm drain): すき間におかねを  
おとしちゃった。も...もうすこし...

My coin fell into this little space. Ju...just a little  
bit more...

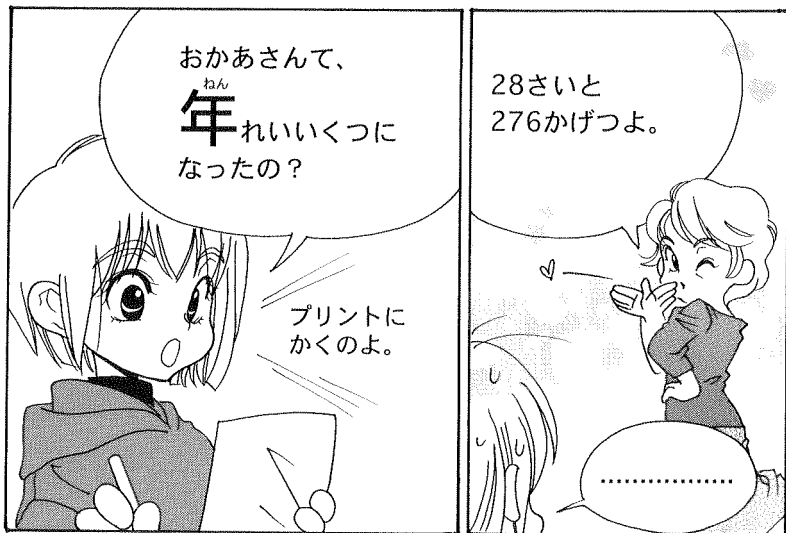
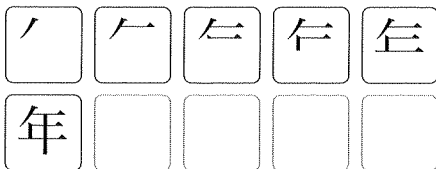
# 年

## YEAR

とし、ネン

ex. 今年 (ことし) - this year

ex. 去年\* (きょねん) - last year



*Girl:* おかあさんて、年れいくつになつたの？プリントにかくのよ。  
Mom, how old will you be this year?  
I need to put your age on this form.

*Mother:* 28さいと276かげつよ。  
28 years and 276 months.

*Girl:* (speechless)

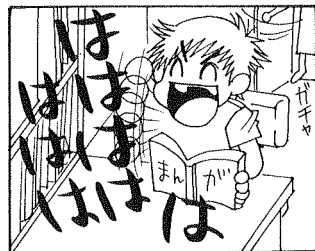
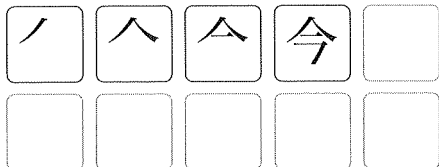


## THIS / NOW

いま、コン

ex. 今日 (きょう) - this day; today

ex. 今月 (こんげつ) - this month



はははははははは  
(boy laughing at comic book)

Mother: しゅくだいは  
おわったの?  
Have you finished your  
homework?

Boy: 今するところ!  
I was just about to start now!  
あせ あせ あせ  
(sound of quick movement)

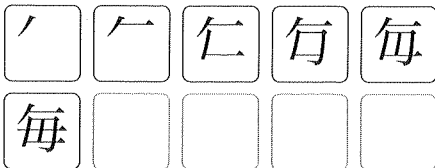
# EVERY

マイ

ex. 毎日 (まいにち) - every day

ex. 毎月 (まいつき) - every month

# 毎



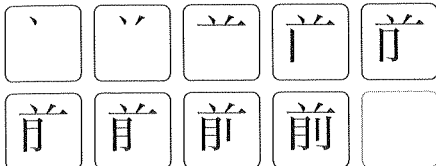
Student: よーし! きょうから  
毎まいにちにつきをつけるぞー!  
All right! Beginning today, I'm going  
to keep a diary every day!

## BEFORE

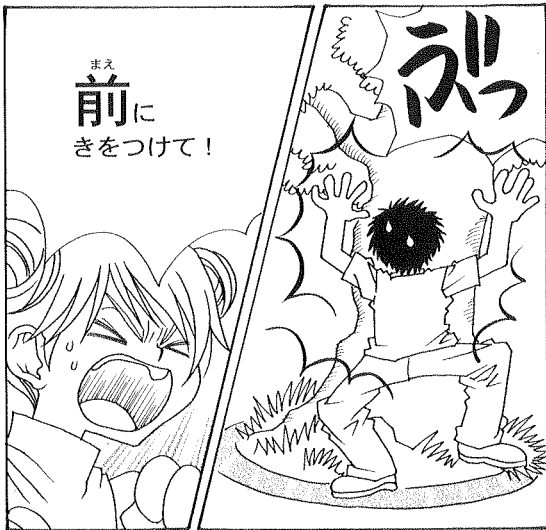
まえ、ゼン

ex. 五分钟前 (ごふんまえ) - five minutes ago

ex. 前日 (ぜんじつ) - the day before



前



Boy: あ、いたいた。

Ah, there she is!

Girl: 前にきをつけて!

Watch out in front of you!

ぶつ (thump)

Girl: — (inaudible)!

Boy: え? きこえない。

What? I can't hear you.

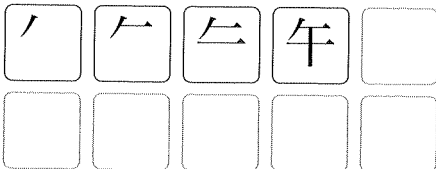
# NOON

ゴ

ex. 午前 (ごぜん) - a.m.

ex. 午後 (ごご) - p.m.

# 午



Schoolboy: がっこうは  
午ぜんちゅうでおわり。  
School ends at noon today.

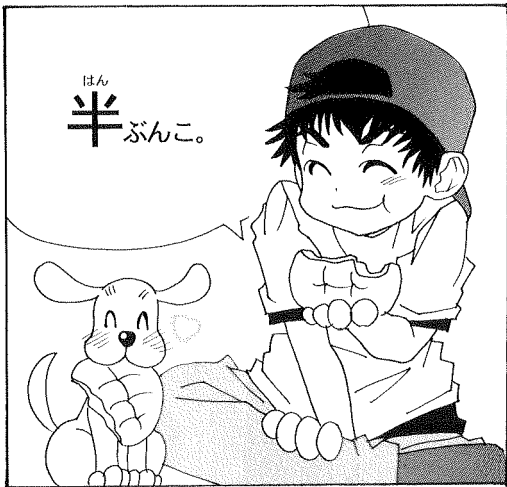
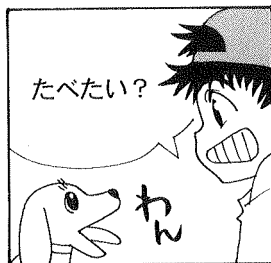
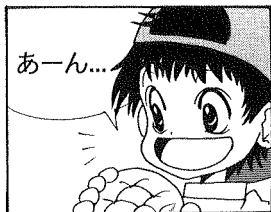
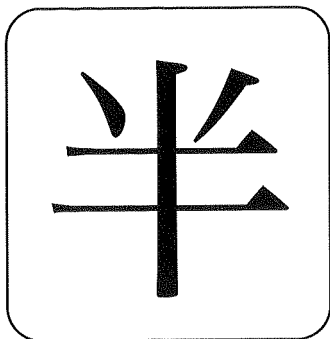
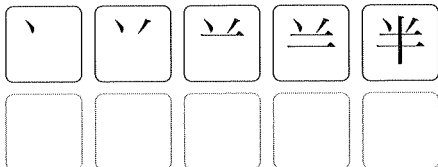
午ごは...あそぶぞ!  
This afternoon...I'm gonna have fun!

## HALF

なか(ば)、ハン

ex. 一時半 (いちじはん) - 1:30

ex. 半年 (はんとし) - half a year



Boy: あーん...

Yum!

たべたい?

You want to eat  
some too?

わん (dog's "woof")

半ぶんこ。

OK, half each.

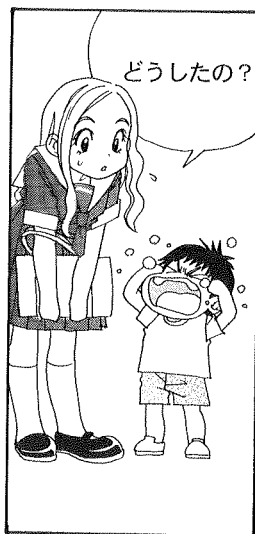
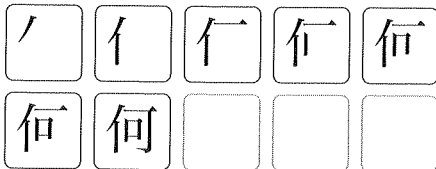
# WHAT?

なに、なん

ex. 何時間 (なんじかん) - what time?

ex. 何人 (なんにん) - how many people?

# 何



どうしたの?



何なにをいっているのかわからないわ...

Sister: どうしたの?  
What's wrong?

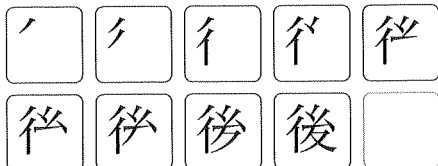
何をいっているのかわからないわ...  
I have no idea what he's saying...

## AFTER / BACK

のち、うしろ、あと、ゴ、ゴウ

ex. 二日後 (ふつかご) - two days later

ex. 後ろ (うしろ) - behind



後



Boy: 後はオレにどーんとまかせてよ!  
どーんと。

Leave the rest up to me! I'll take care of it.

Girl: ありがとう。

Thanks.

どん (chest-thumping)

ゲホゲホゲホッ  
(coughing)

Girl: だいじょうぶかしら。  
ふあんだわ。

I hope things will be OK.  
I'm a bit worried now.

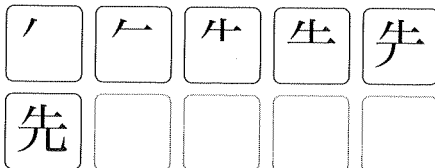
## AHEAD

さき、セン

ex. 先月 (せんげつ) - last month

ex. 先生 (せんせい) - teacher

先



First boy: わー... おばけやしきだって。

Hey, it's the haunted house.

Second boy: う...ん。 Yeah.

First boy: おまえが先にいけよ。 You go first.

Second boy: いやいや、先にどうぞ。 Nah, that's all right. You go first.

Witch: はやくはいつて  
こないかなー。I wish they'd hurry up  
and come inside!

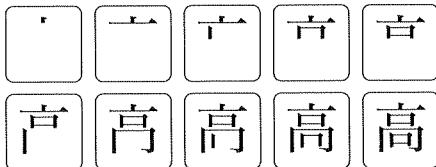


## HIGH / EXPENSIVE

たか、たか(い)、コウ

ex. 高すぎる (たかすぎる) - too expensive

ex. 高校 (こうこう) - high school



高

えー！  
バンジー  
ジャンプ？！

そうよ。



First boy: えー！  
バンジージャンプ？！  
Huh? You're gonna  
bungee-jump?!

Second boy: そうよ。  
That's right.

Second boy: 高 (こう) しょきょうふ しょうなのに。  
But I'm terrified of high places!  
ガタガタガタ  
(sound of knees knocking)

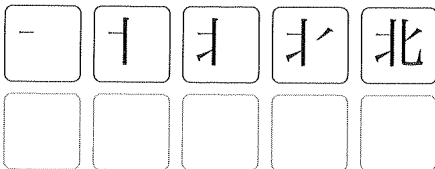
# NORTH

きた、ホク

# 北

ex. 北口\* (きたぐち) - north entrance

ex. 北米\* (ほくべい) - North America



Businessman: きょうはいちだんと...

Today in particular...

くしゅん

(sound of sneezing)

北かぜがつよいなあ。

...the wind from the north is strong.

ビュー

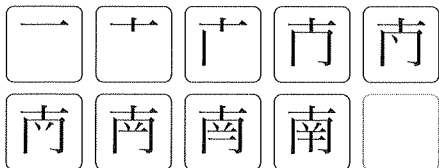
(sound of a strong wind)

## SOUTH

みなみ、ナン

ex. 南口\* (みなみぐち) - south entrance

ex. 南米\* (なんべい) - South America



1

# 南



Sunbather: リゾートといえば、やはり南のしまにかぎるな。  
 When you think of a paradise resort, it's gotta be on an island in the south.  
 きもちいいなあ。さいこうだよ。  
 I feel great. It's beautiful.

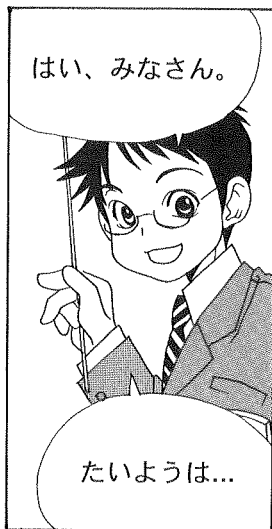
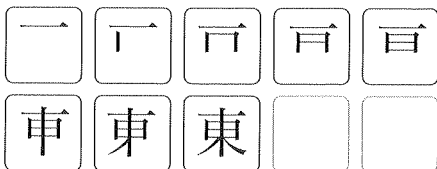
# EAST

ひがし、トウ

ex. 東口\* (ひがしぐち) - east entrance

ex. 東京\* (とうきょう) - Tokyo

# 東



Teacher: はい、みなさん。  
たいようは...  
OK, everyone. The sun...

Students (in unison): 東からのぼります!  
Rises from the east!

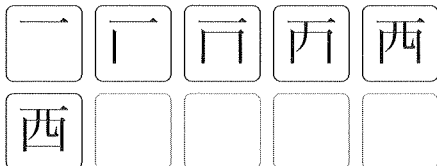
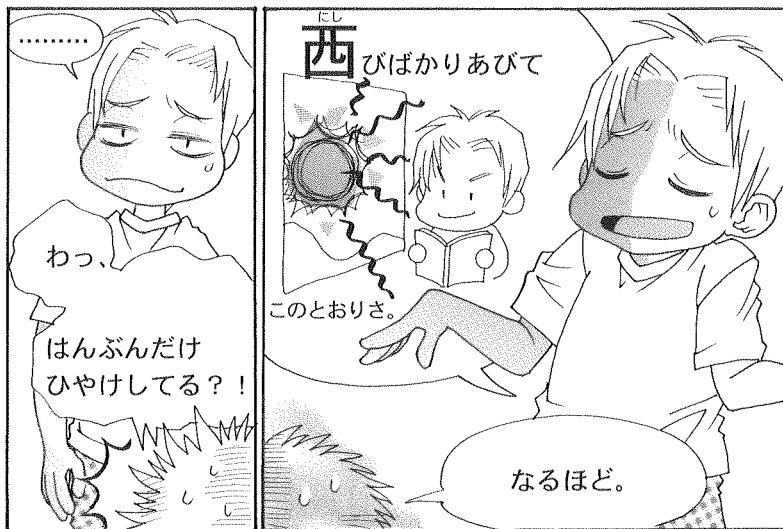
Teacher: はい!  
That's correct!

## WEST

にし、セイ、サイ

ex. 西口\* (にしぐち) - west entrance

ex. 西洋\* (せいよう) - Western countries

First boy: (speechless)

Second boy: わっ、はんぶんだけひやけしてる?!

Yikes! Why are you sunburned on just one side of your body?!

First boy: 西びばかりあびてこのとおりさ。

I sat facing the west all day.

Second boy: なるほど。

That explains it.

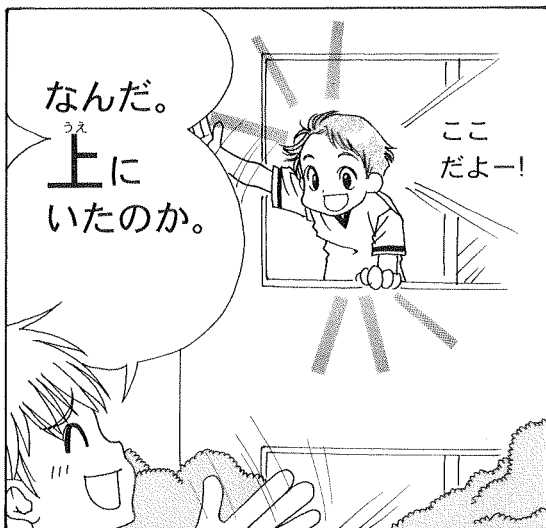
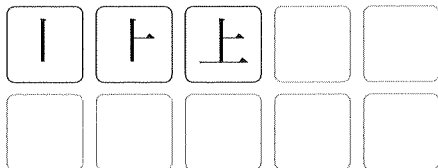
## UP / ABOVE

うえ、あげる、あがる、ジョウ

ex. 年上 (としうえ) - elder

ex. 上下 (じょうげ) - up and down

上



Big brother: おーい  
Hey!

キョロ キョロ  
(sound of head turning  
left and right)

Little brother: ここだよー。  
Here I am.

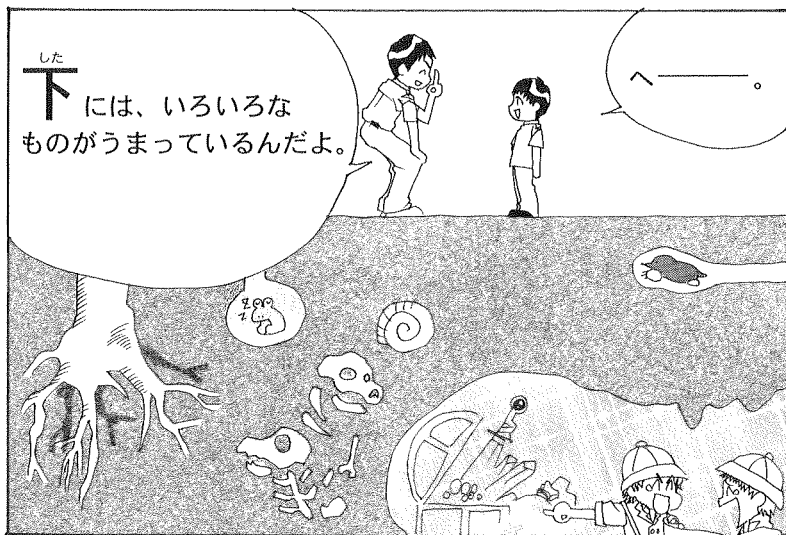
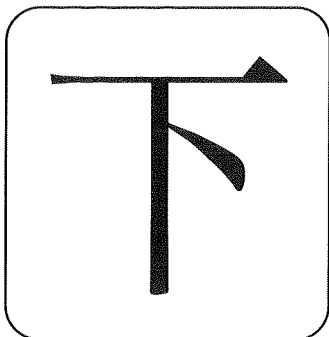
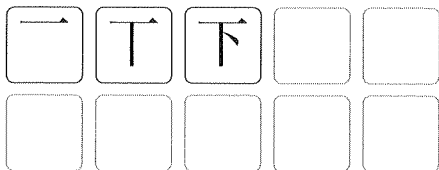
Big brother: なんだ。上にいたのか。  
Oh, you're up there!

## DOWN / UNDER

した、くだ、さ(げ)る、カ、ゲ

ex. 年下 (としした) - junior

ex. 下さい (ください) - please



Big boy: 下には、いろいろな  
ものがうまっているんだよ。  
There are many things buried  
under the ground.

Little boy: へー。  
Really?

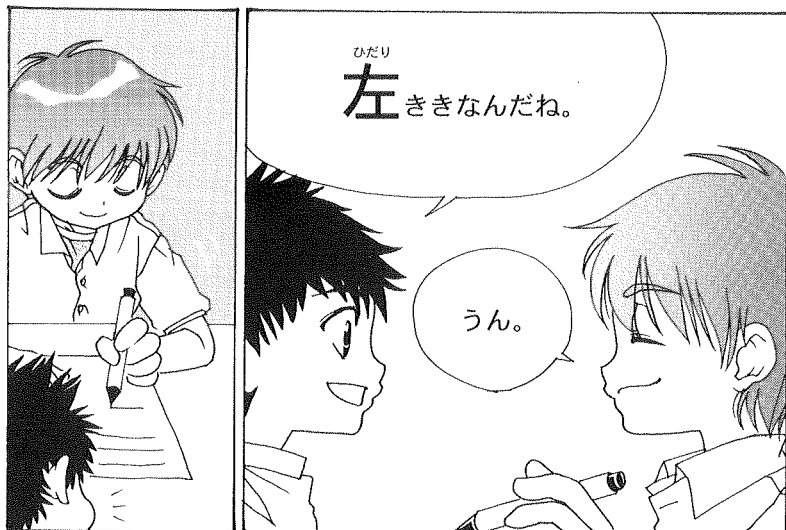
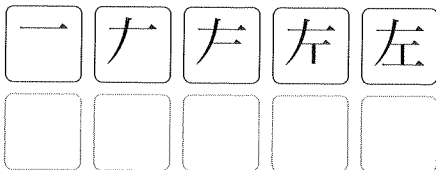
# LEFT

ひだり、サ

ex. 左側\* (ひだりがわ) - left-hand side

ex. 左右 (さゆう) - either side

# 左



First boy: 左ききなんだね。

So, you're a lefty.

Second boy: うん。

Yep.

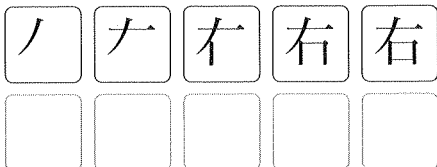


## RIGHT

みぎ、ウ、ユウ

ex. 右側\* (みぎがわ) - right-hand side

ex. 右巻\* (みぎまき) - clockwise




Boy: 右とひだりを  
まよったら...  
If you're not sure  
which is left and  
which is right...

Boy: おはしをもつのが右で!  
おちゃわんがひだりて!  
You hold chopsticks in your right hand!  
And the rice bowl in your left hand!

Girl: もっといいほうほうがあるだろ?  
Isn't there a better way to remember?

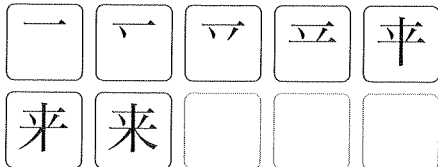
# COME

く(る)、ライ

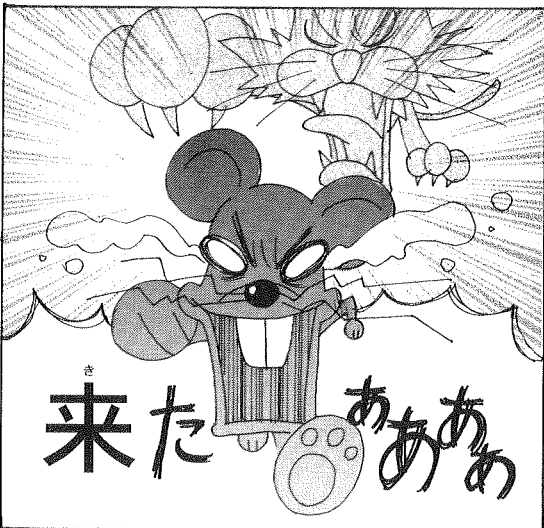
ex. 来月(らいげつ) - next month

ex. 来年(らいねん) - next year

# 来



かた あ!



Mouse: ヤツにきづかれ  
ないようにしないと。  
I can't let him see me.

かた (strange noise)

あ! Uh-oh!

キラーン (glint of cat's eye)

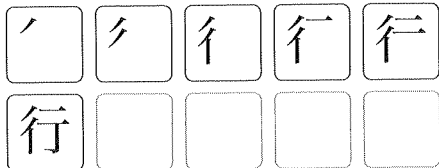
Mouse: 来たああああ  
Here he comes!

## GO

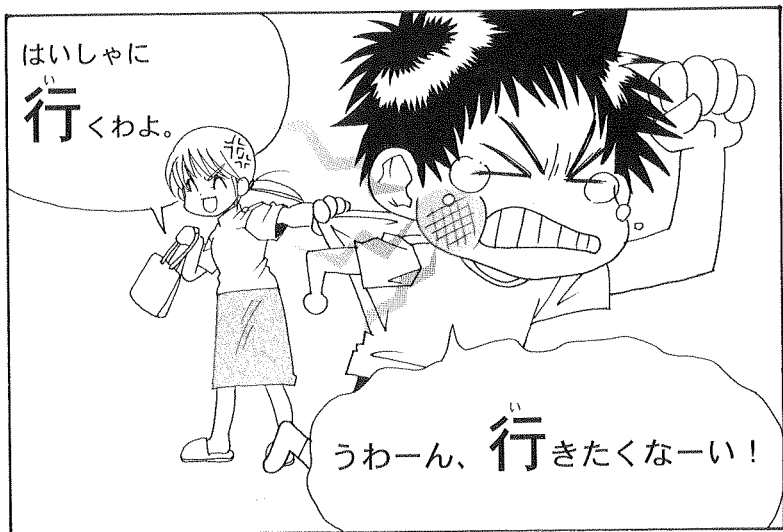
い(く)、おこな(う)、コウ、ギョウ

ex. 行く (いく) - to go

ex. 旅行\* (りょこう) - travel



# 行



Mother: はいしゃに行くわよ。  
We're going to the dentist.

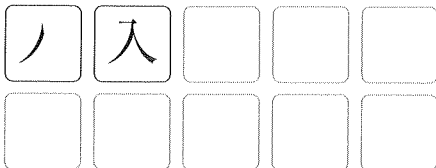
Boy: うわーん、行きたくない!  
Waaahh! I don't want to go!

## ENTER / PUT IN

いる、いれる、はいる、ニュー

ex. 入口\* (いりぐち) - entrance

ex. 入学 (にゅうがく) - matriculation



Businessman: たかいビル  
だなあ。  
That sure is a tall building.

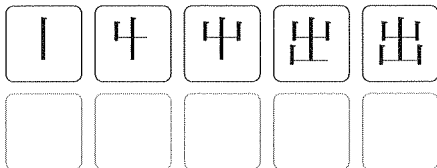
えーと... 入ぐちはこっちか。  
Let's see... The entrance is this way.  
入ぐち ("Entrance" sign)

## LEAVE / TAKE OUT

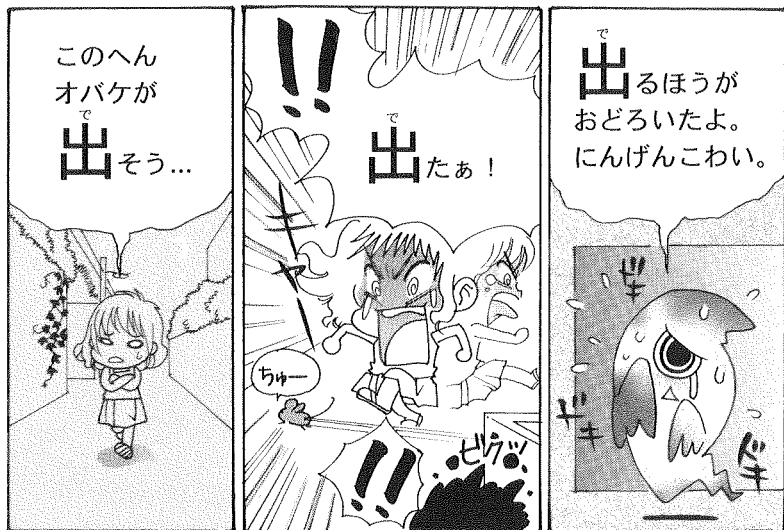
で(る)、だ(す)、シュツ

ex. 出口\* (でぐち) - exit

ex. 出前 (でまえ) - home-delivered food



出



Frightened girl: この  
へんオバケが  
出そう...  
I'm sure ghosts  
come out  
around here...

Frightened girl: 出たあ!  
They're on the loose!  
きゃー (breathless scream)  
ちゅー (squeak of mouse)  
ビクッ (sound of surprise)  
ドキドキ (heavy heartbeats)

Ghost: 出るほうが  
おどろいたよ。  
にんげんこわい。  
I'm supposed to do  
the haunting, but  
humans scare me!

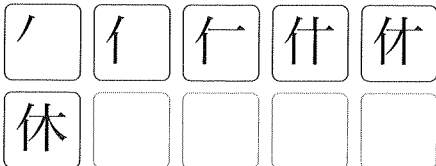
# REST

# 休

やす(む)、やす(まる)、キユウ

ex. 夏休み (なつやすみ) - summer vacation

ex. 休日 (きゅうじつ) - holiday; day off



はあ はあ  
(heavy panting)

ぜーはー  
(slower panting)

Hiker: ちよっと休けい。

Time to rest.

## OUTSIDE

そと、ほか、はず(す)、ガイ

ex. 外国人 (がいこくじん) - foreigner

ex. 外食 (がいしょく) - eating out

ノ ク タ 外 外

□ □ □ □ □

外



Mother: たまには外でうんどうしなさい!  
You need to go outside and get some exercise!

Boy: え... さむいんだもん...  
(Whining) But it's so cold...

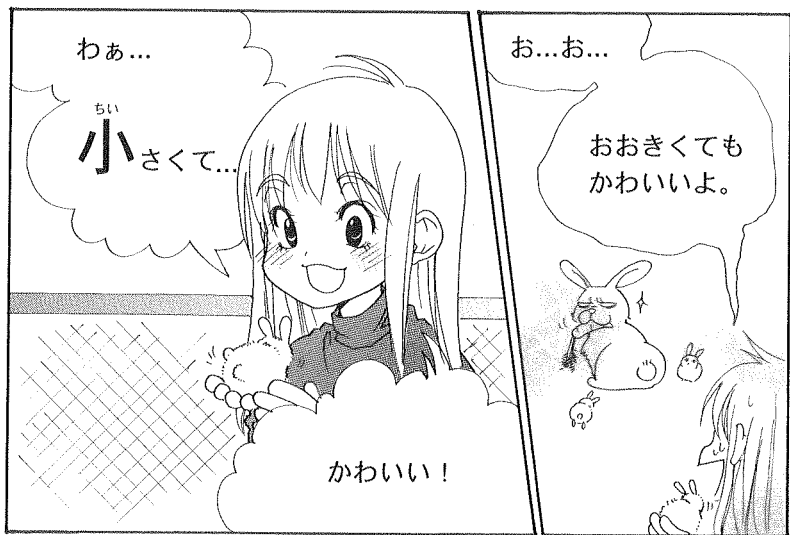
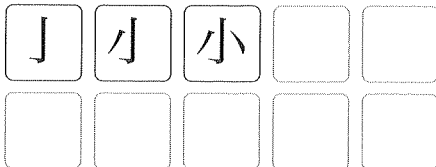
# SMALL

ちい(さい)、こ、お、ショウ

ex. 小雨 (こさめ) - light rain (drizzle)

ex. 小学校 (しょうがっこう) - primary school

# 小



Girl: わあ... 小さくて... かわいい!  
Ah... How small... And adorable!

お...お...  
おおきくても  
かわいいよ。  
Oh, of course, the big  
ones are cute too.

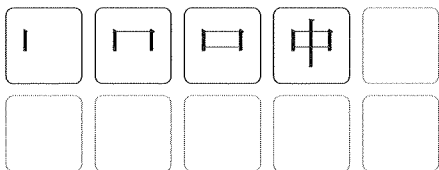
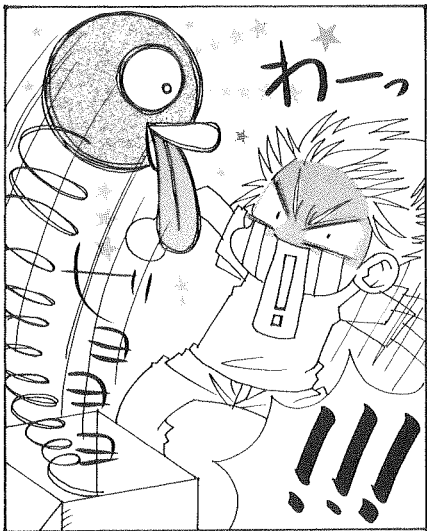


## MIDDLE / IN

なか、チュウ

ex. 中学校 (ちゅうがっこう) - middle school

ex. 中国 (ちゅうごく) - China

Boy: このハコの中って  
なになな？  
I wonder what's in this box?

わーっ！  
Yikes!  
ビョヨヨ  
(boing)

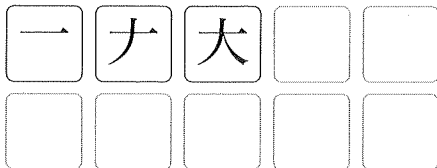
# BIG



おお、おお(きい)、ダイ、タイ

ex. 大人 (おとな) - adult

ex. 大学 (だいがく) - university



Mother: おにぎりたべる？

Do you want to eat a  
rice ball?

Boy: うん。

Please!

Boy: 大きすぎ...

It's too big...

どーん

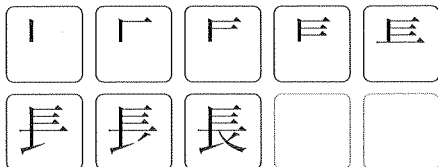
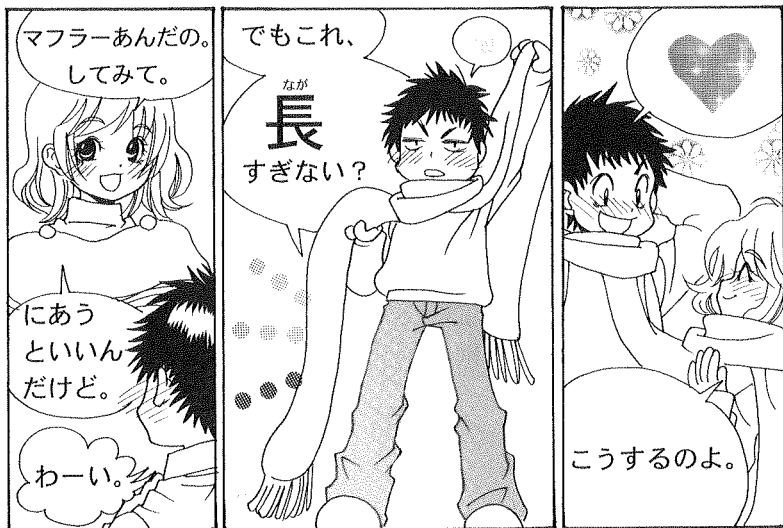
(sound of surprise, similar to "gong")

## CHIEF / LONG

なが(い)、チョウ

ex. 校長 (こうちょう) - school principal

ex. 長男 (ちやうなん) - eldest son

Girl: マフラーあんだの。  
 してみて。にあう  
 いいん  
 だけど。

I knitted a muffler. Try it on. I hope you like it.

Boy: わーい。  
 Thanks!

Boy: でもこれ、長すぎない?  
 But isn't it too long?

Girl: こうするのよ。  
 This is how we wear it.

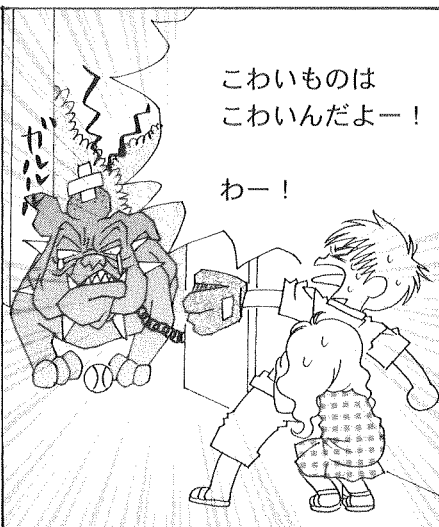
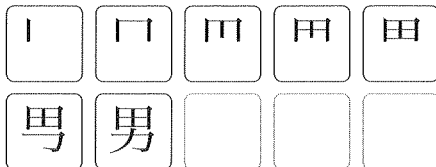
# MAN

おとこ、ダン、ナン

ex. 男の人 (おとこのひと) - man

ex. 男の子 (おとこのこ) - boy

# 男



Girl: 男なんだから、なんとかしなさいよ!

You're a boy, do something!

Boy: そんなこといったって...

Yeah, but...

Boy: こわいものはこわいんだよー!  
わー!

He's so scary! Yikes!

ガルルル

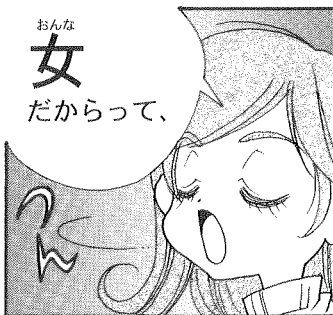
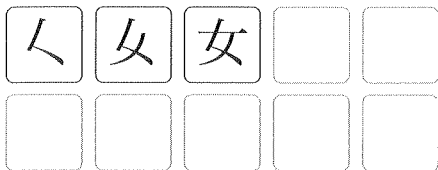
(dog's growl)

## WOMAN

おんな、ジョ

ex. 女の人 (おんなのひと) - woman

ex. 女の子 (おんなのこ) - girl



Boy: おもいにもつはもつよ。  
I'll carry the heavy ones!

Girl: 女だからって、  
Just because I'm a girl..  
つん (humph)

Girl: あまくみないで!  
...doesn't mean I'm weak and helpless!

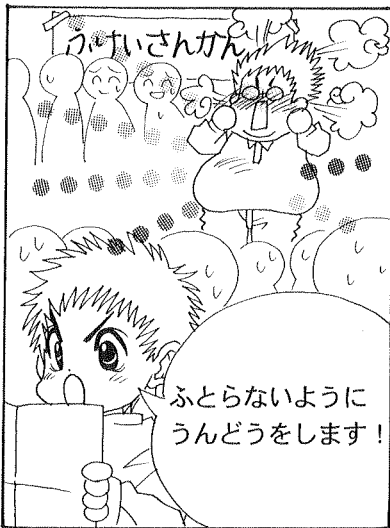
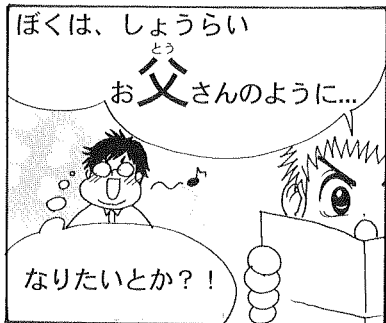
フンツ (oomph)  
パチパチパチ (clapping)

# FATHER

ちち、フ

ex. お父さん (おとうさん) - father (polite)

ex. 父母 (ふぼ) - parents



Teacher: さくぶんはかいたかな？

Did everyone finish their essays?

Students (in unison): はい Yes!

Boy (reading essay): ぼくは、しょうらい

お父さんのように... "My Father": When I grow up...

Father (listening): になりたいとか?! He wants to be like me?!

ふけいさんかん(び) ("Parents Day" sign)

Boy (still reading): ふとらないように  
うんどうをします!

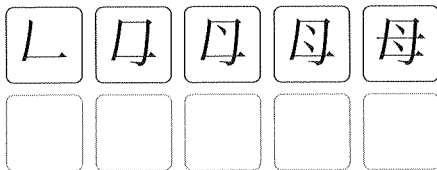
I'll exercise so I won't be fat like him!

## MOTHER

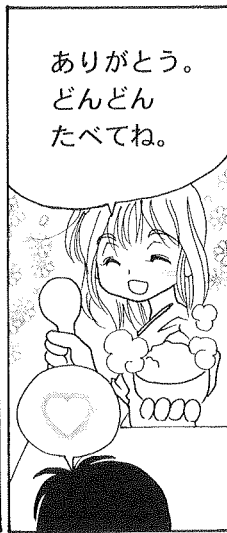
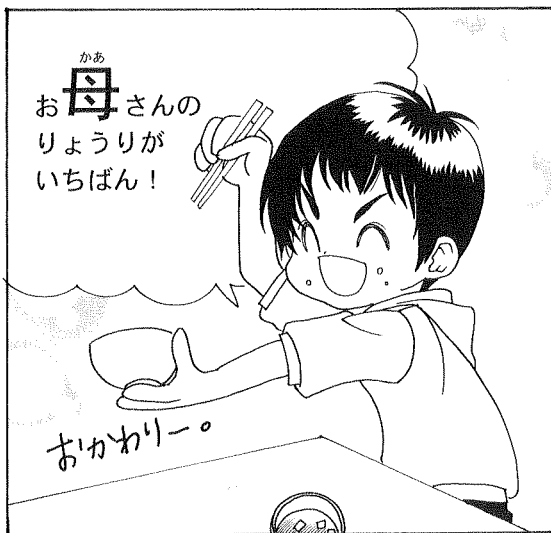
はは、ボ

ex. お母さん (おかあさん) - mother (polite)

ex. 母国語 (ぼこくご) - mother tongue

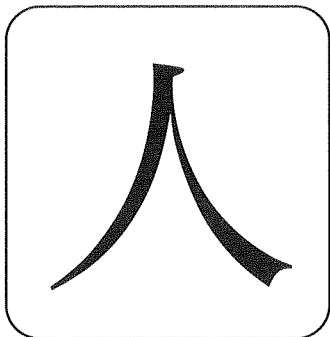


母



Boy: お母さんのりょうりがいちばん！  
おかわりー。  
Mom, your cooking is the best!  
Some more, please!

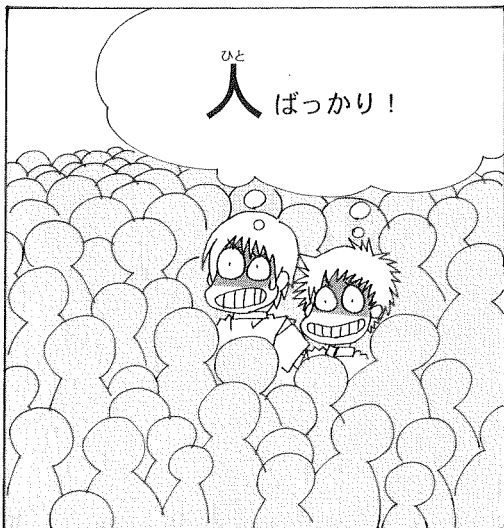
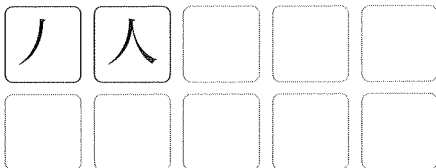
Mother: ありがとう。  
どんどんたべてね。  
Thank you! Eat up!



# PERSON

ひと、ジン、ニン

ex. 一人 (ひとり) - one person; alone  
 ex. 日本人 (にほんじん) - Japanese (people)



First boy: きゅうじつ  
にもなると...  
Come the weekend...

Second boy: どこもかしこも...  
No matter which way you turn...

Both boys: 人ばかり!  
People are everywhere!

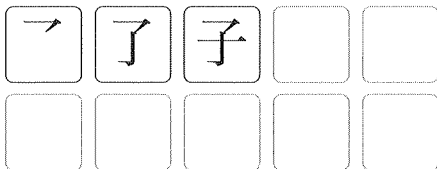


## CHILD

こ、ご、シ、ス

ex. 子供たち\* (こどもたち) - children

ex. 子守\* (こもり) - babysitter



子



Toddler: えん えん  
 おかあさん...  
 (crying) Mommy!

Boy: まい子かなあ...  
 A lost child?

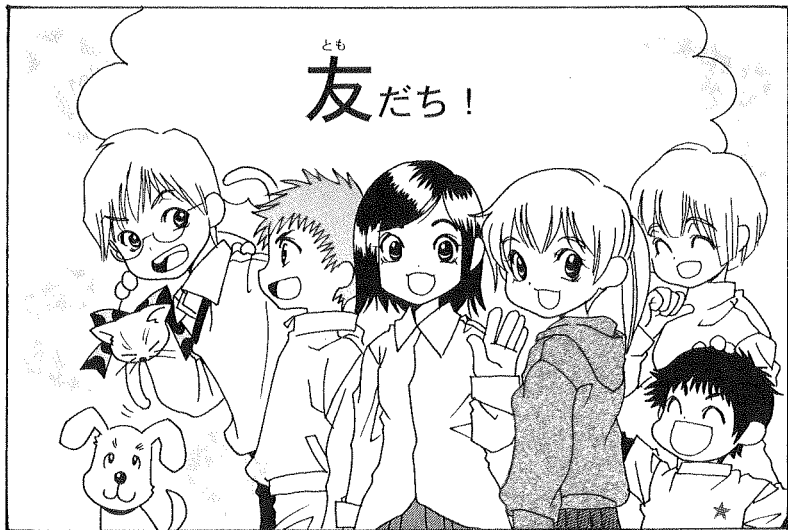
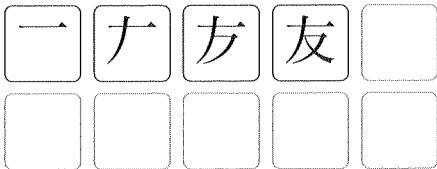
# FRIEND

とも、ユウ

ex. 友だち (ともだち) - friend(s)

ex. 学友 (がくゆう) - classmate

# 友



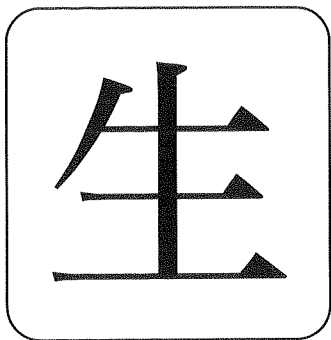
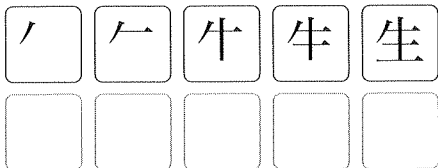
Children (in unison): 友だち!  
Friends!

## LIFE / RAW

い(きる)、う(まれる)、セイ、ショウ

ex. 生まれる (うまれる) - to be born

ex. 人生 (じんせい) - life

Sister: シチューつくったの。  
たべて。

I made stew. Eat up!

Brother: いただきます!

Thanks!

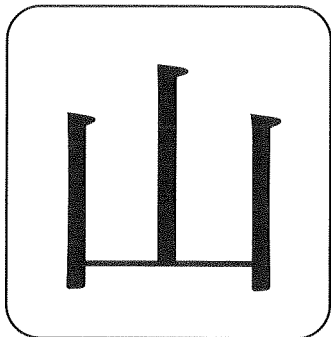
ガリ (sound of shock)

Brother: ジャガイモがまだ生だよー。

The potato is still raw!

Sister: ごめーん。

Sorry.

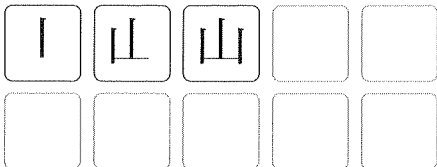


# MOUNTAIN

やま、サン

ex. 富士山\* (ふじさん) - Mt. Fuji

ex. 火山 (かざん) - volcano



Girl: 山のぼりしたいなあ。  
I'd love to go mountain-climbing.

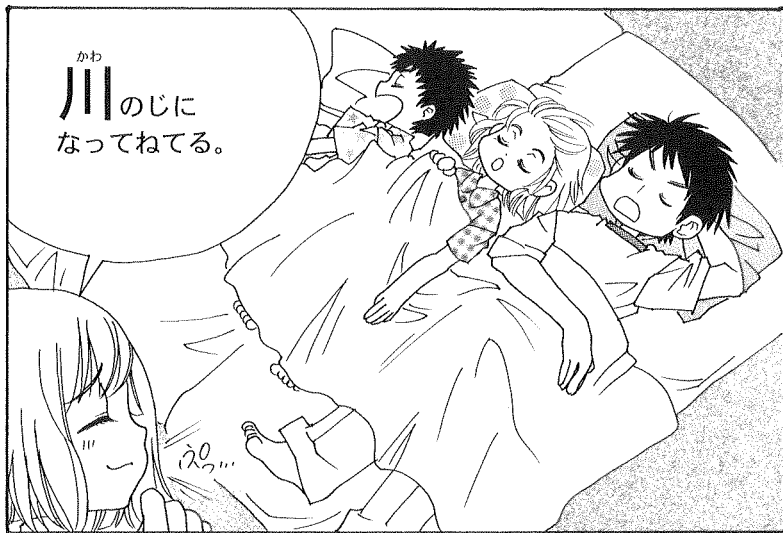
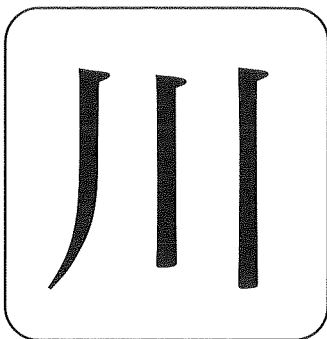
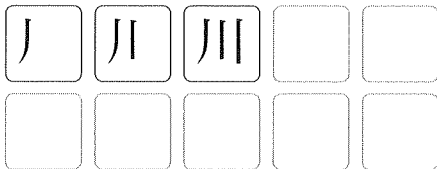
やっほー！  
(Sound of yodeling)  
山びこききたいな。  
Then I can hear the echo of my voice  
in the mountains!

## RIVER

かわ、がわ、セン

ex. 小川 (おがわ) - small river (stream)

ex. 川下 (かわしも) - downstream



Mother: 川のじになってねてる。  
They're sleeping side-by-side.

In Japan, it is common for children and parents to sleep together. When three family members (usually the mother one on side, father on the other and a small child in the middle, are lying next to one another, the formation resembles the kanji character for river (川) and is thus called a kawa-no-ji ("kanji for river").

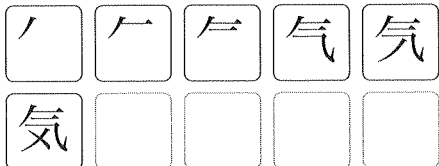
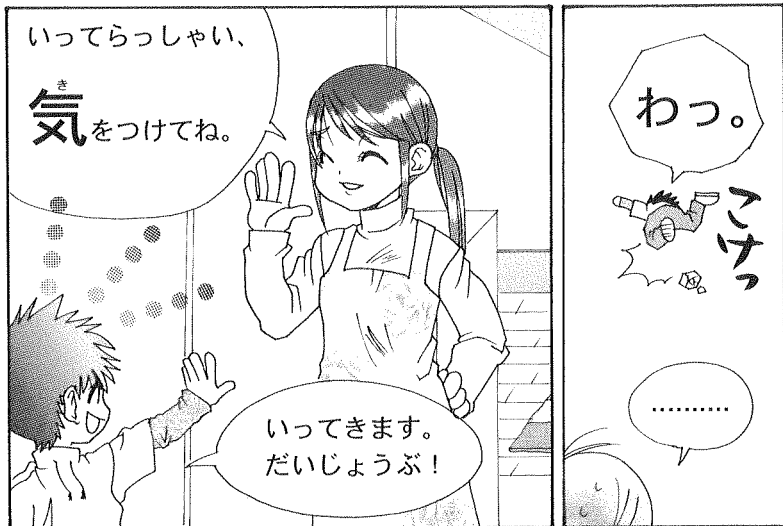


## SPIRIT / GAS

キ、ケ

ex. 電気 (でんき) - electricity

ex. 気分 (きぶん) - feeling; mood

Mother: 行ってらっしゃい、気をつけてね。  
See you later! Be careful now!

Boy: いってきます。だいじょうぶ!  
See ya. I'll be fine!

Boy: わっ。  
Oops.

こけっ  
(tripping noise)

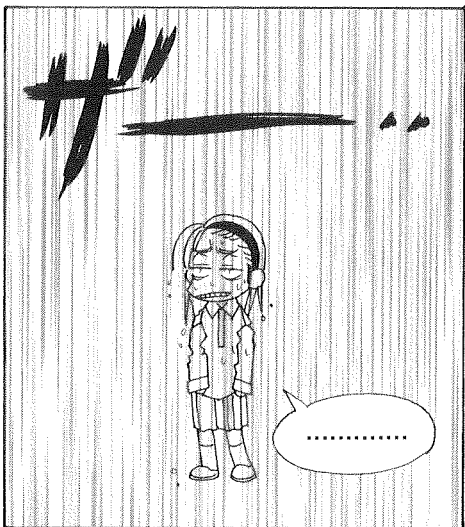
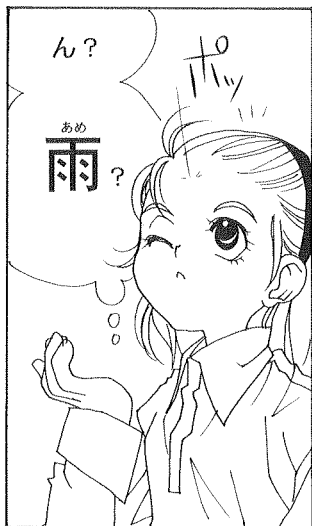
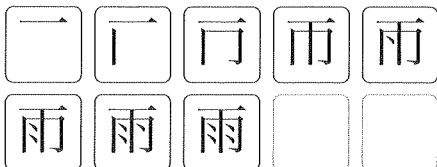
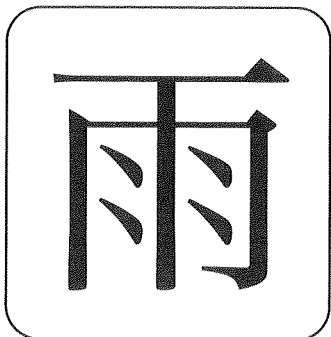
Mother: (speechless)

# RAIN

あめ、あま、ウ

ex. 大雨 (おおあめ) - heavy rain

ex. 雨水 (あまみず) - rainwater



Girl: ん? 雨?。

Hmm. Rain?

ポッ

(sound of a single drop of rain)

ザー

(sound of heavy rain)

Girl: (speechless)

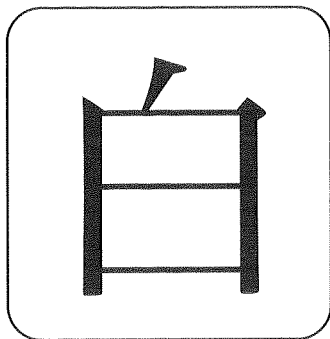
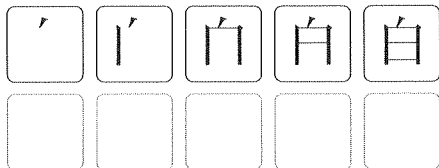


## WHITE

しろ、しら、しろ(い)、ハク

ex. 白鳥\* (はくちょう) - swan

ex. 白人 (はくじん) - Caucasian



Boy: おかあさん、  
ごめんなさい。  
Mom, I'm sorry.

Mother: どうしたの？  
What's wrong?

Boy: 白いシャツよごしちゃった。  
I got my white shirt dirty!

ガーン  
(sound of realization)  
ドロ ドロ  
(wet, muddy sound)

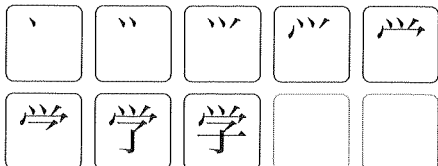
# LEARN

まな(ぶ)、ガク

ex. 学生 (がくせい) - student

ex. 学年 (がくねん) - grade in school

# 学



Student: 学こうはたのしいけど...  
School is a lot of fun, but...

学ぶのはにがて。  
Studying is a drag.

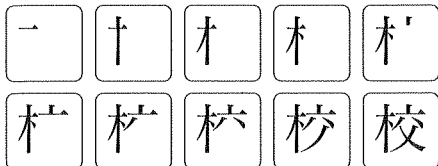
Person in background: おはよう。  
Good morning!

## SCHOOL

コウ

ex. 学校 (がっこう) - school

ex. 校歌\* (こうか) - school song



校



Principal: 校かせいしょう!  
Let's sing our school song!



Student: 校ちょう  
せんせいって  
おんち!  
The principal is  
totally tone deaf!

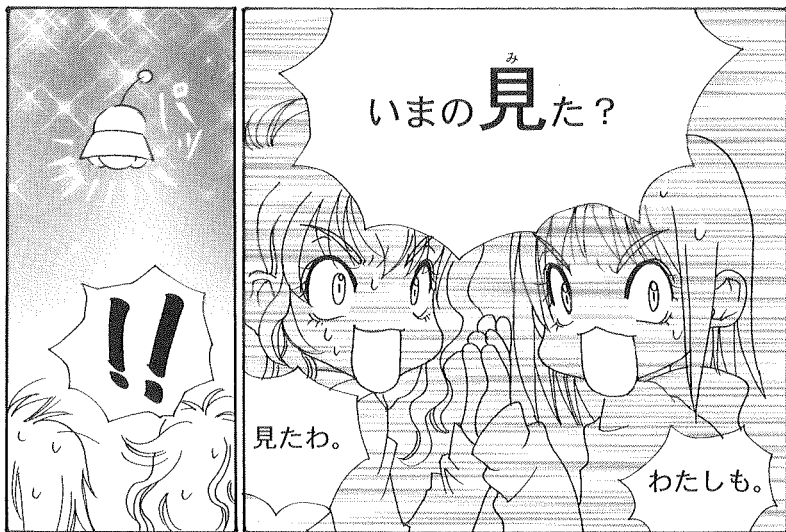
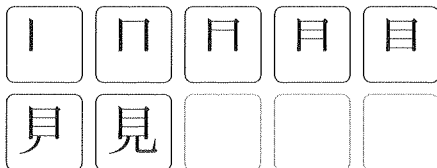
SEE

見

み(る)、み(える)、み(せる)、ケン

ex. 見本 (みほん) - sample

ex. 見学 (けんがく) - field trip



Girls (in unison after seeing UFO): いまの見た？

Did you see that?

Girl on left: 見たわ。

I saw it.

Girl on left: わたしも。

Me too.

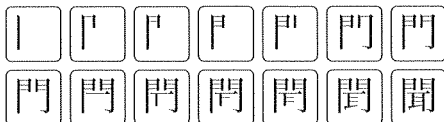
## HEAR

き(く)、き(こえる)、ブン

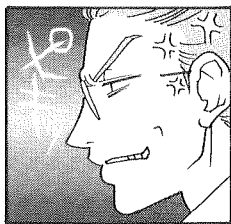
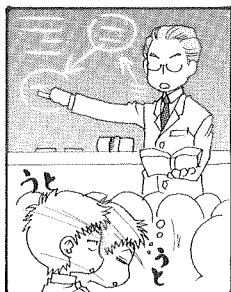
ex. 新聞\* (しんぶん) - newspaper

ex. 聞き手\* (きぎて) - listener; audience

ex. 見聞 (けんぶん) - knowledge; information



聞



うと うと  
(sound of boy  
nodding off to sleep)

ピキッ  
(sound of teacher  
noticing boy)

Teacher: そこおおお、聞いとるの  
かああああ!

Are you listening to me?!

スコーン

(sound of boy being hit by teacher's pointer)

## SPEAK / TALK

はな(す)、はなし、ワ

ex. 話 (はなし) - story, speech

ex. 電話\* (でんわ) - telephone

ex. 会話\* (かいわ) - conversation

# 話

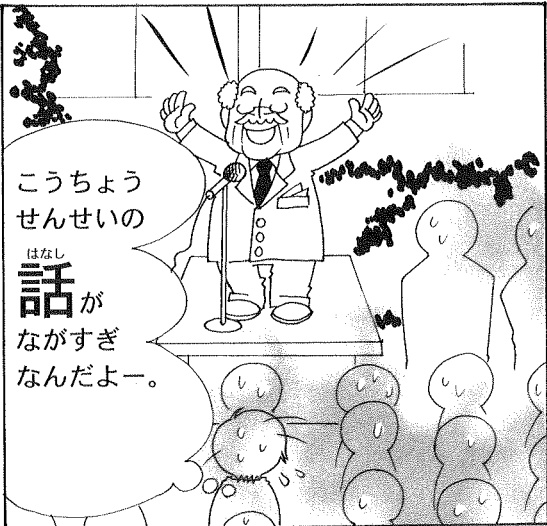


あーあ。  
げつようびは  
ゆううつだなあ。



こうちょう  
せんせいの

はなし  
**話**が  
ながすぎ  
なんだよー。



Student: あーあ。  
げつようびは  
ゆううつだなあ。  
Sigh...Monday's are  
such a drag.

こうちょうせんせいの話がながすぎなんだよー。  
I swear the principal talks too much.

## LANGUAGE

かた(る)、かた(らう)、ゴ

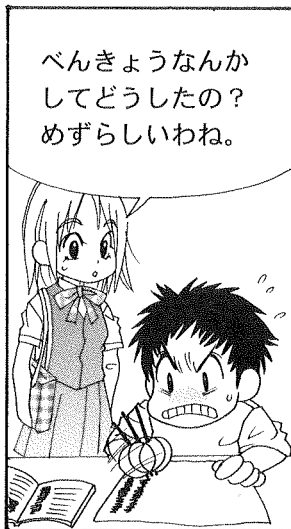
ex. 日本語 (にほんご) - Japanese language

ex. 英語\* (えいご) - English language

ex. 語学 (ごがく) - linguistics



# 語



Girl: べんきょうなんかして  
どうしたの？めずらしい  
わね。  
You're actually studying?  
What's up with that?

Boy: あした、にほん語の  
かんじテストなんだ。  
I have a kanji test in my Japanese-  
language class tomorrow.

Girl: どうりでね。  
That explains it.

# READ

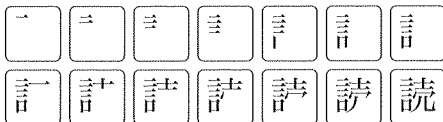
よ(む)、トウ、トク、ドク

ex. 読者 (どくしゃ) - reading book

ex. 音読み\* (おんよみ) - on-reading (of kanji)

ex. 訓読み\* (くんよみ) - kun-reading (of kanji)

# 読



Girl: いま、わだいの  
しょうせつか。  
So, this is that popular  
new novel.

おもしろそう！読んでみようっと。  
Looks interesting. I'm gonna read it!

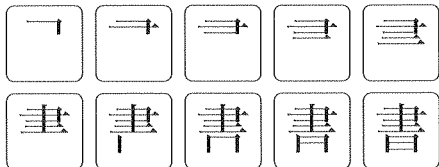


## WRITE

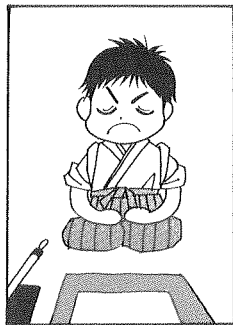
か(く)、シヨ

ex. 書道\* (しよどう) - calligraphy

ex. 書店\* (しよてん) - bookstore



書



でりやあああ



でりやあああ

(Sound of furious writing)

Boy: 書けたぞ!  
I've written my masterpiece!

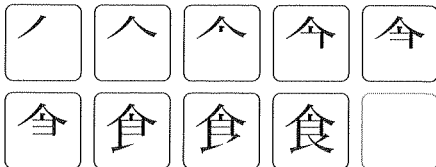
## EAT / FOOD

た(べる)、く(う)、シヨク

ex. 食べ物\* (たべもの) - food

ex. 食事\* (しょくじ) - meal

# 食



きょうはかぞくのために、  
むすめのわたしが  
てりょうりをプレゼント。



Girl: きょうは かぞくの  
ために、むすめのわたしが  
てりょうりをプレゼント。  
Tonight, I, the loving daughter,  
shall make dinner for my family.

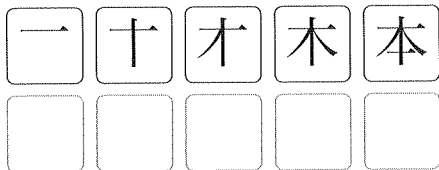
Family (thinking alike): 食べられる  
のか? りょうり?!  
Will we be able to eat it?!

## BOOK / MAIN

もと、ホン

ex. 絵本\* (えほん) - picture book

ex. 日本 (にほん) - Japan




Schoolboy: 本つみすぎちゃった。

I've piled the books too high.

ぐらぐら (sound of shaking objects)

ドサドサドサ

(sound of falling objects)

トホホ...

Whimper...

# 電

## ELECTRICITY

デン

ex. 電子 (でんし) - electronic

ex. 電子メール (でんしメール) - e-mail

ex. 電池\* (でんち) - battery



Girl: わー! てい電。かいちゆう電とうは?

Yikes! A blackout.

Where's the flashlight?

パツ

(shining light)

Boy (in scary voice): こーこーにあーるーよー。

Heeere it is.

Girl: キャー

Eeeek.

ポウ...

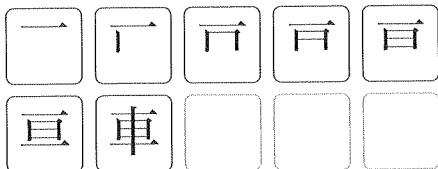
(shining light)

## VEHICLE / WHEEL

くるま、シャ

ex. 車 (くるま) - car

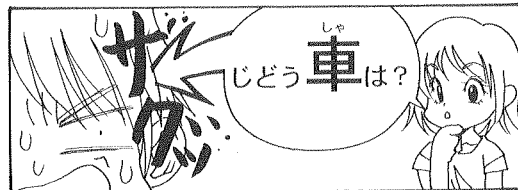
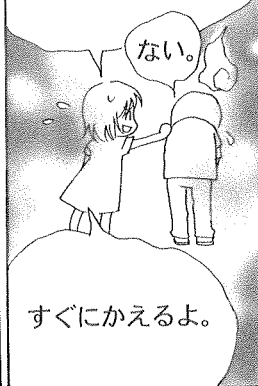
ex. 電車 (でんしゃ) - train



車



これからだったんだね。これから。



Boy: じどう車めんきよとったぞー!  
I just got my driver's license!

Girl: じどう車は?  
You have a car?

ザグッ  
(sound of sudden realization)

Girl: これからだったんだね。  
これから。すぐにかえるよ。  
One step at a time. You'll be able  
to buy one soon.

Boy: ない。  
...no car...

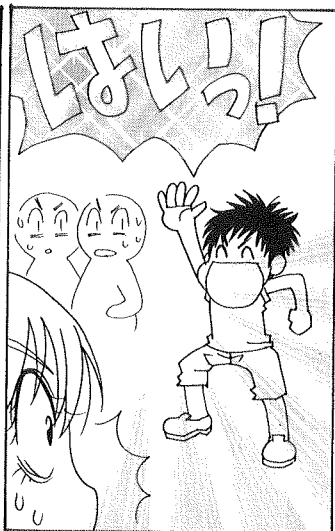
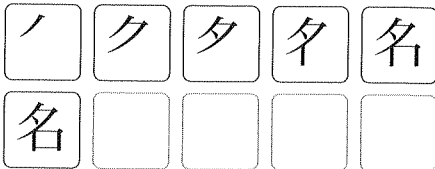
# NAME

な、メイ、ミョウ

ex. 名前 (なまえ) - name

ex. 名刺\* (めいし) - business card

# 名



Teacher: つぎのひと名まえをよびます。

〇〇〇くん。

I'm going to read the next person's name.

Mr. ---.

Boy: (answering before his name is called): はいっ!

Here!

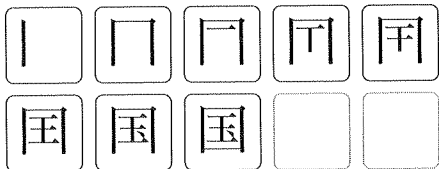
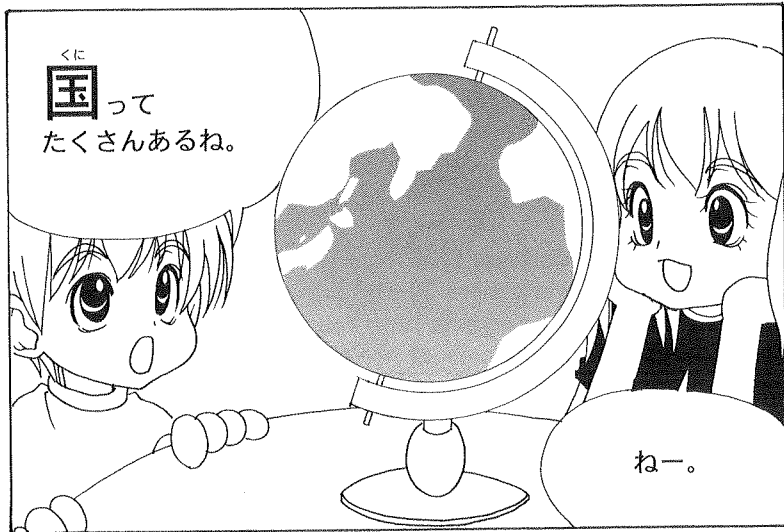
The use of circles (as above) is common in Japanese manga, and is equivalent to the use of underlines in English to mean "fill in the blanks."

## COUNTRY

くに、コク

ex. 外国 (がいこく) - foreign country

ex. 入国 (にゅうこく) - to enter a country

Boy: 国ってたくさんあるね。

There sure are a lot of different countries!

Girl: ねー。

Yep.



## TAKE THE TEST!

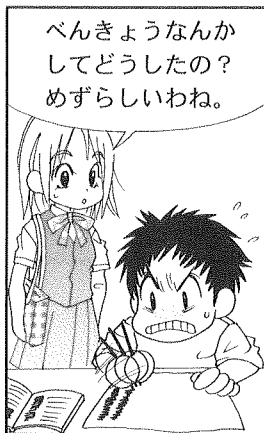
**T**he Japanese Language Proficiency Test has been held annually throughout the world since 1984. Administered by the Japanese government and the nonprofit Japan Foundation, the test evaluates and certifies the proficiency of non-native speakers of Japanese. There are four levels to the examination: Level 4 for beginners, Level 3 for intermediate students, Level 2 for those who are functionally literate in Japanese, and Level 1 for experts.

This book includes all 80 kanji students need to know to pass Level 4 of the JLPT. Subsequent volumes in the “Kanji de Manga” series will help students prepare for the higher levels.

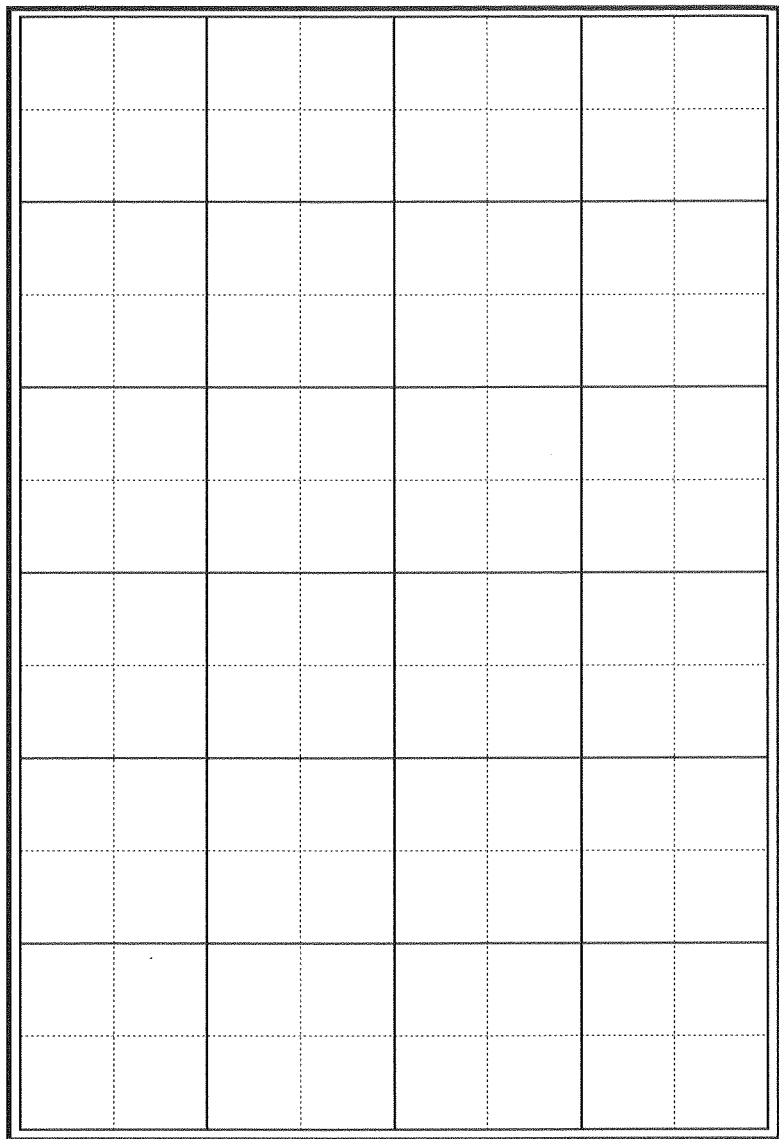
For more information about the Japanese Language Proficiency Test, including examination locations in your country, please visit the Japan Foundation’s “JLPT Communications Square” website at [http://momo.jpf.go.jp/jlpt/e/about\\_e.html](http://momo.jpf.go.jp/jlpt/e/about_e.html).

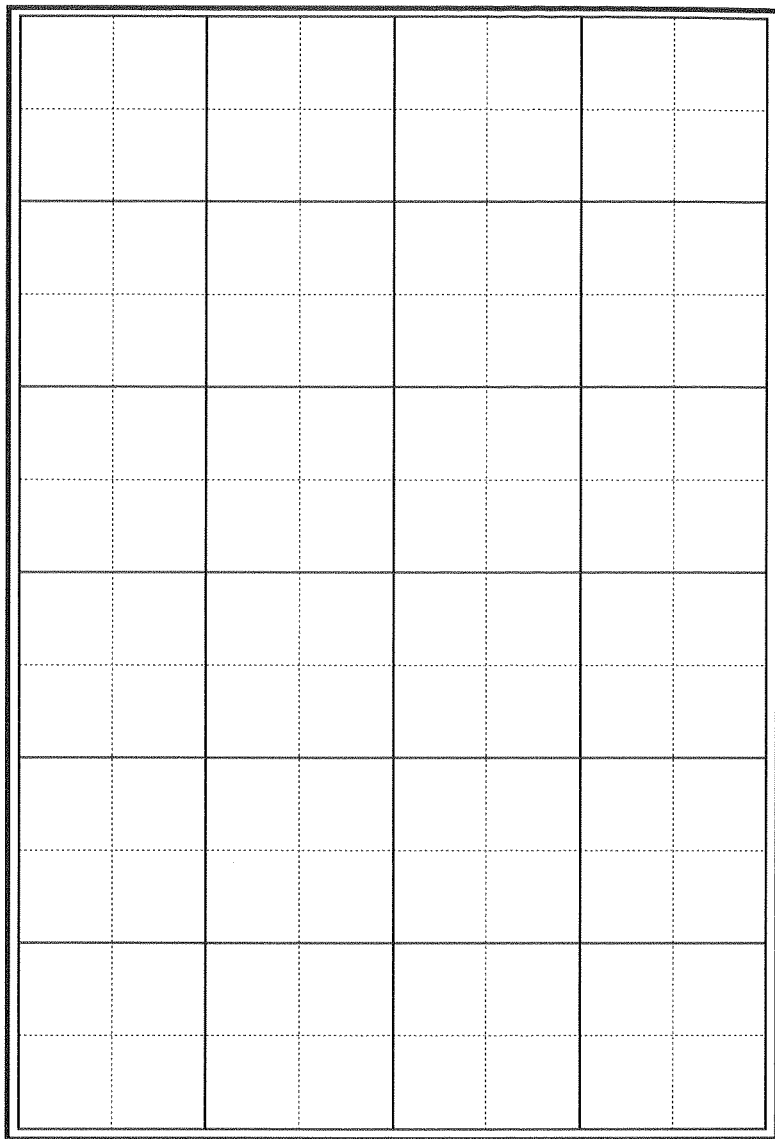


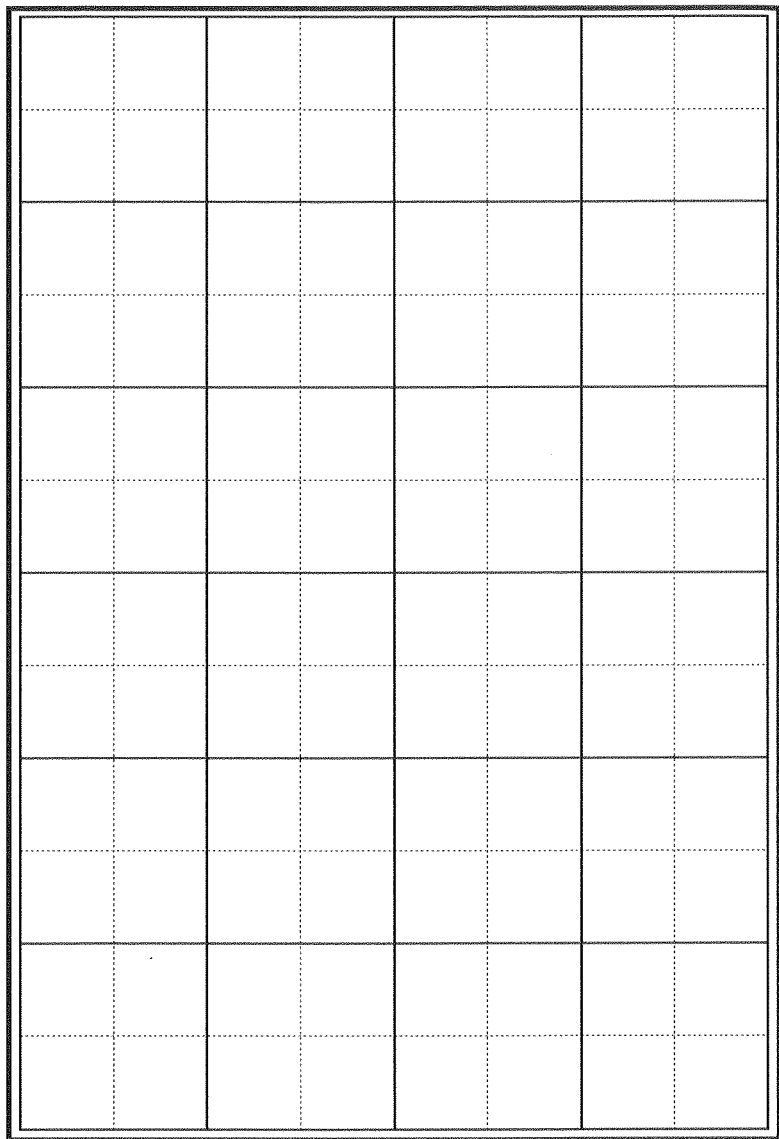
漢字 **kanji** で マンガ **Manga**

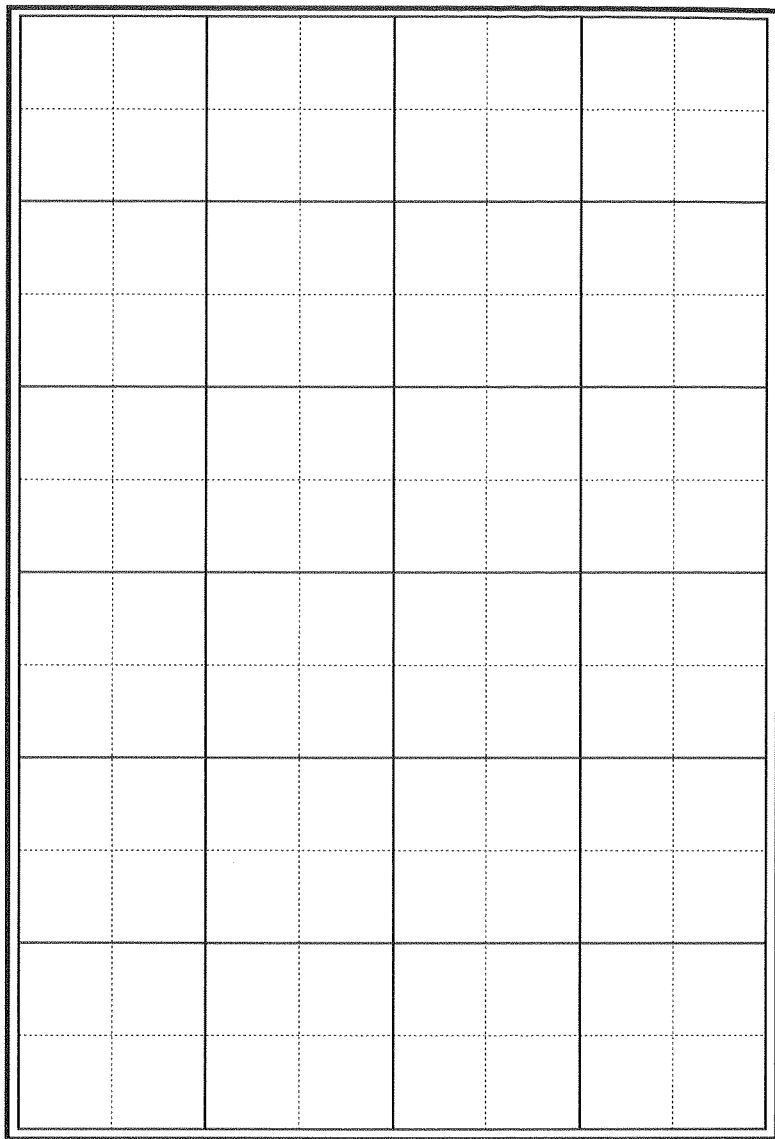


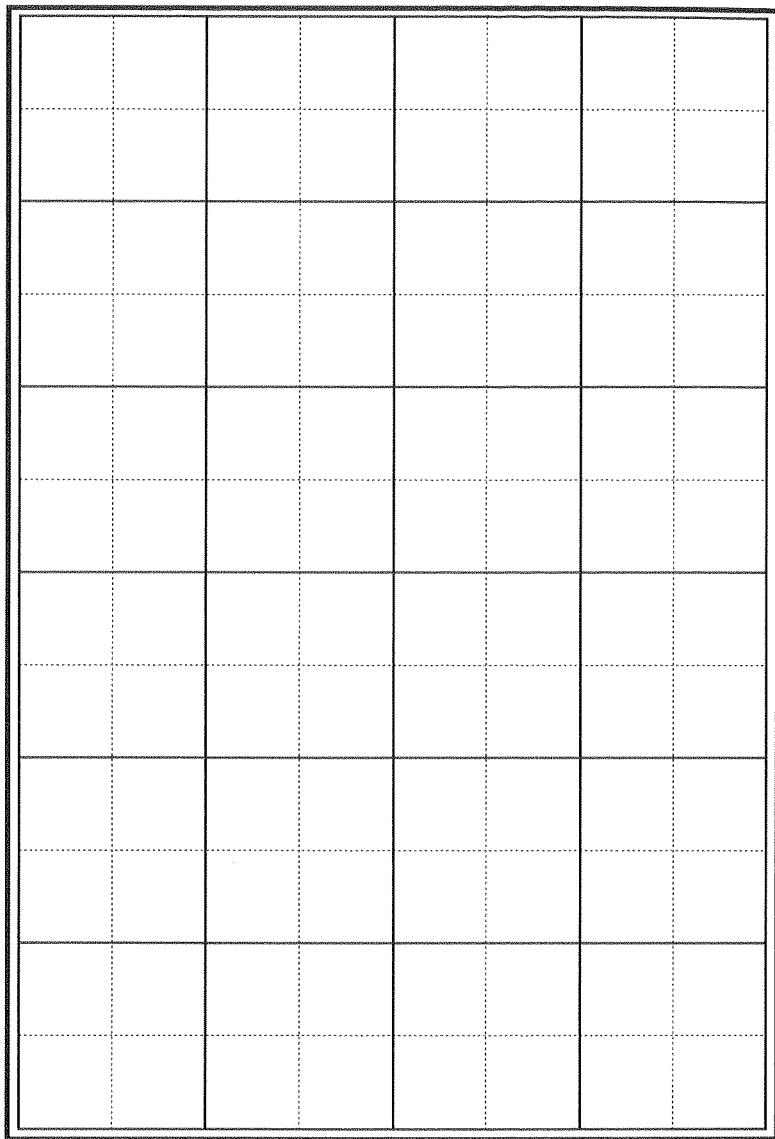
**PRACTICE SECTION**

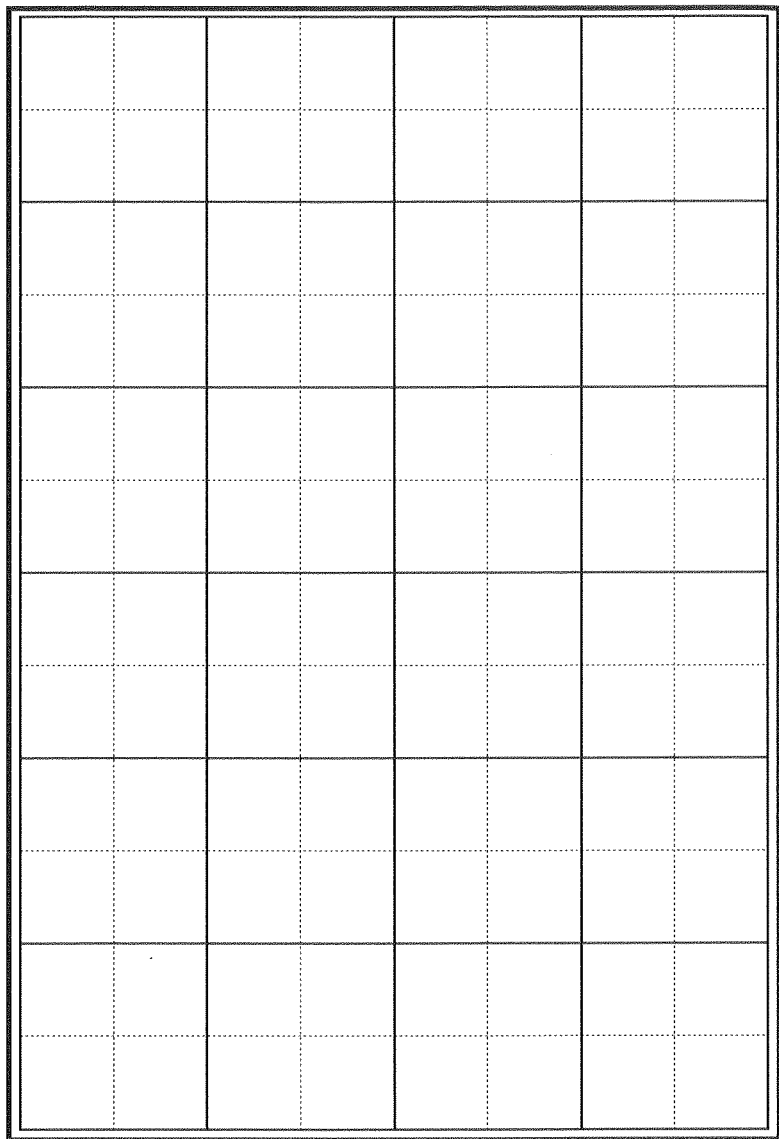


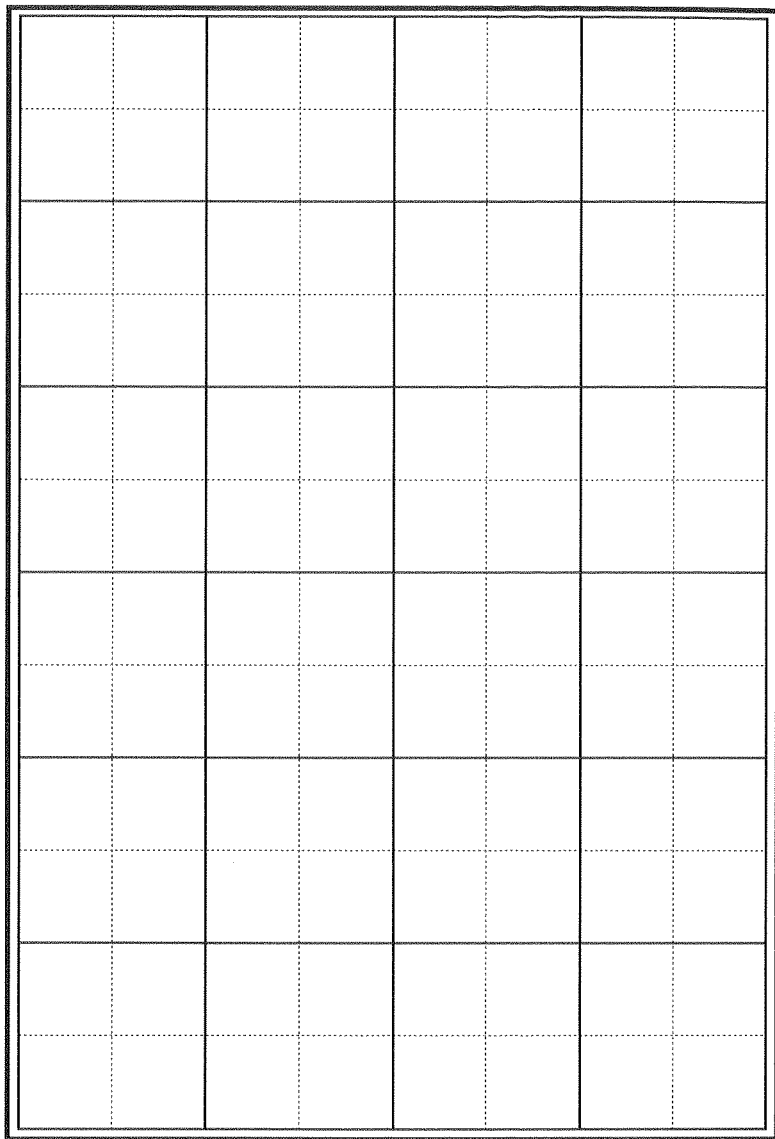














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## KANJI STROKE-ORDER RULES

*The Golden Rule: "Left to Right, Top to Bottom"*

1. Horizontal strokes: left to right and parallel to one another



2. Vertical/slanting strokes: top to bottom



3. Hook strokes: top left to right and turn to the bottom



4. Center strokes first, then slanting left and right strokes



5. Outside strokes before inside strokes (but bottom stroke last)



6. Crisscross strokes: horizontal strokes first, vertical strokes second



7. Diagonal strokes: left-hand first, right-hand second



8. Horizontal and vertical cutting strokes last

