

# GUIDELINES

## THE 37th ANNUAL JAPANESE SPEECH CONTEST

April 11, 2026

For Middle School ♦ High School Students

*Organized by the Consular Office of Japan in Portland*

### IMPORTANT NOTE

1. OBJECTIVE
2. CONTEST LOCATION and SCHEDULE
3. ORGANIZER and SUPPORTERS
4. JUDGES
5. CONTEST STRUCTURE and APPLICATION PROCESS
  - A. Level of Competition and Speech Length
  - B. Speech Topic
  - C. Participants number by category
  - D. Selection Process
6. AWARDS
7. OTHERS

## 1. OBJECTIVES

By showcasing the talent of middle school and high school students of Japanese and encouraging them to pursue their studies, it is hoped that the Speech Contest will serve to support Japanese language learning and education in our jurisdiction, and to promote mutual understanding and strengthen the ties that Japan now shares with the citizens of these States.

## 2. CONTEST LOCATION AND SCHEDULE

**Date:** Saturday, April 11, 2026

**Time:** 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. (Tentative time)

**Location:** Hawthorne Room, Wells Fargo Center Building  
3<sup>rd</sup> floor, 1300 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, Portland, OR, 97201

### Tentative Schedule:

1:00	-	1:30	Registration
1:30	-	1:45	Explanation of Guidelines
1:45	-	3:45	Speeches
3:45	-	4:30	DVD Screening, Judge Scoring
4:30	-	5:00	Award Ceremony

## 3. ORGANIZER AND SUPPORTERS

**Organized by:** Consular Office of Japan in Portland

**Supporters :** Association of Teachers of Japanese in Oregon

City of Sapporo

Portland -Sapporo Sister City Association

Sapporo International Communication Plaza Foundation

Shokookai of Portland

## 4. JUDGES

The judges' panel consists of Japanese professors from local universities, a member of the Shokookai of Portland, a member of the Portland-Sapporo Sister City Association and a staff member of the Consular Office of Japan. (Tentative)

Dr. Suwako Watanabe	Portland State University
Dr. Keiko Ueda	Lewis & Clark College
Mr. Kanji Kimura	Shokookai of Portland
Ms. Mami Kikuchi	Portland-Sapporo Sister City Association
Ms. Lisa Murakami	Consular Office of Japan in Portland

## 5. CONTEST STRUCTURE AND APPLICATION PROCESS

### A. Level of Competition and Speech Length

Division 1 Reading aloud	Middle school students & High school students who are not immersion program students nor do they come from homes where Japanese is spoken <i>Reading length: Two (2) minutes</i> <i>Reading Text: See Attachment 1</i>
Division 2 Speech	Middle school & High school students who are not immersion program students nor do they come from homes where Japanese is spoken <i>Speech length: Three (3) minutes</i>
Division 3 Long Speech	Middle school & High school students in immersion programs or from homes where Japanese is spoken are allowed excluding students of the Portland Japanese school <i>Speech length: Five (5) minutes</i>

- Participants of Division 1 are able to use the Reading Text with "Roma-ji" phonetics.
- Speeches slightly over (30 seconds or less) the time restrictions set above are acceptable. However, contestants will be asked to stop when speeches are longer than prescribed time and 30 seconds.

## **B. Speech Topic:**

スピーチ トピック : 願ねがいが一ひとつ叶かなうなら  
Speech topic: If I had one wish

**Speeches must be written by students themselves.**

Students are allowed to bring notes if they need. No visual aids such as panels, OHP, or music tapes/CDs are allowed.

## **C. Number of participants by category**

Division 1: 7 students

Division 2: 5 students

Division 3: 5 students

## **D. Selection Process**

The panel will consider Japanese language ability, speech content and presentation. Judges do not expect students to perform like native speakers; rather, they will be looking for mastery of a certain skill level. For this reason, we encourage teachers and family to refrain from excessive correcting and rewriting of their student's speeches.

The panel will evaluate each contestant for Japanese language ability, speech content and presentation/delivery. One of the judges will ask the student two to three questions in order to check whether or not the speech is rote memorization. The scores of contestants will not be disclosed for any reason.

The City of Sapporo's special award will be selected by a judge of the Portland –Sapporo Sister City Association separately from the above selection process.

## **6. AWARDS**

The awards will be announced on the day. After speeches, the judges will deliver their decision. The awards ceremony is scheduled to begin at 4:30pm. In the past, the contest has proceeded ahead of schedule, so we may begin the Awards Ceremony earlier than 4:30 pm.

## **7. OTHERS**

- Participants shall participate in this contest at their own risk and should take appropriate measures to safeguard their health.
- If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Consular Office of Japan  
at (503) 221-1811 or email to [bunkaportland@se.mofa.go.jp](mailto:bunkaportland@se.mofa.go.jp)

## Reading Text for Division 1

## 「お手紙」

かえるくんは、まどから のぞきました。

かたつむりくんは、まだ やって来ません。

「かえるくん、どうして、きみ、ずっと まどの外を 見ているの。」  
がまくんがたずねました。

「だって、今、ぼく、お手紙を まっているんだもの。」

かえるくんが言いました。

「でも、来やしないよ。」

がまくんが言いました。

「きっと来るよ。」

かえるくんが言いました。

「だって、ぼくが、きみに お手紙出したんだもの。」

「きみが。」

がまくんが言いました。

「お手紙に、なんて書いたの。」

かえるくんが言いました。

「ぼくは、こう書いたんだ。『親愛なる がまがえるくん。ぼくは、  
きみが ぼくの親友である ことを、うれしく思っています。きみの親友、  
かえる。』」

「ああ。」

がまくんが言いました。

「とても いいお手紙だ。」

それから、ふたりは、げんかんに出て、お手紙の来るのを まっていました。



四日たって、かたつむりくんが、がまくんの家に  
つきました。

そして、かえるくんからのお手紙を、がまくんに  
わたしました。

お手紙をもらって、がまくんは、とてもよろこび  
ました。

