

## JANUARY, 2013: BREEZE ISSUE #63

A FREE MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF JAPAN & TEACHERS OF JAPANESE



### MINAKO KADOI

*Greenway High School & Washington High School  
Phoenix, AZ*

When you think of Arizona, what comes to your mind? For me it would be the sun, the desert, and cactus. When I arrived in Phoenix, I was just surprised at how unique this place was. You will notice that the entire city looks like a big desert because almost every building is tan colored and you can see cactus everywhere. Since this was my first time seeing a real live cactus in its natural environment, CACTUS became my acronym of living in my new home:

Communicating  
Assisting  
Cooperating  
Thanking  
Understanding and  
Smiling

These words describe my experience in team teaching as well as living abroad.

My name is Minako Kadoi, and I am a Japanese language teaching assistant with Olson Sensei at two high schools, Greenway High School (GW) and Washington High School (WHS) in Phoenix, Arizona. We have five classes per day with about 140 students and we teach Japanese 1-2 and 3-4 at GW in the morning and travel to WHS for afternoon classes: two classes of Japanese 1-2 and a combined class of Japanese 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8.

The uniqueness of our district requires that all the students who are enrolled in any foreign language courses take Performance Based Assessment (PBA) at the end of the year. Students who are taking Japanese 1-2 and 3-4 are focused on improving speaking skills while those taking Japanese 5-6 & 7-8 are learning Japanese with an emphasis on writing skills. Besides improving the four skills of Japanese and cultivating a broad view of culture and lifestyle, we encourage our students to seek their passion th

learning Japanese and/or about Japan. Therefore, we provide our students with various chances to experience Japanese culture such as introducing pen pals, cooking Japanese cuisine, visiting Japanese gardens, going to Matsuri, and traveling to Japan.

Our current project is to implement Graded readers into classroom activities. Although we are still working on improving materials, it is great to see how much our students are enjoying reading books. We just finished reading 「絵姿奥さん」. At first I was very worried about using this book since this story required a certain cultural and historical background to comprehend it. However, it was these elements that students loved the most. To give you an example: We discussed what kind of clothing or hairstyles people wore at that time. Our next book will be 「桃太郎」! I would like to implement Reader's Theater with this book. I hope our students like it just as much as 「絵姿奥さん」.

Finally, I must say that I am very fortunate to be working with Olson Sensei, who is very passionate about Education and Japan. She sees me as a teacher and gives me many opportunities to teach with her, participate in professional development workshops and school events. I was a chaperone at Homecoming, a competitor in a speed-eating competition at an assembly, and an adviser at a school camp. I appreciate these opportunities because I have the chance to see other students outside of Japanese classes in order to introduce the beautiful and unique features of Japan to them! I am a novice Japanese teacher and need to gain more knowledge and experience to identify how students learn Japanese as a foreign language and understand what they struggle with when learning Japanese. Olson Sensei shows me a lot of her techniques to teach and build rapport with our students. The most basic and powerful way to make students enjoy our class is to show our passion and curiosity in what we are interested in. Therefore, we always welcome our students to class with a big smiles!

Breeze #74	▼
Breeze #73	▼
Breeze #72	▼
Breeze #71	▼
Breeze #70	
Breeze #69	▼
Breeze #68	▼
Breeze #67	▼
Breeze #66	
Breeze #65	

Breeze #64



2012 JET-MIP Report 7/8

2012 J-LEAP Report: Chieko Yamada

2012 J-LEAP Report: Minako Kadoi

2012 JET-MIP Essay: Maylin Chong

2012 JET-MIP Essay: Rebecca Lee

2012 JET-MIP Essay: Ruby Cabuya

2012 JET-MIP Essay: Sam Gamble

Breeze #63



[Headquarters](#)

[New York Office](#)

[Center for Global Partnership](#)

[Volunteer](#)

[ボランティア募集](#)

[Japan Related Links](#)

[Job Openings \(Updated\)](#)

5700 Wilshire blvd, Suite 100

Los Angeles, CA 90036

P. 323.761.7510

Annual Report

© 2019 The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles

Web Design.