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# Seashorts 2024: A Celebration of Southeast Asian Short Films

Reported by GOH Lee Kwang (SeaShorts Film Festival)



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SeaShorts Film Festival 2024 was held at the brand-new space called The Campus, Ampang, from October 24th to 27th, with 47 programmes, including screenings of 57 short films, Q&A sessions, and a forum.

SeaShorts Film Festival 2024 had 5 winners in 3 categories: SeaShorts Award went to *The Last Visit*, directed by Keawalee Warutkomain from Thailand; The Malaysian Open Award went to *China Beast*, co-directed by Kuok Hong Yoeng and Christopher Ling Jing; Malaysia Student Film Award went to *The Misfit Tiger*, directed by Bennial Soo Tzee Zziung, and two Special Mentions went to *Disappearing Disappearance*, directed by Elvin Kang, and *The Weight of Silence*, directed by Ezzah Mahmud.

The special programme *Heatseeker* highlighted the works by active students and recent graduates, in which we showcased two titles from Japan: *Thank You for the Blur*, directed by Takahiro Suzuki, and *PLACE PLACE PLACE*, directed by Mori Ito.

With almost 700 festival guests and attendees, this edition became by far the most well-attended SeaShorts. The festival was filled with laughter, and nevertheless, intelligent conversations and discussions. Quoting from one of our volunteers, Ang Li Ying: "SeaShorts Film Festival serves as an excellent platform for filmmakers to showcase their masterpieces and foster connections within the industry." Moving forward, early discussions for the 2025 edition have already been underway. We hope to see you there!



# The Next Generation Symposium on Japan Studies

Reported by Farah Ammar (JFKL)



It's a wrap!

After six months of constant hard work and dedication, the Japanese Studies Essay Contest and Mentorship Programme concluded with its final event: **The Next Generation Symposium on Japan Studies**.

The whole day event which took place on the 16th of November, Universiti Malaya saw an audience of 100 people with several notable moments. From the very beginning, it was heartwarming to witness the excitement during the first physical meet up between each Mentors and Mentees after months of corresponding online with their shared goal of completing the essays. Then, JFKL Director, Mr. Tsukamoto Norihisa and MAJAS President, Dr. Rohayati Paidi presented powerful speeches congratulating the success of the first such collaboration centralizing the participation of the youth by providing a platform for them to express their thoughts with a guidance of a professional.

Following this, all four winners proudly presented their essays to an audience consisting of Japanese studies experts, academicians, fellow friends, family and other members of the public. Despite their young age, they successfully conveyed and addressed topics related to mental health, tokusatsu, SDGs and innovation and entrepreneurship. The awards ceremony came after that, where both mentees and mentors received their prize and certificate of participation from Mr. Tsukamoto and had a memorable photo session with all judges, mentors, mentees and VIPs.

The session followed up with a keynote address and Head Judge, Prof.Dato' Dr. Sivamurugan, Universiti Sains Malaysia on Japan Studies and The Next Generation. As a bonus, renowned educator named Madam Loch Leaksmy, Institute of Foreign Languages at Royal University of Phnom Penh flew to Malaysia to share her life experiences as an educator living in turbulent Cambodia.

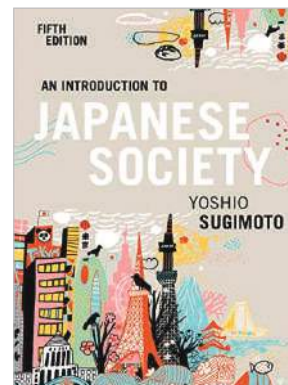
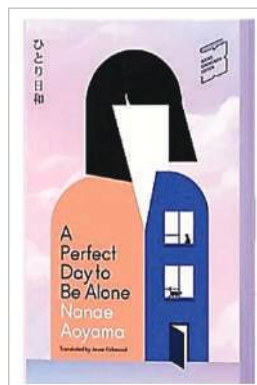
After a delicious lunch, the evening session began with a unique roundtable session titled ""Memupuk Perspektif Baharu: Peranan Belia Malaysia dalam Memajukan Pengajian Jepun" (Cultivating New Perspectives: The Role of Malaysian Youth in Advancing Japan Studies). Dr. Ikbal Huda from UKM took on the role as moderator, with speakers, consisting of current undergraduate and postgraduate students of Japan Studies, alumni and current lecturers. The conversations among fellow speakers and moderator were a mixture of Bahasa Melayu and English, passionately sharing the Japan Studies situation in their organizations. The students shared their experience being a student studying Japan Studies and the importance of re-emphasizing the definition of 'Japan Studies' to ensure clarity of the definition for his fellow classmates. Meanwhile, the lecturers share their hopes to expand the study under their department. The day ended with closing remarks from Mr. Tsukamoto and networking tea.

Overall, the first run of the essay contest and mentorship programme received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the audience. On behalf of The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur, we would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to all the participants who have been involved to make this programme a success.

Keep up with JFKL across all social media channels to find out our upcoming events promoting Japanese Studies!



# What's New: LIBRARY



## Shadowing もっと話せる日本語 中～上級編

By Kumiko SAKODA / Publisher: Kuroshio Publishers 2024/ Library Call No.811.1T

Practicing shadowing for just ten minutes a day will help upgrade your conversation skills!

"Shadowing" is listening to an audio at natural speed and repeating what is being said in real time with as little delay as possible, and it is one of the well-known training methods used by simultaneous interpreters to develop their language skills. This book is the latest addition to the popular "Shadowing" Series, which is specially designed for Japanese language learners from intermediate to advance level (N3-1).

You can enjoy practicing with short conversations like greetings to long dialogues with interesting topics related Japanese culture such as "Japanese People and Cherry Blossoms" "Part-Time Jobs by Japanese College Students" "Voice Actor", and so on. Free audio files are provided on the publisher's official website. This series for elementary level (初級) is also available in the library.

## 身近なテーマで伝える! にほんご作文トレーニング 初中級 A2-B1

By Sendai International School of Japanese / Publisher: Kuroshio Publishers 2024 / Library Call No.816.5T

Are you looking for any suitable materials for your students to improve their writing skills?

This book is perfect for the learners who finished elementary level as a bridge to train their writing skills before moving on to academic writing for intermediate.

According to Can-do (JF standard) for each topic, learners practice how to convey their thoughts on 15 familiar themes from daily life while learning useful sentence patterns from multiple model passages to help increase their expressive ability so that they can write compositions with 250-350 words. In addition, free audio files of the model passages and manuscript paper are downloadable from the publisher's official website.

## A Perfect Day to Be Alone \*Books Kinokuniya Edition

By Nanae AOYAMA, translated by Jesse Kirkwood / Publisher: MacLehose Press 2024 / Library Call No.895.635 AOY

The author, Nanae Aoyama, captured this very human experience of the transition between adolescence and adulthood with humorous authenticity and tender pain when she was only 24 years old with her novel, A Perfect Day to Be Alone (ひとり日和) in 2007. This Akutagawa award - winning bestseller has finally been translated into English by Jesse Kirkwood who is a winner of the 2020 Harvill Secker Young Translators' Prize nearly 20 years after its publication in Japan.

The story is narrated by a young woman named Chizu who has just turned 20 years old and works as a "freeta" (a young person who lacks full-time paid employment). When her mother emigrates to China for work, Chizu moves in with 71-year-old Ginko, an eccentric distant relative in Tokyo. These two women from very different generations start living together with different values.

\*Included a bonus short story, "Departure" (出発), and a special message from the author to readers.

## An Introduction to Japanese Society: Fifth Edition

By Yoshio SUGIMOTO / Publisher: Cambridge University Press 2021 / Library Call No.306.0952 SUG

This is the fifth edition of the primer for students beginning Japanese studies to introduce Japanese society. It was published in 1997 by internationally renowned scholar, Yoshio SUGIMOTO, of La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia.

Taking a sociological approach, the text examines the multifaceted nature of contemporary Japanese society with chapters covering class, geographical and generational variation, work, education, gender, ethnicity, religion, popular culture, and the establishment.

Each chapter now contains illustrative case examples, research questions, recommended further readings and useful online resources. Also, the engaging discussion encourages students to develop an understanding of the complexity and multifaceted nature of Japanese society.

Lots more new arrivals are available in the library!

Get a JFKL Membership!

You can enjoy:

- borrowing library materials (up to 5 items for 2 weeks)
- watching DVDs & listening to CDs at the AV corner
- having discount tickets for selected JFKL events

RM10 (annual fee) and 1 photo (passport size) are required for new registration.

For the latest information, please visit our website, Facebook and Instagram page.





# JFKL Tadoku Salon: Discover the Joy of Reading

Reported by Chan Yee Han (JFKL)

On Saturday morning, 26 October 2024, 55 participants joined the JFKL Tadoku Salon at the JFKL Library. This regular event brings together Japanese language learners from various backgrounds, including members of the public, university students, and those preparing for studies in Japan.

The Tadoku Salon provided a cozy, stress-free space for participants to immerse themselves in Japanese books while creating meaningful connections with others who share the same interest. As opportunities to practice Japanese outside a classroom setting could be very limited in Malaysia, we hope this event will help in enriching the participants' language learning journey in a fun and supportive way.

The positive energy and warm feedback from the participants encourage us to continue making the Tadoku Salon a welcoming space for learning and interaction. Stay tuned for updates on our next Tadoku Salon by following us on Facebook and Instagram. We look forward to seeing you at the next session in February 2025!

\*Tadoku (meaning "extensive reading" in Japanese) is a reading activity whereby one chooses a book from the vast selection of graded reading materials to discover the joy of reading in Japanese. "Tadoku Salon" is a regular JFKL event for the Japanese language learners. The Tadoku collection is available at our library for your everyday reading as well. Feel free to drop by our library whenever you have free time. For more information about our library: <https://www.jfkl.org.my/library/>



The participants



The atmosphere



The "Stamp Rally" winners

## The Japanese Skit Contest 2024

Reported by Fatim Azzahra Hamsa (JFKL)

The Japanese Skit Contest 2024 was aired via live streaming on the Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur (JFKL) Facebook page and Youtube channel on 23 November 2024. The theme for this year is "ひみつ" or "Secret", where we received 10 entries in which 5 were selected for the final round.

One of the finalists was from the newly opened University of Tsukuba Malaysia who ended up coming in second place in the contest. Team ナンバーワン from Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris won the first prize for the second consecutive year with their skit "犯人は?/The Culprit Is?"

Thank you to everyone who made this contest a success, especially the judges, co-organisers, sponsors, and all participants. Congratulations to the winners and we hope to see you again next year!



RANK	SKIT TITLE	TEAM NAME	INSTITUTION
WINNER	犯人は? The Culprit Is?	ナンバーワン	UNIVERSITI PENDIDIKAN SULTAN IDRIS (UPSI)
2	トウマの秘密 Touma's Secret	Imagine the Future	UNIVERSITY OF TSUKUBA MALAYSIA (UTMy)
3	パーフェクトのプレゼント The Perfect Present	ハッピーガールズ	UNIVERSITI KEBANGAAN MALAYSIA (UKM)
4	秘密の餅 The Mochi's Secret	The Mochi Squad	UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA TERENGGANU (UMT)
	ひみつにしておいてくれる、ね? Keep It A Secret, Okay?	Kizuna Club	UNIVERSITI ISLAM ANTARABANGSA (UIA)

Contest webpage: <https://bit.ly/JFKLskit>

Youtube channel: @TheJapanFoundationKL

# JAPANESE-LANGUAGE PROGRAM FOR COUNTERPART JAPANESE LEARNERS (HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS) 2024 AT KANSAI CENTRE

Reported by Nur Diyana binti Abd Rahman (JFKL)

Programme: 令和6(2024)年度 カウンターパート学習者訪日研修(高校生)

Date : 15 – 30 October 2024

Organiser : The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai

Arrived in Osaka on 15 October 2024, the top 3 winners of the 21st Japanese Speech Contest for Secondary Schools in Malaysia 2024 were invited to participate in a newly launched programme at the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai (Kansai Centre). Along with another 23 high school students from Taiwan, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam and Laos, the programme was crafted with the aims to strengthen their competencies which include their knowledge, skills, attitude, and values necessary for the future, as well as to deepen their interest in Japanese language, culture, and society.

With “well-being” as the main theme of this 2-week programme, Thang Xin Ying from Sri Sempurna International School, Nik Mifdzal bin Nik Nubhan from Sekolah Sultan Alam Shah and Nurafifah Najwa binti Muhamad Solahuddin from SMK Putrajaya Presint 11(1), had the opportunity to delve into the following activities:

- Tajiri-town & Rinku-town orienteering
- Study trip to Hiroshima & Kyoto
- School visit & exchange programme with Izumi High School students
- Homestay experience
- Cultural activities (aiki-jujutsu & flower arrangement)

The participants were also encouraged to think about the well-being of their own country, in comparison to what they have seen and experienced in Japan, and how they can create a better world from now onwards, through the sharing sessions and discussions with people of Japan and amongst the 7 countries that participated in this programme.

All 3 Malaysian participants also had the opportunity to represent all participants in delivering a closing speech at the end of the exchange programme with Izumi High School Students on 27 October and during the closing ceremony of this programme in the evening of 29 October.



All 26 participants from 7 countries



Short trip to Miyajima



Presentation by Malaysian team on well-being



Visit to Izumi High School



Thang Xin Ying sharing her stories with students of Izumi High School



One of the presentations on what they perceived as "happiness"



Closing remarks by Nik Mifdzal & Nurafifah Najwa at the end of exchange programme



Experiencing Japanese-style resort during Hiroshima & Kyoto trip



# 10th Batch NIHONGO Partners Programme 2024: Final Report

Reported by NP Team

The 10th Batch NIHONGO Partners have departed to Japan on 7 November after 8 months serving as teaching assistants to the local Japanese language teachers in Malaysia. NIHONGO Partners (NP) Programme, one of the core programmes under WA Project 2.0, dispatches selected Japanese citizens called NIHONGO Partners or NP to secondary schools in Asia since 2015. The recent 10th Batch consisted of 9 NP who had been dispatched to secondary schools from 28 March 2024, in 7 states in Malaysia (Kedah, Penang, Kelantan, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Negeri Sembilan, and Johor). While assisting the Japanese language teachers as their counterparts, these NP were also tasked to spread the charm of Japanese language and culture to school communities and their local area.



CP-NP activities presentation session



NP in KLIA before departing to Japan



Courtesy visit to MOE (6 November)

## Year-End Report Session (4-7 November)

After several years of having their final session separately via online, the CP participated in the session in Kuala Lumpur together with their Japanese counterparts. From 4 November until the day they left Malaysia, all NP with their CP were involved in year-end report session with the Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur (JFKL) and paid courtesy visits to Ministry of Education (MOE) Malaysia and the Embassy of Japan in Malaysia (EoJ) on 6 and 7 November respectively.



Courtesy visit to EoJ (5 November)



NP and CP sharing session



Special performance by NP

During the courtesy visit to the Deputy Director General of School Operation Sector of MOE, Tuan Zainal Abas, the NP representative, Ms. KONO Suzu, gave her speech on the privilege of experiencing Malaysian culture, history, customs, and a place they could call home. She concluded that Malaysia and its people are full of admirable qualities and cultures, including positivity, caring, and ability to adapt to unexpected situation – qualities she cannot wait to share with many Japanese people. Meanwhile, on behalf of the CP, Ms. Lee Li Meng expressed her appreciation on NP's efforts on making Japanese language interesting and their influence to students' improvement and keen interest in learning Japanese. Tuan Zainal was glad to hear positive impacts from NP and CP and extended his wish for the NP to bring back the Malaysian values and culture to Japan to be introduced to their community. He also informed of his hope for the upcoming NP Programme in the year 2025 to continually support the Japanese education in Malaysia.

## NP's Contributions to the Host Schools

Some of the feedback received from the CP on the contributions of NP include the students' overall progress. The CP acknowledged that upon the presence of NP in their schools, the students became more motivated to study Japanese and use it enthusiastically, which could be seen from their everyday greetings and initiative to talk with NP. NP also conducted supplementary activities and created teaching materials to aid students who needed additional support. Due to this, the CP observed that their students' understanding towards the language has increased and kana recognition has also improved.

NP also conducted various cultural activities inside and outside of their host schools. As these NP come from different backgrounds, they were able to introduce the culture of their hometown, in which the CP learned for the first time.

The 4-day report session served as a good opportunity for the NP to reflect on their activities before returning home as well as to exchange the positive outcomes of their activities and learnings of other members. For CP, they managed to consider the continuation of their activities upon the NP's return to Japan. The report session this time was also covered by a local media outlet, Free Malaysia Today or FMT that expressed interest in this programme.

During an appreciation ceremony for the CP before the NP took off, the NP deliver a special performance of Hotaru no Hikari (Auld Lang Syne) accompanied by sanshin, an Okinawan instrument, as a farewell gift to their CP.

Sincerest gratitude to the principals and CP at the host schools and all those who have been involved in 10th Batch NP Programme 2024. Thank you very much for your support.

# HQ Staff Training

Reported by OKADA Yoshiaki

Hello everyone!

I am OKADA Yoshiaki and I usually work at the JF HQ office in Tokyo. Luckily, I had a chance to work at JFKL office as a job trainee for 3 weeks from October to November.

It was my first time visiting Malaysia and since I wasn't confident in my language skills except for Japanese, I was a little bit nervous before arriving in Malaysia.

However, from the very first day, Malaysia showed me a lot of amazing and inspiring things, and my concerns disappeared completely.

Through the job training, I could experience how JFKL promotes projects in Malaysia. Also, the forefront of international cultural and intellectual exchange and Japanese-language education. These experiences at the JFKL are valuable assets for my career.

I enjoyed life in Malaysia as well. I visited as many places as possible on my days off. In just 3 weeks, I may have only seen positive aspects of Malaysia, yet I was still impressed by its cultural diversity.

Especially, I love eating tasty food, so I can't help remembering the delicious and various food of Malaysia. I love Asam Laksa, Satay, Banana Leaf Curry, Char Kway Teow, Teh Tarik and so on. I felt this unique and diverse food culture is one of the greatest gifts of the multicultural society.

Now, I am a big fan of Malaysia after this job training and I hope I can contribute to the friendship between Malaysia and Japan through my job in the future from now on.

I am looking forward to enjoying the rich food culture of Malaysia again someday.

Thank you for your kindness and care during my stay in Malaysia. Hope to see you very soon!!

Terima kasih!!



Myself with JF Logo



Asam Laksa



Banana Leaf Rice

## EVENT LISTING

NOV 1 - FEB 1	<b>JFF THEATER</b> Watch 8 films for FREE online and join our Quiz to win goodies! Head to <a href="https://www.jfkl.org.my/art-and-culture/film/japanese-film-festival/">https://www.jfkl.org.my/art-and-culture/film/japanese-film-festival/</a> to learn more.
JAN 4	<b>JFKL LIBRARY OTOSHIDAMA 2025</b> Jan 4 onwards (Until stock last)   Venue: JFKL Library
JAN 11- FEB 23	<b>“TOKYO Before / After” Exhibition</b> Stay tuned on our SNS and JFKL website for more updates and special programs!   Venue: GMBB
JAN 25	<b>The 13th JFKL Workshop for Japanese Language Teachers</b> Time: 9:30AM-12:30PM   Venue: JFKL Library   Title: Teaching with “Irodori”: Get ready to start tomorrow!
FEB 9	<b>JFKL Talk Series</b> Venue: JFKL Library   Time: 3:30PM
FEB 15	<b>The Weekend Japanese Film Show</b> Title: Mentai-piriri   Venue: GSC Mid Valley

Event listings will be updated from time to time. Stay tuned for updates on our website and official channels.

### JFKL Holiday Notice:

#### JFKL Office Holiday

1 – 3 January – New Year's Holiday  
29 – 30 January – Chinese New Year  
11 February – Thaipusam

#### JFKL Library Holiday

1 – 3 January – New Year's Holiday  
29 – 30 January – Chinese New Year  
1 February – Federal Territory Day  
11 February – Thaipusam



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JFKL membership is available upon application. Membership fee is RM10 per year.

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