

Interview with a JET participant

Q. What made you apply for the JET Program?

After studying Japanese for over 10 years, I wanted a chance to live in Japan and use the language on a daily basis for improvement. Aside from that, I had experience with various assistant teaching/coaching roles and was interested to see how a career in education would fit me, without having to commit to a full teaching certification process and position.



Q. What do you actually do every day as a JET at your schools?

I teach at a neighboring junior high school and elementary school. My day-to-day consists of 4-6 classes (depending on the day, out of 5 periods). In class, I usually help with pronunciation by reading different passages or vocab, assisting individual students or giving feedback throughout the course of the lecture (usually with American or Alaskan cultural insights, or just interesting facts if possible). Outside of class, I am occasionally asked to make various games (the students love Kahoot), grade papers, or sometimes, make special presentations or lecture materials (like for holidays). Daily, I usually have at least an hour or so of time that I have no tasks, and that time is up to the individual to decide how they want to be productive. Generally, I will make sure that my JET's don't need anything, then use the time for personal improvement. Lately, I have been studying for my grad school exams.

Q. In your opinion, what is the most appealing part of JET?

In my opinion, I think the most appealing part of JET is the balance between steadiness and being contemporary in nature. The contract is for a year and can be renewed for up to five, which is a large commitment, but not a full-time career or lifestyle commitment. The program and local offices are generally helpful in assisting with living needs, adjustments, and overall moving, so the process runs smoothly. The program offers a unique opportunity to experience a position as an educator in a low-stakes environment that everybody is mutually aware of the short-term nature of. This offers many benefits in being able to just be a fun teacher, and to not worry or have stress regarding your life in Japan. You can decide if you like it enough to stay, you have ample free time to seek other future opportunities, and the day-to-day isn't particularly difficult. Overall, it provides a perfect contemporary window into living life in Japan and performing the role

of an educator or government worker without needing to fully commit to the role for the long-term. Leaving the role is, so long as you do your job with effort, mutually positive, and can offer a strong recommendation in a position that you otherwise would have had to spend much longer in to get the same recommendation, if at all.

