

My Nihongo Space: Japanese Sanctuary

Tina Dawson, Japanese Teacher, North Albany Senior High School, Albany, Western Australia

In our second article of the 'My Nihongo Space' series, Tina Dawson sensei introduces her Japanese sanctuary. Her space is colourful, attractive, welcoming, and guarantees space for students' peaceful learning time.

Welcome to my classroom. Although our school's Japanese language program is quite small, I now have a classroom to myself that opens out into the school's Japanese garden. I have tried to make my classroom attractive and welcoming for students and a place where they want to be. I wanted it to reflect the Japanese culture with as much authentic material as possible, as well as be supporting learning environment. The result is a colourful explosion that is reflective of the seasons alongside word/grammar walls that support the current topics being covered in the class.



The torii gate leads students to the Japanese Sanctuary. [Click for a tour!](#)

The displays are changed throughout the year to reflect seasons, festivals and learning taking place. This promotes a great deal of “Japan” talk from students in both my Japanese and English classes. I have found that relevant learning material gives students some autonomy over their work, freeing me to help other students as required. The “tatami corner” is a calming place where students can work or read many of the Japanese children’s books that are in the area. Some of my special needs students enjoy working in the peacefulness of the area. The photo wall adds to discussions regarding our Japan tours and shows students that Japan is about more than big cities and technology. Students demonstrated increased respect for the space, keeping it cleaner than when it is not decorated and taking care of the material when engaging with it. Some students enjoy the space during their breaks. For me, my class is my Japanese sanctuary and a wonderful place to go to work.

Tip! The Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) has a range of beautiful posters promoting tourism to Japan. Please contact JNTO visitjapanau@jnto.go.jp.

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Call for contributions!

How do you use your 'Nihongo Space'? Please briefly share your story and a photo to language@sydney.jpf.go.jp.