

## ***2008 Regional Opinion Exchange***

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### ***i. Description & purpose of 2008 Regional Opinion Exchange report.***

This report is a breakdown of Regional Opinion Exchange meetings held in November and December, 2008 in the cities of Takasaki, Maebashi, Shibukawa, and Ota. These meetings were designed to gather opinions from resident participants of the JET Programme in Gunma Prefecture. Various topics were discussed, focusing primarily on effectively integrating participants into their respective workplaces, as well as addressing the more general issue of how a foreign national can make their life in Gunma a positive and productive one.

Moreover, a questionnaire was distributed to Programme participants of which provided a quantitative approach to identifying the current situation for Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) in Gunma. As well, this questionnaire proved to be a valuable resource for gathering information on methods for which foreigners could better interact with their communities themselves.

It should be noted however, that this document is not designed to be a guide for standardization in the workplace (especially in the case of ALTs), but more of a reference for one to consult when they find their situation to be less than favorable. This is aimed at filling the information gap between those who have been able to happily integrate into their workplace and/or community and those who are struggling to do so. It is asked that readers consider any remarks or suggestions in this document with an open mind, and understand that strategies that may work for one person do not necessarily work for another without modification or further discussion with related parties. As well, the ideas expressed in this document are based on the opinions of JET Programme participants in Gunma collected through the Regional Opinion Exchanges and naturally incur a certain amount of bias. Furthermore, the questionnaire likely suffers from data skewing as only a 47.5% response rate was achieved. Nevertheless it should provide valuable insight for interested parties.

***1. Breakdown of the questionnaire (selected open-ended questions).***

***1.1. If you discuss your lessons with your JTE(s) (Japanese Teacher of English), please describe how you do so.***

This question was asked in order to identify the primary method(s) and timeframe of lesson planning between ALTs and their JTEs. The questionnaire indicated that a staggering number of people do, in fact, discuss lessons beforehand in some capacity, at least periodically (see graph A-5). Preparations roughly 3 to 5 days before the scheduled class make up a majority, almost one quarter, of the responses.

Many ALTs stated that they generally sit down with their JTEs and draw up a plan or outline for the week's classes which then the ALT will develop materials and aids for the content throughout the remainder of the week. Following this, some respondents would have the JTE check over the materials a day, or often times fifteen minutes, before the class. According to respondents, other notable lesson discussion times happen during open periods when both the ALT and the JTE have no classes at the same time. Furthermore, discussions every day after school (presumably after 6<sup>th</sup> period, before club obligations arise) were common where both the JTE and the ALT compare one another's ideas for the following classes. Interestingly, there were also a few respondents who incorporated lesson planning time into their daily timetables. For those who have developed relatively long-standing relationships with their counterparts, lesson discussions taking place only a few minutes before class were fairly common.

In a large number of cases, respondents claimed that they take the initiative to approach the JTE to begin discussions. During the discussion, the overall format of the class is decided upon, with some respondents creating templates outlining timing, activities, materials required, and roles to be assigned. Other respondents discuss the overall focus of the lesson, including topics to be covered, which page(s) of the textbook to be used, and even the end target for that day's lesson. It was also noted that depending on the depth of the lesson, the discussion length would vary accordingly, e.g. some review lessons needing only a quick brush over by both parties to ensure consistency. Some respondents found it beneficial to prepare a log book of each class from which they can keep track of textbook/page, students, etc.

It was also mentioned that it is important to ensure the material is suitable for the students' level, yet challenging. To do this, both parties should have an open mind and earnestly consider one another's opinions when deciding upon supplementary worksheets, etc. for the lesson.

**1.2. Please describe how you are treated at your school(s), e.g. same as regular teachers, etc.**

Naturally, there are concerns with respect and treatment inherent in the position of “assistant”; combining this with communication barriers, both direct and indirect resulting from cultural and linguistic differences, the chance ALTs may be inadvertently treated with less respect than those around them is fairly high. As a result, this question was designed to highlight issues that could potentially cause ALTs and possibly foreigners in general, to feel less empowered in their workplaces.

Contrary to the aforementioned common belief, an overwhelming proportion, some 80% of respondents, answered that they feel politely treated, if not well-respected by fellow staff in their schools. This being said, although generally respected as a member of the team, many ALTs still claim that they are frequently left out of the loop when it comes to information exchange. This includes being properly informed of school events, meetings (English or otherwise), class scheduling/amendments, and social events such as *enkai*, school trips, etc. In cases where ALTs are required to attend meetings, especially English committee meetings, care should be taken to ensure that they too know what topics have been covered and the resulting decisions; when a decision directly involves the ALT, it is paramount that they understand what is going on. If information is not properly conveyed to the ALT, the potential for miscommunication increases and all parties may be negatively affected by resulting actions or lack thereof.

Furthermore, although the ALT position is *generally thought of* as ranking among the more junior levels, it is important that expectations from other staff, such as the JTE, be high enough to challenge the ALT in their everyday work life; this includes expectations both inside and outside of the classroom. A common remark given by respondents was that they are lacking any responsibilities outside of the classroom (or in some cases anything non-English related). Something as simple as assigning an ALT to oversee an area during cleaning time similar to that of other teachers, can really empower the ALT and help them gain status in the eyes of the students. It is also important for the ALT to understand that responsibilities over and above teaching are common in Japan, and compliance can lead to being treated on more equal terms. More importantly, as all ALTs are proper adults, it is essential that JTEs not be ‘afraid’ or ‘feel bad’ about assigning ALTs work; being native speakers of English, ALT’s opinions regarding lesson difficulty/content should be also considered – both are inherent responsibilities of the Assistant Language Teacher job.

Moreover, the results of the questionnaire reveal that it is understandable, especially in

the case of elderly staff members who are not comfortable conversing in a language other than Japanese, that communication with ALTs can be strained at best, and vice versa. However, avoidance and apprehension, as experienced by a number of ALTs, is not an appropriate means of dealing with such communication issues. In fact, something as simple as a morning greeting in either language can make the workplace more comfortable for both sides.

***1.3. Please provide at least one example of how you believe an ALT should be utilized in the classroom.***

Every teacher has their own way of teaching in the classroom. Some teachers can naturally adapt to having an ALT by their side, others find it rather difficult. According to respondents, only being asked to repeat the textbook's content to the students, more commonly termed as being a "human tape recorder" is not a very efficient use of an ALT's skill set. This question was asked to gain insight into other means of putting said skill set to good use in the classroom.

Addressing the human tape recorder issue is a difficult task as it is inherent in expressing natural pronunciation to the students. Properly demonstrating this natural pronunciation is a requirement of ALTs given by a fair majority of respondents, illustrating that there will be times when repeating the textbook's content cannot be avoided. However, this in itself does not make English fun, interesting, or rewarding for the students. Giving life to the textbook material, and providing a window to foreign culture in the classroom have been continually cited as important roles that the ALT can perform to increase interest in the classroom. For example, giving life to the textbook could be accomplished by the ALT and the JTE performing a brief dialogue together before introducing the targeted grammar point. Since an ALT's greatest asset is regarded as their natural language ability, they should be consulted when creating a dialogue appropriate for the student's level. Furthermore, giving the students an opportunity in each class to speak with the ALT (whether it be simple question & answer, or discussion on a popular topic) can help the students gain confidence in their own language ability and increase the ALT's reputation among them. Equally important is opening a window to non-Japanese culture by giving the ALT an opportunity to tell the students about their own culture. This can be done through simple continuous dialogue where the JTE asks the ALT questions about his/her culture throughout the lesson; allowing the ALT to add their cultural insight and color to the material being discussed; using pictures & gestures to illustrate foreign concepts; or even creating more interactive lessons which give the children a chance to experience foreign culture first-hand.

Other interesting ideas for broadening ALTs' responsibilities in the classroom presented by respondents are:

- ALT & JTE working together to brainstorm ideas for activities that make the textbook material more interesting.
- ALT being responsible for creating an activity involving the grammar point being discussed.
- Comic relief to help the kids focus their attention on the teachers instead of themselves or their friends.
- Explaining games/activities in English prior to the Japanese explanation, helping the students grow accustomed to the ebb and flow of natural English on a daily basis.
- Examining life-based situations on top of textbook based situations, where natural English is also demonstrated to students.
- Offering examples of common usage, and challenging the students to recognize incorrect usage in and around Japan.

The bottom line is simply that when given the opportunity to inject more variety into the class, an ALT's skill set can be many times more powerful than anything a textbook or tape recorder could ever provide. As a result, all parties involved are likely to find English a more enjoyable experience as more exposure to the students will generate respect for the ALT, the ALT will be more empowered (as discussed in section 1.2), and the JTE will find themselves with an invaluable assistant.

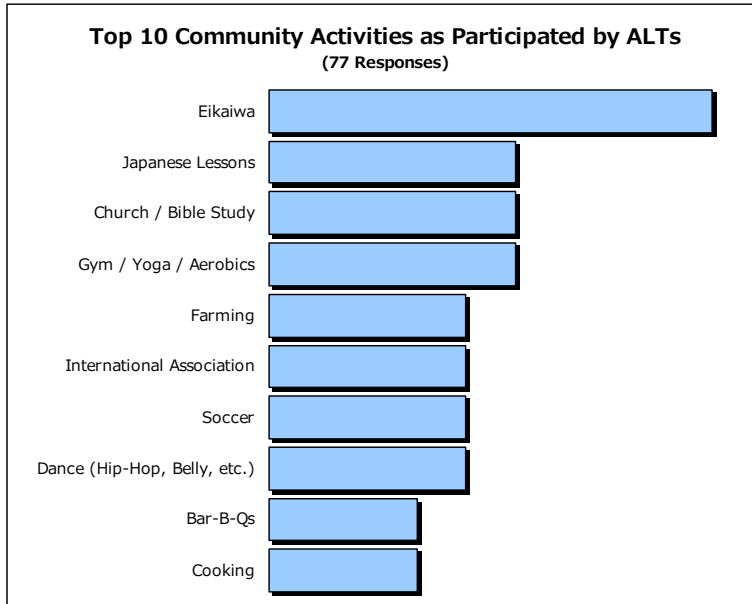
***1.4. [Edited for Relevance] ... If you do participate [in clubs, sports, events, planning, etc., with Japanese people inside or outside of your local community] please describe in detail. If you do not, please describe why not.***

As a foreigner in Japan, it can be difficult to find ways to get to know your community or what the people around you are doing for hobbies in their spare time. Naturally, when living in a foreign culture, contributing positively to the local community through hobbies, sports, and other recreational activities can, among other things, help you find new friends, ease culture shock and/or depression, and importantly in Japan's case, give Japanese citizens exposure to foreign members of their community. Highlighting local activities that ALTs in Gunma participate in, this question was designed to give ALTs and other foreigners who are struggling to find ways to interact with their communities a sense of what others like themselves are doing as participating members of their communities.

The information gathered in response to this question has been broken down into two

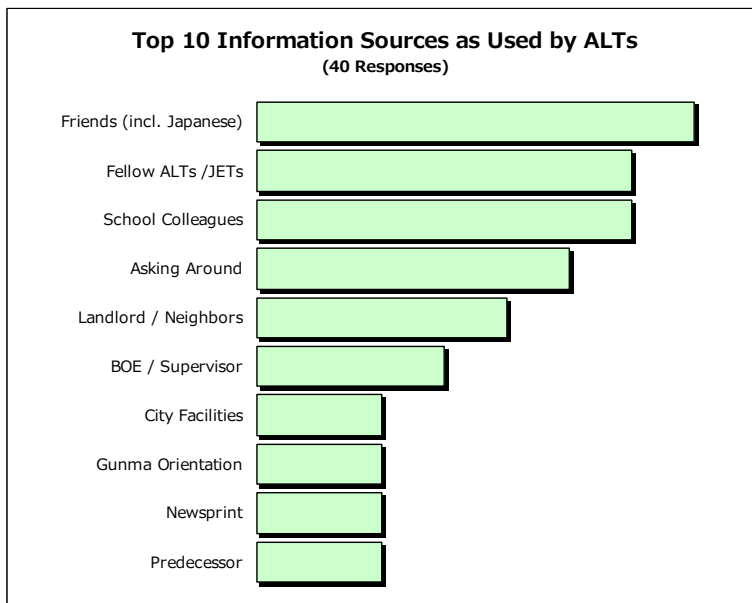
parts: *community activities* and *information sources*. Community activities outlines the types of non school-related activities that ALTs in Gunma participate in, while information sources illustrates the medium used to discover said activities.

In graph 1.4a, it is easy to see that *eikaiwa* is the prevalent non school-related activity among ALTs in Gunma. This is natural as there is demand for it from Japanese students, and is sometimes stipulated in the ALT’s contract. However, other activities such as



Graph 1.4a – Illustrating the ten most common extra-curricular activities that ALTs in Gunma partake in outside regular school hours.

bible study, farming, dance, and bar-b-qs are also popular activities available in Gunma that might otherwise be overlooked by many interested people. Graph 1.4a is by no means an exhaustive list of activities available for foreigners in Gunma; it is important to realize that some of your interests are likely someone in your community’s interests too.



Graph 1.4b – Illustrating the ten most common sources used by ALTs to gather information about local events and activities taking place outside of school.

The importance of one’s local network is clearly evident in graph 1.4b, as friends, fellow ALTs/JETs, and school colleagues round out the top three sources for finding out about activities in the community. It shows that close proximity interpersonal relationships have a profound effect on the success or failure to

find pertinent information about the community. Moreover, simply asking around which could be anything from querying a local train station or convenience store employee, the person sitting next to you on the train, or a family playing in the park, can help you find

ways to better integrate into your community. As well, your landlord or neighbors can be a convenient source of information for local events, health centers, farmers' markets, and even provide explanations for daily living in Japan (e.g. proper trash disposal, etc).

## ***2. Internationalizing Japan from a foreigner's perspective: aggregated notes from opinion exchanges in Maebashi, Takasaki, Shibukawa, and Ota.***

### ***2.1. Community Integration***

One of the most difficult tasks for ALTs, and foreign people in general, in Japan is successfully integrating into and positively contributing to their local communities. Throughout the meetings, issues directly related to community integration were discussed, which centered around identifying activities that local organizations are doing to facilitate foreign residents' living comforts, low cost ways of getting foreigners involved in the community, and to what extent international associations are involved in the process.

Establishing a positive connection with local organizations is important, and specifically in the case of ALTs, their respective Boards of Education (BOE) can help with basic information distribution. The importance of using supervisors and Boards of Education as communication mediums was mentioned in all locations. In Shibukawa for instance, the BOE takes an active role in organizing events where ALTs participate, promoting school and non-school related activities like festivals, and even recruiting ALT participation on behalf of other organizations. In a number of high schools, the supervisor offers information for Japanese lessons available in the community, and how to get in touch with local social networks.

Non-school-related institutions and facilities include the local *bunka-kaikan* (cultural center) or *komin-kan* (community center), of which many offer local and foreign cooking classes among other things; you can even rent rooms (generally free of charge) there to start your own cooking classes. Discovering your local gym or sports club is a great way to stay in shape and meet new people. There are larger gyms in Takasaki, Maebashi, Kiryu, Isesaki, and Ota which also offer aerobics classes (such as Pilates, Yoga, Zumba, Latin Dance, Les Mills, etc.) with membership. Albeit more expensive than most Western countries, gyms and sports clubs in Japan have top-notch facilities, with a bright and welcoming atmosphere for foreign residents. An added benefit is that many gyms and sports clubs can offer information on local grass-league sports teams; some of which even have their own teams to join. Moreover, getting in touch with the local exchange association can also provide contact names, phone numbers, and general

information on clubs, sports teams, other foreign resident organizations, and more.

International Associations (including International Divisions) are available in most municipalities and are generally useful for at least basic needs such as maps and information about key buildings and places of interest in English. Some also provide copies of bus, train, trash disposal, and other schedules in multiple languages. Larger International Associations such as those in Takasaki and Maebashi have several smaller events each month, and a number of larger events each year. These events can include anything from bar-b-qs, tours, and cooking events, to themed parties, festivals, and competitions. Seeking out involvement an International Association can be an effective way to stay in the information loop.

However, in many smaller communities in Gunma, such as those in the mountains, or in villages scattered throughout the prefecture, a common concern is that the resident International Association isn't large enough to be a good source of information by itself. In this case it is encouraged to seek out International Associations in neighboring communities or even encourage the local International Association to form a network with surrounding municipalities.

Aside from established institutions, it's important to get involved in your community using interpersonal relationships. Opening community members up can be as simple as saying "hi" to someone at the supermarket, or politely querying someone about local facilities, etc, and encouraging them to show you around. Especially in smaller communities, walking or jogging around in your neighborhood can get you noticed by the locals. As well, if you have a talent, it can be beneficial to speak to someone about finding a place to show it off.

Getting involved in the community is important for a healthy and positive life in Japan, and will no doubt lead to increased friendship with the locals. Knowing your limits and expressing them too is important, as ideally other community members will respect you and set their expectations accordingly, avoiding misunderstandings and other accidents.

## ***2.2. Your Role as Ambassador***

In a country where less than 1.9% of the registered population is comprised of foreign residents, it goes without saying that each individual person plays a representative role of their home country and is subject to preconceived notions of what the "typical foreigner" is to Japanese people. In fairly rural Gunma, where there are just over 47,000

registered foreign residents<sup>‡</sup>, this fact is exaggerated to the point where each foreign individual becomes an ambassador to the outside world for Gunma's citizens. As an ambassador, ALTs and other foreigners alike have a responsibility to educate Gunma's people about their own cultures, while at the same time respecting customs, traditions, and laws of the prefecture. To help understand these responsibilities, during the opinion exchanges the *Japanese perception* of a foreigner was discussed, along with expectations that ALTs themselves have in internationalizing Japan. Moreover, the effectiveness of "grass roots internationalization", the favored principle of the JET Programme, was also examined.

During the meetings, identified as the most popular preconceived notion that Japanese people may have is that foreigners, particularly those of Caucasian decent, are American and speak English. In fact, it could be further expanded to foreigners in general simply being "big, white people" to those Japanese who have not had much exposure to the foreign community. In contrast with Japan's rather passive society, Japanese people may consider foreigners to be extroverted and loud. An interesting illustration depicting this view is represented in a comic strip titled *Charisma Man*<sup>§</sup> originally created by Larry Rodney and Glen Schroeder. In contrast to this observation, many ALTs of Asian decent commented that they are automatically assumed to be Japanese, even when expressly mentioned otherwise. This becomes problematic as the same Japanese norms are asserted upon these people and become the basis for misunderstandings and unfounded persecution. Another perception that many participants pointed out was that perhaps Japanese people believe foreigners are unable to handle responsibility in the workplace. This was also similarly mentioned in Section 1.2 and can result in too little workload. Having insufficient responsibility can easily lead to boredom and lethargy; when underlining circumstances are not considered, the latter can also be viewed in error as laziness.

These perceptions, whether true or not, are arguably unrepresentative of foreign people in Japan. As a member of the small proportion of Japan's foreign population, it is important to have your own expectations as a virtual ambassador that help alter preconceived notions to more realistic views. Specifically, communication with different people on a regular basis is important to give positive exposure to as many people as possible. Openly expressing favoritism towards one person can negatively affect others around you and affirm feelings of selfishness in foreigners. Engaging in exchange relationships can help educate people to finer details of your own culture in exchange for education in Japanese culture; finding commonalities between Japan and

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<sup>‡</sup> As of 2008, Gunma's population of 2,012,816 is comprised of 47,196 registered foreign residents.

<sup>§</sup> See Wikipedia Article: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charisma\\_Man](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charisma_Man)

your own country is something that can have a large impact on forming relationships with Japanese people.

On the other hand, impressions can also be easily swayed in the wrong direction so it is important to understand that negative contributions have more weight on people's minds than positive ones. It is fairly common knowledge that a single poor contribution can leave as strong an impression as ten positive contributions so it is imperative that care is taken to minimize situations that will yield a poor image of yourself (and other foreigners).

For ALTs in particular, contributions in the workplace will form perceptions for the next generation of Japanese citizens. This "grass-roots internationalization" is a cornerstone of the ALT occupation. Being accessible to all students in the school is important and communication is encouraged. Many Japanese children do not realize how much globalization affects their culture and country. For example, many children are not aware that McDonalds or 7 Eleven originated in the USA, or that most of the clothes they wear are made overseas. Grass-roots communication corrects this misinformation at a young age and helps open children's eyes to the foreign community. Making even a single student want to experience life overseas can have a profound impact on those around them, their communities, and the future of Japan.

In summary, positive contributions to your community and continued communication with those around you, including children will help eliminate false preconceptions, and give Japanese people a chance to know the *real* you.

### **2.3. *Insight into Japan***

Although the surrounding environment plays a considerable role in how effectively one can settle into life in Japan, inevitably it comes down to the individual person to determine how "Japanese" they become and how they go about doing so. As the Regional Opinion Exchange involved ALTs anywhere in their 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> years on the Programme, it also functioned as an effective medium for individual participants to give concrete insight to other foreign residents in the prefecture. This section highlights those principles from which ALTs believe a positive existence in Japan can form, specifically in terms of learning the Japanese language, to what degree should one assimilate, and coping with societal norms.

As taxing as it is, learning Japanese is a crucial keystone of life in Japan. The importance of learning Japanese was mentioned numerous times during the exchange

including how using it as a tool to unlock Japanese culture can be very effective. As a foreign national, a barrier or “shield” to Japan is automatically erected from which you can only interact with aspects of the culture on a limited level. Depending on the amount of Japanese you are able to speak, that shield can be dissolved almost completely through communication alone. In a geographically isolated society, it is natural to be surprised and impressed by a foreigner who can speak the language. As is the case with Japanese, of which no other country in the world speaks as a primary language, it is especially surprising to see it spoken by a non-Japanese citizen. This can result in many seemingly empty compliments for merely saying “hello”, however these are also opportunities to open doors for communication, friendship, and even education. Shrugging off these communication opportunities is one of many choices; however it is important to also remember that your efforts in developing relationships will affect you and others’ perceptions of you.

Nevertheless, learning Japanese is but one way of breaking down the barriers of life in Japan. Understanding differences in lifestyle, rules of communication, and social hierarchy can also contribute to assimilating into Japan. Japanese people in general live very different lives than their Western counterparts; for example, working overtime and on weekends is typical, using paid leave in place of sick days is common, and keeping quiet to avoid conflict with trivial matters is normal. Also knowing the difference between how things are said in your own language is important as well. Judging responses from voice tone, gestures, and other indirect forms of communication will help avoid unwarranted conflict. Japanese people are very indirect when voicing their opinions, trying hard to circumvent extremes like “no”. Instead you may find that expressions such as “maybe” [多分] or “I’ll look into it” [考えておく] actually mean “no” in the end.

Moreover, Japan like many East Asian countries is known for its relatively rigid social hierarchy originating from Confucianism. In the workplace, for example, every person is aware of their standing in the hierarchy and does not openly question anyone else’s position, especially that of a senior’s. Knowing where you and others fit into the hierarchy can be a basis for understanding your environment and mitigating related misunderstandings. The importance of the social hierarchy in Japan cannot be understated; however one should also not forget who they are and where they come from. Going along with societal norms will generally ease the transition into Japanese life, but it may also be beneficial to limit yourself in certain situations to what you are comfortable with.

Finally, it is needless to say that being a foreigner in Japan yields a responsibility to

ensure that your actions do not negatively affect the foreign population as a whole. Specifically, knowing the rules and bending/breaking them *because you are a foreigner*, or “*gaijin-smashing*”, is not a proper way to act. No matter how small of an incident is created, such actions will negatively affect other foreigners through Japanese perceptions of you. Being irresponsible in your everyday life will not only leave a poor impression on yourself, but indirectly on the entire foreign population. It is important to remember how amplified the ripple effect is in Japan before making poor decisions.

### **3. Conclusions**

Aggregating the questionnaire data and information gathered from the meetings held throughout the prefecture, it appears that the situation for JET ALTs in Gunma is fairly good with a large number of participants engaging in regular lesson planning and communication with their JTE(s). For the most part, ALTs are treated fairly and with respect. However, it is evident that communication is far from 100 percent with increased cooperation required to overcome the language barrier from ALTs and JTEs, as well as other teachers. Furthermore, ALT responsibilities should extend beyond the classroom and include projects or objectives that will help further motivate and empower them, including proper consideration of ideas for English education in their respective school(s).

In the classroom there are numerous ways other than rote repetition of the textbook to make good use of the ALT, such as free dialogue, comic relief, or activity/worksheet creation. Diversifying the in-class responsibilities of the ALT can help create a fun and effective medium for learning English.

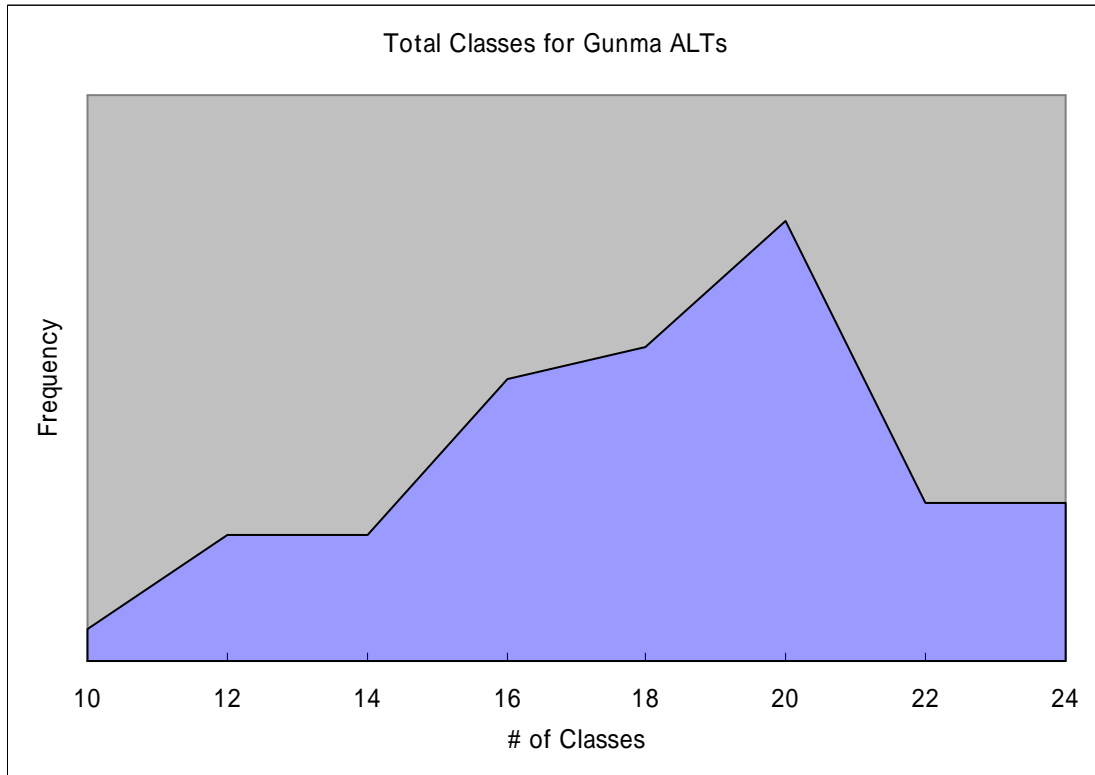
In the community, there are a vast number of social activities that people can engage in to make friends, learn Japanese, and deter boredom. Getting involved with the local (or neighboring) International Association can, at the very least, provide resource materials for everyday life, with some organizing large-scale international events. Being sure to check out city facilities such as local gyms, city hall, community centers, etc. helps form contacts with clubs, sports, and other groups around town. As well, forming a social network is important for information gathering and can be helpful in times of need.

Remembering that the perception of you is fragile and affected by your actions within the social hierarchy is critical for effectively integrating into Japan. Being responsible, having an open mind, and not avoiding opportunities for communication can lead to a positive community experience for both you and Japanese people around you. More

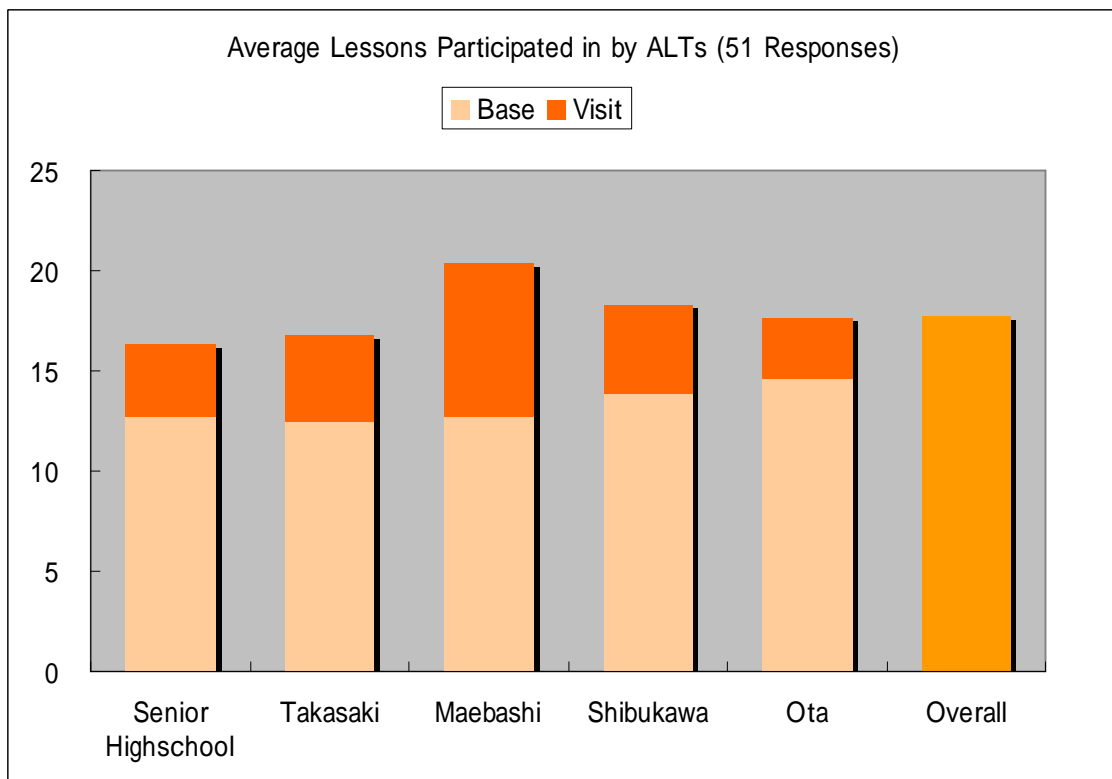
importantly, learning Japanese can open cultural doors and break down barriers that would otherwise be too hard or impossible to do without. However difficult Japanese may seem, it is only natural that the more time you spend in Japan, the more you will be expected to be able to speak it with some level of fluency. Forgoing the language aspect of Japan's culture can lead only to a surface understanding at best.

Finally, no matter how much you intend to assimilate into Japanese culture, you still have a responsibility to educate Japanese people and help them become more open and welcoming of foreigners. With its aging population, it is no secret how important foreign relations will become for the future of Japan. Making a difference in your community can have a lasting effect for generations of Japanese people to come.

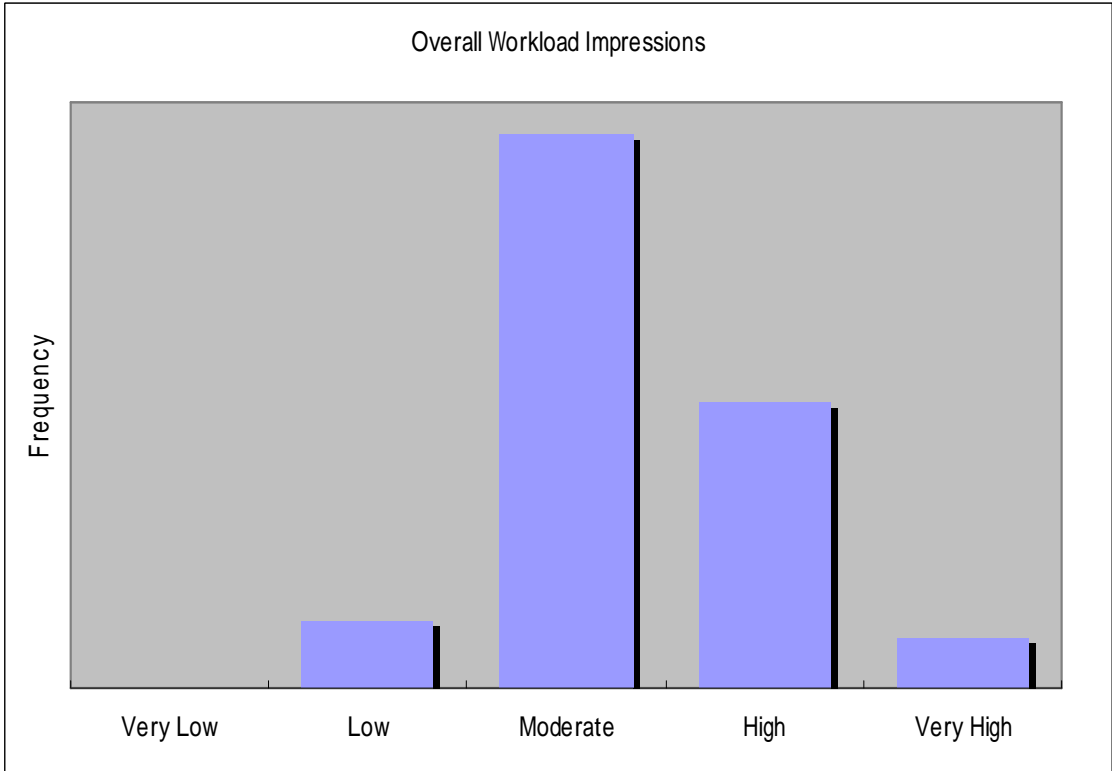
**Appendix A. Supplementary graphs from analyses of the questionnaire for General Work Information and Teacher Relationships.\***



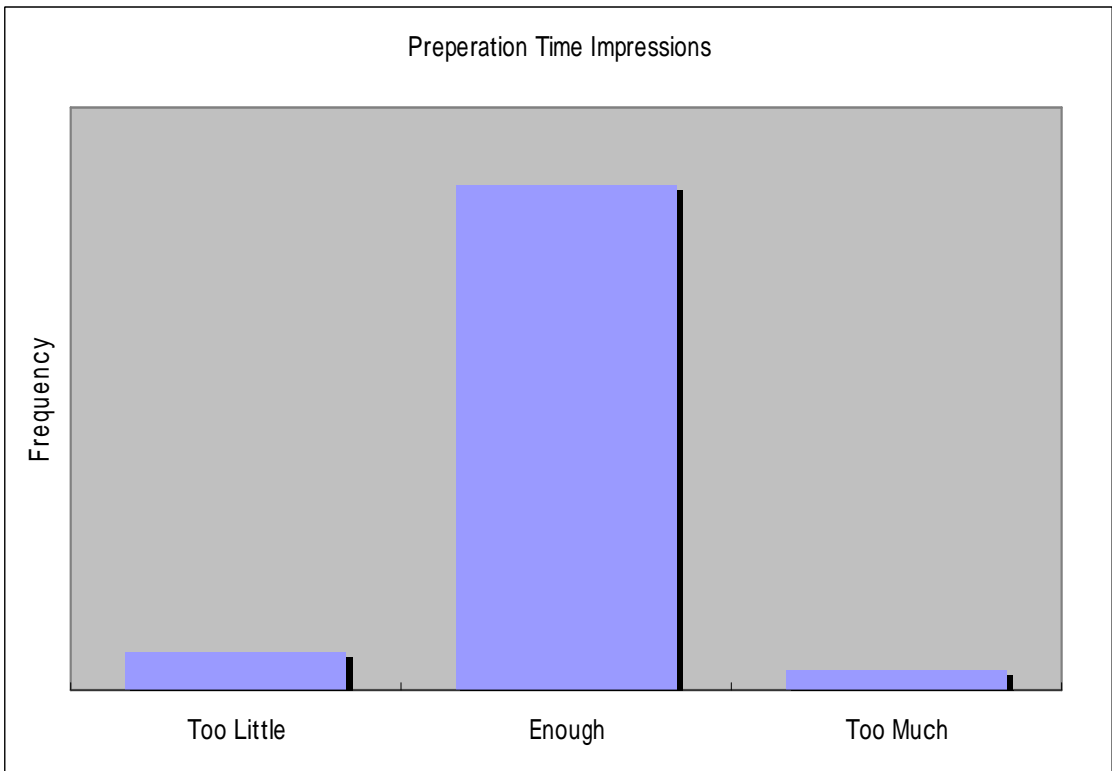
Graph A-1. Visually illustrating the number of classes for ALTs. Frequency is taken as a relative measure of each answer and therefore no frequency scale has been implemented.



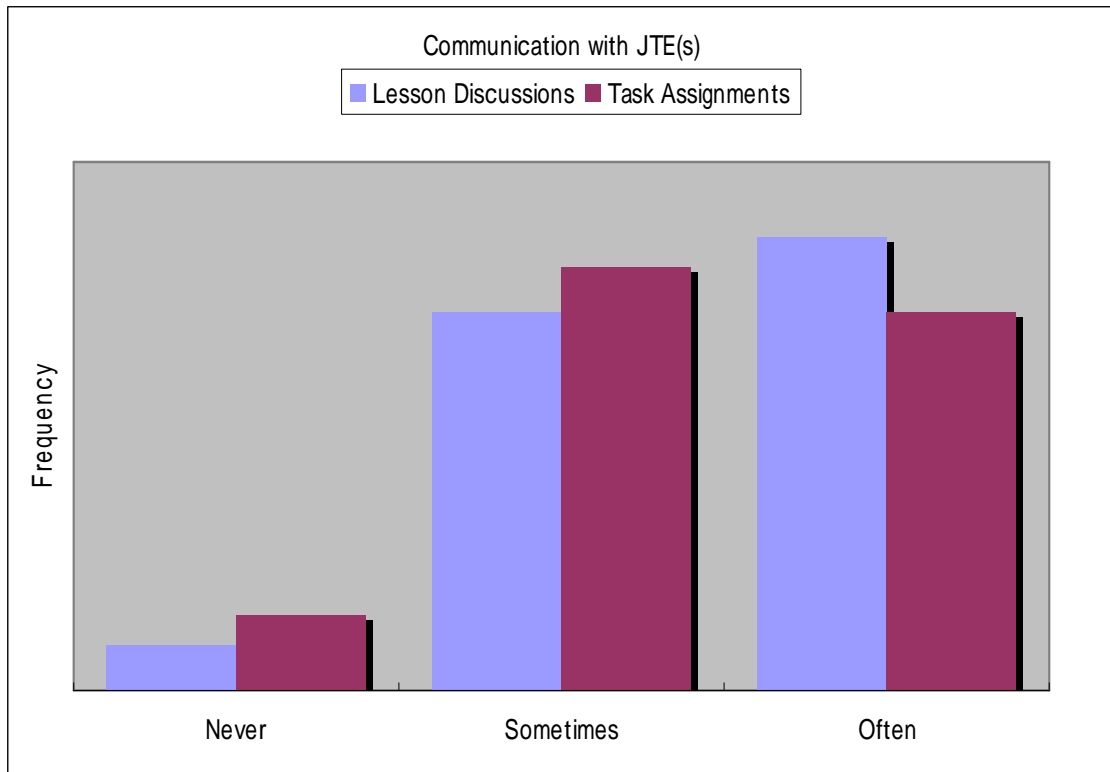
Graph A-2. Illustrating the average number of lessons that ALTs participate in at base and visit schools. **Note: Regions are represented by corresponding ROE meeting location.**



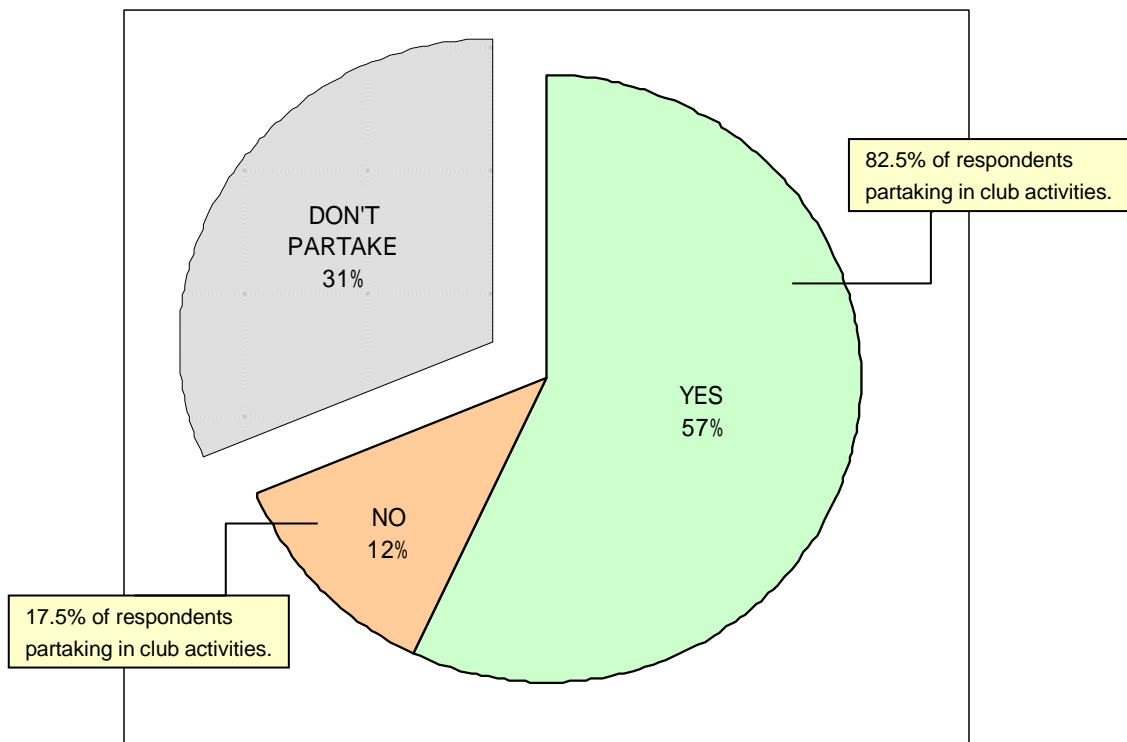
Graph A-3. Visually illustrating the overall workload that ALTs feel they have. Frequency is taken as a relative measure of each answer and therefore no frequency scale has been implemented.



Graph A-4. Visually illustrating the lesson preparation time that ALTs feel they have. Frequency is taken as a relative measure of each answer and therefore no frequency scale has been implemented.

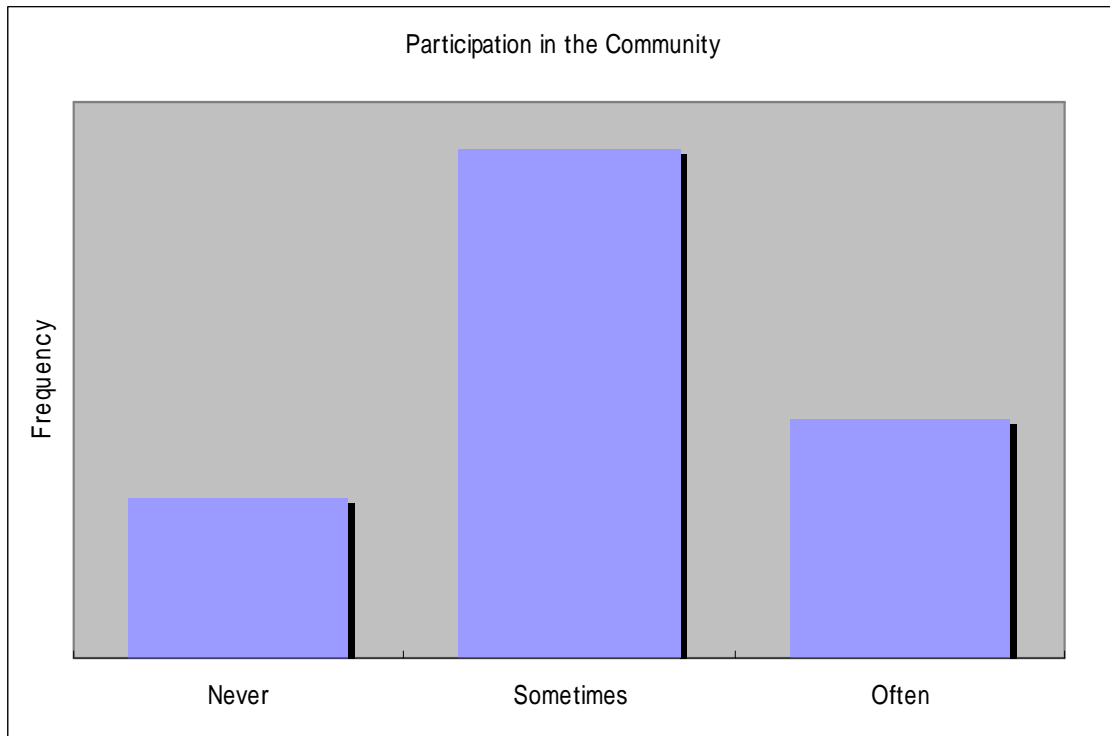


Graph A-5. Visually illustrating the amount of work-related communication with JTE(s) as experienced by ALTs. The blue bar represents any lesson discussions performed with JTE(s) at any time, purple bar represents tasks assigned by JTE(s) for the ALT to perform at any time. Frequency is taken as a relative measure of each answer and therefore no frequency scale has been implemented.

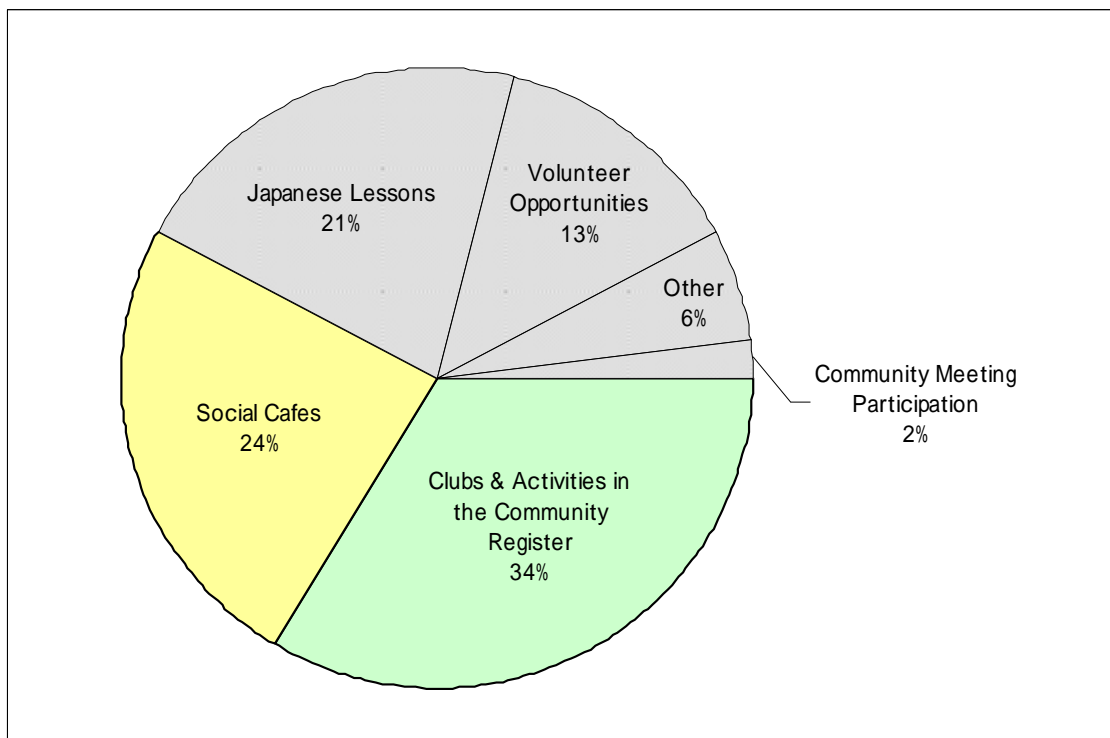


Graph A-6. Illustrating the percentage of ALTs who engage (in any capacity) in school club activities with students. For those who do partake in club activities (orange and green slices), it was also asked whether the students are more responsive in-class to said ALT.

**Appendix B. Supplementary graphs from analyses of the questionnaire for Community Integration.\***



Graph B-1. Visually illustrating the number of ALTs who participate in their community through events, clubs, sports, etc. Frequency is taken as a relative measure of each answer and therefore no frequency scale has been implemented.



Graph B-2. Illustrating the most popularly received ideas that would help facilitate community integration as chosen by JET ALTs. Note: Respondents were asked to chose at most two ideas from the five available, else suggest their own.

**Appendix C. Questionnaire distributed to JET ALTs in Gunma Prefecture.**

QUESTIONNAIRE	Social Integration
Please complete the blanks in line below, and press 'print' on the last page.	
Last Name <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> First Name <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/>	
Contracting Organization <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
<small>*Municipal ALTs indicate city name, Prefectural (JET) ALTs indicate Prefecture.</small>	
General Work Information	
How many lessons do you participate in each week?	
Base School(s): <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> Visit School(s): <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> Total: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/>	
Taking into account class and preparation time, please rate your workload.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Very Low <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Very High	
Taking into account class and preparation time, please rate your free time.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Too Little <input type="checkbox"/> Enough <input type="checkbox"/> Too Much	
Teacher Relationship(s)	
How often do you discuss or prepare lessons with your JTE(s)?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Never <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Often	
How often do your JTE(s) assign you tasks or lesson preparations?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Never <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Often	
If you discuss your lessons with your JTE(s), please describe how you do so.	
Please provide at least <u>one</u> example of how you believe an ALT should be utilized in the classroom.	
Please describe how you feel you are treated at your school(s), e.g. same as a regular teachers, etc.	
How often do you participate in school club activities? <input type="checkbox"/> Never <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Often	
For those participating in school club activities, do you find students from these club activities more responsive to you in class? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
Do you participate in clubs, sports, events, planning, etc., with Japanese people inside or outside of your local community? <input type="checkbox"/> Never <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Often	
In the previous question, if you do participate please describe in detail what activity, how often, and how you found out about this activity. If you do not participate, please explain in detail why not.	
To better integrate into your community or Japan in general, please choose at most <u>two</u> important ideas that you believe would make socialization easier.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Locally sponsored Japanese lessons for foreigners <input type="checkbox"/> A "hub" or office in your community to register, with contact information. <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for volunteering in your community, such as _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for participation in community meetings, polls, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Social events where Japanese and non-Japanese can gather and exchange. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
In a prefecture sponsored multicultural festival, workshop, etc., what idea(s) would you like to see presented?	
Would you be willing to help present the above idea(s) at the event? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	

\*Note: Graph data likely suffers skewing as it is representative of only a 47.5% response rate.