Hot Topics Japan is a two-book series specifically developed for the intermediate to advanced English language learner. The series is intended to support a discussion-style classroom and contains some of the most current issues of interest to young Japanese people. Within each unit, students will be exposed to a variety of ideas and offered multiple opportunities for discussion. Reading and listening passages have been designed to both engage and inform the learner. The graded passages allow students to comfortably progress to more challenging ones as they move from book one to book two. Exercises in the Hot Topics Japan series provide the opportunity to further develop students' reading, listening, writing, and discussion skills. Hot Topics Japan is a culturally specific discussion book that aims to support intermediate to advanced English language learners. The series is intended to support a discussion-style classroom and contains some of the most current issues of interest to young Japanese people.
Unit 01  Personal Space

Vocabulary Preview
1. a  2. f  3. b  4. g  5. d

Vocabulary Practice
1. a  2. c  3. a  4. d  5. b

Listening

What are two reasons Samantha is upset?
Samantha is upset because Yoshi stands far away when they talk. He also does not look her in the eye(s).

How does Ai explain personal space in Japan?
People in Japan do not stand close together. Men and women also rarely touch in public.

What does Samantha think will help?
Samantha thinks that spending more time with Yoshi will make him more comfortable with her.

What does Ai suggest that Samantha do?
Ai suggests that Samantha ask him for coffee because he is not being rude.

Comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Space in Japan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definition:</strong> Personal space is the space between two people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who seems to have smaller personal space?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- People from Middle Eastern or Latin American countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- People from big cities like Tokyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- People on the subway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Two women or a dating couple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who seems to have larger personal space?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- People from small towns like Ojika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Two men or a man and a woman who are together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A person of high status</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unit 02 Japanese Restaurant Culture

Vocabulary Preview
1. f 2. g 3. e 4. b 5. c

Vocabulary Practice
1. octopus 2. pork 3. mayonnaise 4. starving 5. conveyor belt

Listening

Suggestion • Take a break and grab something to eat

Kind of Restaurant • Near the university • Convenient and cheap

Bad Choices • Teishoku → for old people and businessmen • Tonkatsu → fried

Problem • The woman doesn’t know what she’s in the mood for.

Decision • Go to an izakaya where there are many choices

Comprehension

Types of Restaurants

Curry restaurants: Usually have many different choices of what goes in the curry, such as beef, pork, and chicken.

Sushi restaurants: Inexpensive sushi can be served on a conveyor belt. More expensive restaurants have specialty items.

Teishoku: These are best for traditional Japanese cuisine. They are usually frequented by businessmen.

Okonomiyaki and takoyaki shops: Serve fried foods made with a type of batter.

Noodle shops: Can specialize in soba, udon, and ramen. Most people like them because they are cheap and quick.

Izakaya: This is a type of Japanese pub. They are very popular with students and workers.

Suggestion
• Take a break and grab something to eat

Kind of Restaurant
• Near the university • Convenient and cheap

Bad Choices
• Teishoku → for old people and businessmen • Tonkatsu → fried

Problem
• The woman doesn’t know what she’s in the mood for.

Decision
• Go to an izakaya where there are many choices
Unit 03 Collectivism

Vocabulary Preview
1. d 2. g 3. b 4. a 5. e

Vocabulary Practice
1. c 2. b 3. d 4. a 5. c

Listening

Saying: The nail that sticks up gets hammered down.

Meaning
• Something that is different than others needs to be changed.
• This change can hurt.
• When all things are the same, there is collective harmony.

Japanese Society
• Not all parts of Japan are the same.
• Differences may not be big like in countries such as China or the US.

Example
• Miwa Mori is different.
• She is a woman who designs buildings and is president of her company.
• “If a nail is sticking out enough, if you are different enough, nobody can hammer it down.”

Comprehension

Concepts at the Root of Collectivism

Wa
“group harmony”
Examples: working together on farms or in businesses

Amae
“dependence”
Examples: farmers depending on samurai to protect them or younger students depending on older ones

Enryo
“restraint”
Examples: people holding their tongues about their own opinions when those are different than the group’s or not sticking out in the interest of the group
Unit 04 Natural vs. Artificial Ingredients in Snacks

Vocabulary Preview
1. f 2. c 3. e 4. d 5. b

Vocabulary Practice
1. spoiling 2. processed 3. nutrients 4. obesity 5. chemicals

Listening

Old Japanese Diet
- In the past, Japanese people used to eat fresh fruit and vegetables, rice and a bit of meat.

Japanese Diet Today
- Fast food has become more popular.
- The biggest problem is with children.
- They eat unhealthy food that makes them fat.

Solution
- Dr. Smith tells people to eat more whole foods.
- We must teach our children to make the right choices about food.

Comprehension

Artificial Ingredients
- Artificial snacks are filled with chemicals.
- Chemicals in these snacks keep them from spoiling, change the color of the food, and improve the flavor.
- These snacks are also filled with chemicals and cheap ingredients.

Natural Ingredients
- Natural snacks are better for the whole body.
- Vitamins and nutrients help build a strong body.
- Three things that natural ingredients help with: learning process, concentration, and obesity.
Unit 05  Medical Masks Worn in Public

Vocabulary Preview
1. a  2. e  3. d  4. g  5. c

Vocabulary Practice
1. germs  2. population  3. outbreak  4. plague  5. paranoid

Listening

Details About the Bird Flu
• The Chinese government is trying to contain the disease.
• Coughing, high fever and stomach pains are some of the signs of bird flu.

Ways to Protect Yourself
• Wash your hands with soap and water often.
• Medical masks should be worn to protect against airborne germs.
• Don’t go to farms where chickens and other birds live.
• Older people and children should be extra careful.

Comprehension

Germs and Diseases
• Germs and diseases spread very easily in countries with large populations.
• Germs are spread every time a person coughs or sneezes.
• Children can get illnesses easier than adults.

Japan and Masks
• Japanese people love to keep their toilets, streets, and bodies clean.
• Being sick is very inconvenient, and masks help protect others from missing work.
• Masks keep germs away from healthy members of the school or office.

Outbreaks
• Asia has been at the center of some outbreaks.
• Many outbreaks come from China.
**Unit 06 Japanese Tea**

**Listening**

- **Hot Green Tea**
  - They can get it at home.
  - Tastes best when it is fresh.
  - The woman makes it with *sencha* or *matcha*.
  - Matcha powder is expensive.

- **Bottled Green Tea**
  - They can get it at the store.
  - Tastes best when it is fresh.
  - The man can make it with *matcha*.
  - The bottled tea is expensive.

**Comprehension**

- **Sencha**
  - Grown in full sun
  - Made by putting leaves in water
  - People don’t drink the leaves
  - Color: brownish-green to dark green

- **Matcha**
  - Grown in shade
  - Made by putting powder in water
  - People drink the powder
  - Color: bright green

- **Both**
  - From the same plant
  - High in Vitamin C and catechins
  - Natural source of fluoride

* The healthier of the two teas is *matcha*. 
Unit 07 Youth Subcultures in Japan

Vocabulary Preview
1. b  2. a  3. e  4. d  5. c

Vocabulary Practice
1. norm    2. accessories    3. teenager    4. slang    5. pose

Listening

Harajuku
What are two things that you can do in Harajuku?
1. See subcultures
2. Go shopping

Gyaru
• Gyaru girls like to wear Western fashions.
• They also like to buy expensive bags.

Cosplay
• Cosplayers dress up like characters from anime and manga.

Lolita
• The man thinks that the Lolitas look cute.

Otaku
• The otaku is taking pictures of the different people.

Comprehension

Subcultures in Japan
• Like to gather in Harajuku
• Are different from other Japanese people

Cosplay, Decora, and Lolita
• All like to wear special outfits

Cosplay
• Like to dress like characters from anime and manga

Decora
• Wear bright colors

Lolitas
• Wear lacy outfits

Otaku
• Love one subject
• Some examples are manga, idols, and video games

Gyaru
• Love Western fashions
• Have dark skin, colored hair, and lots of makeup
Unit 08  Juku Culture

Vocabulary Preview
1. g  2. d  3. a  4. e  5. b

Vocabulary Practice
1. b  2. d  3. b  4. c  5. a

Listening

What is Hiro doing?
He is studying.

Why can’t he be outside playing during his vacation?
He has begun attending a cram school.

Why does Satoshi believe Hiro needs to start early?
He wants Hiro to attend a good university.

When does Satoshi feel Hiro should have started attending juku?
He feels he should have started before elementary school.

How does Hiro feel about juku?
He likes his teacher because she is fun. He is also making new friends.

How long did Kate attend a cram school?
Kate attended for four weeks.

What was different about Kate’s experience?
She attended the course a year before graduating from high school, not while in elementary school.

What will happen if Hiro gets into a good university?
He will be able to find a good job.

Comprehension

Students attend juku so that they can get into the right university so that they can find a good job.

They became popular in the 1970s.

Schools are criticized for several reasons.
1. Children will miss out on their childhood.
2. Schools use rote memorization and drills.
3. Poor families cannot afford to attend them.

60% of high school students attend cram schools.
## Unit 09  Studying Abroad

### Vocabulary Preview
1. d  2. f  3. b  4. a  5. e

### Vocabulary Practice
1. d  2. b  3. b  4. a  5. c

### Listening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Where?   | Study abroad in **Vancouver, Canada**  
Program is with a sister school there |
| Who?     | Ten students from the school can go  
If more apply, the school will randomly select ten students to go |
| How much?| Total cost for each student is **¥400,000**  
Government awards of **¥100,000** are available for five students |
| When?    | Spring semester  
Leave Japan in mid January |

### Comprehension

#### Why Students Choose Not to Study Abroad

- **It costs too much.**
  - **Tuition** can be **four** times the cost in Japan.  
  - Government support is not **enough**.

- **It does not fit students’ schedules.**
  - The semesters **begin and end** in different months.  
  - Students who study abroad may be too **old to find jobs** when companies are hiring.

- **It makes students uncomfortable.**
  - Life at home is **easy and safe**.  
  - In Japan, students face fewer **challenges** other than **classes**.
Unit 10  Cell Phone Etiquette in Public Places

Vocabulary Preview
1. f  2. a  3. g  4. b  5. e

Vocabulary Practice
1. headphones  2. commute  3. text  4. privacy  5. etiquette

Listening

What does the woman normally do on the train?
- She usually studies.

How long is her commute?
- It’s 45 minutes.

Why is the woman upset?
- There was a rude guy talking loudly on his cell phone, so she could not study for her test.

What feature does she have on her cell phone?
- She can listen to music.

Why did she not use this feature on this commute?
- She forgot her headphones at home.

Comprehension

Cell phones:
- Called keitai denwa in Japanese
- Developed in 1979

Japan’s collective culture, in which the needs of the group come first

Phone Etiquette in Japan
- Passengers on trains should put phones on silent or manner mode.
- People should ask before taking photos to respect others’ privacy.
- Don’t talk on phones or text while driving, riding a bike, or walking to avoid accidents.
- Phones should be turned off around the elderly to avoid affecting medical devices.
Unit 11 Vending Machines

Vocabulary Preview
1. b 2. e 3. c 4. g 5. f

Vocabulary Practice
1. a 2. a 3. c 4. a 5. d

Listening

Report on New Vending Machines

Where?
- They are in the north of Japan.
- They are in a region hit by an earthquake.

Features?
- They keep drinks cold even with power off.
- They work during power loss.
- They show emergency information on screens.

How did they work?
- Power loss did not interrupt vending services.
- Screens were able to show information and latest news even when power was off.

Results?
- The company received a lot of good reports related to the new machines.

Comprehension

Vending Machines in Japan

Drink machines:
- More than 2,000,000 soft drink machines
- Close to 200,000 coffee machines
- Around 100,000 beer and sake machines

Other machines:
- More than 300,000 tobacco machines
- Around 75,000 food machines

More energy efficient machines:
- Shut off by themselves
- Use energy efficient parts like LED lighting

Other innovations:
- Use the Internet to track problems and products
- Show products, ads, and information on screens
Unit 12 Robotics Research

Vocabulary Preview
1. c 2. a 3. g 4. b 5. f

Vocabulary Practice
1. great leap 2. puppet 3. trunk 4. facial 5. humanoid

Listening

How long have robots been around?
Robots have been around for hundreds of years.

When were the first Japanese robots made? Why?
They were made in the 1600s for a puppet theater.

How are robots used the most?
They are used in factories.

What else can robots help with?
They can help in hospitals, assist the elderly, be pets for children, act as teachers, and clean homes.

When do people think robots will work with humans?
They think that robots will be working with humans by 2020.

Comprehension

1600s
• Puppet-like robots were made in Japan.

1920s
• The word “robot” was first used in Europe.

1970s
• The first humanoid robot was made.
• The Soft Gripper robot was developed based on an elephant’s trunk and snake movements.

1980s
• Robots that could walk on different terrains and take steps every 0.64 seconds were made.

1990s
• The first self-regulating two-legged humanoid robot was created.
• Sony’s Dream Robot could recognize faces and express itself emotionally and through body language.

2000s
• Robots were developed to work as personal assistants.
Unit 13  Manga

Vocabulary Preview
1. f  2. b  3. c  4. a  5. e

Vocabulary Practice
1. supernatural  2. comic  3. romance  4. teenage  5. category

Listening

Girl
- Has a book bag full of comics
- Limits herself to ten at one time
- Prefers shonen to shojo manga

Boy
- Has a sister that loves manga
- Does not get hooked like his sister
- Has a hard time putting down the series One Piece

Comprehension

Manga

Shonen
- Account for 40% of the market
- Fantasy titles top the list in popularity
- Examples are Naruto, Bleach, and One Piece

Shojo
- Read by 75% of teenage girls
- Tend to involve romance in their plots
- Examples are Skip Beat and Vampire Knight

Seinen and Josei
- Are more mature to suit the tastes of adults
- May include scenes of sex and violence
- Examples are Gantz and Loveless
Unit 14 Karaoke

Vocabulary Preview
1. b 2. d 3. a 4. c 5. e

Vocabulary Practice
1. pastime 2. sophisticated 3. chords 4. orchestra 5. catch on

Listening

What are John and Ryosuke going to do tonight?
They will sing karaoke.

Does John want to go? Why?
No. He cannot sing.

In Japan, how do most people sing karaoke?
They rent a private room.

What can people order?
They can order drinks and snacks.

How does John feel?
He is embarrassed.

What does Ryosuke suggest?
He suggests that they go get his guitar.

Does John agree?
Yes. He will play the guitar while Ryosuke sings.

Comprehension

Karaoke = “empty orchestra”

- First created in Kobe in the 1970s
- Karaoke became popular in the 1980s

- Japan: Most people rent private karaoke boxes/rooms with their friends
- America: Most people sing in bars in front of strangers

- Was used in hotels and bars
- Now possible to bring your own instruments and play along with chords shown on the screen
Unit 15 Japanese Gardens

**Vocabulary Preview**
1. d 2. c 3. e 4. a 5. g

**Vocabulary Practice**
1. texture 2. nobility 3. inspire 4. aesthetics 5. solitude

**Listening**

What do the gardens at Kenrokuen symbolize?
- They symbolize open space, age, water, large views, and solitude.

What were these gardens once a part of?
- They were the gardens of Kanazawa Castle.

What water elements are at the garden?
- There are bridges and water.

What kind of garden is Ryoanji?
- It is a famous rock garden.

What is important about the fifteen rocks in the garden?
- One cannot see all of the rocks at one time.

Where do people go to reflect on the garden?
- People go to the teahouse.

**Comprehension**

Emperors and the nobility first used gardens.

The idea of these gardens came from China.

They are known for their symbolism. Water represents the ocean, and rocks represent land.

Gardens at temples are meant for meditation and reflection.

They differ from Western gardens in vegetation and design.

People walk around traditional gardens but sit still to enjoy rock gardens.

Teahouses give people a chance to reflect on what they have seen.