

- Use the genkō-yōshi (原稿用紙) posted on my home page (.pdf file).
- Use a pencil!
- If you are doing a retelling, limit yourself to the grammar and vocabulary of the original.
- Punctuation:
  - ▶ Each punctuation mark (。、・「」『』…) gets a box (こま) of its own, with the exception of combined period plus quotation closer.
  - ▶ Dangling periods and commas are placed after the last box on a line, not at the top of the next line.
  - ▶ Watch the directionality of quotation marks, etc.
  - ▶ When you have a direct quotation of a sentence (as opposed to just a word or phrase), start on a new line, leave the first box (こま) empty
- Honorifics:
  - ▶ Use written-style Japanese (i.e., short forms except where necessary). ~ます/です style is more typical of company presidents writing condescending pep-talks and grandmothers telling bedtime stories.
- Stylistic consistency:
  - ▶ Don't alternate ~だ/~です unless you intend a meaningful distinction.
  - ▶ Don't switch gears suddenly between easy and difficult: especially, for example, don't use hiragana for びょうぎ when you use kanji for 懲戒 or 懷疑.
  - ▶ Don't switch suddenly between literary (~なくては) and colloquial (~なくちゃ) styles.
  - ▶ Subject consistency: minimize subject-switching; pay attention to transitive and intransitive particles; pay attention to directions of giving and receiving.
- Tense/aspect:
  - ▶ Whenever a narrator describes an event (fictional or otherwise), there are at least three “frames” of time at work: (a) the location in time of the narrator ('narration' time); (b) the location in time of the story that is being described by the narration ('story' time); and (c) from within the story time, whether or not a particular sub-event (such as the action of a verb) is completed or not.
    - Example: "This morning I was about to get up out of bed when the bell rang."
      - (a) The narration time is whenever the speaker speaks (example: evening of the same day).
      - (b) The story time is "that morning" (e.g., a few minutes before 8:00am, say).
      - (c1) the narrator was “about to” get up out of bed (action incomplete),
      - (c2) but the alarm has sounded (action completed)
  - Tense* expresses the time relation between the time frame of the narrator and the time frame of the story being told. "...I was about to ... when the bell rang." English is primarily a tense-based language.
  - Aspect* expresses whether or not the event being described was *finished* (= completed) or *yet to be finished* *within* the time frame of the event being described. Japanese narrators tend to start and finish their stories in terms of *tense* (i.e., showing the relation between narration time and story time), but often will deploy *aspect* once the overall frame has been established. Mid-sentence modifications almost invariably make use of *aspect*:
    - 日本に行く時… (when I am going to go to Japan)
    - vs 日本に行った時… (when I have gone to Japan)
    - 行く前に着替えた。(I changed clothes [= past tense] before going [= incomplete aspect].)
    - vs 行った後で着替えた。(I changed [= past tense] after going [= completed aspect].)
    - vs 行く前に着替えることにした。
  - ▶ The basic mode for fiction in Japanese is in the present/incomplete. Sometimes the entire story will be expressed in the past/complete (a Western 'influence'). Often, the story will begin in the past/complete (to establish the time frame of the story as being *separate* from that of the narration), then shift into the present/incomplete as the narrator repositions him/herself *into* the time frame of the story. "The other day I got on the bus. I sit down and say to the woman next to me..."
  - ▶ Don't switch tense/aspect unless you mean it. Readers notice.
- Logical flow: Does your story make sense “as a story” and will your reader “get it”?