

## Beginner level

### ● 'Tanoshiku Kikoo' Books I and 2 with teacher's book

by Bunka Gaikokugo Senmon Gakko. Publisher - Bonjinsha. 1992  
Books 1 and 2 - ¥1,800 each. Teacher's book - ¥3,500. Tapes (2 for each book) - ¥5,000 per set of 2.

「楽しく聞こう」文化外国語専門学校 凡人社

Please see Intermediate level for more details of these books. They are designed for beginner students of Japanese but unless the student is using the Bunka Daigaku's main beginner texts alongside these supplementary listening materials, he may find "Tanoshiku Kikoo" a bit beyond his level.

### ● Everyday listening in 50 days Vol 1

By Miyagi Sachie, Mitsui Akiko, Makino Keiko, Shibata Masako and Oota Yoshiko.  
Publisher: Bonjinsha ¥2000 2 x 90 min tapes - ¥3,500

「毎日の聞き取り50日」初級編 上  
宮城幸枝, 三井昭子, 牧野恵子, 柴田正子、太田淑子著 凡人社 1998

This is the first of a series consisting of 2 beginner level texts and 2 intermediate to advanced level texts. (Please refer to B4 for the listening level texts.) JLC at present only has the first of the 2 beginner level texts.

This is an excellent text for basic listening practice with review of basic sentence patterns. The exercises are varied and the text full of illustrations to aid and test comprehension. The tape is clear and natural with both male and female voices. Instructions in the text are in English, Korean and Chinese, making it easy for the student to concentrate on listening for meaning. A booklet accompanying the text has the complete tapescript and also answers. **This enables the student to study on his own.** There are 25 short units and the authors suggest that one should be done each day. At the back of the book is a list of the grammatical patterns used in each unit and also a list of vocabulary for each unit. It is suggested that the student reviews the vocabulary

before starting on the listening practice. Each unit concludes with a simple dictation exercise. **This is a very helpful text for anyone who has studied a basic general text.**

### ● Waku waku bunpo listening 99

By Kobayashi Noriko, Ford-Niwa Junko, Takahashi Junko, Fujimoto Izumi, Miyake Kazuko.

Published by Bonjinsha 1995      Worksheet ¥1,900      Teacher's text ¥2,600

Tapes: 2x 90 mins ¥4,500

「わくわく文法リスニング99」

小林規子、フォード丹羽順子、高橋純子、藤本泉、三宅和子。      凡人社

**As the title suggests this text is aimed at listening out for grammar patterns or items like particles, numbers etc at a very basic level.** There are 2 types of listening required:

listening for gist.

listening for details.

For someone studying on their own, this would be best used after completing a general beginner's text such as 'Minna no Nihongo although it was designed to be used together with Situational Japanese 1,2 & 3. For self study the teacher's book which contains the tapescript and answers to the worksheet will also be necessary. Instructions are given in English, Korean and Chinese. Furigana is below all kanji. There are 99 units hence the title 'Waku waku listening 99'. This text requires a basic reading and writing ability. It is considerably easier than for e.g., 'Tanoshiku Kikoo' or 'Mainichi no Kikitori' but useful for someone who is unsure of their listening skills and of grammar at the elementary level.

## Intermediate level

### ● Aural Comprehension in Japanese

by Osamu and Nobuko Mizutani.      Japan Times 1979

Book and 2 tape set      ¥6180

The authors designed this book as **a tool for students who have finished a course in basic Japanese** such as ‘Shin Nihongo no Kiso’ or ‘An introduction to Modern Japanese.’ It is ideal for revision of basic sentence patterns as well as for practice in listening comprehension and lends itself to self study as the tape script and answers are included with each section. The book is divided into 3 parts:

Part 1- trains the listener to distinguish between 2 different syllables (eg between 「ねっています、にています,ねっています」、 between types of intonation, or sentences with different patterns of accent. Practice is given both is repetition (of words and sentences) and in selecting the correct answer from a number of tape cues.

Part 2 - consists of 15 conversations between 2 or more people and 5 speeches by a single person. These are graded from easy to more difficult. The student is asked to listen and answer questions which are given in Japanese with an English translation. Where necessary a brief word list and/or notes on grammar follow the comprehension questions. The answers to the questions can be found in both English and Japanese on the next page together with the full script of the tape conversation in its 2 versions, formal and informal. An English version of the latter is also given. The 13 conversations which have these 2 separate versions mean that the learner is exposed to the different levels of language in a way that is easy to understand. This is one of the strong points of this book . The topics of the conversations are useful dealing with a variety of situations in which the student is likely to find himself. eg leave taking, asking for permission, complaint, refusal, shopping, giving directions on the phone, at a PTA meeting etc.

Part 3 - short section providing practice in listening to actual announcements, for eg. on a bus, train or in a department store.

This is a tool to be highly recommended for post beginners (particularly English speakers) needing practice in aural comprehension, in understanding different levels of language and in hearing and using common phrases in everyday communication in Japanese.

## ● 'Nyuusu de Manabu Nihongo'

by Hori Utako, Mitsui Toyoko, Morimatsu Eiko. Publisher - Bonjinsha. 1986

Text : ¥1,456 Tape (2) : ¥2,913

「ニュースで学ぶ日本語」 堀井歌子,三井豊子,松村映子。 凡人社

This is a **listening comprehension** text for intermediate students. It has 50 short units. Each unit has one page of varied listening comprehension exercises which the student completes after listening to a news item on tape as many times as is necessary. Each news item is repeated twice on the tape, once by a female voice and once by a male. The second page of each unit is a dictation exercise. The taped text is reproduced with blanks in it which the student fills in while listening. The full texts of the recordings, word lists (Kanji and Kana but no English equivalents) and answers to the exercises are given at the end of the book for the student to check his own answers.

Although this is not a recent book the topics are not on the whole dated and the vocabulary is useful for anyone wanting to discuss general topics with Japanese. In the past this text was one of the post JLC modules as it lends itself to self study. As such it produced a wide range of reactions. Some thought the vocabulary extremely useful, others that they never used such vocabulary. The latter got bogged down with the quantity of new words introduced. The main drawback is perhaps the length of the text. It can be tedious going through 50 units with the same layout and no variety. It is however, useful as a listening text (it is unusual in having the dictation exercises). Choices about whether to use this should be made on the basis of :

1. how much the student thinks he is likely to use the vocabulary
2. whether he can cope with the heavy vocabulary load
3. and whether practice in listening is a priority or simply learning the language of the news. If the latter there are easier options described in the resource sheet on 'Understanding the News'.
4. A student looking for vocabulary, grammar and expression practice would not choose this option.

## ● 'Tanoshiku Kikoo' Books I and 2 with teacher's book

by Bunka Gaikokugo Senmon Gakko. Publisher - Bonjinsha. 1992

Books 1 and 2 - ¥1,800 each. Teacher's book - ¥3,500. Tapes (2 for each book) -

¥5,000 per set of 2.

「楽しく聞こう」文化外国語専門学校」 凡人社

These texts are designed as supplementary texts to the Bunka Shokyu 1 and 2 main textbooks but can be used by anyone who wants listening practice at a basic level whatever beginner courses they have studied. They are also useful tools for revising basic grammar through listening.

**Attractive features of these texts :**

1. Although primarily designed for classroom use, they do also lend themselves to self study. An answer book is included with each text and students who wish to have the tapescript as well can find this in the teacher's book. Instructions on how to use the student's book are given in Chinese, English, Korean, Thai and Japanese.
2. The majority of the tasks involve using pictures which have an appeal in themselves. The tasks themselves are imaginative, varied and interesting even in the very first units . Book 2 includes activities like finding out what kind of job you are suited to and doing physical exercises in accord with the instructions on the tape.
3. Each book has 18 units - neither too short nor too long for study purposes.
4. One of the aims of 'Tanoshiku Kikoo' is to teach the student selective listening ie learning to pick out only the information he requires and ignoring the words he doesn't understand and doesn't need. The student is set a task before he listens so that his listening has purpose. This also means that although the set tasks in book 1 particularly may be in themselves very simple as appropriate for the beginning level, the context in which the tasks are set contain more sophisticated language. This means that these texts can provide useful practice even for those who have advanced to an intermediate level.
5. The speed of the taped material is as close to live authentic speed and content as is possible.
6. Each unit concentrates on the practice of one structure.
7. When used with a language helper or in class there are suggestions for discussion and other activities.

● Listening Tasks for Intermediate Students - Everyday  
Listening in 50 Days  
2 volumes

by Yoshiko Ota, Masako Shibata, Keiko Makino, Akiko Mitsui and Sachie Miyagi.

Publisher - Bonjinsha 1992

Both texts : ¥1,800 each. Tapes (2 for each volume) - Jo Y3,200, Ge ¥3,107

「毎日の聞き取り」上,下 中級日本語聴解練習  
太田淑子,柴田正子,牧に恵子,三井晶子,宮城幸枝。 凡人社

This text is designed as a bridge between intermediate and advanced level Japanese. There are a total of 50 units, 25 in each volume and it is suggested that 15 minutes be spent on each unit for a period of 50 days to get the most effective use out of the texts. They are produced by Tokai University Foreign students centre but the majority of topics have an appeal to anyone and cover a wide range of topics from which knowledge of Japanese society in general can be gained. Considerable use is made of pictures, diagrams and graphs. The title alone of some units made me curious to know their content - eg unit 21 'petto no hebi' ペットのへび、 unit 26 'ichiban taisetsu na mono' 一番大切なもの (content for a sermon here?!), and unit 44 - 'inu ningen to neko ningen' 'いぬ人間とねこ人間。 Other topics include things like body rythm, food, the Japanese and rice, ambulances, Tokyo Dome, advertising and traffic war.

These texts require a good level of listening comprehension and are quite demanding in the listening tasks they set. However, they will be well worth the effort a student puts in to working through them. They can be easily used in self study as the answers and tapescript are included with the texts though in separate booklets. Sometimes relatively long sections of language have to be listened to at a good speed.

There are 7 different kinds of listening task as follows.

- a. following the order and connection of events
- b. imagining the shape or size of objects from a description
- c. listening for numbers and what they refer to
- d. listening while looking at graphs or diagrams.
- e. listening for pronunciation and correctly writing that pronunciation.
- f. selective listening
- g. guessing when you can't hear or understand everything

Compared with 'Tanoshiku Kikoo' where little reading ability is assumed, 'Mainichi no Kikitori' requires a certain amount of reading to understand the tasks to be set. Many units have a little section in a box called 一口メモ、 giving little snippets of general information such as what to do if you pick up money in the street, the value of music in relieving stress or the boom in having pets. These sections are not on tape so can be used as reading practice as incidentally, can the tapescript in the answer book which accompanies each volume of 'Mainichi no Kikitori'. While a certain amount of reading ability is required many of the kanji have furigana on them. **A good option for the intermediate/ post intermediate student wishing to improve listening skills which looks as if it could be fun to use.**