

3. Remember that you don't need to reinvent the wheel.

Programs have spread across Canada through sharing of information and experience and adaptation of available curricula and materials. This is a helpful community. Moreover, some programs have been developed with financial and other assistance from the Pacific 2000 Program specifically to serve as prototypes for others to use. Programs developed in your province follow curricular requirements and can serve as your basic program. If there are no programs in your province, you may need to undertake some adaptation.

4. Locate the teaching resources you will need.

Japanese Language

Finding qualified teachers to teach Japanese language courses is not always easy. If you do not have anyone on staff and if the normal hiring process has not produced any candidates, you may have to be more inventive. The British Columbia Ministry of Education and Alberta Education can assist schools in these provinces.

Some schools have turned to local resources - Canadians from Japan who have the requisite language skills but who may not be certified teachers. In these cases, schools have received the necessary letter of permission from their provincial authorities and have followed up by ensuring training for their new teachers - sending them to workshops on Japanese-language teaching, sometimes in other provinces, and by helping them enrol in pre-service teaching programs.

If any teachers from your board or neighbouring boards have participated in the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET) and learned Japanese, see if they would be interested in teaching Japanese part of the time. If a local university

or college offers Japanese-language programs, check whether students are available for some part-time work and then follow up as above by sending them on pedagogical workshops.

Investigate recruiting a teacher or monitor from Japan. The Asia Pacific Foundation should be contacted for assistance in these cases.

For the longer term, determine whether teachers in your school or board would like to recycle themselves. The JET program offers an opportunity for younger staff to spend up to two years in Japan teaching in junior or senior high schools. During their time in Japan, your staff should make every effort to learn and practise Japanese. You could supplement this experience by supporting their participation in a program to up-grade their Japanese-language skills and in a program specifically targeted to Japanese-language pedagogy.

Japanese Culture

Introducing courses on Japanese culture is a little less wearing, but current staff may need upgrading as well. Study tours are available such as the one at Douglas College, B.C. Workshops and seminars in their subject area should be pursued.

5. Decide how to optimize your courses on Japan.

In some schools or boards, teachers have learned some Japanese - enough to add some realism in their teaching of Pacific Rim modules or programs and to spark student interest in the language.

Monitors and interns from Japan bring their culture into the classroom and help create interest in both culture and language. School twinning and exchanges are also useful.

