

WHO SHOULD READ THIS GUIDE?

Please read this GUIDE if you

- are interested in introducing programs in Japanese language and culture at the secondary school level*

OR

- wish to enhance existing programs in Japanese language and culture at the secondary school level.

WHY SHOULD CANADIANS STUDY JAPAN AND ITS LANGUAGE?

Canada's relationship with Japan has developed rapidly in recent years in a wide range of activities. The volume of trade between Canada and Japan has more than doubled since 1985 and diversified in its composition. Today Japan has become Canada's largest trading partner after the U.S. Japanese investment in Canada continues to grow, and Japan is now Canada's third largest foreign investor after the United States and the United Kingdom. In the number of overseas tourists visiting Canada, Japan is second only to the United Kingdom.

Cultural and educational relationships have also expanded rapidly since the signing of the Canada-Japan Cultural Agreement in 1976. Governments and agencies in both countries have vigorously implemented programs to improve mutual understanding and appreciation. If Canada is to take full advantage of the opportunities presented by this relationship, we must strive to increase our knowledge of Japan and its language.

HAS CANADIAN EDUCATION RESPONDED?

Until the mid-1980s, Japanese studies in Canadian education were concentrated at the post-secondary level, although Japanese as a heritage language was offered at the primary and secondary level in some provinces. However, since 1987 the number of students enrolled in Japanese-language credit courses at the secondary level has risen from fewer than 500 in two provinces to some 6,000 students in five provinces. The number of courses in other subject areas with a focus on Japan also increased over this time frame. Continued growth in both language and awareness programs is expected.

WHAT DOES THIS GUIDE DO?

This GUIDE aims:

- i) to alert you to some of the challenges which confront Canadian educators in the implementation of Japanese-language and culture programs; and
- ii) to direct you to the people, organizations and programs across Canada which can facilitate the process.

* The term "Secondary school level" includes CEGEP general education programs.