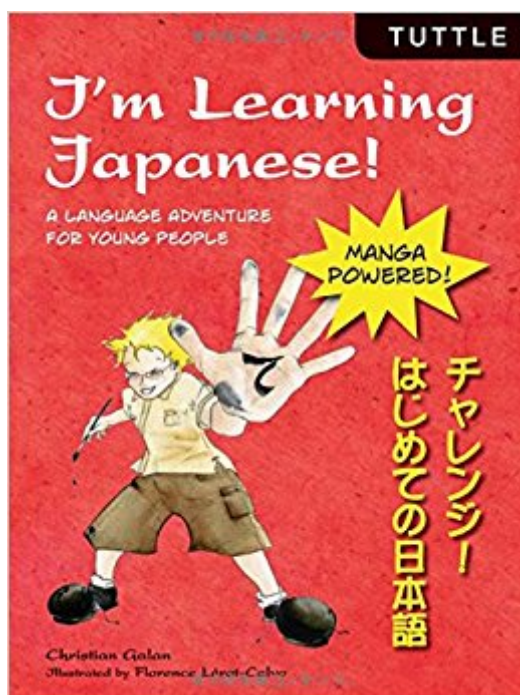


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# I'm Learning Japanese!: A Language Adventure For Young People



## Synopsis

This is a fun and entertaining beginner level children's Japanese language book (9 years old and up) that is also appropriate for adults. I'm Learning Japanese takes a light-hearted approach to the Japanese language by using fun anime-style manga characters to teach Japanese. However, it does not scrimp on content and covers everything from Japanese kanji, kana and grammar to Japanese culture and customs. The book starts out with the main characters, Emily, Nico and Teo sitting on the grass after school, minding their own business, when an unbelievable giant talking fox dressed in a kimono appears. Explaining that he knows magic, speaks 3,000 languages and is respected as a sensei (master), he wonders if the three kids are ready to learn Japanese from him. During the next 128 amusing pages the three friends learn to speak Japanese, read Japanese and write Japanese along with taking breaks to try Japanese hot-spring baths, sumo wrestling, Zen meditation and more. Focusing on exactly what the 9 to 13-year-old learner wants to know, this book is carefully set up to allow them to learn Japanese independently, at their own speed, without an adult's help. Every page of I'm Learning Japanese! is in full color and the illustrated comic book-approach, with its speech bubbles and funny side remarks, makes the learning seem to fly. It gives preteens a fun grounding in the language, and one that's accurate and practical. Nothing they learn here is "watered down" or will ever need to be unlearned, should they continue on with their Japanese language studies in school or later in life.

## Book Information

Spiral-bound: 128 pages

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Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars 14 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #206,180 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Foreign Language Learning > Japanese

Age Range: 9 - 14 years

Grade Level: 4 - 8

## Customer Reviews

Christian Galan is head of the Japanese department at the University of Toulouse. He is the author of more than a dozen books, textbooks and other language resources for Japanese learners, and has served as editor in chief of Daruma, the international journal of Japanese studies.

I have been trying to learn Japanese on my own for a few years off and on, have two children in high school Japanese, 2nd year, and an 11 year old. I, myself, have studied Korean and Spanish at a university level and was finding Japanese much more difficult due to the different alphabets and Kanji. My 15 year old daughter has just learned she will go to Japan as an exchange student and the Rotary club recommended our whole family get involved with learning Japanese. We had difficulties with even children's books presenting mixtures of romaji, hiragana, katakana, and Kanji. We wanted to just focus on hiragana to learn it well and were looking for a book to reinforce hiragana skills. We want to avoid romaji. This book is perfect. A sensei Fox teaches about Japan, using both English and Japanese using hiragana. It also teaches the most basic kanji. It is a very visual book with lots of pictures. My high schoolers may find it too easy right now, but I can see them picking it up in a few years for a quick review of Japanese as I have done with Korean over the years.

I am a private tutor working with two homeschooling high school students on second-year Japanese. When I first offered this class, I was approached by the mother of a sixth-grade girl who wanted to study Japanese, but I turned her down because I didn't know of any teaching materials appropriate for her age. I am sorry that this book had not come to my attention because it would have been excellent for us to use. The scope of the book is quite appropriate for a year's daily study for a "tween," introducing all the hiragana, 23 kanji, and about 200 vocabulary words. Although seven active verbs are briefly introduced, almost all of the sentences and exercises in the book are built with the three Japanese verbs that can be translated into linking verbs (is, are, am, etc.) in English. As other reviews have mentioned, there is absolutely no textbook feeling to this book and the many illustrations are both kid-friendly and appropriate. I would love to see a sequel that moves to the next steps at the same pace and in the same style.

I haven't gone through it with my son yet, but I read through the first part and it seems more confusing than I had hoped. It didn't seem to have clear phonetics so I can tell how the words are pronounced; however, I did not sit down with it and really study it. I'm still hopeful that it will be easy to use. I also like the fact that it focuses on writing. My son doesn't like to write much, but he does

love learning cursive and so I think he might like to write in Japanese. It might be useful if they added a CD that at least gave the alphabet and some numbers, etc., just to have an idea how things should be sounding. Overall, I'm pleased and I think it will be fun to use.

When I got this book for my son in the mail I was so excited to give it to him. I almost hated to wrap it for Christmas as I wanted to read through it myself. It may be more advanced for my son yet as he is not yet 8- but I am sure he will grow into it over time and the images- and writing style is still easy to understand. It presents small chunks of information at a time that make it easier to remember what is being taught. Some adults would find this book enjoyable as well. I would have liked it in college while or even before visiting Japan for a few months. The hiragana 'te' in on the boy's hand on the cover means, hand.

This book is geared to young readers and is a novel way to learn Japanese. It is a story which a fox is the teacher (sensei) and he teaches a group of kids. It doesn't get into pronunciation but is more learning letters. It should help to read some simple Japanese. Other good Japanese books are from Manga University.

I am truly honored to be able to write the first review of "I'm Learning Japanese". The book is just absolutely fantastic on so many levels. I first noticed the wonderful enclosed-spiral binding which is solid, durable and lays flat. The artwork is simply beautiful, with softly colored pen and ink/watercolor humanistic manga-style illustrations. A complete hiragana character chart on the front inside cover and 23 included kanji, as well as a basic Japanese language pronunciation guide serve as quick references when working on the exercises, and a glossary at the back includes all vocabulary words learned throughout the book. Katakana are not presented in this edition. The book is arranged as a story wherein three friends are greeted by a wise elder Fox and his faithful helper who masterfully manages to pique the curiosity of the initially skeptical kids. The attitude of the kids is very hip and tends toward slight sarcasm, but their observations are always spot-on, and the delivery is tasteful. My 9 year old son instantly identified with the characters and was hooked. The "masters" are loveable and endearing, providing wry commentary and tongue-in-cheek pomposity befitting their ancient sage status. Together they embark on a journey to speak, write, and read Japanese, as well as gain a better understanding of Japanese culture. Lessons begin by focusing on Japanese grammar, using an extremely user-friendly hybrid of English words with Japanese syntax and particles, (Japanenglish) to firmly cement word order and importance of subject marker, object

marker, location marker and question marker. From there, hiragana are introduced seamlessly as the reader/student is carried along the journey by way of the engaging storyline. Potentially confusing elements of the language are cleverly and humorously acknowledged and clarified by the student characters and masters respectively. This has one been one of the most remarkable achievements of the book in that the reader feels that the characters in the book are \*themselves\* striving to learn something rather different than they are used to. In this respect, I think that children (or any students using the book) will feel they have advocates who understand their frustration. We are relaxed homeschoolers, and after several only marginally successful attempts at foreign language learning, this book has been the proverbial "dream come true". It is fun, entertaining, well designed, clear, culturally relevant, visually beautiful and comprehensive. It is perfect for self-directed learning as it is not divided into lessons or units, but rather the student takes on "challenges" directly from the master. (Answers to these challenges are provided in the back of the book.) A family treasure-My most sincere thanks and appreciation to the team that put this amazing book together...Ganbatte!

Such a great book.

It's an eye-catchingly designed book with a lot of appeal due to the cartoon format. However, i don't find it helpful for my class who didn't know any Japanese. It just jumps in and attempts to teach you random phrases, expecting you to learn the hiragana at the same time as the romaji. I find it confusing.

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