

Organic Japanese Structure Course

Worksheet I: The First Three Lessons

Let's try making sentences using what we have learned so far.

At this early stage we will just practice basic skills one by one, but from Lesson 4 we will slowly start using our accumulated knowledge to build more and more complex sentences.

You can use romaji, hiragana, or full Japanese (hiragana, katakana and any kanji you know). Vocabulary is listed at the end.

Lesson I

Please answer these *without* using the zero pronoun (invisible carriage) as it isn't covered in Lesson I.

Sentences:

1. I am a cat
2. I dance
3. The cat walks
4. The bird sings
5. The cat is white
6. The bird is small

Vocabulary

Here I am using only fairly basic kanji – broadly those covered in Alice in Kanji Land. Feel free to use more kanji if you know them. I am giving animals, birds and plants in hiragana, but katakana is often used for them and you may do so if you prefer (not tori though – the actual names of particular animals, birds, and plants such as ウサギ or ネコ). Using katakana is probably slightly more “correct”-seeming but hiragana is considered softer and therefore cuter. I am also doing it to make it easier for those who only know hiragana. We should work in (at least) hiragana from an early stage for the sake of structural integrity. Taking longer with katakana isn’t a crucial issue.

I: わたし watashi

Cat: ねこ neko

Dance: おどる odoru

Walk: あるく aruku

Bird: とり tori

Sing: うたう utau

Is-white: 白い しろい shiroi

Is-small: 小さい ちいさい chiisai

Lesson 2

Please answer these using the zero pronoun and particle (the invisible carriage). Please answer three times: once as it is actually said, once showing the zero pronoun, and once showing what the zero pronoun represents.

Example:

Q: I am a cat

A: ねこだ (or: neko da)

=Øがねこだ (or: =Ø-ga neko da)

=わたしがねこだ (or: =watashi ga neko da)

Sentences:

1. I'm Alice
2. It's sunny
3. I drink tea
4. It's White Day
5. I sing a song

Vocabulary

Sunny: はれ hare

Tea: おちゃ ocha (the o is honorific but almost always used)

Drink: 飲む のむ nomu

Today: 今日 きょう kyou

Weather: 天気 てんき tenki

Song: うた uta

White Day: ホワイトデー ほわいとでー howaito dee (ee pronounced like the e in get only twice as long). *White Day is a Japanese holiday where men give gifts to women in return for the chocolate they received from them on Valentine Day.*

Lesson 3

Please use wa in all these sentences. If there is a word in [square brackets], that word should be the wa-marked topic of the sentence. This time, please give the answer in four forms: the three we did before plus the *literal* English meaning, using “as for”.

NOTE: wa can only mark something we already know about. So in cases where “a” or “the” is needed in English, we never render ○○は “as for a ○○”. It will always be “as for the ○○”.

Example:

Q: I am an [American]

A: わたしはアメリカ人だ (or: watashi wa Amerikajin da)
=わたしはがアメリカ人だ (or: =watashi wa Ø-ga Amerikajin da)
=わたしはわたしがアメリカ人だ (or: =watashi wa watashi ga Amerikajin da)
As for me, I am an American

Sentences:

1. [I] am Sakura
2. [Sakura] is very beautiful
3. [I] send a letter to Sakura
4. I send a [letter] to Sakura
5. I send a letter to [Sakura]
6. [Sakura] sends a letter to me

Vocabulary

Very: とても totemo (used just like English “very”, directly before what it modifies)

Beautiful: うつくしい utsukushii

Letter: てがみ tegami (literally hand-paper)

Send: おくる okuru