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Learning Japanese is an obligation. Learning as a beginner can feel almost impossible. There's so much on the tongue. Where to start? If you ask Japanese students, the answer you will almost unanimously get is Genki. Genki is a two-volume Japanese textbook published by the Japan Times in 1999. It was revised and updated into the second edition in 2011. It was written by Eri Banno, Yoko Sakane, Yutaka Ohno, Chicako Shinagawa, and Kyoko Tokasiki. Shortly after its release, the Genki textbook became a popular choice for Japanese university classes across North America. It's got quite a following and remains a popular choice even for those in the self-in-a-way community. Countless students and teachers swear by them. Or the outdated hype in Genki's textbook? To find out, let's dig out the second edition of Genki I and the accompanying work book. Who's Jenky for? Depending on your situation Genki may or may not be right for you. This chart will give you a quick idea of whether it will fit your needs. Genki for: Absolute Beginners Class of Students Is a Really Motivated Self-Trained Beginner who started learning Japanese but got frustrated People who want to take JLPT level 5 or 4 People who want effective learning People who are intimidated by learning the Genki language are not for: Tourists Are Unmotivated Self-Learning People who want to learn kanji Genki is designed for people who want to be fluent in Japanese. If you want useful words for your vacation in Japan, Genki will not teach the words you need in a fairly short learning time. It is designed for university classes. People who use Genka's textbook with the help of professors and classmates will get a large part from it. This means that self-study must be very motivated. Even so, many exercises are group work that is difficult to do alone. Self-learning will also need to find out how to somehow test your work. The Genki Textbook Content Conversation and Grammar Section Conversation and Grammar Section is a major part of the tutorial. That's the main reason you buy Genki. It consists of 12 chapters or lessons that teach grammar points and offer exercises to reinforce what you learn. Below is a breakdown of each Genki concept I've learned: Japanese Writing System Introduction Greetings 1: New Friends 2: Shopping これ それ あれ どれ こ/そ/あ/ど ここ そこ あそこ どこ だれ Noun じゃないです 〜ね/〜よ 3: Creating Date Verb Conjugation Of The Verb Types and Present Particles Time Help 〜ませんか Word Order Frequency Particle Theme は 4: First Xがあります な/います where things in the past are tense です past time verbs も時間 たくさん と 5: Trip to Okinawa Adjectives 好き (な) / きらい (な) 〜ましょう 〜ましょうか / Counting 6: Day жизни Роберта Те-формы - Please don't Описывая be good Описывая let's go from мероприятия to 7: Семейное изображение Mary has long hair Te-формы для присоединения предложения глагола стволовых I'm going to 8: Barbecue Short Forms Informal Speech 〜と思います/Verb 〜と言っていました 〜ないでください Noが好きです が 何か and 何も 9: Kabuki Past Tense and Short Forms of Skilled Nouns and Verbs and Adjectives まだ〜ていません 〜から 10: Winter Vacation Plans Comparison Between Two Points Comparison Between three or more items adjective/noun and adjective 〜つもりだ なる どこかに/どこにも で 11: After a vacation 〜たい 〜たり〜たります 〜ことがある noun A や noun B 12: Feeling Ill 〜んです 〜すぎる 〜ほうがいいです 〜で 〜なければいけません / 〜なきゃいけません 〜でしょう you may notice that the titles of the chapters do not indicate what you'll learn. Rather, they explain what is happening to Maria and her friends. This allows authors to teach grammar scores in the order they want, rather than shoehorning them into arbitrary categories. The categorization should fall on your teacher if you have one. If you don't, it's not a problem. Figuring out categories of grammatical concepts is less important than learning how to use them well. The reading and writing section section after the conversation and grammar reading and writing. There is an appropriate chapter of reading and writing for each conversation and grammar chapter. These are twelve chapters in each section, a total of twenty-four. Each chapter of reading and writing teaches 14-16 kanji and comes with a wealth of exercises that strengthen your writing skills. We'll talk more about this section later. Genky Style Genky's textbook is not there to entertain. It's a learning tool. The style keeps you engaged, but doesn't detract from its educational purpose. Lessons and exercises are all in English. Other Japanese textbooks are immersed with directions in Japanese. But at the initial stage it only interferes with the learning process. You have to learn Japanese in your native language to understand what you are teaching. Otherwise you will misunderstand the instructions and practice poorly. Genki's writing is wonderfully brief. Written information is the information necessary to begin to understand the grammatical point. No wordy explanation to suppress or lull you to sleep. But it's not so vague, you can't understand the essence at all. Keep in mind, Genki is a basic Japanese textbook. The explanations are designed to make you use grammatical concepts quickly. You will need other texts, like the Dictionaries of Japanese Grammar, to dig deeper once you have completed Genki I and II. The structure of sentences and the choice of words are unofficial. But there is almost no interruption in the educational tone. Following facts and instructions ensures that you don't waste your time reading anything extra. But writing in a random voice gives the illusion that it's down to earth. This makes it easier to fight through the dense material. Genka's art and Genka's illustration is one of his strengths. It perfectly complements lessons and exercises without becoming the center of attention. Some textbooks try to attract customers with flashy manga illustrations. But these books are mostly tolerated because their art is more interesting than Genki knows what he wants to be and his educational focus is reflected in the style of illustration. To be honest, at first I had mixed feelings about art. Sometimes I'm fascinated by illustrations. Other times, not so much. I couldn't quite put my finger on it until I looked closely at the dialogue illustration on page 209. The main characters of Genki's textbook (left) are more iconic, while the unnamed assistant casting (right) has slightly more expressive features. But there's a reason for that. The main characters are designed to represent the reader. The fewer definitions they have visually, the easier it is for you to see yourself in their place. And that's exactly what happens as you keep learning. While you may not find art particularly interesting at first, you spend a lot of time with it. And because the spirit and function of art is so closely related to the material, your time and effort is transformed both by connection with art and by proxy to the main characters. Of course, Genky gives Maria a break from her iconographic role with various activities. In practice exercises, Mary gets to do all sorts of funny things that are around her as a character. And your connection to it makes you feel rounded as you learn. Even if it will take some time for you to connect with Maria and Takeshi, expressing sub-characters will give you a giggle and kickstart your connection to the illustrations. Carlos, where have you been all my life? I understand that the design differences between the main and non-main characters are insignificant. The general artistic approach to Genki is homogeneous and consistent. This is that rare kind of cute illustration that doesn't try too hard to be cute. This is what it is, and it is bound to fascinate you with its authenticity. Illustrations in general do a great job of connecting you with the material and helping you learn. Without them, Genka's textbook wouldn't be the same. If you don't like art at first, these feelings are likely to wash away as you are drawn into exciting stuff. Genky's textbook Progression Teaching In many ways, Genki perfectly accepts the No.1 principle Koichi has written about before. You want to work on something that is 1 euro above your current level of ability. No.2 or more will take more effort or be out of your reach. But studying what happens next means always relying on what was before. Using enough effort to learn but not doing as much you want to quit smoking. It's a tough balance. How do you know that 1 euro is above your current level of ability? How do you know there's too much or too little fighting? Genky solves this problem. If you follow Genki's tutorial, you'll always be on the way. It teaches you what you need to know and cuts the fat. The best example of this: almost no romaji. The first two chapters feature romaji to give students enough time to learn hiragan and katakana (a few hours is all you need). Then Romaji fell, and Genky you move forward. Forward. it would be nice if Genki treated furigan as well as a romaji, gradually reducing it. Furigana is present throughout the book for all kanji. It acts as a crutch and disables any potential kanji reinforcement that could accompany reading and grammar exercises. Even the calculated removal of furigans would be good, removing what the reader should know by a certain point. After graduating from Genki I and II, you will need to return to learn the nuances of the series skips. But that's a good thing. The Genki tutorial doesn't waste your time teaching you all the ways to conjugate verbs at the same time. It teaches you enough to keep you moving forward. You get efficiency, not completeness. Genky Textbook Features Chapters in the Conversation and Grammar section to follow a predictable structure. You will solve new information in each chapter, but you will always know how to deal with it. No surprises, except for the targeted information. This is useful for creating a study groove. Here's the order you'll attack every lesson: Dialogue Vocabulary Grammar Explanations Practice is inserted into the main sections of each chapter of the breakout box of information. They: Expression Notes Culture Notes Useful Expressions Genki Dialogues are the first point of contact with new material. First, you'll see three (or more) dialogues in Japanese. Then there are the English translations of these dialogues. Here it is: メアリ: すみません。 いま なんじですか。 たけし: じゅうにじはんです。 メアリー: ありがとう ございます。 たけし: いいえ。 Mary: Sorry. What time is it now? Takeshi: That's half of the past twelve. Mary: Thank you. Takeshi: Welcome. It may seem counterintuitive to start reading the full sentences of new material before you see a list of vocab or grammar explanations. But there's a reason. Dialogues consists of two things: The information you've already studied is the information you're going to study when reading dialogues, your mind makes a distinction between what you know and the things you don't do. Every time you get stuck, it will most likely be new information. If you don't turn the page to refer to vocab or grammar explanations, you should look at the appropriate English translation. This allows you to fill in knowledge gaps by deducting rather than saying the answer. A little fight is a great way to kickstart your brain as you start a new lesson. Of course, none of this works if you skip ahead and look at the vocab and grammar sections. The authors did a great job of working with elementary grammar and vocabulary to create unforgettable situations. Each dialogue uses only the concepts of previous lessons when introducing new concepts. It can't be easy to write. Repeated characters and the ongoing history in dialogues show creativity. Although the stories are simplistic, you will still find yourself making connections with characters and situations, making learning more enjoyable. Dialogues are easy to understand if you're learning stuff It gives you the feeling that when you understand what you're reading. They are written in standard and polite Japanese, so there are a few curveballs. The situations are all collegial. By which I mean, symbols and scenarios revolve around college life. During the series you will get to know Maria and Takeshi. Maria is studying in Japan. Takeshi is a student at a Japanese college. They meet, go on dates and fall in love with each other. In between their romantic-stories, different B-stories occur. How Takeshi is going on vacation with his friend Robert. Or Robert forgot his textbook and get scolded by Mr. Yamashita. One of the biggest complaints I've seen in the Genki Amazon tutorial is the reviews of the series focus on college life. Scenarios of dialogue and exercise around travel, homework and dating. But given the target audience, the solution makes sense. This may annoy you, but it shouldn't be a deal breaker, given the quality of the lessons you get. Vocab List After Dialogue comes a dictionary list. Each of them has a dark gray border, so they are easy to find when flipping through the textbook. Vocabulary is divided into: nouns い adjectives な-adjectives u-verbs ru-verbs irregular verbs (if applicable) adverbs and other expressions of the Vocab Column are divided into hiragana, kanji and English translation. This is great for good old-fashioned column cover cram sessions (although we recommend SRS). Keep in mind that some of the terms used may differ from other books or resources. If you've learned these concepts from other books or classes, be aware of a few names. い adjectives can be called keiyoushi 形容詞 () or just adjectives. な adjectives can be called keiyou doushi 形容動詞 () or adjectival nouns. u-verbs and ru-verbs can be called ichidan and godan verbs, respectively. Whatever terminology you prefer, the Genki tutorial uses the names it uses. It may take some mental switching, but it won't hurt you to learn different names for the same ideas. A common complaint I saw in a review of a Genki or two tutorial is that vocab feels random or disorganized. I'm sure the word choice was purposeful, but I agree with the somewhat odd vocabulary of pop words on each list. It is difficult to say which words are the most basic. But you can quantify which are the most commonly used. And this should give an idea of what words and types of words should be trained in the first place. With that in mind, take a look at some of the vocabulary from Chapter Genka 1. Major (as a college major) college, University of International Students of Sweden Anthropology Advocate Again, this points to Genki's college-oriented approach. But it also shows an emphasis on teaching vocab based on dialogue. Instead of teaching the most commonly used (or useful) words, he teaches vocab, fits into the dialogue of situations. In general, this is a minor complaint. Odd minority words and most vocab are basic and helpful. So you don't have to learn a lot of specialized words. Just a little. Teh Teh the number of vocabulary in both volumes of Genka is 1700. A great start that is the goal of the Genki series. They are the basis on which you will build your life of Japanese research. After all, you use Genki's textbook for grammar. Learning vocabulary is its own task, and no set of textbooks is going to fill that role. Learn the words Genki vocab because they will help you learn the grammar it teaches. But supplement the tables full of Japanese words to learn the vocab you want to know. The effectiveness of the Grammar Explanations Genki trademark is best seen in the way it teaches grammar. Genki gives you just what you need to know to understand and start using grammar. There are several, if any, peripheral distractions. Genki assumes that you end up, throughout your life learning the language journey, to become an advanced Japanese user. This means that all the details that they are not learning now, you will learn some time down the line. Their attention gives you enough to start using the language without overloading you. Some complain that Genki teaches grammar because just like in Japanese. Although I have never seen these words in Genki's textbook, I understand the complaints. The grammatical explanations are concise and complete, but they are not elaborated. They teach the point how it works, and give an example (maybe two). Those who are looking for reasons why will get impressed is just the way it is in Japanese. It's not just a message. Rather, the resulting attitude is a side effect of a streamlined approach to teaching. It may be frustrating, but it is important to take at this stage. Why the language is linguistics and not the focus of Genka. Find out first. Most people don't understand why native language, but use it well. Focus on the task at hand and then ask the linguist about why later. Genki however dissects the grammar, but only when necessary. A good example is the breakdown of 〜なければいけません/〜なきゃいけません on page 273. This grammatical phrase is essentially the Japanese equivalent of a must in English. Genki could teach grammar, explain what it means to must and leave it at the same time. Instead, it digs and explains the components: なければ and なきゃ means if you don't... and いけません means you can't go; なければいけません and なきゃいけません literally means you can't go without doing... with a double negative, which gives rise to an affirmative sense of mandate. In addition to grammatical explanations, it is assumed that you will better understand grammar through exercises and workbook. It is also assumed that you will have a teacher who will give you additional examples of suggestions and explanations. So there aren't many examples of suggestions in grammatical explanations. All the more reason for self-study to get a work book and to be proactive with such like HiNative. Although Genka's approach to teaching is orderly, he strives to be complete in parts. As a point, footnotes. Not all explanations have them, but when we show up, up, can be a revelation. An example of this is the explanation 〜と思います/〜と言っていました on page 193. After an example of the sentence (私は) たけしさんはメアリさんが好きだと思います (I think Takeshi loves Maria), there is a footnote that explains how to make this idea in the red. There are two ways, but one is more common in Japanese. For English speakers, it's more natural to say: I don't think Takeshi likes Mary. Thus, the reader may assume rendering 〜とおもいます (think) in the negative would reach its goal. It would be, but it sounds wobbly for the Japanese ear. Instead, Genki's textbook says, I don't think takeshi likes Maria. Clarifications like this sprinkle the entire book in footnotes, and make the learning experience more complete. A minor complaint made against Genka's grammatical explanations is that she does not teach real Japanese. That means he doesn't learn Japanese the way people speak it. It is important to learn the language long before you learn it naturally. Conversational and informal language is certainly more fun, but it's not a good basis for a beginner. That being said, if you want to learn some conversational and real Japanese along with Genki, check out the Japanese Manga Way. Keep in mind, learning two books at a time can slow you down. Practice Exercise Genki amazing grammatical explanations would be nothing without exercises for their backup back. Exercises are repeated enough to reinforce key points, but varied enough to keep students engaged. Put in a while and these exercises will have a great relationship to packing learned grammar and vocab into your brain. Genki's textbook has many different types of exercises. Some of the ones you can see are: translate/conjugate the word/offer to answer questions read the dialogue with a partner to ask questions with the group to look at the chart and make a suggestion/describe something / ask questions to look at the picture (s) and make a suggestion/describe something / ask questions to fill in the missing information with the partner matching the chart of role-playing talk with the class singing of the song to combine parts of the speech/grammar points together While most exercises follow the same structure. And each lesson bends the structure to work uniquely with the target concept. So you are struggling with new material in a familiar way, giving you some kind of muscle memory in unfamiliar territory. Illustrations help to confuse the process of practice. Regardless of your opinion of art, it serves an important purpose in the exercise section. Instead of pages of words, questions and diagrams, there are exercises using photos on at least every other page. Illustrations are part of the task and make them more interesting and memorable. If you're an audial student, Genky has your back. There are sound icons next to the favorite lessons. They have appropriate audio files on the CD when Audio components mostly listen to and repeat versions of exercises, but a few songs for children's education. Some readers may be tempted to skip them, but they offer the necessary listening practice. Especially when first learning Japanese, it is important to hear examples from native speakers. Even better is the ability to listen and repeat. Genki's great fame for recognizing this and providing a solution. As for the content of the exercises themselves, they can be specific or abstract. From conjugation in this form or describe what is happening in the picture. Students build tough language skills and then use them to express themselves. One of the drawbacks of self-learning exercises is the lack of an attached answer key. When you are learning on your own, it is important to check your answers to make sure you are not learning the information incorrectly. While the Genki answer key sold separately may be an easy way to achieve this, there are other ways. Try the Lang-8 Hi-Native Service to check out answers you're not sure about. Ask questions in Japanese educational communities. The Genki answer key, available as a separate book, may be worth buying. If you are going down a key way of replying, keep in mind that it is written for teachers who read Japanese fluently. So it's all in Japanese and uses kanji you may not know. As an elementary learner, this makes the validation of answers much slower, but not impossible. There are enough exercises in each lesson to give you a solid foundation with new grammar (if you do them all and do them well). But for self-learning, the effectiveness of exercise is reduced by a significant amount. Since the book is aimed at learning Japanese in class, a great piece of steam work or group work. Some may be finagled in practice for self-learning, but most of them must be missed completely. The expression notes several types of breakout boxes with additional information complement the lessons. Expression notes are the only type of breakout window that is not listed in the content table. The Expression Notes offer explanations on the use and nuances of the Japanese language. For example, Expression Note 8 explains that the verb 遊ぶ (play) is used for a pleasant time, but not for cases such as playing tennis or playing games. The expression Note 4 行く (go) is used to move away from the speaker while the 来る (come) is used to move to the dynamics. Just 11 words of expression. Page 36 – おはよう/ありがとう, さようなら, すみません, いいえ, いってらしゃい/いってきます/ただいま/おかえりなさい Page 46 – あの, はい/いいえ, そうですか, Pronunciation of は, Numbers, Giving one's telephone number, せんせい, さん, Referring to the person you are talking to Page 67 – (〜を)ください, (〜を)どうぞ, On the pronunciation of number words, Big numbers Page 94 – 行く/来る, ちょっと Page 113 – Xの前, えっ/あっ Page 136 – 忙しい/にぎやか(な) Page 155 – 遅く/遅い, どうも, お Page 175 – 遊ぶ, 知る/わかる Page 197 – 〜する Page 236 – Using が and けど at the end of a sentence to indicate Page 257 – in neatientences, only, to, drive, dream, that's else are a nice addition. Zhao Ожидают нового учащегося учащегося about the Japanese language and help to flesh out the features. Cultural Notes For those interested in cultural notes, they are listed in the content table, as opposed to the expression notes. These breakout boxes try to explain some of Japan's culture along with language. There is one culture note on the chapter. They include: Greetings and Bowing Japanese names Japanese currency Japanese homes Japanese national holidays Japanese national holidays Japan Educational system Kinship Terms Foods in Japan Japanese traditional culture of public transport in Japan New Year Japanese climate Makes sense only to teach culture with the language. They go hand in hand. Overall, Culture Notes are good fragments of Japanese life that differ in their usefulness. The Japanese currency and communication terms are useful, with the latter being the most useful of all. The rest are great introductions. Use them for further cultural exploration as you learn the language. Useful expressions The third type of breakout box is the most practical. Useful expressions are exactly the same as the name suggests. These lists additional vocabulary and a set of phrases that will help in everyday life. Even college-oriented lists such as In Class and In Japanese Class contain words everyone should know. In addition to simply listing words, some boxes contain useful explanations or organizations. For example, the Colors breakout box divides Japanese color words into い adjectives and nouns. This explains い adjective colors become nouns, dropping い and nouns of color must connect to other nouns. It's not something that's immediately obvious to beginners. Here is a list of useful expressions sections throughout the book: Time/Age-in-class days/weeks/months/years at the Post Office Directions of Body Color on The Station in the Japanese Health and Disease Class While I said Genki is not for tourists, I would recommend vacationers take a look at useful expressions if they have a copy of the Genki textbook available to them. Remembering all this would be helpful during a 2-3 week trip to Japan, especially when paired with a list of vital Japanese vocabulary. My only complaint is there are no more useful expressions of the box. They are convenient and it wouldn't be too hard to come up with a few more lists. If you think that every chapter has a Culture Notes breakout window, it's strange that some chapters don't have a box of useful expressions. The reading and writing section of Genki's reading and writing section should not be missed. Just 60 pages, it's not much practice. But what you get is an emphasis on play and experimentation that will benefit the most motivated students. Each reading and writing lesson corresponds to the chapter of the conversation and grammar. As you work through each chapter, you should flip to the back and complete the same number reading and writing lesson. First lesson - cana. Lesson one practices hiragan and lesson lesson catacan practices. As I mentioned earlier, it's good that Genki makes you get to know Kahn so quickly. With mnemony you can learn both writing systems in a matter of hours. Exercises in the first two chapters of this section will reinforce what you learn. Chapters 1 and 2 jump straight into practical exercises. Again, it is assumed that you will have an instructor to teach you the can. Self-learning will have to use can tables on pages 24-26. There are also can charts under the front and back cover. Lessons from 3 to 12 are all kanji. The Kanji list is presented in the charts on two pages. It is assumed that you will memorize them, put them in a deck of flash cards, or do something. There are 14-16 kanji for the lesson. The order of the stroke is displayed, but not taught. There is little manual work, so you will have to make a plan to teach yourself the material before you start practical exercises. If you want to practice writing a can or kanji, you will have to purchase a separate work book or use your own paper schedule. Kanji, given to the reader for memorization, is chosen cherry. They are useful and common, grouped into categories such as Everyday Life, Journey and Falktale Casajizo. Some sets are more useful than others. There is no progression of the build on previous concepts seen in the grammar section. You have to learn through cramming. Using mechanical memorization to force kanji into your brain is not necessarily a bad idea. Simply inefficient and outdated. However, cramming these kanji may be worth your time. Assuming you keep up with grammar lessons and learn kanji required, practice exercises in the Reading and Writing section are a powerful tool. Armed with knowledge, you get the opportunity to play with the language more creatively than in the grammar section. Many exercises are similar to those in the rest of the book. Compare that to that. Fill in the gap, etc. but there are a few that shine particularly brightly. On page 295 there is a search for the words of the catacan. When you learn to read cans, it's a great way to scan characters and identify them. Going in different directions helps to weaken this brain. There's no mention of radicals, but the Genki tutorial does introduce the concept with a kanji combination of exercise. You submitted a certain amount of kanji and said to combine them to create new ones. This tests your kanji knowledge and encourages you to research and relate. Maps and diagrams are returned in this section. But this time you write complete sentences to describe actions or information in your own words. Some of the best reading exercises are understanding. When you start learning Japanese, reading is usually a waste of time. You don't know enough kanji and grammar, so you'll be constantly pausing to see concepts you don't know. But if you've been keeping up with the lessons, practice reading will only use Japanese you know. Not only is the reading itself remarkably wonderful You are asked questions based on excerpts. Having to consume, process and output all in Japanese is a great experience and hard to find as a beginner. Compact tomi add listening and conversational practice to the mix. All reading understanding in these sections has appropriate audio files. Similarly, these are open written assignments that challenge your ability to shape suggestions and encourage self-expression. Things like: You're organizing a party. Write a flyer about the party. Be sure to include: what kind of party it is, what time it starts, where it is held, what to bring, how to get there and so on. Learning a language is fun when you can express yourself properly. And getting a small chance of doing it early on is valuable. It's a self-governing section. Self-education with low motivation will be a problem. But those who push and do the work will get the most out of it. Indices We are finally at the end of the tutorial. And the end of the textbook means indices! Beautiful indices full of vocabulary. If you're looking for words to put in an SRS flash card deck, here they are. There is a Japanese-English (さくいん1) index and an Anglo-Japanese index (さくいん2). A good thing about both is how it points to your position in the index. Above the Japanese-English index there is a syllabic gyragan and an alphabet above the Anglo-Japanese index. Both are gray, except for a specific letter or symbol covered on the page. It's a minor feature, but one that gives a more modern look to the analog practice of looking things up in a book. The Japanese-English index entries are kana, kanji, English and the marker section. At the beginning of the index there is a legend of the section to tell which characters represent which section. The English Japanese index is similar, with the main exception being the order of records. In this case, it's English, kanja, kanji, and the marker section. Map of Japan This is exactly how the name is described. Map of Japan with each prefecture listed in kanji. There are some photos too that are good for the tiny black and white photos printed in the tutorial. It can be a useful tool if you are stuck in a plane without internet access or something. Otherwise, check online to improve the card with the best features. Figures Just when you think that this tutorial is made of stuff, it surprises you. The Numbers diagram is convenient, though incomplete. Japanese has a ton of counters that change the number readings depending on what you count. いち (1) can change to ひとつ, ひとり, いっかい, いっぽん, and more. This chart tells you how to make one through ten for 37 different categories of things. For those who are confused by counters, seeing them all lined up as diagrams can help break the concept into more comprehensible pieces. Verb Conjugation Chart Genki tutorial gives you one last gift before signing, a verb conjugation chart. Like the numbers chart, it's useful, but even more For those who struggle with verbs, this chart builds everything for easy study. It does not provide every conjugation of verbs. Only those that are entered in this book. But for a beginner, these are big fundamental conjugations in practice. Trying to solve all the conjugations at once is too much. Master these and you'll have an easier time with the main conversation. From there, you'll be more than able to cope with the conjugations in the Genki 2 tutorial. The Genki tutorial Look and feel the physical composition of the Genki tutorial may seem trivial, but it's a lot of little things that affect learning in their own way. Your first impression of the tutorial will probably be its nice glossy cover. When you take it, it feels heavy for paperback. Given the density of information inside, weight is welcome. The cover design is fine. It's close to clean and modern, but still feels the early 2000s. Remove the laid out logo げんき, rearrange some elements of text, and it will feel less outdated. Inside is a good mix of fonts, serif fonts is the most dominant. It's academic, but other styles of fonts paired with illustrations let you know learning will be fun. Some pleasure from your pain (and get). Much of the Japanese text is set in what Genki calls a textbook font. It's very similar to handwriting. This is great because you will be doing so much writing in exercises. All black and white. No distracting colors, which is a big plus. It sucks when a language book confuses attraction with color. The photos are competent and high enough resolution. Unfortunately, their small size destroys their impact. Photos are mainly used for culture notes breakout boxes. Without photos, Culture Notes will feel much more fieldy. So photos are necessary, despite their flaws. Genka's information is well organized, especially given its density. Columns and sections make knowledge easy to navigate. Fields and alignment offer a lot of white space. Visual appeal aside, Genki's design invites you to write on the pages. And those who take note, highlight, dog-ear, and doodle will learn the most. While some of them favor the Pdf Genki tutorial, I think it's a bad idea. It may be handy to have an e-reader, but you won't learn nearly as much without the physical space to take notes. Physically speaking, middle-class paper. It won't vomit easily, but it's not super fat. The book itself is hard to keep open on the table. You will find yourself using a heavy flat object to keep it from snapping shut. Bend that spine back as soon as possible to facilitate the learning experience. The CD provided is stored in the back valve. This makes it hard to scroll through the Genki tutorial. Take the CD and store it in a safe place, A jewel case or CD holder. Dust jacket is just as annoying, always slipping or popping while researching sections. Remove and store or trash it. Genki I Work Book You Can should) do your own exercises in practice that you are learning. But if you find a well-built Japanese practice that fits perfectly with your research, take it. Genki Workbook is exactly that, and worth grabbing. Genki's work book is divided into two sections: Section Dialogue and Grammar Reading and Writing Dialogue and Grammar is a practice for all grammar in the textbook. Think of it as an extra exercise that enhances the grammar you are learning. The reading and writing section of the workbook corresponds to the textbook in the same way. It contains handwriting practice and translation exercises. At its core, the work book is a set of additional practices to help consolidate the lessons learned in the textbook. And that's great. Keeping a work book combined with a tutorial exercise makes your learning specific. Even better, the exercises in the work book are different than in the textbook. Mainly because they are open and encourage self-expression. For example, you get suggestions translation exercises. This may seem simple. But rarely is there only one correct way to translate the sentence from Japanese to English and vice versa. Also there are exercises, like on page 53, answer the following questions regarding your best trip. You should read Japanese, write in Japanese, and draw on your personal experience. Once you've learned a fair amount of kanji, you'll get really open questions like Report On Tomorrow's Weather Place where you live and a large empty space. There is some understanding of reading, but a little behind the individual sentences. There are a few short paragraphs to read and answer questions. Fortunately, the reading and writing section of the tutorial you covered for the reading practice. But it would be nice to have more in the work book. What the working book lacks in reading the comp, it amounts to in listening. Many exercises have appropriate audio files on the included CD. This gives a vital practice of listening for beginners. Here's a list of the types of exercises you'll encounter in your work book. Translated from Japanese to English Translation from English to Japanese Conjugate verbs Look at the picture and write about the picture in Japanese Answer Japanese questions in Japanese Here are the answers, now ask the correct questions Write both questions and answers in Japanese Listen to the audio clip and choose the correct answer Listen to the audio clip and answer questions about it Listen to the audio clip and fill the table Read excerpt, listen to the questions, and write the answers Full Conjugation Table Describe what you (did/ate/saw/visited/etc.) Describe what you think about each thing on the list Read the Japanese passage and draw what the passage describes Write sentences using targeted grammar Select words/grammar from the list and make suggestions Full Dialogue Describe the person, place, or thing interviewing the person in Japanese and get their answers in Japanese Give the tips of the Reading and Letter section of the book is small, but worth doing for writing practice. Each chapter receives two pages, one for kanji/kana practice and one for exercise. Kanji/kana practice pages are designed for photocopy several times for additional practice. So avoid writing into them. The practical exercises for each chapter are the same, one filling in empty and one translation. Genki Audio CD-ROMs CDs are irreplaceable. That's great, The Japan Times decided to pack them with the second edition. They used to cost extra in the first version, and were in a different file format. Audio clips fill the listening/talk gap present with most tutorial learning. While there are many Japanese audio resources available online now, Genki audio is of good quality and content pairs perfectly with your research. The clips are slow and clear to the ear of the beginner, but not the indulgence. They will challenge the elementary hearing. Eventually you want to find more listening practices. But as a complete beginner, the compact toks are perfect. The sound quality is a hit or miss. Sometimes the clips sound as if they were recorded in a closet. Sometimes they are quite clear. Sometimes they sound like they have been exported in poor quality and added along with high quality clips. I couldn't find a template either. Sometimes English speakers would sound tin, and sometimes it was Japanese speakers. In the clip about the pronunciation of numbers, one of the numbers was randomly tin, of poor quality, and spoke a different Japanese actor voice than the rest of the numbers in sequence. Today, podcasters and amateurs put out high quality sound every day. This makes Genki compact sites seem low quality by comparison. The quality aside, the voice of the actors is both male and female, and that's great. When you start learning, it is important to hear the differences between male and female Japanese. And the voice of the actors vary in age too. The male voice sounds somewhere between the late twenties and mid-forties. Women's voices range from the early twenties to the early sixties. Getting such variety out of your listening practice make these COMPACT computers extra valuable. Keep in mind CDs are not audio CDs. They are CD-ROMs. The first edition CD is a set of audio CDs. But they were set 6 compact tot on that. The Japan Times fit 6 CDs worth of audio files on two CD-ROMs, which means less physical hassle for the consumer. It also means that new CDs won't play CD player. They are not made to play files, just store them. So you need to put Genki CDs in your computer, and drag the files into the folder. From there you can do with them as you please. Put them on iTunes. Download them to your phone. Burn them on an audio CD. Whatever you do, it's definitely going to be worth the effort. People claim mp3 files on the CD are disorganized and difficult to sort. Personally, I don't see what the problem is. I popped a cd tutorial in my laptop and was presented with 2 folders: One One Genki1_KaiwaBunpo-hen for the Conversation and Grammar section, while another is labeled Genki1_Yomikaki-hen for the reading and writing section. Definitely not comfortable, but everything was organized. Inside the folders are files: I understand that this is confusing at first glance. But the file names exactly correspond to the sound icons in the tutorial. Since the sound was made for use with the tutorial, it makes sense. Could they have been better organized? Definitely. But that's not all that will keep you from searching and using files. Full disclosure, I used a Genki CD-ROM on a Mac. I didn't try it on a Windows machine. It may be more difficult to access files on Windows. If you need help getting files on iTunes, Genki has instructions on its website. My biggest complaint is that compact toses are used at all. Navigating and accessing files is not a problem. It's finding a CD that's a problem. Back in 2011, when the second edition was published, CD discs are still a common feature on laptops. But with the advent of tablet computing, access to the CD is less and less common. It's nice to have a physical copy of the audio files. But it won't be too hard to turn on a piece of paper with a key to download files from the cloud. Some access to the only download area of the Genki tutorial. Including CD-ROM was per second in 2011. Not much today. It should be noted, however, that most textbooks still come with a compact volume. So that's not what Genky is for necessarily. It's just that the Japanese world of textbooks has yet to make a foray into cloud computing. Genki Textbook Price Perhaps the biggest complaint of people with Genki is the price. The retail price in the U.S. is $59.99 for a textbook and $29.99 for a work book. That's about $90 for the first volume. Add another $90 if you get a Genki II at the same time. How does this compare to other Japanese textbooks? Here are the retail prices for the first volumes of some of the most popular: Textbook Price Workbook Compact Sites Total Genki $60 $30 Included $90 Minna but Nihongo $25 $9 Included $34 Japanese for busy people $27 $22 Included $22 49 Kakehashi $40 $20 N/A $60 Adventures in Japanese $70 $30 $60 $160 Marugoto $23 N/A N/A $23 This makes Genki a little more expensive than average. But it's a stealth when you consider the quality you get. You can pay $49 for Japanese for busy people, but you get less than $49 worth of education from it. If you really want to get a deal on Genki Books, buy them from a retailer in Japan. In Amazon.co.jp, the textbook sells for 3,500 pounds ($29), and a work book sells for 1,600 pounds ($13). It's like getting both halves off! Of course, this does not include delivery. To calculate Amazon Japan's shipment to your country, check out their international delivery page. Real Deal Genki isn't the only Japanese resource you'll ever have But this may be your main tutorial at the beginning of your Japanese Japanese school travel. It manages to be both inclusive and complex. Its predictable lesson structure and scaffolding progression ensures that you are always moving slowly and confidently forward. The grammatical explanations of such home runs are mostly made up for any shortcomings. Adding compact albums and working books to your research mode cements Japanese grammar concepts further than the tutorial does alone. Of course, if you're self-learning, using the Genki tutorial will take more effort. It was designed for university classes, so you'll need a friend or answer key to check your work. You won't get a ton of sample sentences with grammatical explanations, so plan to use other resources to cross-refer grammar you have questions about. Vocab lists are OK, but less than you need to communicate comfortably. Adding a massive SRS vocab study will make your conversation more powerful than it would otherwise be. After all, it's up to you to decide whether Genky is right for you. It is ideal for classroom learning. So if you're thinking about signing up for a Japanese class that uses Genki, jump on it. The Genki series was my first Japanese tutorial and I loved it. My entire fund is in Japanese thanks to Genki! But! I used it in a school setting, so I'm definitely biased. But but! As I worked my way through it, I saw how students at another school struggled with their textbooks, and I can't tell you how grateful I am that I happened to go to the one that chose these books. Whenever someone asks me what tutorial they should start with, I point to Genki. Genki is probably one of the best beginner Japanese textbooks out there. However, there aren't any amazing tutorial options out there, so just being pretty decent puts you on top. Genky is pretty decent, in my opinion. Get a workbook because it was designed for teachers (who create additional materials for their students to fill practice gaps). When I think of Genki, solid is the first word that comes to mind. It covers what you need to know as a beginner and gives you a great foundation. Other books may exceed Genki in several areas, but very few can offer the overall quality you get here. Ideal for Beginners Easy to Predict The Structure of the Scaffolding Progression Lesson Clear, Brief Explanations of Grammar CD and Workbook To Strengthen Learning Is Not Designed for Self-Learning No Way to Check Work

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