

New Volunteer Section

Thank you for your interest in becoming the JIS volunteer! Here are the frequently asked questions about the JIS volunteers.

Q: What do I do as a volunteer?

Japan in a suitcase program (Elementary school program)

Teams of English and Japanese speaking volunteers visit elementary schools to introduce Japan and Japanese culture to first through third grade students by comparing cultural similarities and differences between Japanese and American students. Each team will be provided with a curriculum outline and a suitcase containing posters, books and everyday articles to help students visualize and understand contemporary life in Japan. Volunteers will help students learn how to say some Japanese greetings, how to count in Japanese, and how to write a few simple Kanji through hands-on activities.

Japanese Language and Culture Visits (High school program)

Volunteers with near-native to native fluency in oral and written Japanese will visit high schools in the Puget Sound area to provide Japanese language students with opportunities to practice speaking Japanese. This is a “mini-immersion” experience in which groups of volunteers provide students with opportunities to use recently acquired Japanese language skills to converse with fluent Japanese speakers.

Q: How is the school visit coordinated and what is the volunteers' responsibilities?

Once you become the JIS volunteer, Japan America Society's JIS coordinator will send you information with regard to the presentation date and school name, addresses approximately 3 weeks prior to the requested dates.

If you are the volunteer person who visits the school, you need to let JIS Coordinator know that you would like to be the presenter, and confirm the pick up location of the suitcase with JAS office. On receiving the suitcase, volunteers have to check the items in the suitcase and notify JAS if any of the suitcase items are damaged or missing, or if handouts, erasers and /or chopsticks are running out.

Volunteers will meet at the school at least 15 minutes before the scheduled time so that they have enough time to set up the suitcase materials. Volunteers need to register as visitors at the school's main office.

After the presentation, presenter will fill out the “Presenter Evaluation Sheet” and submit it to JAS office. Please check the items in the suitcase (an inventory list is in the suitcase) after the presentation. If any of them are damaged or missing, notify Jas immediately. The suitcase should be returned to the Jas office after the presentation.

Q: How do I become a volunteer?

If you would like to join the JIS as volunteer, please fill out the Volunteer Application Form and send it to aolson@us-japan.org

We will ask the new volunteer to visit schools as observer for once or twice with experienced volunteers. We also have JIS training workshop periodically and we encourage you to participate in the workshop.