

# A note from the author

Grammar instruction plays a major role in English education in Japan. However, the strong bias towards grammar-focused education to solve grammar problems is also one of the primary reasons junior high school students come to “hate English.” So, what does a grammar-focused book for students who have previously focused on using and communicating in English look like? I have spent many years considering the grammar that these students need, and as a result Learning World Book 4 BRIDGE was born.

The purpose of this book is to help students who have been studying communicative English (through conversation, songs, chants and games) make a smooth transition to junior high school English classes. Explaining and organizing English expressions and syntax rules (grammar) that students already know and use, in a way that is easy for them to grasp, enables the students to read more complex sentences and express themselves in ways that are deeper and more meaningful.

In order to help students produce language that is as natural and authentic as possible, phrases and sentences are not introduced based only on the order of easiest (shortest) to hardest (longest), but by also considering the frequency of opportunities students have to use the language in their daily lives. Students should not just understand and remember phrases, though. BRIDGE provides many tasks and questions to help students use the structures to organize and present their thoughts.

## **BRIDGE is different from traditional English materials used to teach grammar in Japan in 4 major ways.**

### **1 Lesson plans with the primary goal of using English**

Before grammar is explained, the target structures are introduced and used in an activity. ⇒ Sentence syntax is practiced further in a chant. ⇒ Grammar is explained simply without using grammatical terms. ⇒ Through self-expression activities, group discussions, and presentations, students use the target language to talk about facts and their personal lives. ⇒ Finally, drill practice and rewriting sentences consolidate the syntax.

This lesson plan order is completely different from most materials in Japan that explain English grammar.

\*For more details, see the Lesson Plans and Procedures starting on p. 9.

### **2 Interactive DVD-ROM with easy-to-use digital materials**

The introduction of digital materials makes conducting activities and games, presenting language, and consolidating language much easier and smoother. In young learners English education, teachers use a variety of materials: real items, activity sheets (KYOGU), picture cards, audio and many other necessary teaching materials. But digital materials eliminate difficulties related to storage and management of all these materials, and make complex procedures much more simple. There is no need for an interactive whiteboard or other special equipment to use the digital materials. All you need is some way to display the contents - a computer, and maybe a monitor or projector with whiteboard.

### **3 Teacher Talk to make it easier to conduct a class entirely in English**

In order to make it possible for teachers to explain grammar in English, the syntax for each STEP is explained in simple English, without using grammatical terms that are unfamiliar to students. All you have to do is show the digital materials and use the English in the Teacher’s Book. (Detailed Activity Procedures ⇒ Let’s Study ⇒ Teacher Talk in English)

### **4 Opportunities for students to use the syntax to more thoroughly express themselves**

In the “Let’s Write” section, students write about facts that interest them and about their own lives. In order to expand on the topic, there is a question list (Let’s Write: Questions for Expanding Topics) starting on p. 90. Repeated use of these questions (for all 127 Let’s Write sentences) will enable students to expand on their answers and discuss a variety of topics using varied syntax.

**Grammar structures** covered in BRIDGE include the present tense of be verbs and regular verbs, imperatives, past tense, future tense (positive/ negative/ interrogative), plural forms of nouns, questions beginning with wh- words, present progressive, auxiliary can, third-person singular, prepositions, adjectives, adverbs, comparatives, superlatives, gerunds and infinitive. Contents are written (in Japanese) focusing on the function of the grammar without using grammatical terms.

Thanks to the newly developed digital materials, BRIDGE’s content is even more enjoyable for students. The digital materials are a wonderful tool to stimulate and maintain students’ interest. Please take advantage of these digital materials in your classes. This book is designed to function as a “bridge” between fun, conversation-based children’s English education and grammar-focused junior high school English education. I hope that many children can efficiently study English as a “language,” and continue to enjoy learning and communicating in English.

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