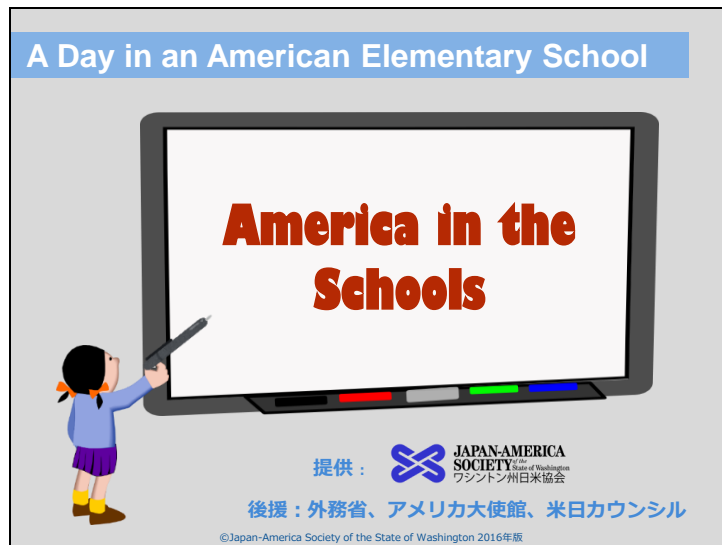


Slide 1



The Point: prepare students to compare and contrast their lives to what they learn in this PowerPoint.

What to do:

Hand out Student Worksheet

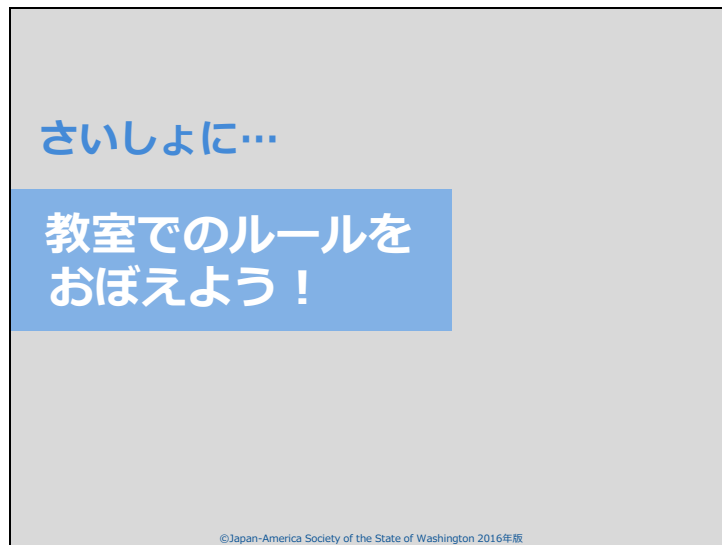
Explain to students that this PowerPoint was made in Washington State to teach Japanese students about American school life. Ask students if they can read the title.

Notes:

We will now introduce the school life of Mika, a Japanese-American girl in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. As we go through a day in her life, we hope students notice differences and similarities between Japan and the US. We also aim to foster understanding between Japan and the US.

In the first section of the lesson, we introduce basic information about the US. Later, we visit Mika's actual school and learn about American culture.

Slide 2



Notes:

Let's learn an American classroom hand sign that teachers use before we start.

Slide 3



The Point: show how American teachers quickly and quietly get their students attention and have them get quiet.

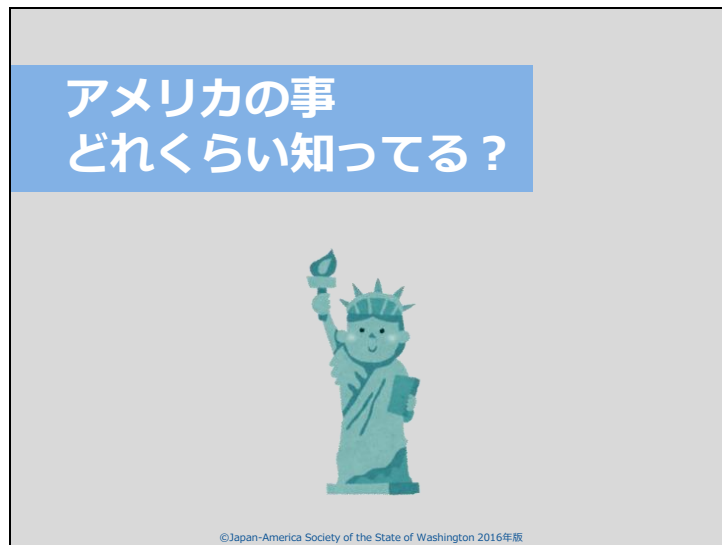
What to do:

Introduce Quiet Coyote. Use Quiet Coyote throughout this presentation! If necessary, explain what a coyote is.

Notes:

“Quiet Coyote” is a common sign used in American classrooms. It means “Be quiet and pay attention.” It’s called so not because coyotes are particularly quiet, but because the word sounds similar to the word “quiet”. Teachers shape their hand to look like a coyote, focused with its ears pointed and mouth closed. The teacher makes the sign and waits for all the students to do the same and become quiet. This sign is very effective. You can try to use “Quiet Coyote” throughout the lesson, too!

Slide 4



Notes:

“How much do you know about the US?” (This is only to lead to the next slide.)



The Point: show what world maps look like in America & Europe

What to do:

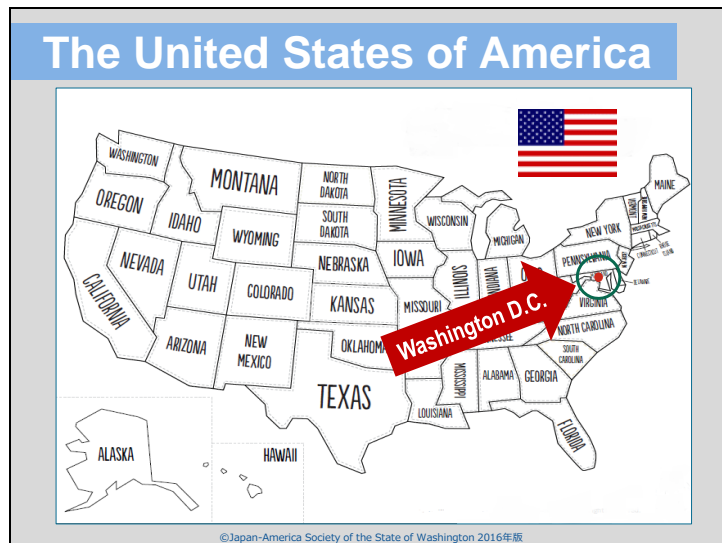
Have students come and point to the USA and Japan. Ask students to guess how many hours it takes to fly from Seattle and Japan.

Notes:

The world map used in US schools differs from those used in Japan. Most people think that Japanese world maps put Japan in the center while US maps put the US in the center. However, there are only two official types of world maps – one with the Atlantic Ocean in the center and another with the Pacific Ocean in the center. Every country adopts the map that places their country closest to the center.

Please note that “America” not only means the country, but also the two American continents – South America and North America. When we talk about the country, we often say “USA” or “United States of America”.

Slide 6



The Point: introduce Washington, DC, the capitol of the US.

What to do:

Ask students how many states are in the US. Ask students to point to Washington, DC.

Notes:

The capitol of the USA is Washington D.C. (Many students may guess New York!) The official legal name is the "District of Columbia." It is neither a state nor a city. It is simply called "Washington D.C."

One of the 50 states is also "Washington." You may want to point out the difference between them. (This is the home of the creators, the Japan-America Society of the State of Washington.) Do students know that the US is so big there are four different time zones? The West Coast and the East Coast has a time difference of 3 hours.

Slide 7

今日の主人公は…



Mika Yamamoto

ミカ ヤマモト?  
やまもと みか?



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The Point: introduce a central character that students can follow.

What to do:

Explain that we will follow the life of Mika Yamamoto, Ask students if they think Mika is Japanese or American. Ask why they think so.

[Click for audio] Listen to her self-introduction and ask students what they understood. Reveal that Mika is American – Japanese-American

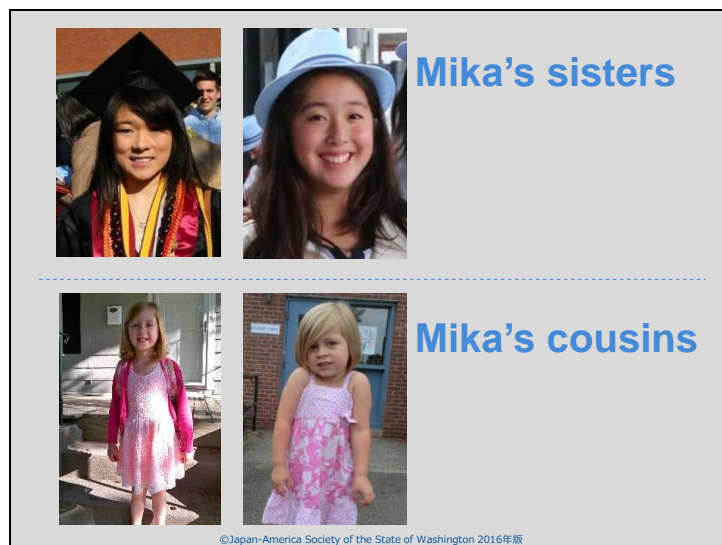
Notes:

She is a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Japanese-American. We say she is “mixed-race” because her father is Japanese and her mother is half-Japanese, half-white. Although she is racially  $\frac{3}{4}$  Japanese, she is 100% American, because she was born and raised in the United States.

Mika does not speak Japanese. However, she looks almost exactly like your students (hair, eye, and skin color). Many Japanese people think of Americans as blonde, blue-eyed, and Caucasian, but please emphasize that America is a diverse country with diverse peoples.

At the end of the self-introduction, Mika says “I like bunnies” [*usagi ga suki desu*]. We have included an image of a bunny to help students understand.

Slide 8



The Point: challenge Japanese students' stereotypes about what Americans look like.

What to do:

Explain that these are Mika's sisters and they are American. They were born and raised in the United States of America.

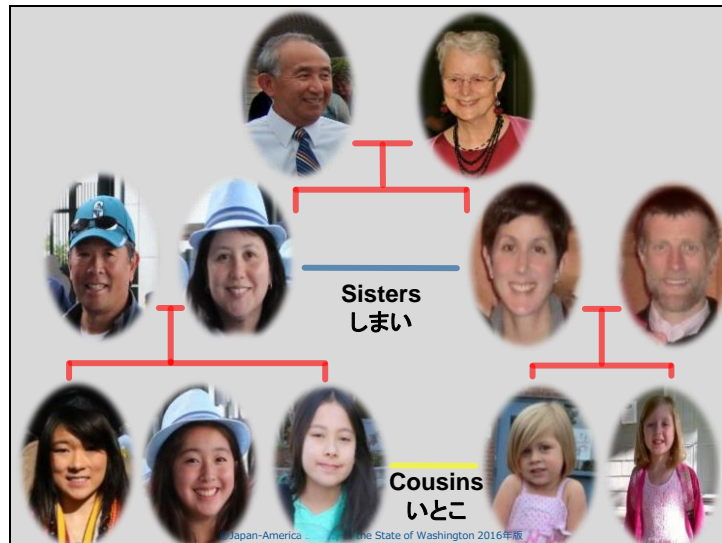
Now, look at the two girls on the bottom. Ask, who are they? Mika's classmates? Mika's family? Explain that these are Mika's cousins. They look very different from Mika and her sisters because they (Mika's cousins) are  $\frac{1}{4}$  Japanese. Their father is Caucasian and their mother is half-Japanese. But they are all family.

Notes:

Mika and her sisters are what we call "*Nikkei*" or "Japanese-American." Mika is  $\frac{3}{4}$  Japanese-American, while her cousins are  $\frac{1}{4}$  Japanese-American, so they look very different from Mika. However, they are all related. A diverse country like the US produces diversity even within families.



Slide 9



The Point: to understand that diversity occurs because of mixed-race families.

What to do:

Explain how the difference in appearance occurs.

Notes:

As you can see, Mika's father is 100% Japanese and mother is 50% Japanese, so Mika and her sisters are 75% Japanese and they have Asian features. On the other hand, Mika's cousins' mother is 50% Japanese and father is 0% Japanese, so they are 25% Japanese and have more Caucasian features.



The Point: confront Japanese students' stereotypes about what Americans look like.

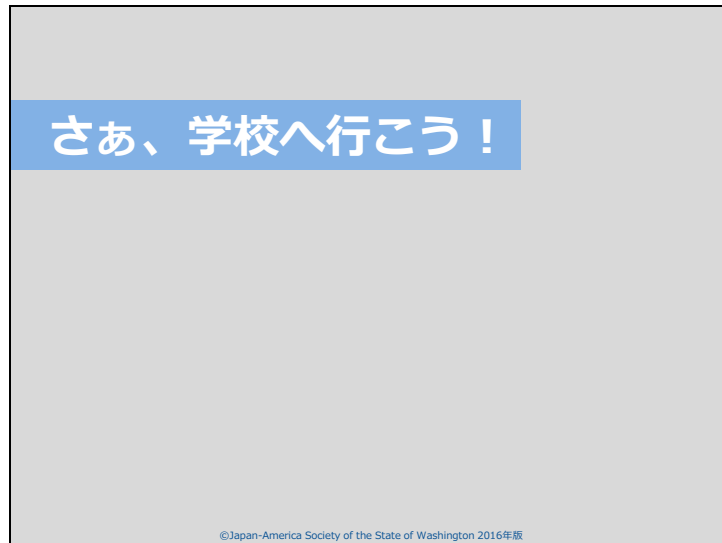
What to do:

Introduce Mika's friends. Explain that, in most parts of the US, there are children of various skin and hair colors that play and study together without a thought about their different appearances. These pictures are typical of the United States of America. It's a country made of many peoples and many nationalities.

Notes:

These pictures are great example of a diverse country. Though many still being equate American to being Caucasian, depending on the region, the diversity of students still grows and children from many different races and cultures share the same classrooms. There are, of course, some American schools that consist mostly of one demographic and display very little diversity.

Slide 11



Notes:

Let's go to school!

Slide 12



The Point: point out that unlike Japan, America doesn't have set phrases for greetings.

What to do:

Ask students what they say as they leave the house. Explain that no words directly translate to this in English. Instead, American kids may say "bye" or "I love you".

Notes:

Explain that there are not always direct translations of cultural phrases. In Japan, set greetings like "*ittekimasu*" and "*itterasshai*" are very important, but there are no perfect translations of these in English. Greetings vary from person to person. Though this may be hard for some Japanese students to believe, most children and parents say "I love you" and hug and kiss each other as they leave.

There are also no *randoseru* in the US. American students choose their own backpacks.



The Point: explain a variation in the school day (commute to school).

What to do:

Ask students how they come to school. Explain that American students mostly come by school bus or parent's car. High school students can even drive themselves to school in some states.

Notes:

Of course, students can walk to school if they live nearby. However, over 50% of American children travel to school by school bus. The bus is free. The bus circles the school district and picks up students near their homes (or in front of their homes).

The rest are dropped off by parents. Many Japanese people think that most students commute by school bus, but the number of students who commute by bus and by car are almost the same.



The Point: introduce an extracurricular student duty organized by local organizations to instill responsibility and respect.

What to do:

Explain that Mika is on Safety Patrol. There are many cars and school buses, so she helps younger students cross the street by stopping traffic.

Notes:

Only older students are entrusted with this job. Students volunteer to perform traffic control before and after school. The younger students look up to the older students on Safety Patrol, and eagerly wait until they are old enough to be selected. Depending on the region, the police present awards to students who complete their patrol term (about one semester). Others take students to movies or bowling to reward their hard work.



The Point: show typical American school architecture (short building with colorful, playful design).

What to do:

Explain that this is Mika's school and playground. Ask, how is it different or similar to your school?

Notes:

Mika's school is a public school. Typical American elementary schools are kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The picture above is a typical elementary school building. Unlike Japan, there is a vast plot of land and many elementary schools are only one floor with no stairs.

**The building is locked before school starts** and Mika's teacher unlocks the classroom and lets in the students as the bell rings.

American schools do not have the Japanese-style "*shokuin-shitsu*". Teachers in the US use the classroom as their office. The classroom is called "Ms. / Mr. A's class" and it is not named by grade and class number like Japanese schools.

Each school has their own "school mascot." The mascot of Mika's school is a bulldog.





The Point: explain some differences in school dress codes.

What to do:

Explain that, in America, students spend the whole day in the same shoes.

Notes:

There are neither “indoor shoes” nor “gym shoes.” By the way, there are no gym uniforms either. You might notice that Mika’s school has a carpet floor, which might be an unusual case for Japanese schools. Not all do, but it seems quite popular as it’s easy to clean or repair compared to hardwood and concrete floors.

Students participate in gym class in their regular clothes.





The Point: show how American teachers use and control the classroom.

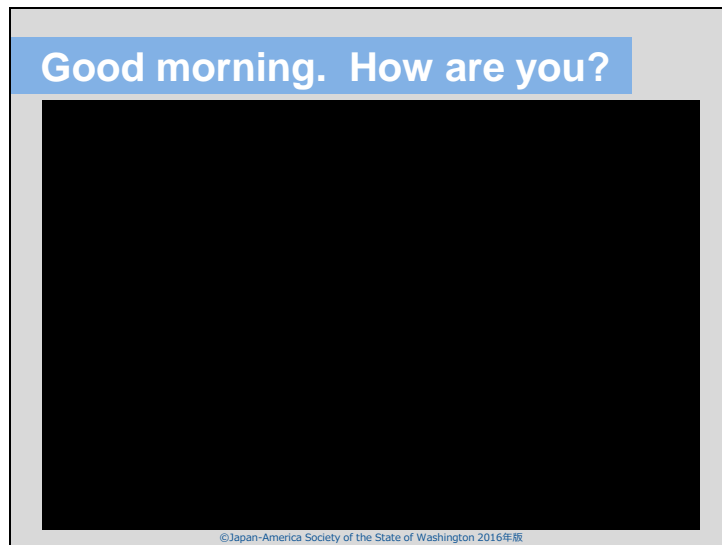
What to do:

Explain that school has started. Before the bell, everyone waits outside the classroom. The teacher keeps it locked until the bell rings. [Click for audio of school bell]. Then she welcomes the students in.

Notes:

As we explained before, most American schools do not have a Teacher's Room (*shokuin-shitsu*). As seen in the video, the teacher unlocks the door and greets each student as they enter. Unlike Japan, school bells differ from school to school. Some sound like a bell while others sound like a beeping alarm.

## Slide 18



### Notes:

[Click for video]

This is a video of Mika's classroom. Ask students to watch the video and share thoughts on how students and teachers act.

Slide 19



The Point: show that classroom environment and design (technology, organized student spaces, educational/motivational decorations) are important in the American classroom.

What to do:

Ask students where they think this is. (Many will guess the teacher's room.) Explain that this is Mika's classroom and that they use a whiteboard and SMART Board (an interactive whiteboard that uses touch detection technology).

Ask students to compare and contrast Mika's classroom with their own (technology, layout, size, where students put their water bottles, etc.).

Notes:

A big difference between Japanese and American classrooms is the use of blackboards. American classrooms use more technology than Japanese classrooms and very few still use blackboards. (Though of course, this depends on the schools.) Instead, most use whiteboards. Many schools in the US (and almost all in Washington) have projectors and internet access in the classroom.

In Japan, each student is given their own textbooks for individual use and each student brings their own supplies. In the States, however, students share supplies and borrow textbooks from the school. Students usually leave these at school.

## Slide 20

2015年6月9日(火曜日)の時間割	
9:00 Attendance	朝の会
9:05 Morning Work	話し合い (誰かが出したテーマについて話し合う)
9:20 Literature Circles	朝の本読み練習 (グループごとに輪になり、同じ本を声を出しながら本を読む)
9:45 Library	図書室の先生と学習
10:25 Math	さんすう
12:00 Lunch/Recess	昼食と昼休み
12:45 Star Reading	パソコンを使ったテスト
1:50 Recess	休み時間
2:05 Science	理科
3:25 Final Bell	下校の時間

Daily schedule 時間割	
	

The Point: show what American students learn.

### What to do:

Explain that this is Mika's daily schedule. The homeroom teacher decides the daily schedule and curriculum.

9:00 Attendance	Including the pledge of allegiance
9:05 Morning Work	Classroom discussion. Somebody raises the topic of the day.
9:20 Literature Circles	Reading in the classroom
9:45 Library	Move to the library and study with the librarian
12:45 STAR Reading	STAR Reading is a online test to evaluate student's reading skills. STAR stands for "Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading".

### Notes:

You can see the hand-written daily schedule on the whiteboard. Why? It's because the classroom schedule is decided by each homeroom teacher every day. Unlike Japan, there are no "Teaching Guidelines" provided by Federal Ministry of Education in the States. There may be some guidelines by each state or each city, but it is very common for teachers to decide what to teach on any given day. With this system, teachers can feel free to adjust the curriculum and teaching speed to their students.

Classroom sizes are smaller than those in Japan (Usually about 24 students in a class – numbers vary by state or grade).



The Point: show how American schools instill patriotism and unity in children.

What to do:

[Click for audio] Explain that this is the Pledge of Allegiance and students recite it every day since kindergarten. This is especially important for unifying the diverse student population. If possible, recite the pledge yourself (if you're from the States) as the audio can be hard to understand.

Notes:

Every morning at public schools, from kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade, students recite the "Pledge of Allegiance" while putting their right hands on their chests and looking at the American flag. The flag is generally hung by students each day. The Pledge of Allegiance goes like this: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." Young students might just recite it from memory, not grasping its meaning. But, they naturally start feeling loyal to their country while reciting the pledge every day. It is a unique way to cultivate love for the nation in young students, especially for a country of many different races and cultures.



The Point: show how American kids read in the classroom.

What to do:

Explain that these 4 pictures show how Mika and her classmates read. Some read aloud in a circle, some even use tablets.

Notes:

Those four pictures were taken at reading time. Some students may read together in circle, others may read individually with books or tablets. Students move around the classroom freely depending on the time.

Within a single class, students are sometimes separated by level. For example, students are sometimes given different assignments depending on their level, unlike Japan, where all students do the same assignments and read the same passages.



The Point: illustrate America's opposing viewpoint to Japan's taboo of eating at school.

What to do:

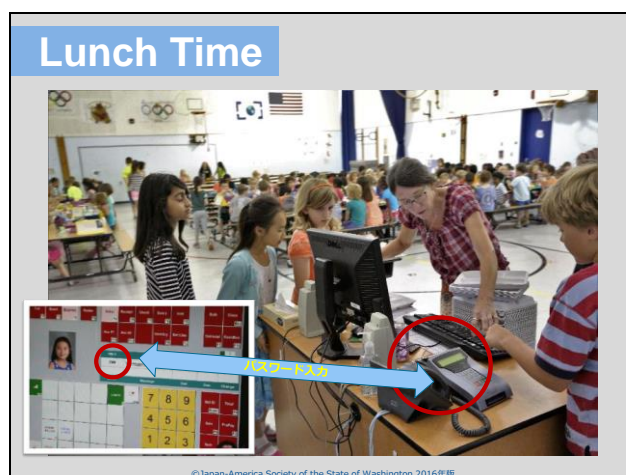
Explain that Mika's school has Snack Time every morning. Teachers believe that students cannot concentrate if they are hungry. Everyone brings their own snack. At some schools, parents take turns providing snacks for the whole class. Ask students for their opinion. Ask the Japanese homeroom teacher for his/her opinion.

Notes:

This slide surprised many students. Don't forget to use Quiet Coyote! You can also add that most schools in the US allow cakes or sweets in the class for birthdays or special celebrations like Halloween, Valentine's Day, and Christmas. Some teachers also give out candies as prizes or rewards.

In Japan, it's common to have "snack time" at preschoolers or kindergarten. In the US, there may also be snack time for elementary students. Many educators reason that students cannot concentrate on studies if they are hungry and that students need enough nutrition as they are still growing. Some schools have no rules about when and where students can have their snacks, however most schools designate a specific time and place. Depending on the school or the district, each student might bring their own snack, or they may take turns to bring snacks for the whole class. Popular snacks are fruits, vegetable sticks, chips, or crackers.





The Point: show that American students can choose what they eat. Some students are even responsible for paying.

What to do:

Introduce lunch time. Ask students where they are eating. What is the boy doing?

Explain that most US schools have a cafeteria. Mika's school uses the gym as the cafeteria. Some students bring their own lunch, but this boy is buying school lunch. He types his password into the computer. The teacher gives him a lunch tray and he can go choose what foods to eat for lunch.

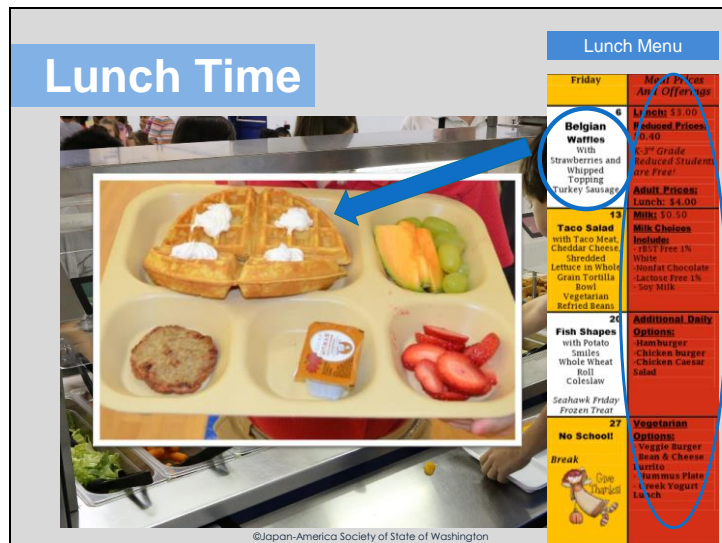
Notes:

In Japan, students eat lunch at designated tables in their classrooms. In America, students usually don't eat lunch in their classrooms. Normally, each class will go to the school cafeteria and have lunch there. Some schools change their gym space into cafeteria for lunch time, by arranging tables and chairs. Students can bring their own lunch from home, or they can purchase their food at the cafeteria. At the end of the month, their parents are charged, so students do not have to worry about lunch money. Some schools do not have this kind of system and require students to pay every time.

There are several menu options, to make sure students with food allergies or religious restrictions can enjoy lunch at school as well.



Slide 25



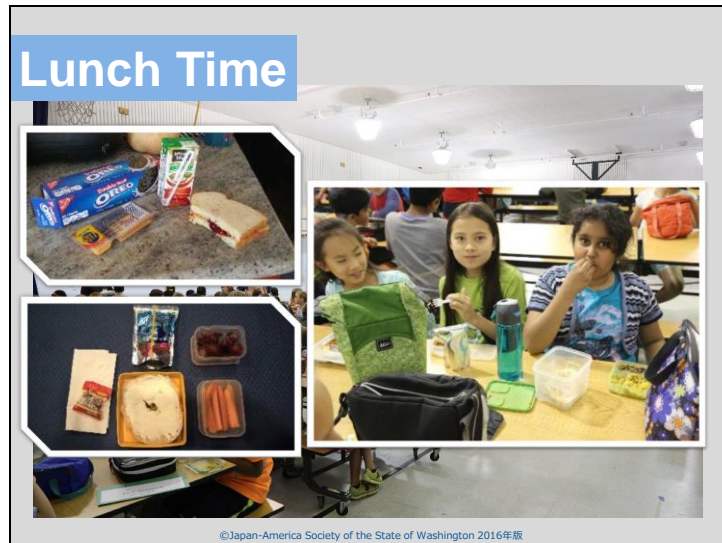
Notes:

Show the menu to the students and explain that lunch is \$3 and milk is \$0.50.

Every day has a different rotating special lunch such as “Belgian Waffles” or “Taco Salad.”

However if they don’t want to eat the special lunch that day, they have a set “Daily Options” selection (Hamburger, Chicken burger, Chicken Caesar Salad or Vegetarian) that are available to order every day.

Here in the States, kids can select what to eat depending on their religion or for allergy reasons.



The Point: show examples of an American sack lunch.

What to do:

Explain that some students bring sack lunches, like Mika. Show examples of these.

Notes:

Show what American sack lunches looks like. Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches are common.



The Point: show the different games, materials, landscapes, and equipment one observes at an American school.

What to do:

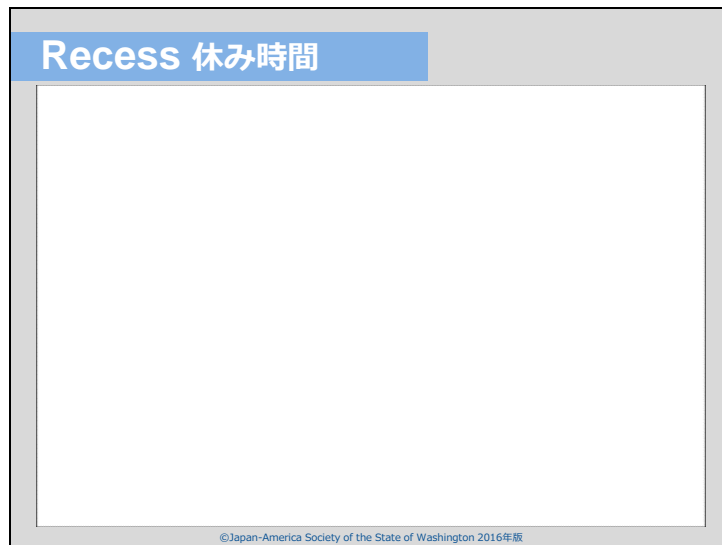
Ask students where they think this is. Explain that this is the playground. Ask students what they see. How is it different from your playground?

Notes:

This is very different from Japanese schools. Schools with an all-grass playground are rare in the US. Since elementary schools include kindergarten, play fields and other equipment are available for all students to use.

There is no sand as in Japanese school playgrounds. Instead, there are areas with concrete, grass, or bark. There are squares and designs on the ground that children play on (four-square, tag, follow-the-leader, etc.). A very popular recess game that Japanese students may not know about is “tetherball”. Two students hit a ball tied to a pole with a rope. They try to swing the rope all the way in a certain direction. The person who swings the rope all the way in their direction wins.

Slide 28



The Point: show the different games, materials, landscapes, and equipment one observes at an American school.

What to do:

Watch the video showing Mika's school during recess.

Notes:

This is not very different from Japanese schools. Everyone loves recess!



The Point: introduce the opposing American mentality that maintaining the school is not a student's responsibility.

What to do:

Ask, what do you do after lunch? American students do not clean their classrooms. Schools hire professional janitors or custodians to clean the entire school.

Notes:

Please avoid negative comments like "American kids are lazy" or "Why do we have to clean when American kids don't have to?!"

In many other countries besides Japan, students clean their school buildings, but it is very common for professional janitors to do all the cleaning for schools in the States and in Europe. They use professional equipment for their jobs, which may be an example of American rationalism.

Japanese students clean up after themselves because it is considered a good way to teach discipline. Therefore, make sure to convey that Japanese students should not feel jealous that. It is not better or worse, just different.



The Point: point out (again) that unlike Japan, America doesn't have set phrases for greetings.

What to do:

[Click for audio] Explain that school is over.

Ask, what do you do at the end of school? American students don't say formal greetings to their teachers like Japanese students do. Instead, they can say "Bye" or "See you later".

Practice the phrases with the students. [Click for the bell]

Notes:

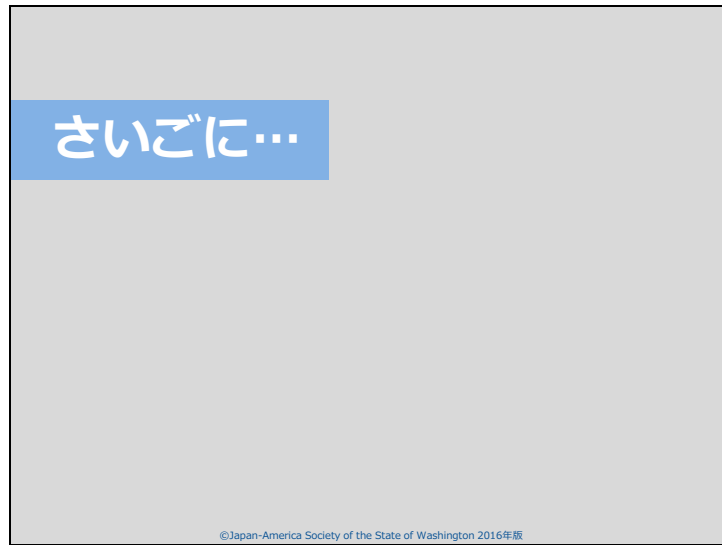
As with the morning bell, the teacher directs all students out of the classroom. Students are never left unsupervised inside the school.

In Japan, students recite formal greetings altogether: "Stand→Attention→Good-bye, teacher!"

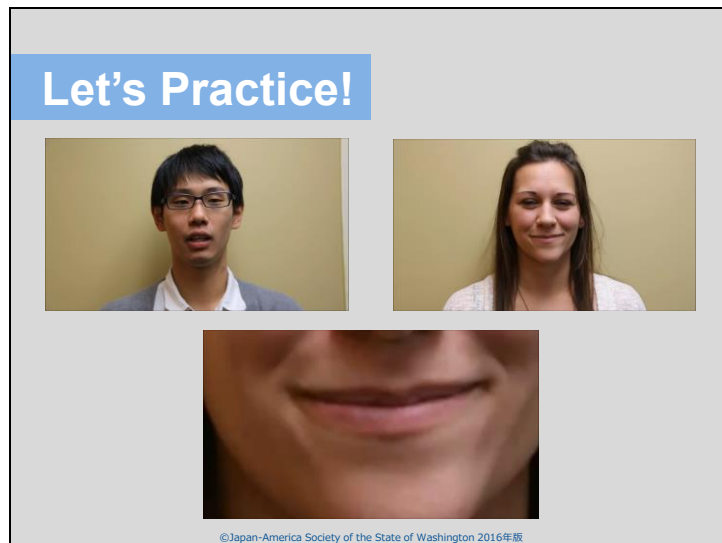
Students in the US, however, do not have such set greetings. Each student might say "see you tomorrow" "see you" "see you later" or "bye" individually. Teachers see students off outside the school campus, and that is the end of school time!

Mika's classmates do not have backpacks on because backpacks are stored in the hallway.

Slide 31



Before wrapping up...



The Point: show how to correctly say “thank you” to the presenter(s).

What to do:

Ask students to compare how Japanese and American people say it.

[Play left first, then right] How do their mouths move? Look at their lips, teeth, and tongues. If necessary, demonstrate with the homeroom teacher.

Notes:

Emphasize that we cannot use *katakana* to learn English because the sounds are too different. Focus on making the right mouth movements.

“Thank you” is one of the most commonly used expressions in everyday life. At the same time, it is very difficult for Japanese people to pronounce. If you watch carefully and imitate the ALT’s mouth movements, you should be able to pronounce it beautifully!





This lesson shows a day at a public elementary school in Bellevue, Washington. Since there are no “Teaching Guidelines” provided by the Federal Ministry of Education in America, each region manages its own unique school system.

Therefore, no school building looks the same. The particular school we introduced today is a one-story building with white walls. However, other schools have two floors or use red bricks or display colorful, modern architecture. Everything depends on the school district and its programs.

Curriculums also vary. Each homeroom teacher has a right to decide the daily schedule. We saw Mika’s daily schedule, but other classrooms in the same grade probably studied completely different subjects that day. In America, it is impossible to declare that “this is how we do things in the US” or “Americans all do this”. Just like the US – a nation of different races and cultures – schools are diverse.

We hope teachers who use these slides in Japan are fully aware of this diversity and do **not** reinforce or create unfortunate stereotypes among students.

Please enjoy our lesson with your students and thank you so much for your consideration.



The Point: review what students learned and address additional questions.

What to do:

Ask the students if they have questions. What surprised them about Mika's school? Did they learn anything new?

Have students fill out the review sheet. (This is available for download on our website → <http://www.jassw-ais.org/#!/home/wtl4i>)

Notes:

Instead of answering all questions yourself or assigning the review sheet as homework, please encourage students to email us directly. The Japan-America Society of the State of Washington wants all Japanese students to experience international exchange.

We are happy to receive emails in English or Japanese.

**Thank you & See you!**



提供:



**JAPAN-AMERICA  
SOCIETY** Society of the  
State of Washington  
ワシントン州日米協会

後援: 外務省、アメリカ大使館、米日カウンシル

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