

Daily Expressions

The two Daily Expressions homework sets teach children a range of common everyday expressions. The CD tracks also introduce hundreds of English words, which are given in the context of entertaining skits and songs with Japanese explanations to supply meaning and make them memorable.



Introducing Daily Expressions

Hand out a set with an enthusiastic flair to pique students' interest. Show the 'Listen.' card and try to elicit what it means by talking about it: "There's a mouse... and an elephant. And look! The mouse is saying something in the elephant's ear. What's it saying? Hmm, what can it be...?" Students will have learned 'listen' from the pink verb card set and might even be able to suss out the answer here; but our aim is not necessarily for them to successfully guess the answer; it is rather to pump up their interest in the card set. Show your excitement about the homework set and your students will go home eager to learn the cards.

When you hand out Daily Expressions Set A in particular, it is important that students understand what they are expected to do at home, and what you'll ask them to do next lesson. This will be their first card-and-CD homework set, so explain the homework sheet, how and when to listen, what they're to make sure to remember from the CD track, and so forth. Some Japanese use may aid understanding; if you're not confident in your own Japanese language ability, enlist a staff member to interpret for you. We also recommend that parents/guardians be spoken to by Japanese staff at this time, to ensure everyone's on the same page.

Extra Vocabulary

On the homework sheet, there is sometimes a note calling for "extra vocab," which is taught in the homework tracks. To earn a blue chip in the homework check for these weeks, students must say not only the expression but also one or more words of extra vocabulary pictured on a card. Example: "'Listen.' Mouse. Elephant." The week before, alert the children to this added requirement, and play the Hint Game (described later in this manual). To increase the challenge, children can be required to identify things the teacher points to, rather than being allowed to choose freely.

Being tested on two things complicates the hint-giving and chip-awarding systems. There are any number of ways to deal with this, depending on class size, teacher experience level, student psychology, etc. One simple approach is to give hints for the expression, but to simply teach a vocabulary item if a student cannot quickly produce it. The table below has a suggested chip-awarding procedure:

<i>Expression</i>	<i>Extra vocabulary</i>	<i>Chip awarded</i>	<i>Show the next student...</i>
Said promptly	Said promptly	Blue	...a new card.
Said promptly	Not said promptly	Yellow	
Said with hint	Said promptly		
Said with hint	Not said promptly	Red	
Not said after a hint	Don't check	Red	...the same card.

Homework Motivation

Here are a few tips to maintain high motivation levels:

- Acknowledge the effort students make to complete their homework. Look them in the eye, smile warmly, and praise genuinely when you stamp the homework completion box on their homework sheet. The number of 'times really listened' written on their sheet represents 1–2 hours of concentrated effort; they've earned some sincere praise from you!
- Praise those who do well in the homework check, and show loving concern when a student does not complete their homework or does poorly in the check.
- Get to know the material well so you can use the expressions at opportune times in class and encourage students to do so as well—this will impress on them the idea that real, meaningful communication is possible using these expressions.
- Increase the fun of the homework check by mimicking voices and sound effects from the skits.
- Occasionally play the Hint Game and 1-2-3 Game as enjoyable forms of review. Playing games with the cards can also make them fun again for kids who have struggled in the homework check.
- Deal with problems early. If an issue arises, such as homework non-comple-

tion or a prolonged drop-off in homework performance, show caring concern to the student when assigning extra listening times, and let them know they can earn make-up stamps for homework completion, and gold stars and stickers for doing well in homework checks. Inform staff and propose a plan of action, such as a review before class, to get those having trouble back on track.

Additional Notes

- There are two Daily Expression cards with two possible answers. (D/E A 16: ‘Once more.’ / ‘Again.’ D/E B 9: ‘I’m afraid.’ / ‘I’m scared.’) We ask students for both during the homework check.
- The narration for D/E B 29 (“It’s sunny.”) includes the alternative expressions “It’s a fine day” and “It’s a nice day.” There’s also a song that repeats “It’s a sunny day” several times, so if a student can produce any of the above expressions, they may earn a blue chip (or yellow after getting a hint).
- In the 3rd Rank, students revisit the Daily Expressions in the Beyond Daily Expressions workbook. Note that, while the listening homework is assigned when students are in the 10th and 9th Ranks, the workbook does not come until they are quite a bit older and more experienced in English.