

## Roll-Taking & Speed Roll

In Speed Roll, students to use functional English to complete a challenging task. The teacher initially runs the activity but over time it becomes more and more student-centered. On-the-ball teachers will regularly introduce new phrases and up the challenge level to keep the activity fun and educational.

### *Getting Started*

In beginning 10th Rank classes, we call students' names. They reply, "Here", "Present", "I'm here", or something similar. Once they're good with one reply, introduce a variation, and finally require each to use a different reply to that of the student who responded before them.

Once the class has started their first homework set, after you call the students' names, ask each in turn, "Did you do your homework?" Hopefully, all will gleefully reply, "Yes, I did," but also teach responses like, "I did half" as the need crops up. Catch the eye of those who complete the assignment and praise them warmly by saying something like, "Good job!"

### *Student Attendance Sheets*

At the start of a new school year, give each student an attendance sheet to fill in when you take roll. There are instructions on how to complete these on both the teacher and student versions. Of course, be sure students treat them with pride, and fill them in neatly. The students keep their attendance sheets in the front of their student files (make sure the sheets go in the files' plastic sleeves, or they tend to disappear into the depths of kids' bags).

### *Student-Centering Speed Roll*

Once students have got the basic procedure down, they steadily take over more and more of the activity. Only introduce one new responsibility at a time. Overloading them with new tasks leads to the activity eating up too much class time (it should be done and dusted in no more than three minutes, start to finish) and is frustrating for both teacher and students alike. Here some possibilities for initial Speed Roll duties:

1. The TA colors the teacher's attendance sheet while you call the names.
2. The Ex-TA times the activity and reports the time taken.
3. The TA calls the names and colors the teacher's attendance sheet.

## The Speed Roll Cards

Use these cards to prepare students for taking roll and reading a stopwatch. Each card has a question or expression to use in these tasks, with Japanese on the front, equivalent English on the back. The words are underlined with lines of different colors. For example, card 22:

Japanese side	English side
あなたはあなたの宿題をしましたか。	Did you do your homework?
Red underline: あなた	Red underline: 'you'
Yellow underline: あなたの	Yellow underline: 'your'
Blue underline: 宿題	Blue underline: 'homework'

- Play a game to test comprehension:
  1. Show the Japanese side of a single card and say the English expression: “Did you do your homework?” Kids don't repeat this yet.
  2. Next, ask the kids, e.g., “What color is ‘homework’?” The Japanese word 宿題 has a blue underline, matching the blue underline beneath ‘homework’ on the English side, so kids blurt out, “Blue!” Give chips for correct answers. (Note that you need not read a jot of Japanese to make this work, as long as you can distinguish these colors.)
  3. Repeat this for each of the individual words in the expression—you say the English, kids demonstrate comprehension by saying the color. There is never any need to speak, or have the kids speak, Japanese.
  4. Finally, go over the entire meaning of the expression on the card: “Did you do your homework?” This time, the kids repeat after you. It is important that we have kids repeating the entire expression only after they’ve studied the meanings of the individual words.
- In later weeks, switch to an English output game:
  1. Show the Japanese side of a single card and say the English expression: “Did you do your homework?” Kids don’t repeat this yet.
  2. Next, ask the kids, e.g., “What’s the blue word?” or “Which word is underlined in blue?” The Japanese word 宿題 has a blue underline, so kids blurt out, “Homework!” Give chips for correct answers.
  3. Repeat this for each of the individual words in the expression—you say

the color, kids produce the English word.

4. Finally, elicit the entire expression: Kids will say, in unison, “Did you do your homework?”

Each card is numbered, and if put into numerical order will form a ‘script’ for a high-level Speed Roll. However, we normally don’t flash all the cards in order. Rather, we use them according to color-coded groups. Each card has a small colored square on the English side:

Pink	Asking and answering about homework. Appropriate when the class is still doing teacher-centered roll-taking.
Yellow	Asking and answering about the stopwatch. Also useful in other timed activities like Enterquest.
Blue	Expressions the Teacher’s Assistant will use in a basic version of Speed Roll.
Green Brown Purple	Progressively more challenging expressions, divided (somewhat arbitrarily) into three sets.

### *Example Speed Roll*

The following example is of a class of 5th Rank students doing the Question/Answer, set B homework set. They received their first student attendance sheets after a year of classes, and the TA started filling the teacher’s attendance sheet six months after that. The teacher has used the Speed Roll Cards to teach the phrases the students use in this example.

1. The teacher hands the TA the roll sheet. The TA says, “Last week, Speed Roll took 2 minutes and 32 seconds. Let’s try to do it faster today. Start the stopwatch.”
2. The kids say, “Okay, let’s try!” as the Ex-TA starts the stopwatch.
3. The TA gives her portfolio to the Ex-TA, sitting beside, saying, “Please color in my attendance sheet, Misako.” The TA says to the next classmate, “And, Yosuke, please put blue stickers on my Super Homework Sheet.”
4. The Ex-TA supplies the TA with a sharp pencil, and blue, red and green colored pencils.
5. The TA asks, “What’s the date today?” The others answer more or less in unison. (Even if the dates are pre-typed, it’s a good question anyway.)

6. The TA switches to a dark blue pencil and takes roll, using full names. She fills in the sheet according to the plan at the bottom of the sheet.
7. The class responds to a missing kid's name with, "She's absent, or late."
8. In older classes, the TA may ask someone, "Why were you absent last week?" If the response can't be made in English and your Japanese comprehension is sufficient, this is a teaching opportunity. Reasons for absences tend to be recurring, reducible to a few words, and learnable—and the most common can be taught with KCE (Kids' Classroom English) Cards.
9. When the TA reaches her own name, she tells the Ex-TA, "Ask me." The Ex-TA calls the TA's name and colors her attendance sheet.
10. The TA exchanges the blue colored pencil for a red one and goes down the list again. But this time using only first names: "Tomoko, did you do your homework?" "Yes, I did it all." TA: "Good!"
11. "Hideya, did you do your homework?" "I did about half." TA colors in the left half of the circle, as shown at the bottom of the attendance sheet, and asks, "What didn't you do?" (Some older kids, with a grin, have also taken to saying, "That's half good.")
12. "Noriko, did you do your homework?" "I did almost all." TA colors in three-fourths of the circle. Again, "What didn't you do?"
13. To, "No, I didn't," veteran students can usually ask and answer to "Why not?" though responses from lower-aged or weaker ones run anywhere from *short* English, to Janglish, to Japanese. (Another teaching opportunity.)
14. After any of the above three, the TA says, "Next week, please do it *all!*"
15. At the third name called and asked about homework, the TA shortens the question to, simply, "Junko, did you?"
16. If the TA comes to a previous week's absentee, she will also ask, "Did you do it last week?"
17. Going down the register, the TA will have skipped her own name, so at the end, all others ask the TA, "Did you do *your* homework, Tomoko?" Hopefully, she will honestly say, "Yes, I did it all," and hear a chorus of "Good!" from her peers.

18. The Ex-TA colors in the homework circle of the TA's attendance sheet (having already colored the attendance column and the TA diamond), quickly reinserts the sheet into the TA's portfolio, and puts it by the TA, with the Super Homework Sheet on top, outside the portfolio.
19. The TA will report to the teacher, "Eight students are here and Namiko is absent or late."
20. While the TA has been doing the above, the others have extracted portfolios from bags, pulled personal roll sheets from portfolios and filled in same, including coloring in boxes under reasons for previous absences. They will have affixed blue mini-stickers in the appropriate boxes of their Super Homework Sheets. Each will have placed their portfolio neatly, face up, in front of them. Atop this will be any notebook in use, textbook or reader, and at the summit, their Super Homework Sheet. They'll then report to the teacher, in a whisper, "I'm ready," and first finishers will be praised.
21. The TA's helpers will have carefully colored in her attendance sheet, affixed Super Homework stickers, returned the former to its vinyl insert, placed the latter outside, on top of it, given the TA's dedicated homework sheet to the designated homework paper collector, and returned the portfolio to the TA, saying, "I colored in your attendance sheet." "I put blue stickers on your Super Homework Sheet."
22. The teacher surveys the table, making sure pencils and sticker sheets have been returned, and all students have removed their homework sheets from their files ready to hand them to the teacher.
23. The TA calls, "Stop the stopwatch," and all ask, "How long did we take?" The Ex-TA reads out the elapsed time and the TA records this time at the bottom of that date's roll list. The kids ask the TA for a comparison with the previous week, the TA computes and answers, and the teacher reacts predictably.
24. Any dedicated homework papers are handed, one at a time, by the students to the teacher, with a phrase like, "This is my Question/Answer homework sheet. I listened six times." The teacher stamps or signs each with individual name use, eye contact, and as much beaming and approval as has been earned.