Greet-Sheets

Beginning Japanese learners of English have to learn how to competently and confidently greet friends and new acquaintances. Cultural norms mean some students are reluctant to initiate exchanges and passively wait to be greeted. Worse, some may even actively avoid making eye-contact and being greeted, which in western cultures is often construed as rudeness or a lack of confidence. Greet-Sheets motivate young students to initiate greetings with others and ask questions on a range of topics.

Preparation

10th/9th Rank

From a child's first English class, teach them to greet staff members, classmates, teachers and others upon entering the school. Start with a simple 'Hi, (name)', progress to other greeting phrases like 'good afternoon' or 'good evening' and finally move on to Peer Greetings with Greet Sheets, which is done first in the classroom but then migrates to the lobby.

Peer Greetings with Greet-Sheets

8th - 6th Ranks

During attendance-taking, students record how many people they greeted on their Greet-Sheets. At the conclusion of attendance we quiz students on how many people they greeted, ask follow-up questions (e.g., "Jun, How's Mari today?", "She's fine.") and congratulate those who greeted the most. Give students a minimum target to reach each week, and praise those who make it while requiring those who didn't to greet some people after class to make up the difference.

Date ひづけ	4・7	4・14	4・21
① Staff スタッフ	2		
② My classmates クラスメイト	3		
③ My teacher わたしのせんせい	1		
④ Other people ほかのひと	1		
Total ごうけい	7		

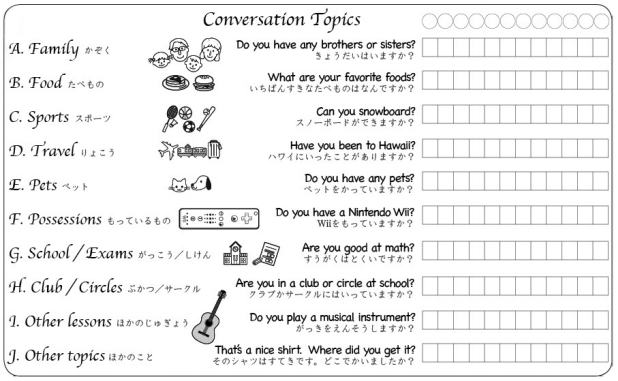
Peer Talk with Greet-Sheets

5th Rank and above

Peer Talk is a 5th Rank elective requirement (but can, of course, be introduced earlier). Follow the standard procedure (be sure to assign follow-up PLS Click/Rank CD homework, at least initially) but during Speed Roll, in addition to recording people greeted, students enter information in the Conversation Topics' box by coloring a box in the row corresponding to the topic of the conversation they practiced (one box per week). Once Peer Talk is running smoothly in class, get the students to do it in the lobby.

Greet-Sheets - Student-Selected Conversation Topics

5th Rank and above



Once students are smooth with Step 3, introduce the student-selected conversation topics. As in previous steps, do it in class before moving the activity to the lobby. By this stage students should be able to read, or 'read at', the examples listed in the Conversation Topics box. Students are initially permitted to ask each other these example questions, but we soon require them to ask a different question each week. Also, it's much *cooler* if they ask a question they don't already know the answer to. They color a box of a category when they initiate (not respond to) an exchange on that topic. Here's an example exchange:

Junko: "Good afternoon, Kenta."
Kenta: "Good afternoon, Junko."
J: "How are you today?"
K: "I'm great, and you?"
J: "I'm okay. Do you have a skateboard?"
K: "No, I don't. Do you?"
J: "Yes, I do."

In class Junko would color the first uncolored box of the Possessions row. After Speed Roll, we ask students to recall what they learned about each other.

Teacher: "Who did you talk to, Junko?"
Junko: "I talked to Kenta. He doesn't have a skateboard."
Kenta: "That's right."
Teacher: "I see, but you have a nice bicycle, don't you, Kenta? And do you have a skateboard, Junko?"
Junko: "Yes, I do."
Teacher: "Nice. Can it fly?"
Junko: "No!"

Once they have colored a column of boxes they color the circle at the top and are showered with praise and valuable gifts (e.g., stickers, erasers) by the teacher. This system encourages students to attempt all of the categories on the sheet, thus giving more depth to their conversations with each other.

Initiating greetings with others, while daunting at first, is an important skill for our students to learn. The Greet-Sheets turn the initially daunting task of greeting others into a fun game. Our kids build this important communicative skill in a spirit of friendly competition and steady individual achievement. Try them out. We hope you find them as useful as we have.

Notes

- Some students are reluctant to greet students from other classes, or people milling around the lobby whom they have yet to meet. Here are some ideas to motivate them:
  - Offer double points for the 'Other people' category.
  - Require students get at least one point in this category before they go home.
  - If another class starts at the same time, organize a class-greeting exchange. This has the extra benefit of having two teachers keeping an eye on proceedings.
- Look for ways to link homework and in-class activities to the Greet-Sheets. For example, if students are doing Question/Answer, set B, you could require them to use a question from that set in their exchanges.
- To save paper, and reduce time spent searching through student files, photocopy the Greet-Sheets onto the back of students' attendance sheets. This is standard practice at PLS Tokyo.