

INTRODUCTION

What makes “Terrific Talk” unique?

1. *Terrific Talk* has been designed for Japanese intermediate to advanced learners of English as a Second Language. Many textbooks on the market are either very structured or claim to be “communicative.” This text combines both formats to meet the distinct needs of Japanese learners. Generally speaking, Japanese students are hesitant to jump into conversation even when they have the vocabulary necessary to do so. This creates problems when so-called “communicative” texts are used, while other texts are so structured that little or no opportunity is given for communicative practice. *Terrific Talk* starts each chapter with structured activities that lead naturally to less structured activities and finally to fully communicative situations.
2. *Terrific Talk* assumes that students will be willing to be more talkative and that they will progress in their ability to communicate as the course progresses. Therefore, the latter chapters are more communicative than the beginning chapters.
3. This text, while mainly American in dialect, introduces characters and accents from other native English speaking countries, specifically, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Cultural notes explain the differences in these countries and in the slang and dialects that students are apt to encounter in meeting people from these countries.
4. Existing texts often assume that English will be necessary only after the learner goes abroad, so they are often set in foreign countries. *Terrific Talk* is set in Japan and introduces situations where Japanese students are given the opportunity to talk about their culture and their lives in English. Since both visitors to Japan and people that Japanese students will meet while they are abroad will be interested in hearing about Japan, the exercises and situations presented in this text are realistic and likely to take place.
5. *Terrific Talk* has been written by trained ESL/EFL experts who are presently teaching in Japan.

How Do I Use “Terrific Talk”?

Each chapter contains the following:

1. **Conversation.** (Each conversation has both native Japanese and English speakers.) Students can listen to the recording of the conversations and practice the conversations in small groups or as a class.
2. **Word List.** Word lists are in both English and Japanese. The meanings are for the context of the text.
3. **Comprehension Questions** check the students’ understanding of the conversation.
4. **Culture Notes** give students explicit information about the cultural aspects of the topic of the chapter including notes on differences between English speaking countries and sociolinguistic hints not covered elsewhere in the chapter. Questions at the end of this section allow students to check their comprehension of the culture notes. Questions can be used as topics of discussion.
5. **Fill in the Blanks** gives students the chance to use the vocabulary introduced in the conversation. Short dialogues can be used for oral practice.
6. **Small Talk** provides common expressions, questions, and possible responses relating to the topic including suggestions regarding social register.
7. **Situations** gives students the chance to use the vocabulary learned in a semi-communicative manner filling in the deleted parts of a dialogue and practicing these dialogues with other students.
8. **It’s Your Turn!** gives students the opportunity to use the vocabulary and expressions they have been introduced to. This exercise provides a fully communicative opportunity for students.
9. **Word Game** gives students the chance to use the vocabulary in a fun way thereby further reinforcing their learning.

The number and variety of exercises provided give teachers the freedom and flexibility to use *Terrific Talk* in many ways. One might choose to do all of the exercises for each chapter, or one might choose to use only those which encourage the actual use of the language for communicative purposes. The variety and number of the exercises also allows teachers ample opportunity to

see the progress of the students and to adapt the text for a number of different purposes.

Terrific Talk has been used successfully in Oral English classes with university students and with adults studying English for Specific Purposes.