

Japan's Climate

There are three ways to utilise this resource:

1. Print these slides (enlarge to A3 if you prefer) and display them around the classroom walls. Students may then move around the room to collect information for their calendar worksheet. Allow 30 minutes for this.
2. Print the slides onto A4 (you may need more than one set, depending on the size of the class). Distribute the sheets one between two and allow the students 3 minutes to read the page and add some details onto their worksheet before swapping.
3. Display the slides on the projector/screen. Allow the students to study each slide and add information to their worksheet. Change the slide every 3 minutes.

Note: Phonetic pronunciation on how to say each season in Japanese is included as a guide.

Japan's Climate

Use the information sheets to collect information about the seasons and events.

January	February	March	April
May	June	July	August
September	October	November	December

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Student calendar worksheet

Spring 春

Spring (*hah-roo*) is between the months of March and May in Japan.

Temperatures are still quite low and there is snow in mountainous regions. Rainfall is also fairly frequent, but days are generally sunny. In the south of the country the weather will be much warmer, around 24°C, while the north will be around 11°C.

This is the time when the many deciduous trees start to bloom, with cherry trees developing showstopping displays of blossom.



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Summer 夏



Japan's summer (*nat-sue*) is between June and August.

Temperatures can reach heights of 35°C and with this high temperature comes high humidity, especially in the south. The humid air makes the temperature feel even higher. Temperatures are lower in the north, around 20°C.

For the majority of Japan, summer is disrupted by the rainy season. Hokkaido, the most northern of the 4 main islands, isn't affected by the rainy season very much, and instead it receives sunshine and mild weather.

Autumn 秋

Autumn (*ak-ee*) is between September and November.

It is cooler than summer and so the humidity is much lower, with days feeling fresher. The north of the country cools quickly, down to around 7°C, and experiences increased rainfall. Meanwhile, the south will remain warmer, with temperatures around 18°C well into autumn.



The deciduous trees turn their leaves orange, yellow and red, forming stunning displays. The Japanese Maple trees, also known as Acers, are particularly striking at this time of year and they attract many tourists.

Winter 冬



Winter (*foo-you*) in Japan is between December and February.

Again, there are variations in temperatures across the country, with the north experiencing the lowest. Here, snow falls in heavy blizzards.

Further south the temperatures are relatively mild and snow fall is rare. In the most southerly regions it feels more like spring, with temperatures around 17°C, while the north can dip below -5°C.

Rainy Season 梅雨

Rainy season, or *tsuyu*, begins in the south of Japan at the end of spring and works its way to the north throughout the month of June and into July.

During the rainy season the temperature is increasing, which causes large amount of evaporation, making the air feel humid.

Central areas of Japan experience conditions that are similar to Spring, but there can be sudden heavy downpours. The south of the county experiences the heaviest rainfall, over 400mm in just one month in some areas, while the north gets away with very little.

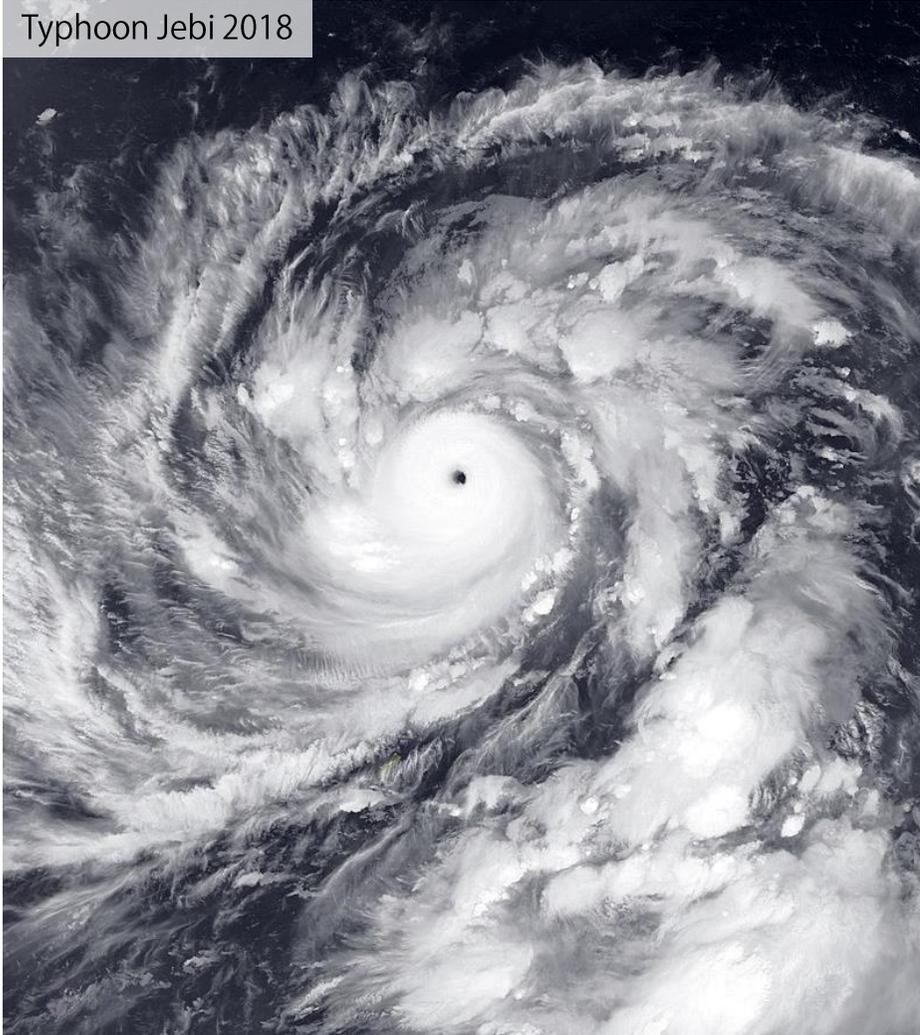


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Typhoon Season

台風

Typhoon Jebi 2018



Typhoons are huge and potentially dangerous storms, similar to hurricanes.

On average, 10 typhoons hit Japan each year, usually between August and September, but they can occur any time throughout summer and into autumn.

Typhoon damage



© Christophe95

Seasonal Festival 1:

Yuki Matsuri 雪祭り



A huge snow festival which has taken place in Sapporo on the northern island of Hokkaido since the 1950s where incredible sculptures are made out of snow. It's become a contest, with people from across Japan as well as international artists competing to create the most impressive works of art.

There are also mazes, play areas and stages for music performances made out of snow. The festival takes place in February and lasts a whole week.

Seasonal Festival 2: Setsubun 節分

Setsubun is a celebration of the changing of the seasons and it takes place in February on the last day of winter according to the old Japanese calendar.

Although it is not an official New Year, it marks the beginning of spring and many of the traditional aspects of the celebration are aimed at scaring away evil spirits and bad luck from the previous year.

Perhaps the most well-known setsubun activity is 'bean-throwing'; it's tradition to throw roasted soybeans at people dressed up as a demon. It's also thought to be good luck to eat the beans, one for each year of one's life and sometimes an extra one just to be sure!



Seasonal Festival 3: Tsukimi 月見

Tsukimi is the 'moon-viewing festival', which celebrates the harvest moon. The exact date of the celebration changes to fit the cycle of the moon, but it always falls in September or October.

It is traditional to gather somewhere where the full moon can be seen clearly and to make decorative displays of pampas grass and seasonal produce such as sweet potatoes, chestnuts and beans. In Japan, there is a myth that a rabbit lives on the moon so people may also put up rabbit decorations.

People also enjoy eating Tsukimi dango (above left), which is made with mochi (a dessert made by pounding rice). The mochi are round and white, like the moon!



Seasonal Festival 4: Tanabata 七夕

Tanabata, also known as the 'Star Festival', takes place in the summer. It's based on an old story where two lovers are reunited in the Milky Way.

The lovers in the story represent two stars, Vega and Altair. They were separated because their love for one another was distracting them from their important work, but once a year on the 7th July they meet at the banks of the Milky Way river and are reunited as magpies appear and form a bridge for them to cross. If it rains the magpies don't appear and the lovers have to wait another year to be able to meet again.

It's become tradition for people to make wishes at Tanabata on strips of paper called tanzaku and hang them up on bamboo (right).

