

## **A Report on the NZALT H.B. Branch Junior Japanese Role Play Competition 2009**

This was our first competition to get students to role-play using the target language in Hawke's Bay. There were originally four secondary schools which would participate in the competition. However, examinations and school camps prevented the two schools from joining the competition. It took place on the same day as another role play competition in Christchurch. More careful planning on the timing of the competition needs to be taken into account next year.

There were two entries each for Year 10 and Year 9 categories. All the participants performed confidently and used the target language with great flexibility. However, to be fair to all the participants, students should probably use the language which is appropriate to their level (e.g. students should use Y9 and/or Y10 NZ curriculum levels or equivalent) and language interactions among students should always come first over individual skills such as music and karate performances. The emphasis is on interaction using the target language. To clarify these matters, we need to reconsider the purpose of this competition, along with criteria for judging.

We did not have any entries for Year 7/8 role plays. But, Hastings Intermediate School Year 8 students were invited to see Years 9 &10 role plays on the day of the competition. They were asked to show the audience what they had learned in their Japanese classroom while judges were making decisions on the winners. They showed action learning techniques using some sign language. We probably need to keep trying to contact intermediate schools to promote language learning.

Although there were not many entries, the students who participated in the competition seemed to really appreciate the competition. One of the spin-offs too is that some of my students have started to bond and work together since the competition.

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