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Thank you
for joining us
in May and
June!



The Peach COBBLER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editor's Note.....3

Masthead.....4

Teacher's Corner.....5

Leaver's Advice.....7

A Bouquet of Unrequited Love...11

Okayama Events.....16

August Theme/Help Wanted.....18

EDITOR'S NOTE

Happy July! On behalf of OKAJet, I am so excited to present you the newly improved Peach Cobbler! In this issue, I'd first like to highlight our new recurring section "Teacher's Corner". Here you can find ideas for the classroom, contributed by you!

This month we are also saying goodbye to over 15 members of our community. Thank you to all of our leavers for the work you have put into Okayama's schools, neighborhoods, and towns. On page 7 you can read their parting advice.

Lastly, if you have any questions or feedback regarding this updated version of the Peach Cobbler, please find the feedback form on page 18. Stay peachy!



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Teacher's Corner

This month's Teacher's Corner comes to us from Chris who is a senior high school ALT in Okayama City!

I recently did a 2nd Street speaking role-play lesson with my SHS classes. It was a lot of fun and got students speaking spontaneously while giving them a genuine chance to express themselves creatively.

Students worked in pairs with a script displayed on the projector. One student played a 2nd Street staff member and the other played a customer trying to sell something to the store, alternating each round. To create their items, the customer students used their Chromebooks' drawing app (canvas.apps.chrome). They really loved this part, and it added an extra layer of engagement before the speaking even started.



For the first few rounds I directed what they should draw and sell, starting simple with a T-shirt, then stepping it up to a Nintendo Switch, and then a washing machine. Alongside this, I introduced vocabulary for describing item conditions such as "brand new", "worn out", "pristine", and "damaged". Having these phrases on hand gave students natural language to work with during the role play.



After presenting their items, pairs had to negotiate and agree on a buying price. This got them

using English numerical place values and conversational phrases like ”a fair price” or ”a rip off”, which added a practical, real-world dimension to the task.

Once students were comfortable with the format, I opened it up and let them draw and sell whatever they wanted. The results were hilarious, some tried to sell their houses, others their friends, and in one case, a student tried to sell me (I fetched ¥200). Letting students choose their own items brought a kind of focused chaos to the class that had every student engaged and keen to speak English to get a good deal.



One of the things I appreciated most about this lesson was how easy it was to differentiate on the fly. For stronger classes I could add in extra vocabulary or challenge students to avoid looking at the script, while lower-level students could lean on it as much as they needed. The core activity stayed the same regardless. It was a low-prep, flexible, and genuinely engaging lesson, I’d definitely recommend it to other ALTs looking for a speaking lesson that doesn’t require hours of preparation.



Did you have a lesson or game that went well? Do you have a creative method for feedback or rewards? Submit your stories to newsletter@okayama-ajet.com, or scan the QR code.

LEAVERS' ADVICE

The seasons are changing, and so is our JET community. Read advice from nine of our leavers.

I've been writing in circles and it feels like there's no way to summarize five years on JET in Japan. Rather what comes to mind is that I've achieved a dream long held since University and it's time I close the chapter.
I won't lie, there's been a lot of fear moving forward from the life I've created for myself here. Partially because I've experienced a large amount of personal growth from the schools, trips, and people I've met, but also because a dream of great significance has finished.
So I want to remind myself, but also share with you:
Emptiness doesn't await us on the other side of our dreams, new and additional forms of purpose do. Accumulating and finishing them only continues to grow the journey your life is going through.
Thanks for everything ଘ(*ˆ▿ˆ*)✧₊⁺

- Magdalena

Everyone has a bug to socialize. So don't feel like you're the only one that wants to hang out. Reach out, if they deny you, then go next. Make groups, drink, have fun.

- Ernest

I enjoyed my time here and my, how time flew! My advice would be to enjoy your time here to the fullest by getting involved in whatever you can. OKAJet helped me make some great connections and memories during my time here. Live it up!

- Karissa

Upon moving to Okayama City, my general approach to socializing was to download every friend-making and gay-dating app, show my face and my hobbies, and meet up with anybody who came calling. Being fluent in Japanese, I thought the worst that could happen would be a deathly encounter or too much conversation about my foreignness. One person I met for dinner insisted we get a private room. He showed no discouragement at continuous dismissal from reception, and I, fearless and interested, followed him around the street trying our luck. On the seventh floor of a building with a river running through it, we sat for gyoza. He began displaying a collection of coins on the table. Soon they were poorly flowing from my ears and hidden pockets of skin on his hands. To my horror, he was a budding magician. Another man I met for a surprising number of times displayed a remarkable inability to parlay any information about himself with decision. At every challenge, he was “so-so”. Each encounter was increasingly awkward and yet we continued with equivalent haste. Soon, I accepted an invite to a nomikai for twenty somethings with no friends in the basement of Okayama station. We went, and returned with a new friend, a third, someone to break the ice. Coffee was scheduled and they canceled at the last minute. Ignoring the data before us, we kept to the plan, met at the café, and continued to fail at becoming friends. Parting, we lied about meeting again, and accidentally headed in the same direction. No, it’s over, we said. It felt good to finally agree on something.

- Case

There's never enough time, so enjoy life here as you can. And don't forget to rest!
- Bren

Look up as many one of a kind festivals as you can and make every effort to attend them! - Jack

Take the job seriously but not too seriously. Have fun. Define the experience you want to have here. Take care of yourself :)
- Sean

Thanks for all the memories! - Nolan

The only thing that is currently coming to mind is don't be stupid with your money. Leaving sneaks up on you and it's not cheap. I highly recommend making a financial plan that allows you to have at least ¥300,000 saved. That' ll allow you to comfortably pay for your plane ticket up front (before being reimbursed), remaining residence tax, final bills (rent, electric, internet, etc), removal of furniture, and a small cushion to land on. From August onward, put ¥30,000 aside each month you' ll have that amount by next May (before you' d need to get your ticket).
Start thinking about and preparing for potential future jobs earlier than you think is necessary. This s*** is draining and best not to do at the last minute. Look into supplementary online training/certifications that can help with your employment qualifications. Prepare a skeleton for some cover letters and letters of interest. Reach out to any old contacts back home. Better yet, if you' re newer here, maintain whatever contacts you have. Send a post card, a goodie box, a bi-monthly email. Whatever it is, it' s better than going into the job hunt blind.
- Monica

A Bouquet of *Unrequited* Love

The Flowery Visuals of Episodes 4 and 5 of "Kamiina Botan Fully Blossoms When Drunk".

It's a nice early summer afternoon, and you decide to take a walk in the local park. Around you are vibrant flowers in mixed hues and shades from different species. You stop, look around, and suddenly feel a wide range of emotions. Flowers do a lot more than look pretty, signify spring has arrived, or be given as gifts to loved ones. But did you know that flowers have symbolic meanings? Of course you do, you know what roses are.

In Japan, this is called *hanakotoba (花言葉)*, where flowers can mean different things, from their species down to their colours. Because of this, in visual media, flowers are often used to convey their characters' emotions further, to make the audience feel a certain way, or to add a touch of symbolism. Every time there is a shot showing an abundant amount of flowers, I can't help but think, Is there a deeper meaning? More often than not, there is. In this multi-part article, I will talk about the spring 2026 anime "*Kamiina Botan Fully Blossoms When Drunk*" and its use of flower imagery to connect deeper with the character's emotions and the series' themes. Let me start with a brief introduction to *Kamiina Botan*.

Kamiina Botan Fully Blossoms When Drunk

"*Kamiina Botan Fully Blossoms When Drunk*" follows Kamiina Botan, a 20-year-old first-year university student, who shares her first drink with her dorm leader, 3rd-year Tonami Ibuki. Ibuki, despite being unable to drink with



others due to a past incident, has her walls quickly toppled by the bright and alluring Botan as they both grow a bond with each other as time goes on.

Another character is first-year master's student Gujo Kanade, who also lives in the same dorm, and harbours feelings for Ibuki. As Ibuki and Botan grow closer, Kanade finds herself slowly drifting apart from Ibuki, despite trying to hold on as much as possible.

In episodes 4 and 5, as well as in the names and genre, there's a heavy use of flower imagery. First, let's talk about the White Lily and the Peony.

Kamiina Botan and the White Lily

Throughout history and in different cultures, the symbolism of the White Lily (*Lilium candidum*) or *shirayuri* (白百合) in Japanese, can range from innocence, purity, and femininity. Additionally, White Lilies can be seen as a sympathy flower, used for funerals or given to those mourning a loss. In Japanese media, the White Lily is the de facto symbol of "*Yuri,*" a genre depicting romantic relationships between women. In fact, yuri (百合) is the

Japanese word for the Lily (*Lilium spp*).

By now, it should be obvious that Kamiina Botan has sapphic themes, with there being a love triangle between Kanade's unrequited feelings and the budding (pun very much intended) relationship of Botan and Ibuki. Furthermore, the literal translation of the Japanese title is "*Kamiina Botan, Her Drunken Appearance Like a Lily Flower*". Despite the flower itself not being prominently displayed in the series, other than that one shot in the opening credits, it's right there in the title.



How the white lily is connected with sapphic relationships in anime and manga is a whole different conversation into the history of the genre and queer representation in Japan.

Kamiina Botan and the Peony

The Peony (*Paeonia suffruticosa*) can symbolize many things depending on the culture. For the Chinese, it can represent wealth, honour, and high social status. For the Europeans, the peony can symbolize romantic love,

bashfulness, and fidelity, along with deep emotions, long marriage, and mutual devotion. For the Japanese, the peony can carry the meanings of bravery and honour. Additionally, there is a Japanese proverb comparing a person's beauty with three flowers, each meaning standing with elegant bearing, sitting with perfect composure, and walking with natural elegance, respectively: *"Stand like a [Chinese] peony, sit like a tree peony, walk like a lily flower"* or 立てば芍薬、座れば牡丹、歩く姿は百合の花. For those paying attention, the last part of the proverb should remind you of something. The Japanese title of the series has very similar wording to the proverb: "*Drunken Appearance Like a Lily Flower*" or 酔へる姿は百合の花.

In Japanese, the peony is called "botan" (牡丹). The main and titular character of the series is named Botan despite her name officially being written in hiragana. With her name and the title's connection with the proverb, is this a coincidence? Maybe, maybe not. The connections could stop



Spoken with perfect composure, but ayo, what does she mean by that? 🙄

here. However, one can argue that Kamiina Botan can exert the qualities of the proverb. Especially with alcohol in her system, Botan becomes quite the smooth and elegant talker, often flustering the person she's talking to. The English title of the series even says that Botan "blossoms", something flowers famously do. She just does it whenever she's inebriated.

Conclusion

So far, the flowers mentioned are more so in connection with the concept of *"Kamiina Botan Fully Blossoms When Drunk,"* that is, the name of the series, the main character, and the themes. We talked about Kamiina Botan sharing a name with the Peony, and the White Lily and its connection to the yuri genre in Japanese media. Next time, I will dive into the flowers that do show up in the series, starting with the Hydrangea.



Written by Wilson Yuan

Events in Okayama

The stars of Tanabata
たなばたのおほしさま



Date: Saturday-Sunday, July 4th-5th; Tuesday, July 7th
More info: 日本語
Location: Okayama Lifelong Learning Center
Time: 10:00-10:35; 14:30-3:05 Tuesday only
Admission: ¥500 adults, ¥300 children

Blueberry Land Kibi Blueberry Picking Experience
ブルーベリーランド吉備 ブルーベリー摘み取り体験



Date: Every Tuesday-Thursday, Saturday-Sunday until August 30th
More info: 日本語
Location: Kibi-Chuo
Time: 10:00-12:00
Admission: ¥1000 adults, ¥700 children, children under 3 free

Ice Cream Expo "Aipaku" in Okayama Tenmaya
アイスクリーム万博「あいぱく」in 岡山天満屋

More info: 日本語
Date: July 8th-27th
Location: Okayama Tenmaya 7th Floor
Time: 10:00-18:00
Admission: Free



Free SUP & Kayak Experience Event
SUP＆カヤック無料体験会

More info: 日本語

Date: Saturday, July 18th
Location: Okutsu Lake Paddling Field
Time: 10:00-11:00, meet at 9:50
Admission: Free



Kurashiki Tenryo Summer Festival
倉敷天領夏祭り



More info: 日本語

Date: Saturday, July 25th
Location: Kurashiki City
Time: 16:30-20:40
Admission: Free

Kameiwa Festival
亀岩まつり

More info: 日本語

Date:Tuesday, July 28th
Location: Kameishi Shrine, Suimon-cho
Time: 19:00-22:00
Admission: Free



August Theme: Summer Fun

What did you do this summer? Share any adventures, or last minute travel ideas to check off the list before the start of the new semester! Please keep submissions to 500 words and feel free to include pictures.



Want to be part of the newsletter?

We are always looking for new talent and help at the newsletter, so if you have writers itch you want to scratch, or have some ideas for the newsletter look, please contact us at our email!

newsletter@okayama-ajet.com

Additionally, if you have any suggestions or feedback for our newsletter, please fill out the form below!

