

Savannah Gomes

Stacy Joslin

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At first, I had no idea what to do for my project. I wanted to put something into it that I knew a little about, but I wanted to be able to learn more about it along the way. Doing a drive, for example, is one idea I purposely stayed away from because it seemed too simple and like it wouldn't actually work with all the other activities other seniors would do around the school. When I got the idea to do a website to learn Japanese, it was great. I'm not completely fluent, but I used what I knew and did some research about what I didn't. Plus, no one had to look at it if they didn't want to, and it was easy to tell people about in person, through flyers, and through posts online.

The most difficult part about the project was finding outside resources. It seemed like everywhere I turned, someone was too busy or too far away. With Small Talk Language Academy, for example, their email didn't work. Once I realized I had to call, it became less of a priority because I would have to find the time to do it outside of school, and it often just didn't work out with my schedule, especially at the time of year I found it. I got so close to seeing another Japanese teacher besides Collis Sensei in person, too, but our schedules didn't work at all. Still, I found opportunities in the most unlikely places, like at Amherst College during my overnight visit. I met with the Japanese teacher there, talked to her a little bit, and sat in on her class. The age group she taught was the age group I was aiming at, and I learned from her that repetition is more important than memorization.

I am extremely proud of how my website turned out. When I posted the link on Reddit, I got some especially negative feedback, about how it looks more like a two day project than a senior project, and about how they wouldn't use my website if it was the last to learn Japanese, but I know how much work and thought I put into every detail. I was aiming at complete beginners, and I can only assume that the people making the negative comments knew enough Japanese that the website wouldn't have been helpful to them. I left out most of the grammar and verb conjugation because I believe that my website was supposed to be used more as an aid than as a sole instrument. I even provided outside resources if the viewers wanted to learn more. I did more than I expected I could, and the positive feedback I got was incredibly encouraging.

I had fun doing the project and it came out better than expected. I learned that I can push through the hardest of situations and come up with great work. Even after my contacts turned out to be useless and I got the hate from Reddit, I kept going and I was still proud of what I'd done. I didn't think that I would be able to stand situations not going my way, but I handled it well.