

Message for the Japan Bowl Ontario 2022 participants



皆さん、こんにちは。

It is truly a pleasure to send my greetings to all the students who are meeting up virtually to take part in Japan Bowl Ontario 2022. Having started off on a modest scale thirty years ago, the Japan Bowl has now grown into a worldwide movement with competitions taking place in many countries. The role it has played over the years in encouraging students to study Japanese is a truly significant one, and I take this opportunity to thank all those involved in organising the various Japan Bowls throughout the world.

Japanese is a difficult language to learn, and preparing for the Japan Bowl must have been both time-consuming and hard work, with time spent memorising *kanji* and *kana*, remembering historic and geographic details, making sense of grammar, perfecting listening comprehension, and trying to understand curious customs and strange gestures. However, I do hope that had some enjoyable moments along the way, and that the competition will prove to be a fun and fulfilling experience.

I extend my congratulations to all the students participating, and my admiration to their teachers, for their commitment and their hard work. I am delighted to hear that many Japan Bowl participants choose universities that have Japanese studies as part of their curriculum and that after graduation, some go on to pursue careers that are related to Japan.

In the same way that learning English helped me to better understand the world beyond Japan, I am confident that learning Japanese will lead to a greater awareness and knowledge of the world for this year's Japan Bowl participants. Please do remember that human beings and societies have much more in common than they have differences and it is up to all of us to nurture and cultivate this common ground so that we may create a better society for the future.

学生の皆さん、

将来、是非、日本とカナダの架け橋となってください。いつの日か、どこかで、皆さんとお会いすることを楽しみにしております。