

# Professional Standards Project

L A N G U A G E S



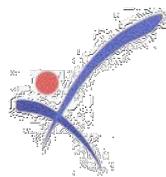
## Teacher participant investigation

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**Tennille Alford**

**Japanese, Year 6**

**Queensland**



  
UniSA

Research Centre for  
Languages  
and Cultures

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## TEACHERS' CLASSROOM-BASED INVESTIGATIONS

Welcome to the examples of teachers' classroom-based investigations that have been drawn from their work in the Professional Standards Project. Teachers were asked to conduct an investigation into their own practice based on their work with the Standards.

A range of investigation topics and processes from across the states and territories of Australia have been chosen, although not all investigations that teachers provided have been posted on this website. These examples are provided for you to consider and use, while expanding your own understanding of the Standards and their use in the teaching and learning of languages.

However, you will not find examples of programming or practice that you can instantly adopt and use in your teaching. That was never the intention.

Furthermore, you will not find 'best practice' or exemplars of definitive investigations of languages teaching and learning.

So, what kinds of materials can you expect?

- You will find ideas about practice that teachers have investigated. You can use these ideas to stimulate further thinking when working in your own context.
- You will find some outstanding approaches to thinking about practice that advance our understanding of how to make teaching and learning languages a rich and effective learning experience for students, and a satisfying professional experience for teachers.
- You will also find professional educators striving to make sense of their work in teaching and learning languages. You will find a great deal from which you can learn.

What these programs show are 'teachers at work', examining their practices and pedagogies in relation to the Standards. The teachers responded to their particular contexts, the curriculum and assessment frameworks in which they work, the particular demands they and their students face in languages education, and their own 'learning-by-doing' from using the Standards in teaching and learning languages. The details about the specific context and the elaboration of the teachers' investigations give professional insights into the interaction of thinking and practice.

Reading across the full set of investigations you will get a sense of the ideas and issues that the Standards raise about languages teaching for teachers, for students, for whole schools, and for communities, across languages and age groups, and in the range of contexts in which languages are taught in Australia.



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment  
and Workplace Relations



## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS PROJECT CLASSROOM-BASED INVESTIGATION REPORT

TEACHER	SCHOOL	LANGUAGE	YEAR LEVEL
Tennille Alford	Brisbane Grammar School Gregory Terrace, Spring Hill Qld	Japanese	Focus: Year 6

### CONTEXT

#### *Profile of student group*

My investigation focused on a Year 6 Japanese class. There are twenty-six boys aged between 9 and 11 years in this class. They will have been studying Japanese for approximately 9 weeks at the conclusion of this project. There are fewer than five students who have prior Japanese language experience and no students have a native speaker background. All students have had foreign language learning experience at primary school, and during Semester One at Brisbane Grammar School.

#### *Profile of school community*

Brisbane Grammar School is a large, single-sex school with approximately 1500 students, situated near the centre of Brisbane.

At my school languages are a valued part of the whole school curriculum. Five languages (Chinese, French, German, Japanese, and Latin) are offered to boys in Years 6 to 12.

In Middle School, boys in Year 6 and 7 study a semester each of Chinese, French, German, and Japanese on a rotational basis. Students then choose one language in Year 8, with an option of studying a second language, including Latin, in Year 9.

### AREA OF INVESTIGATION

My investigation stemmed from a conversation with a colleague about our Middle School languages program. In Term 2 the school gave all teachers a Tablet PC and we discussed the useability of the 'One Note' program to improve teaching the writing of script languages.

I chose to analyse the impact that the Tablet PC has on my teaching. I selected this area for several reasons:

- First, I wanted to integrate this new technology into the classroom rather than use it as an 'add on'.
- Second, as students in Middle School have only 2 hours per week for one semester there is limited opportunity to master script and to practise writing, so I saw this as an opportunity to offer a more organised approach and cater to various abilities in the classroom.
- Finally, I wanted to reflect critically on my teaching and improve my use and understanding of ICT.

My investigation question was 'how can I improve my teaching of Japanese through the use of a Tablet PC?' This is linked with the personal characteristics standard: *they have a commitment to their own professional and personal learning* (AFMLTA 2005).

## CLASSROOM PRACTICE

I integrated the use of a Tablet PC into each lesson and I am fortunate enough to have a projector in every classroom. Students know to set up the projector at the start of the lesson and I can take the roll on the Tablet, setup worksheets, and give new grammatical and vocabulary explanations. In this semester I focused on two major areas to measure the improvement in my teaching through the use of the Tablet PC.

### *Focus 1:*

Organising lesson plans, worksheets, and teaching objectives into the Tablet PC, One Note program.

### *Focus 2:*

Writing all 'board' notes for students into One Note on my Tablet PC.

This is similar to a word document (with grid lines) that is projected on the whiteboard. This has allowed me to prepare notes ahead of time, alter notes with students, use highlighting and revision techniques and save these pages to put on the school intranet at a later date for absent students to view (the latter I have not experimented with yet, although I hope to do so at a later date).

Other minor areas were storing the roll electronically in One Note and using a writing program called 'Sticky Notes' with students to focus on reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

The difference between the Japanese program this semester and last semester was that I was able to pre-prepare some board work for students, so that I could spend more time checking their progress. I was also able to sit facing the class with the Tablet PC in my lap.

## DATA OR INFORMATION GATHERED

During the semester I asked students informally about their perception of teacher use of the Tablet PC and their reactions to it in terms of their own learning.

I also gathered data from a survey. Students answered questions about the teacher use and perception of their own learning in the form of true and false questions, strongly disagree to strongly agree about statements, and long-response questions where there was an opportunity to express opinions and give examples.

I found reflection and critical analysis beneficial for measuring the success of the Tablet PC in my own teaching.

## INTERPRETING THE INFORMATION

In choosing to study my own teaching practices through the use of the Tablet PC I had assumed that my organisation of teaching materials would improve, as there were fewer paper copies and all materials were stored together. As well as this I found that I could also be more creative and the project encouraged me to try using new programs and activities to engage students. I was able to present a larger and more varied amount of information to students, with less instruction. Using the Tablet PC in the classroom I became very aware of my physical position in the classroom and was able to move away from being the focus and main source of information, to letting the student and Tablet PC work together. I found that because I was not out the front, always writing on the board, I could move around more, and when needed I could quickly access work for students.

There were also benefits for the students learning and engagement in classroom activities. As the screen looked exactly the same as their workbook, there were less organisational problems. For example, some students struggle to remember the date in Japanese and the order. By having it on the board all the time, exactly the same as is written in their workbook, students were not asking similar questions each week, such as 'which box do I put the number in?' This meant they were able to start much more quickly and focus on the work at hand. I did not see untidy handwriting, or improperly formed script. Students could see more clearly how the language was put together.

From the data I collected from the students I discovered overwhelmingly that they thought the classroom was a better educational environment and their learning was enhanced through the teacher's use of the Tablet PC. Boys also thought that as long as the teacher continued to use the tablet then it would not be seen as a gimmick and would not reduce in effectiveness over time.

One area that I found difficult to keep clear cut was the distinction between analysing my teaching through the use of the Tablet PC and recording and observing students' learning as a result of varied teachings strategies and activities with the Tablet PC.

One interesting finding was some students did not recognise activities completed on the Tablet PC as anything different to what was normally completed in the classroom. Some students commented that 'we hadn't done any activities yet'. Another aspect that I was surprised about was when conducting my research I was surprised that when surveyed about my teaching many students asked 'will we be getting Tablet PCs now that you are researching us?'

Problems that I encountered in my investigation were analysing my own teaching outcomes and not student outcomes from the use of the Tablet PC. An improvement in teacher performance and pedagogy would generally lead to an improvement in student performance and engagement. However, they are not mutually exclusive. In future I would ask another languages teacher to come and observe one of my lessons and give me feedback on teacher use of the Tablet PC.

I was pleased with the findings of my report — that the Tablet PC helps me in engaging students, organising work, and presenting it.

## MATERIALS AND EXEMPLARS

*Attachment 1* is a sample of using One Note to demonstrate new work to students. Rather than writing directly onto the whiteboard, using One Note allows students to see where characters 'fit' in relation to grid books, and other characters.

*Attachment 2* is a sample of using Sticky Notes to show students correct stroke order of script and record my voice and theirs.

*Attachment 3* is an example of my lesson planning using One Note and the Tablet PC to prepare and store a work program.

*Attachment 4* is summary of results from the student survey about using the Tablet PC to improve my teaching practices and student learning. Please note that spelling and grammatical errors of students have not been altered.

## EVALUATION

During my investigation I was aiming to improve my teaching, in particular Japanese script. Through this project I have realised that I have also been more organised as a teacher, am able to provide quick reference materials for students who are absent on a particular day, and provide a variety of teaching activities to engage and encourage students' independent thinking.

I would definitely continue to use the Tablet PC in delivery of classroom materials and teaching new content. This could be altered for teachers without a Tablet PC to using a data projector with a regular laptop and typing script directly onto the whiteboard. Alternatively, if a classroom is equipped with an overhead projector, then grid paper could be projected onto the wall.

I am looking forward to future investigations and seeing what impact the use of Tablet PCs may have on student learning, as students suggested in their survey results.

## REFLECTION

This project has been very beneficial, not only for analysing and reflecting on my classroom practice, but also an opportunity to work with other like-minded colleagues. I have really enjoyed putting all my planning together and using the professional standards and intercultural understanding to look at how I am teaching and the methods I am using to deliver my work. I felt this project really allowed me to analyse the standard of accomplished language teachers and try to aspire to improve in all areas. I think there are many areas I can work on such as audio and using material within the Tablet PC.

Although it was only tested with a small cohort of students, I was impressed with their enthusiasm and eagerness to embrace new technology. I am still unsure if their eagerness to try new ideas or my new organisation of teaching materials came first. However, I feel the project had a successful outcome. That is, students were encouraged to continue learning languages.

For me, the outcomes are varied. I believe using the Tablet PC has improved my teaching style, organisation, and impacted on students' learning. One way that I would like to further test this is comparing my teaching methodology and planning for the Year 6 class with a Year 7 Japanese class who undertake the same course, without the use of a Tablet PC. Although there are variables that would need to be taken into consideration, this is an area I will examine at the end of the year, once the course is completed. I found using the Tablet PC was 'easier' because there were not so many 'paper' copies and I am pleased to reduce my paper consumption.

# ATTACHMENT 1

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word document titled "Greetings NEE-DI-II - Micro EN English (Australia)". The document content is handwritten on a grid background and includes the following text:

Greetings 八月二十一日

11am ko ni chi wa 4/5pm \* Goodbye

12Am こんにちは sa yo o na ra

Good Morning Hello t ya i t i bi

Good evening

おはようございます。 こんにちは

6am go za i ma su ko n ba n wa

6pm

Good night (before sleep) ← おやすみなさい

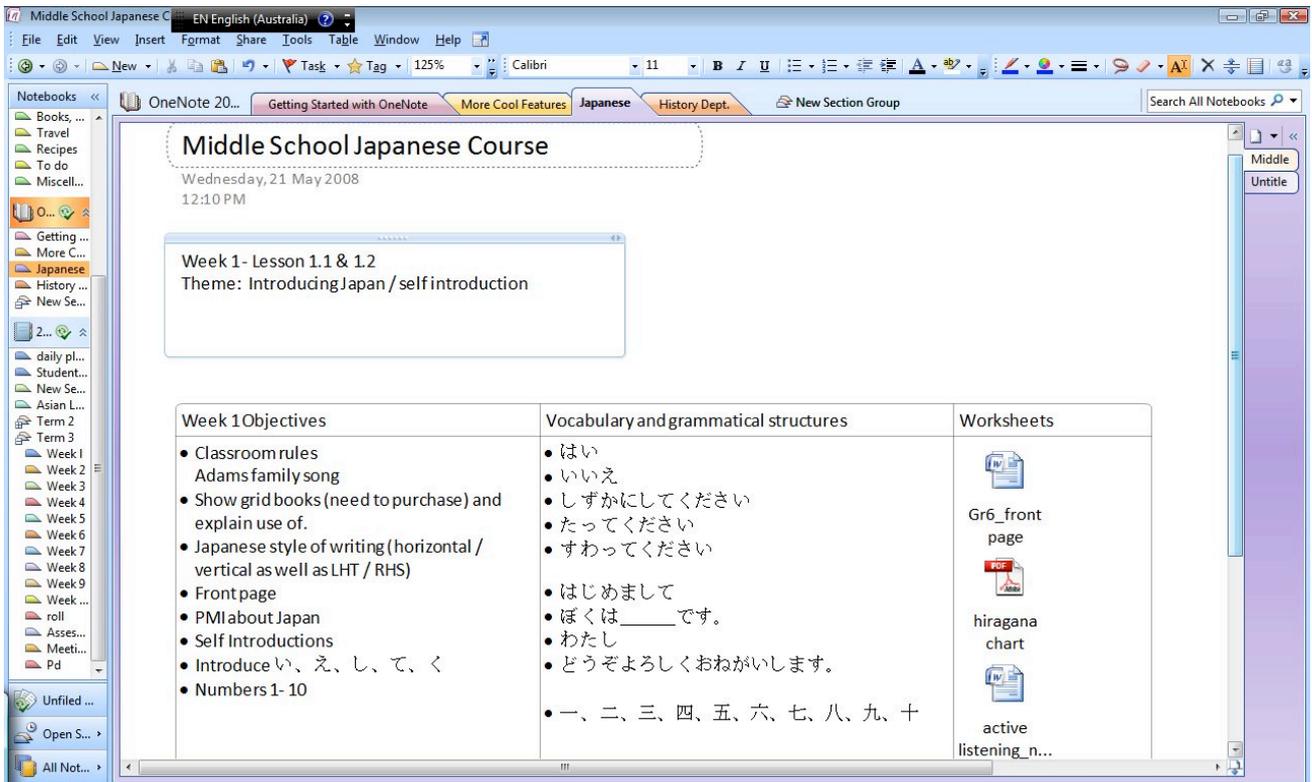
おやすみなさい

o ya su mi na sa i

The document also features a circular diagram representing a 24-hour clock. The circle is divided into two halves by a horizontal line. The top half is labeled "Good Morning" and "Hello", and the bottom half is labeled "Good evening" and "Good night (before sleep)". The Japanese phrases are written around the circle, with some highlighted in yellow, green, and pink. The English translations are written below the Japanese phrases.



# ATTACHMENT 3



## ATTACHMENT 4

### Tablet PC use in the classroom - Results

#### Overall Results

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21 attempts have been completed

#### Question 1

Overall, I believe the classroom is a better education environment for the inclusion of the Tablet PC for teaching.

True

False



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I believe the Tablet PC is of more benefit in a languages classroom than some others.

True

False



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I would rather be taught Japanese in a classroom where the teacher is using the Tablet PC than a 'normal' classroom.

True

False



**Question 4**

What do you like best about the Tablet PC?

 [Collapse Responses](#)

You use a stylus which is really fun. Also everyone can see it better.

you can get grids and things that make it easier and more fun

you can here yourself talking and hear the sound.

nothing

I like the style and it is also easy to use.

Its easier to see because it is bigger than a whiteboard.

It is able to have a grid paper for us to copy off and then study thoroughly in very similiar methods.

The thing i like best about the Tablet PC is that, because it is projected on a screen, it is easer to see and I don't have to crane my neck to look at it.

It does not distract my work when she is writing on the board

I like the way were you can write on the screen with a pen.

I can see it clearly

I like the tablet because it's really fun and and when the teacher is about to use it her/his hand doesn't get in the way. i would really like one because they're they lod really quikly. I like potatos!

that you get to record your self and have some fun with it.

that you can write with a special pen on the screen in word and it is good because its windows vista

It records your speech

The fact that you can see what it has to look like in your grid book and make sure each character is in the right grid square. Also something can be saved instead of having to write it out on the whiteboard.

I like that it's easier to use and we can see it easier.

It can be interactive. Also everyone can work with it and because it is more colourful.

I like the fact that it can record voices. I have to admit that's cool!

the way that you can write rather than having to type words

its cool because you can write and draw with a pen on it.

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Number of Responses: 21

**Question 5**

What do you like least about the Tablet PC?

 [Collapse Responses](#)

It`s hard to use a stylas.Other than that theres nothing bad about it.  
you have to change sites to do different things  
The way that you can replay sounds to yourself.  
nothing  
Because the data projector is mostly not working and it takes a long time to set it up.  
It is less neat than typing. It takes a long time to get on sometimes.  
It may take a while to set up.  
The thing I least like about the Tablet PC is that it has to be set up. usually it isn't that long though.  
nothing!!  
You often hav to change the way you want to do something.  
The fact that it hurts my eyes  
nothing  
that it is harder to write on it.  
its chunky (theres nothing bad about it)  
you can't hear the recording very clearly  
That when the computer isn't used for a while it will stop projecting.  
I don't like it because the projector doesn't work much  
How it may some time never work and takes a while to set up.  
I think it's hard to write with.  
i cannot think of a way that the tablet pc is bad in any way  
nothing.

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Number of Responses: 21

**Question 6**

How would you like to see the Tablet PC used to improve the classroom experience for students?

 [Collapse Responses](#)

I think it`s really great.It looks really fun and should be fun.  
 use the tablet more than a whiteboard  
 if you could send them the sounds along with the pics than it would be great.  
 no  
 I would like students to work hard and have fun but not over exited.  
 By everybody having a turn and having fun.  
 Not all the time but sometimes.  
 I would like to see the Tablet PC to be used in most classes used to multitask, it can be used as a whiteboard or you could go on the net and used to do other things.  
 in every way!!!!!! I would like a computer YES!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
 I would like to see it improve the classroom in the way that when we are watching we have to keep quiet and observe.  
 NNNOOOTTHHHIIINNNGGG!!!!!!!!!!  
 all the kids get to use one to  
 have grids in it for Japenes and other lauganges.  
 that the students should get to use them as well so we dont have to write on paper  
 for children to improve there languages and learn more about things  
 Having recording of pronounciations.  
 Nothing.  
 I do not really know  
 I would like the kids to be able to use it along side the teachers. It would also test the students loyalty.  
 Any kids caught deing dumb will no longer be trusted and it really hurts to be untrusted.  
 Trust me, I've been in trouble like that and it's painful each time you go to that teacher's classroom.  
 i think the Tablet PC making the classroom more exciting in a very exciting in a positive way by helping children to write japanese words and hear how they say the words  
 yes

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Number of Responses: 21

**Question 7**

Would you like to use a Tablet PC in Japanese?

 [Collapse Responses](#)

- Yes because it looks much more fun.Also it`s different and I want to try something new.
- yes because it is interesting and fun
- Yes its a fun and entairtaining way to learn all the japanese charachters.
- no
- Yes
- Yes because it is more fun.
- Because of technlogy it has plenty gimmics and gadgets to learn with.
- I would like to have one for myself because it is more interesting than paper and it is unlimeted.
- I would be more motivated to do more Japanese revision.
- Yes defintly!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- Definetly because it is an easier way of learning.
- I would yes yes yes yes yes like to use it!!
- sertenly
- yes and no but i can't explane why.
- yes, because it would be very easy to write characters
- By saying myself introduction and recording so i can see what im doing wrong.
- Yes as it would help students organize their work. And they could have a recording of what a word sounds like.
- Yes because my writing is never neat and i always take ages to copy things down.
- I would like it so I can practice at home in stead of my book. Or have compitions like games
- Yes. It would be fun!
- yes, beacause it is much more interesting to be on computer than writing in a workbook
- yes

Number of Responses: 21

**Question 8**

How do you think using a Tablet PC would improve your language skills?

 [Collapse Responses](#)

I think it won't but will speed things up.

i can have a go and learn if i do a mistake

you can hear the playback of how to pronounce the sound.

it won't

Easy to read and explain.

You would be more happy and willing to learn.

I think it won't improve your language skills because you are just copying straight off grid paper which does not develop your skills.

I think the Tablet PC would help improve language skill because you could do a report at home in hirigana and then you could send it to the teacher over My Grammar.

In lots of ways

I think it would improve my language skill because of all the programmes and the way you can highlight words and things.

The writing on the board

by using stiky notes we can save our recordings and we can remember Japanese words.

I like potatos!

If i had one i could go home and pratise my japaenes write and hear my self speak.

it makes it more fun to use a laptop and then students would be more interested in learning and would get better marks

Being able to write things down wile being able to record what you say and then you can see what you can improve. And it doesn't just do japanese you also hear the recording and see how loud your speaking.

You could revise ho to pronounce a word not just how to write it.

It would be easier to study and more fun, we could play games like team Japanese hangman

It would help with writing precounation

I think that kids think it's cool and fresh and so pay more attention to it.

i think that it would improve my language skills by being able to show the language teacher how you say many words

not quite sure

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Number of Responses: 21

**Question 9**

Do you think the Tablet PC is merely a 'novelty' and will decline over time?

 [Collapse Responses](#)

- I don`t think so as long as we keep using it.
- no because it makes school fun
- no it is a good idea so you can learn all the caracheters.
- yes
- yes
- No because you can use it in lots of different ways.
- I'd really like it cause I would be able to practice at home but it won't be traditional cause its easier.
- It will, but not alot. In the end it will still be much more interesting and useful than paper.
- maybe because the software will change and they wont buy a new one\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ it costs money.
- No because it is such a wonderfull way of learning a forieghn language.
- Yesss!
- no!!!!!!
- i don't know and i don't care.
- no because the fun of it will never wear out
- yes very well
- No. It is very useful.
- No.
- Yes it probally will become boring and something new will come.
- No. Kids have never had anything as cool as this and it'll take at least 5 years to lose its coolness and by that time there will be new students in class.
- no, because it is much more exiting than a wookbook
- yes

Number of Responses: 21

**Question 10**

I find the use of Tablet PC assists me in my learning.



**Question 11**

I think the novelty of the Tablet PC will eventually decline and will not provide long term learning.



What has been the best activity that you have completed using the Tablet PC?

 [Collapse Responses](#)

- I don` t think we have done any tests yet. You could play a game of guess the Horigana.
- the sticky notes
- the sound playback by a long long way
- the speaker thing
- Grid
- Doing greetings.
- Sticky Notes
- The best activity i have completed using a Tablet PC is using was stickynotes. It was fun writing down the hirogana/kanji and then recording your voice.
- Stickey note
- It would have to be the sticky notes.
- NONE@#\$\$%^&\*()
- stiky notes.
- we have not done any thing with it but.....
- getting to write on the screen with the special pen
- we havn't done anything yet but it will be a very good use in activities and when a japanese test is coming up.
- Writing words.
- Stickynotes.
- Grid lines
- We tried sticky notes today and it looks so cool.
- i have never used one but i would like to
- answering japanese questions

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Number of Responses: 21

**Question 13**

What is the best activity the teacher has done using the Tablet PC?

 [Collapse Responses](#)

Learning what to say at what time and showing us each way.  
the sticky notes  
letting the kids in the class use it was really fun.  
the spaeker thing  
Sticky Note  
Using sticky notes.  
Sticky Notes  
The most usefull thing was on the Tablet PC was using the square pad. It was better than a whiteboard because you could highlight things.  
Sticky note  
It would either be sticky notes or word.  
Put it on the board  
stiky notes and the grid paper  
she has not done anything with it yet but it will be really cool to have one for my birthday on monday.  
September 15th  
the unit called sticky note  
Havn't done any yet but hopefully they will be very fun using the tablet pc.  
Sticky notes  
Taught us the characters, sounds and ways to remember them  
Sticky notes  
Sticky notes is the goddarned BEST!!!!!!!!!!  
the recorder  
doing characters

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Number of Responses: 21

**Question 14**

Can you suggest an activity for yourself or the teacher to improve teaching and learning?

 [Collapse Responses](#)

I can't think of anything. I really want a sticky notes for my own.  
 have a competition on drawing in the grids. if i could get one i would use all its weird things all the time  
 the teacher writes down ku for example then gives the kids 15 seconds to put their hand up then  
 she/he says the prononceation.  
 games  
 no because i don't know any.  
 Yes you could have competitions.  
 If I had a tablet pc I would like it because I would improve my handwriting and my Japanese.  
 Maybe some games and competitions with the Taablet PC  
 An activity that could be used using the Tablet PC is writing something in Japanese and you could send  
 it to somebody in your class to decode.  
 I dont know  
 No, because it has gone over all bad problems. To be honest if I could I would definetly love to use  
 a PC tablet for myself like my teacher does.  
 N O !  
 sorry can't think of any.  
 no,no,no,no,no,no,no,no,no,no,no,no,no,no,no,no,no  
 to let us use the tablets so it would make it more interesting  
 Having games between in class and whoever wins gets a little prize each time they win.  
 Maybe every student have a recording of each word we have learnt.  
 No.  
 Games or typing and new writing methods  
 I think kids should have make a game that revolves around Japan or the Japanese language.  
 no. sorry.....  
 no

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Number of Responses: 21