



## MY JAPANESE SCHOOL FRIEND

Hi, my name is Leo. Last summer, I went to a fun international camp. Kids from many different countries were there. That's where I met Riko. She was from Japan. Riko was very kind and always smiled. We quickly became good friends.

One sunny afternoon, we were talking about our schools. "My school is a little different," Riko said with a smile. "Really? How?" I asked, very curious.

"Well," she began, "at my school in Japan, lunchtime is special. It's called **kyushoku**. We don't go to a big cafeteria like some schools. Instead, our lunch comes right to our classroom! My friends and I wear white hats and aprons, and we help serve the hot food to everyone. We eat together at our desks. And the rule is: we must eat all our food! No waste." She paused. "It teaches us to be thankful and responsible."

"Wow," I said, "that's neat!"

"And after lunch," Riko continued, "it's time for **Souji**. That means cleaning! My school doesn't have cleaners. The students clean. Every day, we take turns. Some friends sweep the floor, some wipe the windows, and others clean the blackboard. We even clean the hallways and the stairs. We all work together as a team."

"You clean your school?" I asked, surprised. "Yes!" she said, "It's our school, so we take care of it. We learn that everyone needs to help. It makes our school a very clean and nice place. When the bell rings, our classroom is shiny, and we feel proud because we did it together."

I thought about my school. It was very different. Riko's school sounded like a place where everyone worked together, like a big family. I learned so much about Japan from my new friend.

### Comprehension Questions

Read or listen to the story "My Japanese School Friend" again. Then, answer the questions below.

1. Where did Leo meet Riko? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What country is Riko from? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the Japanese word for lunch at Riko's school?  
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4. What do Riko and her friends wear when they serve lunch?  
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5. What is the rule about food at lunchtime?  
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6. What is the Japanese word for cleaning time?  
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7. Who cleans the school at Riko's school? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How does Riko feel after cleaning? \_\_\_\_\_

## Teacher's Key

Where did Leo meet Riko?

- Leo met Riko at a fun international camp.

What country is Riko from?

- Riko is from Japan.

What is the Japanese word for lunch at Riko's school?

- The Japanese word for lunch is *kyushoku*.

What do Riko and her friends wear when they serve lunch?

- They wear white hats and aprons.

What is the rule about food at lunchtime?

- The rule is: they must eat all their food (no waste).

What is the Japanese word for cleaning time?

- The Japanese word for cleaning time is *souji*.

Who cleans the school at Riko's school?

- The students clean the school.

How does Riko feel after cleaning?

- Riko feels happy and proud.