

## LESSON NOTES

# Japanese Culture Class #19 Smashing Watermelons

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# 19

# VOCABULARY

Kanji	Kana	Romaji	English
羽根つき	はねつき	hanetsuki	battledore and shuttlecock, Japanese badminton
絵札	えふだ	efuda	picture card
読み札	よみふだ	yomifuda	reading card
羽子板	はごいた	hagoita	battledore
罰ゲーム	ばつゲーム	batsugēmu	penalty game
スイカ割り	スイカわり	suikawari	watermelon smashing
鬼ごっこ	おにごっこ	onigokko	tag
遊び	あそび	asobi	playing
墨	すみ	sumi	ink
トランプ	トランプ	toranpu	playing cards
カルタ	カルタ	karuta	cards
凧揚げ	たこあげ	takoage	kite flying
短歌	たんか	tanka	31-syllable Japanese poem

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

いかは墨を吐く。  
*Ika wa sumi o haku.*

Squids spurt out ink.

トランプをしましょう。  
*Toranpu o shimashō.*

Let's play a game of cards.

短歌の作り方を勉強したい。  
*Tanka no tsukurikata o benkyō shitai.*

I want to learn how to write a 31-syllable Japanese poem.

## GRAMMAR

## Games in Japan

### 羽根つき ・ はねつき ・ *hanetsuki* - battledore and shuttlecock

Japanese badminton, sometimes referred to as battle dore and shuttlecock. Battledore, or 羽子板 ・ はごいた ・ *hagoita* in Japanese, is the name of the wooden racket used to hit the shuttlecock.

In Japan, these often have pictures painted on them. This is a popular game at New Year's, and when a player is unable to volley the shuttlecock, the other person paints on their face with ink. Faces often end up very dirty!

### 罰ゲーム ・ ばつゲーム ・ *batsugēmu* - penalty game

This is a penalty administered when losing a game or contest. Often includes pain or drinking gross stuff, etc.

### 凧揚げ ・ たこあげ ・ *takoage* - kite flying

Kite flying is a common activity in many places. In Japan, however, it is unique in that there are a number of contests and festivals surrounding the activity. At these festivals, there are often kites large enough that multiple people must assist in flying them.

### カルタ ・ *karuta* - card

This word comes from the Portuguese word *carta*, for card. These cards differ from normal playing cards, called トランプ ・ *toranpu* in Japanese. The reading card, 読み札 ・ よみふだ ・ *yomifuda*, is read and the other players try to grab the picture card, 絵札 ・ えふだ ・ *efuda*, that matches. The player that ends up with the most cards wins. There are also いろはカルタ ・ *irohagaruta* that contain proverbs and 歌カルタ ・ うたカルタ ・ *utagaruta* poem cards on which tanka poems in 31 syllables are written. During New Year's, adults have competitions with these tanka cards.

### 鬼ごっこ ・ おにごっこ ・ *onigokko* - tag

This game is similar to tag where one person is "it", and must chase the other players. There are also a number of variations. In 高鬼 ・ たかおに ・ *takaoni*, players must escape to a high place above the ground in order to be safe from the *oni*.

In 缶蹴り ・ かんけり ・ *kankeri*, or kick the can, the player closes his or her eyes and counts while the other players hide. The *oni* then searches for the other players who try to kick over a can standing upright where the *oni* started. If they successfully kick over the can without being caught by the *oni*, then the players win. These are just a few of the variations that exist.

### スイカ割り ・ スイカわり ・ *suikawari* - watermelon smashing

This is a game played very often in the summers on beaches in Japan.

Watermelons are placed on the sand, and players are blindfolded and given a long stick. They then try to smash the watermelon with the stick while receiving hints of where to aim from onlookers. These hints may often be misleading, though! After a watermelon is smashed, it is common to wash the sand off and eat it!

There was recently an organization known as 日本すいか割り協会 (Japan Suika-Wari

Association) that organized contests and drew up guidelines for this type of event, which shows just how popular it is!