

LESSON NOTES

# Japanese Culture Class #27

## Respect-for-the-Aged Day

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# 27

# VOCABULARY

Kanji	Kana	Romaji	English
敬老の日	けいろうのひ	Keirō no hi	Respect for the Aged Day
健康	けんこう	kenkō	fine health
祝う	いわう	iwau	to celebrate
長寿国	ちようじゅこく	chōjukoku	country with long-living people
長寿	ちようじゅ	chōju	long life
敬う	うやまう	uyamau	to respect
老人	ろうじん	rōjin	elderly people
祝日	しゅくじつ	shukujitsu	national holiday
国民	こくみん	kokumin	citizen
福祉	ふくし	fukushi	public welfare

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

敬老の日には、祖父母に感謝の気持ちを伝えます。

*Keirō no hi ni wa, sofubo ni kansha no kimochi o tsutaemasu.*

Japanese people show appreciation for their grandparents on Respect for the Aged Day.

## GRAMMAR

敬老の日・*Keirō no Hi* - Respect for the Aged Day is a Japanese holiday held to honor elderly citizens on the third Monday of September. The origins of this national holiday can be traced to the village of Nomatani (now Taka-machi) in Hyogo Prefecture. 「兵庫県多可郡野間谷村・現在多可町」. In 1947, the mayor of the village, Masao Kadowaki - 門脇政夫村長, declared September 15th as Old Folks' Day 「としよりのひ・*toshiyori no hi*」. The holiday grew in popularity, and in 1964, the day was renamed Respect for the Aged Day. Two years later in 1966, it became a national holiday, with the goal of further fostering appreciation for elderly people. and with these two changes, the day took on its present name and status.

Comparatively speaking, this holiday is a modern one, and therefore, lacks any traditional customs. As heard in the podcast, some families spend the day with the elderly members of their or a loved ones' family, and may enjoy a meal together and give presents to the people they are honoring. Nationwide, people show respect to those who contributed to society and pray for their health and longevity. The Japanese media features stories involving the elderly, and at schools throughout Japan, young children make and present their grandparents with gifts they make.

Japan currently faces the prospect of a declining population, and this is a potential situation that could result in profound economic and social impacts. Japan's population is rapidly aging, a term used to express the notion that the number of people over 65 is rapidly increasing. This is also sometimes referred to as graying of the population. An increasing number of retiring baby boomers, gains in longevity, and a decreasing fertility are major factors behind this trend. To combat this the Japanese government has implemented a series of plans beginning in 1995, with the goal of improving conditions for child rearing. The latest in the New, New Angel Plan.

As the number of elderly persons continues to increase in Japan, Respect for the Aged Day is poised to grow in importance.

