

LESSON NOTES

Japanese Children's Songs #3

Fuji no Yama

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KANJI

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2. 四方の山を見おろして
3. かみなりさまを下にきく
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5. 青ぞら高くそびえたち
6. からだに雪のきものきて
7. かすみのすそをとおくひく
8. ふじは日本一の山

KANA

1. あたまをくものうえにだし
2. しほうのやまをみおろして
3. かみなりさまをしたにきく
4. ふじはにっぽんいちのやま
5. あおぞらたかくそびえたち
6. からだにゆきのきものきて

CONT'D OVER

7. かすみのすそをとおくひく
8. ふじはにっぽんいちのやま

ROMANIZATION

1. Atama o kumo no ue ni dashi
2. Shihō no yama o mi oroshite
3. Kaminari-sama o shita ni kiku
4. Fuji wa Nippon-ichi no yama
5. Aozora takaku sobietachi
6. Karada ni yuki no kimono kite
7. Kasumi no suso o tōku hiku
8. Fuji wa Nippon-ichi no yama

ENGLISH

1. Holding its head high over the clouds
2. Looking down on the mountains around it
3. It hears the thunder rumbling from below

CONT'D OVER

4. Mt. Fuji is the best mountain in Japan
5. It towers high under the blue sky
6. With a gown of snow over its body
7. Pulling along long misty coattails
8. Mt. Fuji is the best mountain in Japan

VOCABULARY

Kanji	Kana	Romaji	English
あたま	あたま	atama	head
雲	くも	kumo	cloud
四方	しほう	shihō	every direction, all four directions
見おろす	みおろす	miorosu	to overlook
かみなり	かみなり	kaminari	thunder
青空	あおぞら	aozora	blue/azure sky
そびえたつ	そびえたつ	sobietatsu	to stand towering over one's surroundings
かすみ	かすみ	kasumi	mist, haze, dimness (of sight)
すそ	すそ	suso	cuff, (skirt) hem

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>彼の頭は小さいです。 <i>Kare no atama wa chiisai desu .</i></p> <p>His head is small.</p>	<p>雲ひとつない。 <i>Kumo hitotsu nai.</i></p> <p>There isn't a single cloud.</p>
<p>この島は、四方を海に囲まれている。 <i>Kono shima wa shihō o umi ni kakomarete iru.</i></p> <p>This island is surrounded on all four sides by the ocean.</p>	<p>彼の家は、町を見下ろす小高い丘の上にある。 <i>Kare no ie wa, machi o miorosu kodakai oka no ue ni aru.</i></p> <p>His house sits on a small rise of land overlooking the town.</p>
<p>夕方、突然、かみなりがなりました。 <i>Totsuzen, kaminari ga narimashita.</i></p> <p>In the evening all of a sudden thunder boomed.</p>	<p>青ぞらの下でピクニックをしましょう。 <i>Aozora no shita de pikunikku o shimashō.</i></p> <p>Let's have a picnic under the blue sky.</p>
<p>新宿にはたくさんの高いビルがそびえたっています。 <i>Shinjuku ni wa takusan no takai biru ga sobietatte imasu.</i></p> <p>There are many high buildings in Shinjuku which stand towering over their surroundings.</p>	<p>今日のかすみがかかって、遠くの山が見えにくいです。 <i>Kyō wa kasumi ga kakatte, tōku no yama ga mie nikui desu.</i></p> <p>Today there's a mist, so it's hard to see the mountains in a distance.</p>
<p>彼のズボンのすそが短すぎる。 <i>Kare no zubon no suso ga mijikasuguru.</i></p> <p>The hems of his trouser legs are too short.</p>	

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is the Japanese Children's Song *Fuji no yama*.

This song was released in 1911 as a song for elementary school students in the third grade. This song about Mt. Fuji is very popular among Japanese people. You can hear the melody of this song playing from the traffic lights for pedestrians in the Shizuoka prefecture where Mt. Fuji is located. There are some train stations located near Mt. Fuji that use this song as the melody for when the train departs.

As you can see from the last line of the first and second verses, *Fuji wa Nippon-ichi no yama* (meaning "Mt. Fuji is the best mountain in Japan"), this song expresses how

magnificent Mt. Fuji is.

あたまを雲の上に出し

Atama means "head," and in this case it means the "top of Mt. Fuji." *Kumo no ue* means "above the clouds." The song does not mention the subject for this clause, but this line is talking about "Mt. Fuji." This line means "The top of Mt. Fuji above the clouds" and expresses how high Mt. Fuji is.

四方の山を見おろして

The *hō* (方) of *shihō* (四方) is the same *hō* we see in *hōgaku* (方角), which means "direction." So *shihō* (四方) literally means "four directions." *Mioroshite* is the *te*-form of the verb *miorosu* (見下ろす). This is a compound verb that combines *miru* (見る), meaning "to see," and *orosu* (下ろす), meaning "to take down," and it means "to look down." The subject is still Mt. Fuji in this line, so all together it means "(Mt. Fuji) is looking down on all the mountains around it" and means that Mt. Fuji is so much higher than any other mountain that it can look down at them.

かみなりさまを下にきく

Kaminari means "thunder." In Japanese folklore, there are gods of thunder. Japanese people call "thunder" *kaminari-sama* using *sama*, which is the polite suffix, to express their feelings of awe and friendship. *Shita ni kiku* means "to hear it down below." Again, the subject of this line is "Mt. Fuji." So this phrase means "Mt. Fuji listens to the thunder down below," which emphasizes the height of Mt. Fuji.

ふじは日本一の山

Nippon-ichi means "the best in Japan." So this sentence means "Mt. Fuji is the best mountain in Japan." This is the main point that the song wants to make, so it appears at not only the end of the first verse but second verse as well.

There are variations similar to *Nippon-ichi*, such as *sekai-ichi* meaning "the best in the world" or *Ajia-ichi* meaning "the best in Asia." So, the phrase **place + *ichi*** means "the best of (place)."

For Example :

1. エベレストは、世界一高い山だ。
Eberesuto wa, sekai-ichi takai yama da.
"Mt. Everest is the highest mountain in the world."
2. 彼は、アメリカ一の俳優だ。
Kare wa, Amerika-ichi no haiyū da.
"He is the best actor in America."