

The weather in Japan will never be like what I'm used to at home. But in my mind, the four seasons have distinctly different weather. The nicest fall and spring days are warm and sunny, with a cool breeze. But although I'm always looking for this kind of weather in Japan, I don't think it will ever come. I think last Thursday was a very spring-like day, but now it feels like it's already summer to me. American summer, that is. I know that summer in Japan gets much hotter than this!

In the past few weeks, I've worn short sleeves a few times. Always under a sweater or jacket, but I often take it off if I get warm. Every time I do bare my arms, a lot of people seem to notice and talk to me about it. At first I was surprised, and didn't really understand why, but now I see that in Japan, most people don't switch to "summer clothes" until June. In America, most schools don't have school uniforms, so there isn't an official date for changing to seasonal clothes. When I was in high school, I sometimes even wore sandals in winter! Now that I live here, I wonder if I should still wear long sleeves just because everyone else is. Sometimes I think I should try harder to fit in, but at the same time I am already so different, does it really matter if I'm wearing short or long sleeves?

I started to wonder about this, so I emailed some other ALTs today to see what they think. The results of my survey were interesting. When I got to work this afternoon, I thought it was very warm. Not hot, but very warm, and humid! My American friends, all replied they have worn short sleeves to work today, or some day this week, and that people have asked them about it too! My friends from Australia, where it is much warmer than America all through the year, all said that they definitely don't think it's hot, and that they are still wearing winter clothes. Even though we all speak English, the places we used to live really change the meanings of the words we use. Some people even told me that they thought today's weather was cold!

Today's topic isn't very deep, but it was something that I found interesting and has been on my mind for a while. If it gets unusually warm in the next few weeks, will any of you start wearing short sleeves before June? I'll be watching!