

It's that time of year again! I was surprised to hear that some of the teachers I have gotten to know in this office in the past few years will be leaving. I thought to myself, but they just got here! I am starting to feel old since I have been in this office since before a lot of other people. Team-teaching classes ended at Tsu Nishi a few weeks ago, and since then there have been students' exams as well as the high school entrance exams for junior high school students. Before I know it, cherry blossoms will be blooming and my offices and schools will be filled with different teachers and my classes filled with new students.

It's always strange for me at this time of year to think of all the kind people I've met that will be going to new schools and that I will probably never see again. We don't have this kind of yearly transfer system in companies or schools in America. I can be pretty sure that if I go back to my own high school, that most of the same teachers will be there. Or that if I go back to the university office I used to work at, that I can talk with my old co-workers. So in a way, the system in Japan is difficult for me. But at the same time I look forward to meeting all the new people who will come in April.

To everyone who is leaving and who has read this journal throughout your time at the center, thank you for reading! I am happy to know that this journal has been interesting for you even at times when I was afraid that I didn't have any good stories to share. I hope that you'll remember some of the things I've written about and not be shy to make relationships with ALTs in the future, as well. Many ALTs can't speak Japanese so well but would be lucky to meet kind people like you at their schools, even if you can't have deep conversations. Good luck in your new positions and schools and I hope I'll see you again someday. I'll always be at this center on Wednesday afternoons!