



Food in Contemporary Japanese Literature: An NCTA Workshop for K-12 Educators

FURTHER RESOURCES:

FOOD IN CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE LITERATURE

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[Dinner at Mine](#) by Tomoka Shibasaki, translated by Polly Barton

[Turtledoves](#) by Naoya Shiga, translated by Ted Goossen

[The Little Woods in Fukushima](#) by Hideo Furukawa, translated by Kendall Heitzman

AUTHORS

Hideo FURUKAWA

Slow Boat, a novella translated by David Boyd (London: Pushkin Press, 2017)

Belka, Why Don't You Bark?, translated by Michael Emmerich (San Francisco: Haikasoru, 2012)

Also, see *Horses, Horses*, listed below (under 3/11 disaster below).

Satoshi KITAMURA

His award-winning picture books include *Stone Age Boy*, *Millie's Marvelous Hat*, and *The Smile Shop*.

Tomoka SHIBASAKI

Spring Garden, a novella translated by Polly Barton (London: Pushkin Press, 2017)

Naoya SHIGA

See titles listed under the I-novel genre below. See also "Night Fires," a short story in the *Oxford Book of Japanese Short Stories*.

Iboshi HOKUTO

Translation of four haiku: <https://monkeymagazine.org/andrew-campana>

LITERARY GENRE

Manga (any type of graphic narrative)

For the Kodansha series (first five titles below), the first chapters can be read online for free:

- Sweetness and Lightning: <https://kodansha.us/series/sweetness-and-lightning/>
- What Did You Eat Yesterday?: <https://kodansha.us/series/what-did-you-eat-yesterday/>
- Something's Wrong With Us: <https://kodansha.us/series/somethings-wrong-with-us/>
- Kitchen Princess: <https://kodansha.us/series/kitchen-princess-omnibus/>
- Witch Hat Atelier Kitchen: <https://kodansha.us/series/witch-hat-atelier-kitchen>
- Oishinbo: <https://www.viz.com/oishinbo>
- Wakakozake (This is also a manga/anime, but I especially like the live-action drama since it highlights IRL Japanese restaurants):
<https://www.crunchyroll.com/series/GYK5X214R/wakakozake-drama>
- Wakakozake anime: <https://www.crunchyroll.com/series/GRGG9K1PR/wakakozake>
- *Japanese Cooking with Manga* by the Gourmand Gohan Team (Tuttle Publishing, 2018)
- *Japanamerica: How Japanese Pop Culture Has Invaded the U.S.* by Roland Kelts (New York: St. Martin's, 2007). An introduction to Japanese popular culture, particularly manga, anime, and video games that have become hugely popular in the West. Note: The author is a contributing editor to *MONKEY New Writing from Japan*.

Zuihitsu ("jottings," short essays, usually focused on personal observations of daily life)

This genre dates back to tenth-century Japan and is still popular today.

- *The Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon*, translated by Meredith McKinney (Penguin Classics, 2007)
- *Essays in Idleness* by Kenko, translated by Meredith McKinney (Penguin Classics, 2014)
- *The Columbia Anthology of Japanese Essays (Zuihitsu from the Tenth to the Twenty-first Century)*, edited and translated by Steven D. Carter, Columbia University Press, 2014)

I-Novel (autobiographical fiction, confessional)

This genre dates to the early twentieth century, when realism was introduced into Japanese fiction, influenced primarily by French writers such as Emile Zola. It has been described as a "confessional literary form."

- *Reconciliation* by Naoya Shiga, a novella translated by Ted Goossen (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2020); see the Introduction for an introduction to the I-novel

- *A Dark Night's Passing* by Naoya Shiga, translated by Edwin McClellan (New York: Kodansha International, 1993)
- *No Longer Human* by Osamu Dazai, translated by Donald Keene (New York: New Directions, 1973)

Waka and Tanka (poetry forms)

One Hundred Frogs by Hiroaki Sato (New York: Weatherhill, 1995).
A collection of over 100 translations of perhaps the most famous haiku of all time, written by Basho in the seventeenth century.

[What Is a Waka? | Asia for Educators | Columbia University](#). (2023)

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Ainu history and culture

- [Ainu Association of Hokkaido website](#)
- [Japan's Native Ainu Fight for Vestige of Identity - The New York Times](#) (July 2023)
- [Ainu Survival and Revival: Turning the Tide?](#) by Matthew J. Cotter and Peter M. Schinkkel (Hokuseiron Collection No. 16, 2018)
- [Ainu Indigenous Rights Movement \(The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements - 2022 - Tsutsui - .pdf](#)
- *Golden Kamuy*, manga by Satoru Noda (Viz Media LLC, 2017) (18+ only for violence)
- Bear/salmon video in Kamchatka [Kamchatka | Peninsula, Russia, & Map | Britannica](#)
- *Songs of Gods, Songs of Humans: The Epic Tradition of the Ainu* by Donald L. Philippi, with a foreword by Gary Snyder (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1979)

3/11 disaster

- *March Was Made of Yarn: Reflections on the Japanese Earthquake, Tsunami, and Nuclear Meltdown*, edited by Elmer Luke and David Karashima (New York: Vintage Books, 2012)
- *Horses, Horses, in the End the Light Remains Pure: A Tale That Begins with Fukushima* by Hideo Furukawa, translated by Doug Slaymaker and Akiko Takenaka (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016)

Film and TV shows featuring Japanese food

- The film *Tanpopo*: [Tampopo \(1985\) | The Criterion Collection](#) One of the most popular Japanese comedies of all time, centered on a ramen noodle shop.
- The TV series *Midnight Diner*, available on Netflix. [Midnight Diner \(Japanese TV series\)](#)
- Documentary *Jiro Dreams of Sushi* (2011) Features the 85-year-old sushi master Jiro Ono, his renowned Tokyo restaurant, and his relationship with his son and eventual heir.
- The TV series [The Makanai: Cooking for the Maiko House](#), available on Netflix.
- The TV series [Samurai Gourmet](#), available on Netflix.

TRANSLATING POETRY: TEACHING UNITS

- [Poetry in Translation | Academy of American Poets](#)
- [Japanese Haiku and Haiga: A One Week Unit Plan | Center for Asian Studies](#)
- [Tanka: Japanese Poetry | NEH-Edsitement](#)
- [Center for the Art of Translation](#)

Crowdsourced Resources from Workshop Chat

- Yearly Japan Airlines (JAL) haiku contest for children and has a lot of great resources for writing haiku: <https://www.jal-foundation.or.jp/en/haiku/>
- JAL published book on best haiku written by children from around the world. <https://www.jal-foundation.or.jp/en/publications/>
- *The Memory Police* by Yoko Ogawa is a contemporary Japanese science fiction novel <https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/mqr/2021/07/yoko-ogawas-the-memory-police-and-the-dangers-of-forgetting/>
- *After the Quake: Stories* by Haruki Murakami is another great series of short stories written after and commenting on a natural disaster (1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake that struck the city of Kobe). <https://www.harukimurakami.com/book/after-the-quake/>