

February was a busy time for students. Third year students spent extra time with Shiroyama's ALT to review grammar and vocabulary for high school exams. It wasn't all work, however, as the third year teachers made time for special review card games and even eikaiwa activities. For many students it was their first time to try to speak only in English. Often, they needed help from their teachers but in the end, their ALT reminded them, "being brave and trying is what matters".

The second year classes had their last oral test for the year. Many of the students were very nervous before class began, but when they saw the ALT's smile they seemed to relax. Some students could even make jokes and laugh during the oral test. "Which do you like better hamburger or pizza?" the ALT would sometimes ask.

"I like pizza better," said some students, "because, I like cheese."

"Really? Me too. I love cheese." The ALT replied. It was a fun part of the test. The ALT was happy to see improvement from many students.

The first years did their best to catch up after they were hit hard with influenza. They leveled up and learned the past tense of many English verbs. For the ALT, past tense always feels like a big step when learning a new language. It really shows the difference between first year and second year English.

Sadly, this school year came to abrupt end. Many of the students of all years were sad to see it end so quickly. Yet, the teachers and staff at Shiroyama are working hard to adjust their school plans so that in April everything can start as normal.

This month's English board was about Valentine's Day and the differences between the American and Japanese Valentine's celebrations. Also on the English board was an event that happens in America called Black History Month. For all of February, African American people celebrate their history. The ALT worked with Shiroyama's librarian to get more information on people with African ancestry for the students.

