



Those who read learned about Mother's Day, and how it is a day to thank our mothers for everything they do, just like Japan's Mother's Day. They also learned about the Kentucky Derby and Memorial Day. The Kentucky Derby is a horse race that is not well known outside of America to my knowledge. Our last event was Memorial Day, a patriotic holiday meant to honor those who have been lost to war.

2nd years got to play "you look..." karuta, which went over better than I could've hoped. We played it twice and still had time to play "Guess the moji." Yet that didn't compare to the excitement they had for uno. No one needed an explanation of how to play, in English or

Japanese but as it was English class, they got one anyway. It was fun to be able to share the Spanish meaning of "uno" with the students to show them there isn't just English and Japanese in their world. They were mind blown when it meant "one" and that's why they say it when they have one card left.

1st years got the full self-introduction, probably more than they ever wanted to know about me and Michigan. Luckily, we got to play a game after to wake everyone back up. We practiced converting hiragana to the English alphabet. Most classes did really well until the infamous "Kyoto" got them, which lead to a mini lecture on being careful with capital and lower-case K's and Y's.

Later in the month, my friends from America came to Japan to visit. Most days they would wander around Minakuchi until I got out of work, then share their daily adventures with me, but on Saturday, I invited them to come with me to see the clubs and meet the students. The students were in awe at the tiny pack of foreigners meandering the grounds, popping from club to club. One of my friends specifically has an interest in music, so while she hung out with the music club, I took the other one to the sports field where we met and talked with tennis and track members. Then we gathered together once more in the dojo to watch Judo and Kendo. I was glad the students showed interest in meeting my friends, even if they didn't want to try their hand at speaking English with them.

Not long after that, they came to school with me for class. They helped me practice self-introductions with class 10. The students practiced their listening by recording our answers and all of them got 100 percent! I was so happy. They were slightly more hesitant to do their own self introductions with us but they did great with that too. I wasn't aware they were going to go over their introduction 3 times, but they did it flawlessly without complaining. Then, because we moved so efficiently, we had enough time to get through most of my introduction power point. We tried to get as much of it in as possible but unfortunately, I had a class right after that so I couldn't stay over.

I may have had to drop my friends off at the entry way after class but there was a light at the end of the tunnel. I got to see one of my third-year classes for the first time in a while. I was a little out of practice but it was so nice to be back on ground floor with them. I even had the chance to ask one of my students, who speaks Portuguese, the pronunciation of a Brazilian mythical creature I'm using in an upcoming project for the first years. He was even so kind after to tell me the meaning, which made sense when referring back to my elementary years in Spanish class.