

Task Name: New York Family Connections

Materials Needed: Pen/paper, whiteboard (optional), printed vocabulary list (see below)

Language Skills Practiced: Speaking, listening, basic sentence construction using も

Required Time: 20-25 minutes

Background

You are attending a student gathering at a New York university (e.g., City College, Columbia, NYU). During a mixer, you meet other students who are also studying Japanese. To break the ice and practice Japanese, you decide to ask each other about your families, since many students in New York have family members from different countries. Your goal is to find at least one thing you have in common with each person regarding family members (e.g., “My mother is also Japanese,” “My brother is also a student”).

Vocabulary (Genki Ch.1–Ch.2 Only)

People/Family: おかあさん・おかあさんたち、おとうさん・おとうさんたち、おねえさん・おねえさんたち、おにいさん・おにいさんたち、いもうと、おとうと、おばあさん、おじいさん、がくせい、せんせい、ともだち

Nationalities/Regions: にほんじん、アメリカじん、かんこくじん、ちゅうごくじん、イギリスじん、ニューヨークじん (Note: ニューヨークじん is not in Genki but is permissible here as a proper noun; all others are from Genki.)

Occupations: かいしゃいん、いしゃ、だいがく

Other Nouns: ひと、おとこのひと、おんなのひと、えいご、にほんご、なまえ、しゅっしん

Verbs/Adjectives: です、じゃないです、だれ、なん

Particles: も、の、か

Task Steps

1. Introduction and Question Practice (5 minutes)

- In pairs, introduce yourself using: はじめまして。[Your Name]です。どうぞよろしく。
- Ask your partner about one family member using: おかあさん/おとうさん/おねえさんはなんじんですか。(e.g., “What nationality is your mother/father/sister?”)

2. Listening and Response with も (10 minutes)

- Listen to your partner’s answer (e.g., おかあさんはにほんじんです。).
- If your own family member shares that trait, respond using も: わたしのおかあさんもにほんじんです。

- If not, simply acknowledge: そうですか。
- Switch roles and repeat with different family members (e.g., father, brother, sister). Try to find at least one commonality.

3. Group Sharing (5–10 minutes)

- Join another pair to form a small group.
- Each student shares one commonality they found, using も in a full sentence (e.g., ジョンさんのおにいさんはがくせいです。わたしのおにいさんもがくせいです。).
- Optional: Write the sentences on the whiteboard or paper to visualize the pattern.