

Task Name: Finding Key Locations in NYC: Practicing ここ/そこ/あそこ/どこ

Required Materials: Textbook “Genki” Chapters 1-2, a simplified map of a New York City university campus (e.g., Columbia University or CUNY campus) with labeled buildings in Japanese, handout with vocabulary list.

Language Skills Practiced: Speaking and listening, using demonstrative pronouns (ここ/そこ/あそこ/どこ) to ask and answer about locations.

Estimated Time: 35 minutes

Background and Problem Setting in English:

You are a new international student studying at a university in New York City (e.g., New York University or a community college in Manhattan). It’s your first week, and you need to find essential places on campus for your daily activities, such as attending classes, studying, or meeting friends. However, you are unfamiliar with the campus layout and often get lost. Your task is to navigate the campus by asking for and giving directions using Japanese, specifically focusing on the demonstrative pronouns ここ (here), そこ (there, near the listener), あそこ (over there), and どこ (where). You will work in pairs to simulate real-life scenarios, like finding the library, café, or station, based on a provided campus map. This will help you build confidence in using basic Japanese for practical situations in an urban setting like NYC.

Key Vocabulary from Genki Ch.1-Ch.2 (Japanese with English Translation):

- ここ (here)
- そこ (there, near listener)
- あそこ (over there)
- どこ (where)
- です (is/are)
- ですか (is it?/are they?)
- がっこう (school)
- としょかん (library)
- きっさてん (café)
- えき (station)
- びょういん (hospital)
- せんせい (teacher)
- がくせい (student)
- ともだち (friend)
- これ (this, thing near speaker)
- それ (that, thing near listener)
- あれ (that, thing over there)

Task Steps:

1. Introduction and Vocabulary Review (5 minutes):

- Distribute the vocabulary handout and review the key words, focusing on ここ/そこ/あそこ/どこ. Use example sentences from Genki, such as “としょかんはあそこです。” (The library is over there.)
- Briefly explain the campus map, pointing out labeled locations like としょかん (library) or きっさてん (café), and relate them to NYC landmarks if possible (e.g., referencing a café near campus).

2. Controlled Practice with Map (10 minutes):

- In pairs, students use the campus map to practice asking and answering questions. One student points to a location and asks, “としょかんはどこですか。” (Where is the library?), and the other responds using ここ/そこ/あそこ, e.g., “としょかんはあそこです。”
- Rotate roles and repeat for different locations, such as えき (station) or びょういん (hospital), encouraging use of full sentences.

3. Role-Play Scenario: Lost on Campus (15 minutes):

- Set up a role-play where one student acts as a lost new student, and the other as a helpful local student or friend.
- The lost student must ask for directions to at least three places on the map, using questions like “すみません、えきはどこですか。” (Excuse me, where is the station?).
- The helper responds using ここ/そこ/あそこ and simple phrases from Genki, e.g., “えきはそこです。” (The station is there.) or “としょかんはあそこです。”
- After 5-7 minutes, switch roles to ensure both practice asking and answering.

4. Wrap-up and Feedback (5 minutes):

- Briefly reconvene as a group. Ask volunteers to share one question and answer from their role-play, writing it on the board in Japanese.
- Provide quick oral feedback, focusing on correct usage of ここ/そこ/あそこ/どこ and pronunciation. No extended explanation—just reinforce key points.