The Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami
“Is Japan safe?”
Lesson Plan prepared by Asako Hayashi Takakura
For Japanese 5 (intermediate Japanese) UCLA, Winter 2018

Content Goal:
- Students gain basic knowledge on great East Japan Earthquake and Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant Accident.

Language Goals:
- Students will learn basic vocabulary related to Great East Japan Earthquake.
- Students will learn basic vocabulary related to Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant Accident.
- Students will learn characteristics of geography of Japan.
- Students will learn how to report the contents learned in class with a written format in Japanese.

Materials:
- Tobira Kuroshio Publishers ISBN 978-4-87424-447-0 Chapter 1
  Monty’s Bridge to Tomorrow Unit 1
  https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/bitstream/handle/11122/4144/Unit%201%20Shinsai.pdf?sequence=6
  Movie “Human Error”
  https://vimeo.com/250631768 (password protected. Please contact asakoha@ucla.edu for viewing)

Pre Activity: Students learn geography of Japan with the textbook “Tobira” chapter 1.

Outside-class Activities (Preparation):
Students watch the movie “Human Error” and think of at least 2 questions to the director.
They fill out the worksheet of “Monty’s Bridge to Tomorrow Unit 1”

In-class Activities: 75 minutes X 2 classes (Week 3)
Day 1: Vocabulary with Monty’s Bridge to Tomorrow Unit 1
Day 2: Meet the movie director (Q & A)

Outside-class Post Activity:
Selected students post their questions and answers from the director on the forum in the course site.

Students write an essay about learning from the movie "Human Error" and the talk by the movie director with 2-3 pages (700-100 characters).
The essay should include a certain grammar functions. The students learned how to quote others’ utterance. In addition, grammar items in the textbook such as “explanation” “listing more items—not only but also” and “extended examples with ~yoni (like~).”

Assessment:

In class discussion (summative)

Essay (with grading criteria rubric) – Accuracy, Variety of grammar points/vocabulary, Contents

A part of the final exam (reading comprehension about the Fukushima Nuclear Accident)

Sample Q (students) & A (movie director)

Q: In Japan, how much can public opposition prevent or change government policy? Is there any historical precedent for this?

A: On the local level, there have been some successes. In Niigata, on the east coast of Japan, about four hours away from Fukushima, there is also a nuclear power plant. After the Fukushima accident, they were able to elect an outspoken anti-nuclear energy activist as their mayor. When the Abe administration made their orders to reopen and restart many of the nuclear power plants around Japan, this mayor was able to prevent that from happening to the plant in Niigata. In that case, the public was successful in getting what they had opposed. On the national level, it is a lot more difficult. And this is not just a Japan problem—it is a global issue. In America we just had a nation-wide Women's March, and that is a lot of public opposition for the current government. But how much does all that protest actually do to change government policy? It is an issue we are all dealing with.

Q: [Knowing the problems of the safety myth, risks of nuclear energy production, and energy needs.] Would you personally endorse using nuclear energy in Japan? In America?

A: The technology is not ready yet. There needs to be a balance, a match between the risk assessment of engineers and the risk perception of the public. For example, Germany shut down their nuclear power plants after the disaster at Fukushima.

Q: Following the meltdown in Fukushima, how did Tokyo and the other places relying on the plant for 1/3 of their energy make up for the loss of their main power supply?

A: Every plant in Japan was closed down immediately following the meltdown, and in the meantime Japanese people cut back (setsuyaku) on their own. The rest of the loss was made up for by importing foreign resources.
Please type your questions. You can ask questions either in Japanese or English. When you print it out, make sure to save space you would write answers in class.

Your Question 1:

Your Question 2:

Your Question 3:

Annotate others’ questions and answers (at least 2 Q&A) here in class.

Q1

Q2

Comments/Suggestions to the movie director (you can write after the talk in class).