
Providing Support While Building Relationships

My decision to participate in the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme was strongly influenced by an interest in teaching English, which I first experienced as a Peace Corps volunteer in Mozambique. I had been to Japan several times—once to visit my sister Taylor, who was a JET participant in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, and twice as part of support efforts following the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011—and each time I was impressed by the politeness of the Japanese people and the country's extraordinary hospitality.

These were busy trips, however, and I was unable to experience many aspects of day-to-day life in Japan. I already knew I liked the country, and the JET Programme provided a spectacular opportunity to deeply explore the rich culture and history of Japan while having a rewarding experience teaching.

Working as an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) at Takada High School in Yamato Takada City, Nara Prefecture, is an extremely enriching experience. I relish the opportunity to teach alongside so many talented and hardworking Japanese colleagues and serve as a positive influence in the English learning experience of students.

The diligent approach students have toward their studies impresses me, and I strive to provide fun and engaging activities to strengthen speaking fundamentals, including in-class exercises that broaden active vocabulary and improve pronunciation. Outside the classroom, I help students build confidence to converse in English and create personal connections by talking with them during breaks and at lunchtime about different aspects of their lives. My involvement in the school's English club also allows me to take an active role in assisting students to reach their individual English-speaking goals as well as introduce seasonal customs in a fun and interactive way.

As an avid adventurer, I take every opportunity to explore the charms of Nara, a region with a history stretching back to ancient times. There is always something new to discover, and I enjoy roving the countless pathways and trails that wind through the surrounding neighborhoods and countryside. I also have an interest in indoor rock climbing, which has allowed me to bridge the barrier of language and make personal connections with other climbers.

The local association of JET participants, Nara AJET, regularly hosts gatherings for people to experience traditional events such as festivals as well as interact with local residents. Volunteering is an important component of AJET, and I am anxious to lend a greater hand in various support activities, including those at local orphanages. This is something I was involved with when visiting the Tohoku region following the 3/11 disaster.

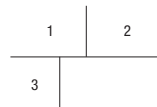
Going forward, I look to deepen the relationships I enjoy with my students, local community, and fellow JET participants. After the program, I hope to combine my strong connection with Japan together with my experience from JET, teaching in Mozambique, and volunteering in Tohoku to be involved with my family's efforts, the Taylor Anderson Memorial Fund, to help those affected by the earthquake to continue to recover.



Jeffrey Anderson

Born in the United States. Arrived in Japan as a JET participant in 2015. Currently teaching at Takada High School. Is the second member of his family to participate in JET—sister Taylor Anderson was a victim of the Great East Japan Earthquake while an ALT in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture.

Anderson walks around providing assistance to a class of first-year students.



1. Anderson plays a game with members of the after-school English club as a way to have fun while building communication skills. 2. Anderson, the Japanese English teacher, and the vice-principal pose for a group photo with students during an English class. 3. Anderson poses with his bicycle outside Kashihara Jingu. The shrine, which is near his home, is one of his favorite places to visit.

