

It has been a busy week visiting English classes and wishing I knew more than English at museums. On Monday afternoon the Gibli Museum had no English signage. On Tuesday there was no English audio support and very little English signage for the Treasures of the Imperial Collection exhibit at the Tokyo National Museum. Both made us very curious. Thank goodness for the internet information on each. We feel lucky every time we have English signage. Knowing how difficult it is to not know Japanese makes spending time in English classes all the sweeter to help someone else learn another language.

Last Friday we had a whole afternoon of class by a professional screenplay writer about the process of making an animated film. Monday we saw displays of how they are made. Check out the video of "Goush, the Cellist" at: <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-986235200397452613>. It was used to walk us through how to produce a video. Very nice. Lest anyone suggest the Japanese lack creativity, tell them to do their research on animation. Sixty percent of the animation being done is coming from here. It is highly creative. Media is second only to the auto industry in revenues for Japan. Animation makes up the lion's share.

In addition to the Halloween activities and the BGU celebration featured in the attachments, I volunteered in the university evening English class for children on Tuesday, returned to the kindergarten classes on Thursday and enjoyed a "mystery lunch" on Thursday afternoon. Jim was busy preparing his speech in English with hints of Japanese for the celebration.

For the mystery lunch, I left with May Ueno from the kindergarten after her classes. We met a group of seven women aged 66-75 for an event planned by May. This was a private English class that meets weekly. May led us through several subway stops and finally onto a trolley ride. We lunched at an Italian sidewalk cafe (yes, nice enough to sit outside). May had us mixing and playing games in English through lunch. Then we were back on the trolley to get to a park. We played a Halloween Bingo and everyone won something. Before leaving the park we rode the roller coaster -- little caterpillar -- and I was introduced to a hot lemonade out of the machine. Next we had a veggie pancake grilled at the table in a tiny cafe. Finally "lunch" was over at 5:00 and we headed home so everyone could fix dinner for their husbands. Sorry to say Jim did his own cooking. The ladies in the group were all from the Bunkyo-ku area and had not been in the area we visited. It was an older area of Tokyo with many pre-WWII houses still in use. Fun exploration with much to generate conversation. May kept saying, "English please." That part was easy for me. :)