



Language Exchange Lounge Series

Join our lively lounge events to meet friendly native speakers and fellow language learners from around the world!
Practice your skills and make new friends!"

Hosted at the Asahikawa International Center from 18:00-19:00

Lounge	Dates
Pengyou Lounge Chinese & Japanese Exchange	10/1 (Wed)
Solniska Lounge Russian & Japanese Exchange	10/2 (Thu)
Nihongo Lounge Japanese Exchange	10/15 (Wed)
K x J Lounge Korean & Japanese Exchange	10/16 (Thu)



AIC 35th Year Anniversary FRIENDSHIP PARTY

10/25
Saturday

TIME: 13:30-15:30

LOCATION: Asahikawa International Center



Join us in celebrating AIC's 35th anniversary at our lively international Friendship Party!

- Make friends with Asahikawa's international and local community!
- Get competitive with our quiz bowl challenge!
- Learn all about safety during our fun disaster preparedness workshop!



**ASAHIKAWA
INTERNATIONAL
COMMITTEE**

Inside this issue...

- 01..... Asahikawa Info Cover
- 02..... An Introduction to English Haiku
- 04..... AIC Café



Check out our website and social media for information regarding the events above.

For further information or to register for events, contact:

Asahikawa International Committee (AIC), (NAGATA), (MIYAUCHI) or Coordinator for International Relations (CIR), (JOHN)

Address: Asahikawa International Center Feeeeal 7F,
1-jo-dori 8-chome, Asahikawa 070-0031

Tel: (0166) 25-7491 **Fax:** (0166) 23-4924

Email: asahikawainternationalcenter@gmail.com

Website: <https://asahikawaic.jp/en/>

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upcoming events!

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****The opinions expressed in the essays are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the AIC or the City of Asahikawa.****

An Introduction to English Haiku

By Noriaki Gentsu



A haiku I composed during the summer of 2016 when we lived with our grandchildren.

Have you ever been curious about English haiku—the English-language adaptation of haiku, the shortest form of Japanese poetry? Let me share how I first encountered it and how I've come to enjoy it as part of my English learning journey.

Decades ago, inspired by my haiku-loving friends, I began writing haiku in Japanese. I was drawn to its elegant three-line structure and the 5-7-5 syllable rhythm, which invites us to capture fleeting moments of emotion shaped by the changing seasons. Before long, I found myself struggling with its complex conventions—especially the use of kigo (seasonal keywords). One friend even gifted me a dictionary of kigo to help me navigate these poetic nuances.

Then came the summer of 2016. Our grandchildren were staying with us for their vacation, and I wanted to write some English poems to preserve those precious memories. That's when I discovered HAIKU MASTERS, a documentary-style TV program and its website promoted by NHK World. It offered a refreshing alternative to traditional haiku. English haiku is less restrictive—both the use of kigo and adherence to the 5-7-5 syllable pattern are flexible. Even better, a photo can serve as a canvas, helping beginners express subtle aspects of nature and emotion tied to their haiku theme. —See the title photo for a haiku I wrote during that summer.

Here are two works I created during that time, both selected as runners-up by the program (see photos below):



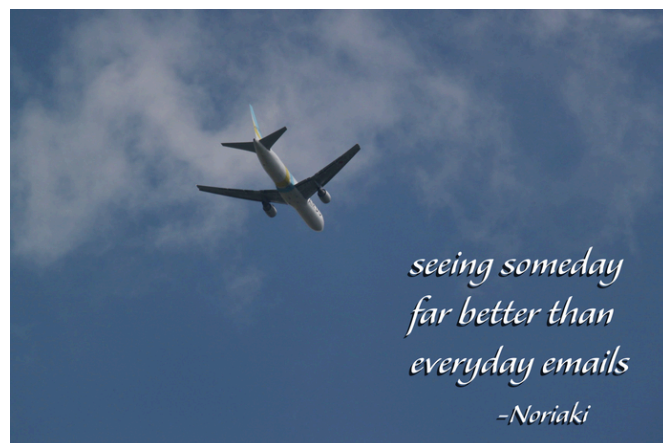
In Haiku A, I tried to superimpose Biei's autumn farming landscape with imagery from the historic Greek-Trojan sea battle—a blend of seasonal life and ancient memory:

**summer dream---
the Trojan lines rush
towards Greek ships
—Noriaki**

Haiku A (source: NHK; photo by Toshiki Nakanishi)

In Haiku B, I expressed the feeling of missing our grandchildren after they flew back home:

**seeing someday
far better than
everyday emails
—Noriaki**



*seeing someday
far better than
everyday emails
—Noriaki*

Haiku B (source: NHK)

Finally, I'd like to share a haiku I wrote without a photo, just last week during a trip to Sapporo for a concert. The mixed chorus group FORESTA, made up of eleven opera singers, performed "My Way"—a song made iconic by Frank Sinatra's first recording. It felt as if faded memories from the past were stirring again. So my haiku goes:

**"My Way" drifts into
my distant, misty memory...
a chorus on stage
—Noriaki**

Did you notice it nearly follows the 5-7-5 syllable rhythm?

For more information on English Haiku, here are some links to reference.



Photo Haiku
Guidelines



Youtube Playlist on
Photo Haiku



An introduction on
Photo Haiku (Youtube)



35th Anniversary Limited-Time

AIC Café

By John Mabilangan

On Friday, September 5th, 2025, the Asahikawa International Committee celebrated its 35th anniversary by hosting a vibrant, limited-time food stand: the AIC Café. Volunteers and staff joined us wearing green-colored attire to celebrate the occasion. The café offered an international menu featuring iconic snacks like American-style peanut butter and jelly toast, alongside unique drinks such as the tangy and spicy Canadian Caesar. The event attracted not only our enthusiastic regulars but also many local residents who joined us for delicious food and engaging conversations. The café provided a warm space for Asahikawa's international community to connect, relax, and enjoy a diverse range of flavors and cultures.



Socializing with customers



Enjoying the café beverages



Canadian Caesar Cocktail



Café Volunteers