

Essential questions are questions that are not answerable with finality in a brief sentence. Their aim is to stimulate thought, to provoke inquiry, to stimulate and sustain student engagement, and to spark more questions. Essential questions are often broadly framed, go beyond questions that are answerable by unit facts, and burst through the boundaries of the topic.

The following essential questions are intended to be relevant to students in any level of the Japanese program at IMSA, as they are very broadly framed and are not unit- or topic-specific questions. These questions primarily focus on the interconnectedness of language, culture, and identity.

## QUESTIONS:

- What is culture?
- What is Culture?
- Presuming that language and culture are inextricably bound together, how does language inform culture and, conversely, how does culture inform language?
- How does the Japanese language inform, reflect, or shape Japanese culture?
- How does Japanese culture shape the Japanese language?
- How is American culture or society reflected in the English language as spoken by Americans?
- What are some distinctive features of Japanese society—that stand out in contrast to American or Western society?
- How do Japanese people conceive of themselves, both as individuals, as well as in relation to other Japanese people?
- What is the relationship between gender/gender roles and the Japanese language?
- What is the relationship between gender/gender roles and the English language as spoken in America?