

# ALTIA CENTRAL RECRUITING

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## An Update on the Recruiting Process Shifting from Overseas to In-Country Recruiting!

By Graham Van Zwoll, ALT Recruitment Manager

It really has been an exciting - and very busy - few months here at ALTIA CENTRAL Recruiting.

While our main focus throughout the year is usually interviewing applicants here in Japan, we also have a number of interviewers based overseas who meet applicants for us in the United States, Canada and the UK. Over the past few months, as well as the May and June period each year, our focus temporarily shifts overseas. We have held interviews literally all over the place just this past month alone - including our main bases in Los Angeles, Seattle, Charlotte, Chicago & Tampa in the US, as well as London, England and a number of other cities here in Japan and around the US!

As always, we're meeting some great people and working to fill a

few immediate openings here and there from January. Mostly though, our focus is on our biggest hiring season of the year - the start of the Japanese school year in April.

Our current and upcoming openings are updated regularly on our website and on our ads that we put up on gainjinpot.com.

For many of our successful overseas recruits, we will soon be applying for Certificates of Eligibility, the first step in the visa process for employment here in Japan. This generally takes about a month or so to issue, and then another few weeks to deliver the COEs to you overseas. From there they can then be processed into entry visas at the local Japanese Consulate or Embassy and you should have a valid visa in hand by about the end of January.

For our in-country recruits, we will be interviewing almost non-stop from early January right through to the end of March. Although the bulk of our interviews are held during the week at our head office in Nagoya as well as our new Kansai office in Osaka, we also hold weekend interviews most Saturdays and Sundays at a number of other cities including Tokyo, Shizuoka, Okayama and Hiroshima.

This is by far the busiest time of the year for us but is also the best and most rewarding opportunity to meet hundreds of fantastic people who wish to be ALTIA CENTRAL ALTs.

We're always looking for great people, friendly people with passion, energy, and positivity- so now and the next few months are the perfect time to apply.

# ALTIA CENTRAL Resources

## A Great Tool Kit

By Peter RICHARDSON, ALT Supervisor

It was a little nerve wracking, I was standing in front of a class of eight-year-olds. Thirty of them, all of them looking up at me expectantly, waiting for their English lesson to begin. I held up a hand-drawn picture of a dog. Well, I say it was a dog, it had four legs, two eyes, a nose and a tail. I might have included ears but I am not sure. The rest of my classroom aids were pretty similar. OK, I was in Uganda at the time and maybe I could be excused for not having the correct materials at hand, and anyway it is the teacher that matters, not the materials. Right?

Of course you are important, you are the person that makes the materials come alive. But here at ALTIA CENTRAL, we believe that you can do so much more if you have the right tools to do the job. With this in mind, we have created a huge variety of resources for you to choose from when teaching in your classes. The sheer amount and quality of our materials is unmatched in this industry and is one of the major strengths of our program and our company. Depending on what level(s) you end up teaching, you could have some 400 flashcards, 36 storyboards, over 40 songs, and countless activities and worksheets to take away with you from training. This will allow you to respond to any requests by your school, on your first day, and every day thereafter, with materials that are up to the job and have been tested and proven in many schools all over Japan.



**ALTIA CENTRAL Resources - The students love them, the teachers love them, we love them and we hope you will too.**

-Peter Richardson  
ALTIA CENTRAL Supervisor

Japanese public schools use a variety of texts, from the “Hi Friends!” book in Elementary schools to various Junior High school textbooks, such as “New Horizon” or “Sunshine.” Some schools have their own curriculum, while others rely more on their ALT to provide meaningful lessons.

Regardless of level or area though, ALTIA CENTRAL won't let you down. For Elementary schools, we provide translations of “Hi Friends!” lesson plans with additional materials that match the lessons perfectly. We give you a six year Elementary school curriculum to ensure that you are never short on ideas. Each lesson is supported by our original songs specially written to match the material, our one-of-a-kind storyboards which allow you to introduce language in a very meaningful way, and a variety of level-appropriate activities. In Junior High school, you have our original activities resource, “The Text Book Trail” which offers dozens and dozens of useful activities that target specific grammar points, along with ones that work well with many different target language structures. We also include the small cards versions and original images that allow you to be as creative as you wish when you feel the need to branch out beyond the resources provided to you.

ALTIA CENTRAL provides you with a great tool kit of resources. This, in combination with the training you receive, means you can be confident that you are going into your schools with activities and materials that really do work and the skills to use them successfully. ALTIA CENTRAL resources - The students love them, the teachers love them, we love them and we hope you will, too.



## Being an Elementary School ALT

### Getting paid to have fun

By Austin Gillard, former ALT in Gifu Pref.

For me, the life of an Elementary School ALT is great. 8:30-4:30 five days a week, with no take home work and very little stress. My days consist of fun lessons, a few games and plenty of laughs.

The lessons themselves are a lot of fun to teach. I might start with a song or a game of Simon Says, then review last week's vocabulary and introduce some new words or a basic grammar pattern. From there the lesson consists of doing activities that reinforce the newly learnt vocabulary/grammar. Some of the best times I have at Elementary School are during these activities. It's great seeing the kids getting caught up in an activity, excitably using the English I've just taught them in a bid to win.

Writing lesson plans for each class was a bit daunting at first but I had nothing to worry about thanks to the abundance of materials I received from ALTIA CENTRAL. These materials specify the themes, what vocabulary to teach, the flashcards to use and gave me an array of topic-specific activities to play.

The times outside of my English lessons are also a lot of fun. I can hardly make it down a corridor without some students stopping me to say hello or to play a quick game of *janken*. School lunch is spent with the kids and although some of the eating habits of the younger grades can be a little gross at times, it's nice to have a bit of a chat and a chance to get to know the students a bit better. The kids also seem to love it when I challenge them to a game of *janken* to decide who has to collect everyone's plates and somehow I always seem to lose.

After lunch is almost the best part of the day. I love being able to go outside at break times and shoot

some hoops with some grade three students or join in a game of hand-baseball with a group of grade fivers. Usually the other teachers are busy with other things after lunch, so the students really seem to appreciate and enjoy me taking part in a game outside with them. It's at this point especially when I think what a great job this is. The kids are happy I'm outside playing with them and for twenty minutes of the day I get to live out my NBA dreams and get paid to play basketball, albeit with a bunch of 10-year-olds. (Did I mention that the basketball goals are lower than standard? So I can actually dunk! YES!)

I've never taught at Junior High School but I can't imagine it could be any more fun than working at Elementary School. I highly recommend it.

## Being a Junior High School ALT

### A new job every day

By Matthew COTHRAN, Lead Teacher

I woke up, got out of bed, dragged a comb... and eventually I arrived at my JHS, ready and raring to go! Life as a JHS ALT is good.

Upon arriving at school, I am always met by myriad greetings from students and teachers on my walk to the teachers' room. I energetically respond, and the day is already off to a good start! In our school we have daily morning meetings, where teachers share announcements and news before the grade levels break off into their own meetings. Also, I seek out my Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) to double check that my schedule hasn't changed and that we're on the same page for the day. After a quick coffee and chat with the vice principal, it's time to go teach some English!

My lesson content and expectations vary by JTE, by grade, and by class. Today I'm modeling text and showing my students how a native speaker sounds in the first grade class. In my second grade class I've prepared a fun activity for the last twenty minutes to go along with my JTE's

lesson plan. And finally, in my two third grade classes the JTE has asked me to conduct a one-on-one speaking test with each student. Sometimes my days are focused on one grade level for four or five classes, but today there are three completely different levels and topics. Days like this keep things fresh and keep you on your toes!

Between each period, I like to walk around the hallways. Many students cheerfully swap greetings with me and often some students rope me into their conversations! For lunch, I rotate daily through the classes and get a nice relaxing atmosphere to chat with students, too. At the end of the day there will be cleaning time, when most students are not supposed to talk, but teachers and students all work together to keep the school looking good!

If I have a free period, I'll often do lesson planning or activity preparations my JTEs ask of me. Then I'll check some workbooks for one of my JTEs classes, taking a moment to write an encouraging message or "Nice job!", for each student. Then I finally get to go work on my English Board! I check the message box and answer any questions students may have written to me and prepare to post them back up on the board, and then I plan what updates are coming next for the board's periodical sections.

Before you know it, the school chime has sounded, lessons are finished, cleaning time is done, now everyone is going to their club activities- a highlight of the day for everyone. I occasionally join a random club, but many days I am considered a regular member of the track and field club, running with the distance runners. Recently, even one of the other teachers has started joining us!

Alas, all good things must come to an end, so after saying the proper greetings to the teachers, the field, and all of the students, it's time to go back inside. With a final burst of energy I say my farewells to the teachers and the students on my way out of the school and head back towards home. It's just been another wonderful day in the life of being a JHS ALT!



# Our Recruiting Team

## Meeting Those Behind The Search

By **Graham Van Zwoil**, ALT Recruitment Manager

We may have already met in person for an interview or perhaps a follow-up online, but just in case we haven't, let me introduce myself. My name is Graham Van Zwoil and I'm the Recruitment Division Manager. I'm originally from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada but I've been in Japan for well over 20 years. I'm married and have 3 fast growing sons, the oldest of which is already in university here in Nagoya.

I have been very fortunate to work with ALTIA CENTRAL for a very long time - as an ALT for 6 years, a supervisor for another 6 years, the Resources Division Manager responsible for creating and producing all teaching materials and the Training Coordinator in charge of running our yearlong training program for a number of years as well before my current role. That makes me either very experienced or rather old - not sure which but perhaps a bit of both.

I have a great amount of faith and pride in ALTIA CENTRAL and absolutely believe that this is a great company doing all we can to achieve great things for all concerned - our BOE clients, the schools and teachers, our ALTs and most importantly the students. Therefore, finding and hiring the

best people every year is incredibly important for me - basically, finding people good enough to teach my own children.

With nearly 100 new ALTs joining the company each calendar year, our continued success means that recruiting can no longer remain a one-man job. In the summer of 2014, we added a full-time Recruiting Assistant position and hired former Gifu Prefectural Advisor and 5-year JET alumni, Mr. Jason WALTERS to help us out. Jason brought incredible energy and enthusiasm, on top of his experience and background, and showed us how invaluable this position could be. He continues to work with us on a part-time basis this year, focussing on social media and helping with interviews during peak seasons, and we have since promoted one of our long-term and very successful ALTs to this full-time position, Mr. Meron MESFIN.

Meron is an avid people person and as a former ALTIA CENTRAL ALT, he will be working closely with me in the coming season to share the workload and develop new strategies for finding those dedicated ALTs who can best serve our schools and children with purpose and enthusiasm. Meron completed his Masters here in Japan, and has worked mainly at elementary school but also all the way up to the university level as well. Up to now, he has contributed to ALTIA CENTRAL by presenting for our Professional Development events, helping at Orientation/Training, and most importantly by continually putting his best foot forward as a wonderful ALT by always supporting, communicating with, and reaching out to students, teachers and colleagues alike.

And on top of our great recruiting team here in Japan, we also employ a team of overseas-based interviewers to meet applicants on our behalf - Lauren in Chicago who

“...a one-on-one, in-person interview with a member of the ALTIA CENTRAL Recruiting Team is always professional, thorough, and personable...”

has been interviewing for us for 6 or 7 years now, and 3 former super ALTs of ours, Jillian in Los Angeles, Jeremy in Charlotte and Chris in London, England. They each meet dozens of applicants every year in their respective cities, with follow up interviews over Skype with the Recruiting Manager for those who have a successful 1st interview.

Whether we interview you here in Japan at our offices, around Japan or overseas, wherever and whenever it is, a one-on-one, in-person interview with a member of the ALTIA CENTRAL Recruiting Team is always professional, thorough, and personable and we are always looking forward to hearing from great applicants like you. Apply now and let's get the process started from there.



**Graham Van Zwoil**



**Jason WALTERS**



**Meron MESFIN**