



Store Manners! – Michael Henderson

Between Japan and America, there are many differences in manners and culture. One area that I don't think people talk about often is differences at the store! So today I want to talk about all the things I've noticed since living in Japan.

The first one is greetings. Japanese workers will almost always say “いらっしゃいませ!”, but in America, workers often don't greet customers. Sometimes they will say “Welcome in!” or talk to customers depending on the store (like Starbucks), but it is not as often as Japanese workers.

The next is opening the door for strangers. In America, people will often open doors for strangers when entering a shop and let them go first. This happens even if the stranger is still far from the door! In Japan, I've noticed this doesn't really happen often, so when I open the door for strangers they often seem surprised.

Another one is shopping manners. Sometimes in America, people will not put back items in the original place. For example, if someone is holding a toy, but realizes they don't want it anymore, they may place it down on the nearest shelf to them, even if it is a different section (such as the food section). Often in American stores you will see random products in random areas because of this. In Japan, it seems like if someone realizes they don't want a product, they will always put it back in the original spot!

There are many other little differences I found, but for now, I'll end with these three! If you're curious about what American stores are like, feel free to talk to me or Kate about it at any time!

“Target”, an American supermarket chain



Winter Fun – Katelyn Sondereker

Even though it is very hot in summer, Ohio has very cold winters with lots of snow. In Kumamoto, the first time I saw snow was this week! Sitting inside while it snows outside makes me feel nostalgic (懐かしい), cozy, and at home.

This past December, I went home to visit my family after not seeing them for a whole year. In fact, I didn't tell my family that I was coming home for Christmas, so it was a surprise! While I was home, I thought a lot about the fun things we do in the winter in America.

The second day that I woke up in Ohio, it was -18 degrees Celsius (摂氏)! We had a winter storm (嵐) and it snowed a lot. If it snows a lot in Ohio or gets very cold, schools have something called *snow days*, where students don't go to school and instead stay safe at home. When I was in school, I loved snow days because I could sleep in, watch movies with my mom, and drink hot chocolate by the fireplace (暖炉).

Another fun thing that Americans do in the winter is go to see Christmas lights (イルミネーション). Many people decorate the outside of their houses with lots of lights. When I was a child, my parents would drive us around to find the houses with the best Christmas lights! Some zoos in Ohio will also put up really beautiful Christmas light displays that people can walk around and look at.

But I think my favorite winter activity is going to a Christmas tree farm to choose a Christmas tree. My family always picks a HUGE tree, usually about seven or eight feet (214-244 cm) tall! Then we cut the tree down to take it home and decorate it with lights and ornaments. It is always so beautiful!

Kate's brother, sister, and mom hanging up Christmas ornaments on the tree!



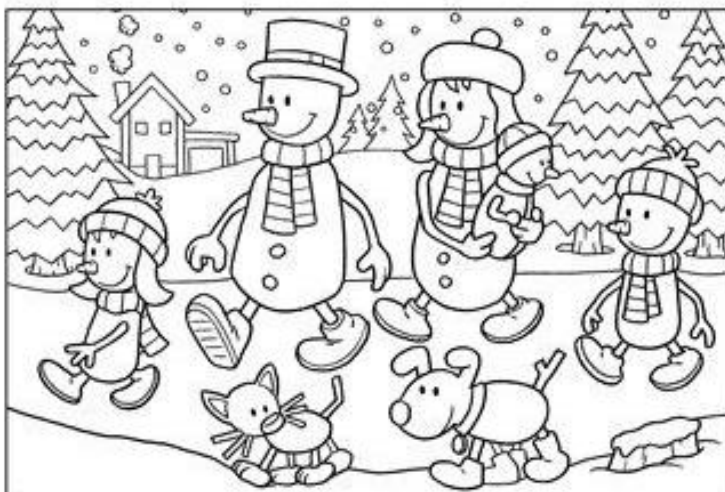
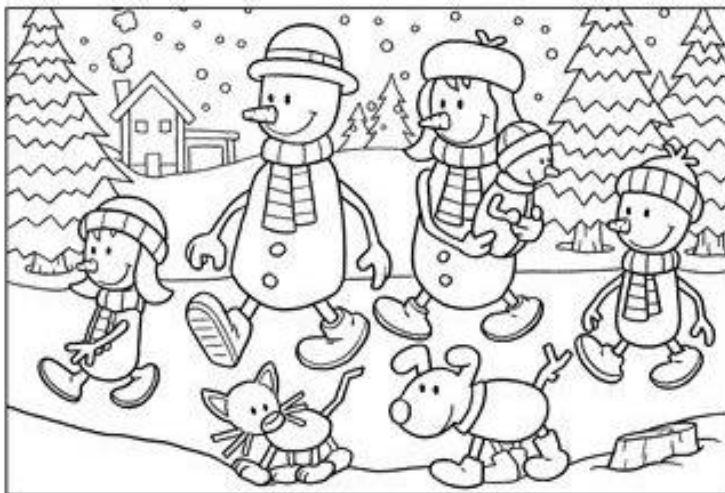
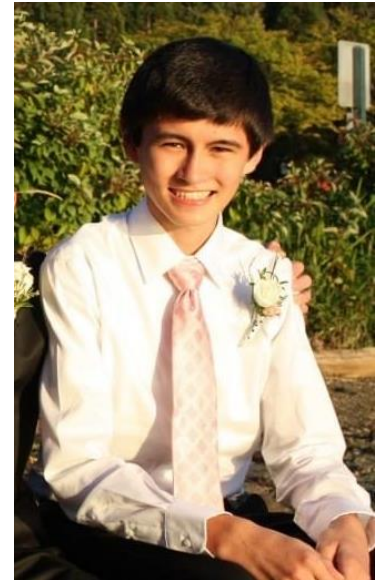
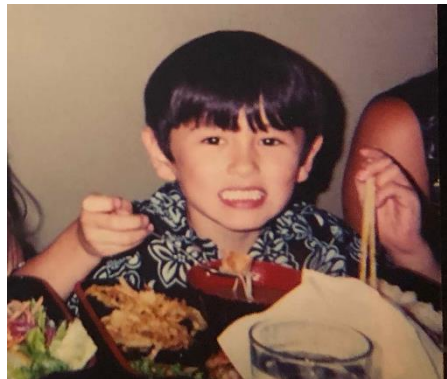


How old do you think Michael is?



Each picture is from a different age
How old do you think I am in each picture?

If you think you're correct, come find me and I'll check your answers!



Can you find the TEN differences between the two pictures??

Come show us what you find!