

Introduction はじめに

You are holding the first of a series of three books aimed at teaching you the first 1006 漢字 kanji in Japanese writing, the so-called 教育漢字 *Kyōiku kanji* (*kyōiku* means “education”). The *Kyōiku kanji* are called so because they are the kanji Japanese children learn systematically during their six years in Elementary School (from 6 to 12 years old) as part of their basic education. This list is established by the もんぶかがくしやう 文部科学省 Japanese Ministry of Education and Science.

The idea of creating a new method in a widely explored field like kanji arose on noticing two facts. First, the enthusiasm with which young students and lovers of the Japanese language received the *Japanese in MangaLand* method. The series is currently published in several languages and consists of three textbooks and three exercise books, through which students can reach an intermediate level in Japanese. This will qualify them to pass levels 3 and 4 of the 日本語能力試験 *Nihongo nōryoku shiken* (or 能験 *Nōken*), the official test for Japanese as a foreign language. *Japanese in MangaLand* came to fill in a gap in the educational material for studying Japanese as a foreign language: that of texts aimed at teenagers and young adults. Furthermore, in a time when Japanese pop culture is driving people wild wherever it goes —due to the influence and widespread distribution of products such as videogames, manga, cartoons, or cinema— young people are developing, more and more, an interest towards everything related to Japan; an interest which, in the linguistic arena, few have considered fulfilling before *Japanese in MangaLand*. These teenagers are becoming younger and younger, and here we find the second fact that drove us to creating *Kanji in MangaLand*. Those who become interested in Japan and the Japanese language do so at an increasingly younger age; therefore, their study tools must also be suitable for their age, as well as for their cognitive abilities and their process of assimilating ideas.

To date, we observe two Japanese kanji teaching methods for foreigners. The first is the traditional method, where the study of kanji is approached in a similar way to that used in Japanese schools —by following an arbitrary order, consisting of the repetition of writing characters over and over again, until the kanji (or the movement of the hand when writing it), is engraved in the pupil’s memory. The second method was introduced by professor James W. Heisig (whom two of the authors of this present work have had the honor of collaborating with on several occasions) and was based on the student’s imaginative memory (see *Remembering the Kanji* I and II). To these two methods we now add a third one: *Kanji in MangaLand*, a method based on visual memory. This method will enable young students to tackle the study of kanji even if their capacity for

abstract conception is not as fully developed as it may be at an adult age; or, alternatively, without the need of making a mental effort as demanding as with other methods.

Kanji in MangaLand combines the best of the two methods described above. On the one hand, it introduces kanji, with some order variations, just as they would appear in Japanese schools. That is, first, the most basic and commonly used; and, afterwards, the most complex ones. Each kanji comes with its most frequent readings, a breakdown of its writing, alternative spellings, number of strokes, and a good number of compounds, which makes this a valuable reference book even for advanced students. On the other hand, each kanji is represented as a set of amusing pictures, all equally flamboyant (each sub-picture represents a forming element of the whole kanji), which make its identification and subsequent memorization much easier. This aspect of *Kanji in MangaLand* is clearly original and different from any other books on kanji that you may find on the market, making it the trademark of this book, along with the rest of the “MangaLand” series. Why get bored studying if there are more enjoyable ways, which are equally, if not more, effective and, besides, use the cool art of manga as a tool?

Kanji in MangaLand combines (as does its father, *Japanese in MangaLand*) the study of kanji with the motivation which drives many people to study it: the Japanese style of manga art. Our method allows you to study kanji not as isolated entities, but as real words in context because we provide you with an original short story of one manga page for each lesson you study.

Everybody can use *Kanji in MangaLand*. Those students who have already initiated themselves in the study of Japanese, either with a teacher or self-taught, will find this book to be a supplement to their study and a backup for kanji (probably the main difficulty a Westerner comes across when learning Japanese). In addition to reading some original manga pages, beginner-intermediate level sentences and texts are used, which will allow the student to practice their knowledge of grammar. Even if they don't know anything about the Japanese language, those curious about kanji will find in this book a system to help them remember, identify, and learn how to write the characters since all texts and sentences in the book have been translated. Our purpose of using kanji in context is that of creating a real framework to learn the language —understanding kanji is not an isolated entity, but one part of a system as a whole.

Kanji in MangaLand is obviously a member of the “MangaLand” family, and, as such, it is designed to complement the three textbooks and the three exercise books in the *Japanese in MangaLand* series. While the primary focus of the last three is on Japanese grammar and vocabulary, they never leave writing aside. However, for obvious space reasons, they push the aspect of writing into the background. Thus, the need arose to create these three *Kanji in MangaLand* volumes, in order to provide an equally fun and innovating method to study kanji. However, Japanese is not only kanji, nor is it only

grammar. Therefore, we highly recommend that students work simultaneously with the textbooks *Japanese in MangaLand* 1, 2, 3, and their corresponding exercise books, to consolidate the study of grammar and vocabulary; and the *Kanji in MangaLand* volume that is appropriate to their level.

This method will consist of three books, each containing two of the six grades in which the 教育漢字 *Kyōiku kanji* are divided. The books are structured in lessons of 8 or 12 kanji, to which we add one page of a manga-comic, one page of exercises, answers to the exercises, and a translation of the comic-book. We must state that *Kanji in MangaLand* is a progressive study method, which means that what has been learned in a lesson is considered as assimilated in successive lessons and, therefore, what has been learned in the first book will be applied in the second and third books. Thus, we do not recommend that you start studying with this method from book 2 or 3.

Japanese writing

Japanese writing is the result of a combination of three writing systems:

KANJI: The subject of study in this book. They are complex characters “imported” from China to Japan in the 6th century, which represent “ideas” or “concepts” (that is why they are also called “ideograms”).

HIRAGANA: One of the two syllabic alphabets or “syllabaries,” with cursive forms.

KATAKANA: The second of the Japanese syllabaries, with rectilinear forms.

We only have documentary evidence of written Japanese from the 5th and 6th centuries and on; before this, Japanese language was oral, and had no writing system. In this period, Chinese ideograms (or kanji) were introduced into Japan, and were originally only used phonetically, but soon went on to be used ideographically to represent Japanese words. These kanji were imported along with their readings. Although, due to the need to adapt them to a preexistent language (oral Japanese), they were also given new readings. The result is this: one kanji can have several readings, which derive from their 音読み *on’yomi* (Chinese reading) and 訓読み *kun’yomi* (Japanese reading). This fact really complicates the Japanese writing system, even in comparison to the Chinese, where readings are for the most part univocal.

Nowadays, there are 1,945 “common use” kanji (常用 *Jōyō kanji*) of compulsory learning in elementary and high school, which enable you to read, with no trouble, all kind of texts in common Japanese. Among these, only 1,006 (the 教育 *Kyōiku kanji* in *Kanji in MangaLand*) are systematically taught during the six years at elementary school. The rest are gradually learned as years of study and reading draw on. An average Japanese person usually recognizes about 3,000 kanji; it is worth mentioning that among them are the 人名漢字 *Jinmei kanji* (kanji for people’s names), which consist of almost 600 characters mainly used in first names and recognized by almost everybody.

The kana

Hiragana and katakana are a series of characters which represent a sound consisting of a simple vowel or formed by a consonant plus a vowel. Together, they are generically called 仮名 *kana* (syllabic alphabets of the Japanese language).

Since there was no native writing system in Japan with which the Chinese kanji could merge, and because Chinese and Japanese sounds are substantially different, during several centuries about 970 Chinese characters were used as phonetic symbols for the 88 Japanese syllables, giving birth to an older katakana syllabary. Halfway through the 8th century, some of these kanji were transformed into more cursive, curved lines, mainly by women in court during the Heian period (794-1185). They became the origin of the development of a phonetic syllabary with a univocal relationship between sound and written form. In the 10th century, this syllabary was recognized as an official writing system: hiragana. Nowadays, hiragana is used to write characteristic Japanese words, to add grammatical desinences, and to write those words with difficult or non-standard kanji.

Katakana forms also derive from kanji, but unlike hiragana they were not based on the calligraphic writing. Instead, a “part” (*kata*) of a kanji was taken to represent sounds. These forms were written in a rectilinear style. Nowadays, katakana is used to write foreign language loanwords (including proper nouns), to draw the reader’s attention to a specific word, and for onomatopoeia.

In *Kanji in MangaLand*, because the kana are used to indicate kanji readings, knowledge of the kana syllabaries is essential. Thus, following the traditional convention, the 訓読み *kun’yomi* reading of a kanji will be indicated in hiragana, while the 音読み *on’yomi* reading will be in katakana. If you already have some experience in the study of Japanese, you should already know the kana (hiragana and katakana) syllabaries, and be able to read and write them; if so, then you can skip the next part and jump to the section entitled “How to use *Kanji in MangaLand*.” But if such is not your case, then keep reading and use this section to learn the kana; thus, overcoming the first obstacle in the Japanese language.

あ a	か ka	さ sa	た ta	な na	は ha	ま ma	や ya	ら ra	わ wa	ん n
い i	き ki	し shi	ち chi	に ni	ひ hi	み mi		り ri	ゐ wi	
う u	く ku	す su	つ tsu	ぬ nu	ふ fu	む mu	ゆ yu	る ru		
え e	け ke	せ se	て te	ね ne	へ he	め me		れ re	ゑ we	
お o	こ ko	そ so	と to	の no	ほ ho	も mo	よ yo	ろ ro	を wo	

Katakana table

ア a	カ ka	サ sa	タ ta	ナ na	ハ ha	マ ma	ヤ ya	ラ ra	ワ wa	ン n
イ i	キ ki	シ shi	チ chi	ニ ni	ヒ hi	ミ mi		リ ri	ヰ wi	
ウ u	ク ku	ス su	ツ tsu	ヌ nu	フ fu	ム mu	ユ yu	ル ru		
エ e	ケ ke	セ se	テ te	ネ ne	ヘ he	メ me		レ re	ヱ we	
オ o	コ ko	ソ so	ト to	ノ no	ホ ho	モ mo	ヨ yo	ロ ro	ヲ wo	

VELARIZATIONS: adding two tiny strokes on the top right part of some kana, we obtain the so-called “impure sounds”: voiced (or velarized) versions of these kana. This phenomenon affects “k,” “s,” “t,” and “h” columns:

Hiragana: が (*ga*); き (*gi*); ぐ (*gu*); げ (*ge*); ご (*go*); ざ (*za*); じ (*ji*); ず (*zu*); ぜ (*ze*); ぞ (*zo*); だ (*da*); ぢ (*ji*); づ (*zu*); で (*de*); ど (*do*); ば (*ba*); び (*bi*); ぶ (*bu*); べ (*be*); ぼ (*bo*).

Katakana: ガ (*ga*); ギ (*gi*); グ (*gu*); ゲ (*ge*); ゴ (*go*); ザ (*za*); ジ (*ji*); ズ (*zu*); ゼ (*ze*); ゾ (*zo*); ダ (*da*); チ (*ji*); ツ (*zu*); テ (*de*); ト (*do*); バ (*ba*); ビ (*bi*); ブ (*bu*); ベ (*be*); ボ (*bo*).

On the other hand, adding a small circle on the top right part of the kana in the “h” column, we obtain the occlusive versions of these kana:

Hiragana: ぱ (*pa*); ぴ (*pi*); ぷ (*pu*); ぺ (*pe*); ぽ (*po*).

Katakana: パ (*pa*); ピ (*pi*); プ (*pu*); ペ (*pe*); ポ (*po*).

DIPHTHONGS: another essential point in order to use kana perfectly is knowing about diphthongs, which are combinations of the characters in the “i” line with those in the “y” line (the latter written in a smaller size):

Hiragana: きゃ (*kya*); きゅ (*kyu*); きょ (*kyo*); ぎゃ (*gya*); ぎゅ (*gyu*); ぎょ (*gyo*); しゃ (*sha*); しゅ (*shu*); しょ (*sho*); じゃ (*ja*); じゅ (*ju*); じょ (*jo*); ちゃ (*cha*); ちゅ (*chu*); ちょ (*cho*); にゃ (*nya*); にゅ (*nyu*); にょ (*nyo*); ひゃ (*hya*); ひゅ (*hyu*); ひょ (*hyo*); びゃ (*bya*); びゅ (*byu*); びょ (*byo*); ぴゃ (*pya*); ぴゅ (*pyu*); ぴょ (*pyo*); みゃ (*mya*); みゅ (*myu*); みょ (*myo*); りゃ (*rya*); りゅ (*ryu*); りょ (*ryo*).

Katakana: キャ (*kya*); キュ (*kyu*); キョ (*kyo*); ギャ (*gya*); ギュ (*gyu*); ギョ (*gyo*); シャ (*sha*); シュ (*shu*); ショ (*sho*); ジャ (*ja*); ジュ (*ju*); ジョ (*jo*); チャ (*cha*); チュ (*chu*); チョ (*cho*); ニャ (*nya*); ニュ (*nyu*); ニョ (*nyo*); ヒャ (*hya*); ヒュ (*hyu*); ヒョ (*hyo*); ビャ (*bya*); ビュ (*byu*); ビョ (*byo*); ピャ (*pya*); ピュ (*pyu*); ピョ (*pyo*); ミャ (*mya*); ミュ (*myu*); ミョ (*myo*); リャ (*rya*); リュ (*ryu*); リョ (*ryo*).

VOWEL LENGTHENING AND DOUBLE SOUNDS: the kana ended in “o” or “u” can have this last sound lengthened (that is, pronounced for a longer time than usual). This effect is indicated in hiragana adding the character う at the end. Thus, the diphthong しょう will be pronounced *shōh* (and not *shoU*, as could be thought), じゅう will be *juu*, びょう will be *byoo*, etc. When romanizing Japanese, this effect is usually represented with a dash on top of the lengthened “o” or “u,” thus, *ū* and *byō*. In this book, we will use the same method to indicate the lengthening in katakana: ジョウ (*jō*), ニュウ (*nyū*), ギョウ (*gyō*).

For phonetic reasons, and to make pronunciation easier, we sometimes have, as well, the phenomenon of “double sounds” (when the tongue sort of suddenly stops when pronouncing the sound). This effect is indicated with a small character っ (in hiragana) or ッ (in katakana) before the consonant to be doubled. This phenomenon only happens before those kana starting with *k*, *s*, *t*, *ch*, *g*, *z*, *d*, *b*, and *p*. Examples: まって (pronounced *matte*), バッド (*baddo*), あっし (*asshi*).

“WE” & “WI”: you have probably noticed that in the “w” columns of the hiragana and katakana tables two forms corresponding to the sounds “we” (ゑ and ゑ) and “wi” (ゐ and ゑ) appear in grey. They are old forms whose usage was ceased after the language reform that took place at the end of the Second World War. You don’t need to remember them, since in modern Japanese you will never come across them; they are included in the table for the sake of curiosity.

TO CONCLUDE: the explanations on kana we offer here are very basic and just enough for you to use this book without any other kind of help. However, we highly recommend that—in order to know more about their usage, pronunciation, and other characteristics—you resort to other more specific texts, such as *Remembering the Kana*, or *Japanese in MangaLand 1* and its exercise book.

At the end of this introduction you will find a table with the breakdown of the writing order for each syllabary: both hiragana and katakana.

How to use *Kanji in MangaLand*

Kanji in MangaLand is a self-learning method for kanji, designed for self-taught students, both for those who study Japanese grammar and vocabulary, and for those who don’t. (Although, as we have mentioned before, we recommend the simultaneous study of the grammar and the writing, since knowing kanji alone is not very useful knowledge). Therefore, this book has all the necessary tools to be self-sufficient: readings for those kanji which have not yet been studied in the book; translations of the sentences in the exercises, of the manga pages, and of the review texts; and answers to all the drills we propose.

This book covers the first two grades of kanji studied at a Japanese school, which would be the equivalent to the program of the first two years at an elementary school. Lessons 1 to 7 cover the first grade (80 kanji), and lessons 8 to 21 cover the second (160 kanji). Altogether, providing you with a course of 240 kanji for this first volume, which consists of two steps that you must climb in the suggested order. Book 2 will cover grades 3 (200 kanji) and 4 (200 kanji), while Book 3 (the final book) will cover grades 5 (185 kanji) and 6 (181 kanji). Altogether, we will study the 1006 *Kyōiku kanji*.

Even though we have chosen to follow the system of arranging kanji by grades as is done in Japanese elementary schools, we have opted to stray from the traditional order in which they are introduced because we find it to be unideal for students of Japanese. The Japanese school system generally introduces kanji of progressive complexity; that is, it usually introduces the simpler and most commonly used kanji in the first grades while leaving other peculiar, more technical kanji for higher grades—we find this is to be a very good idea. However, they sometimes tend to introduce complex kanji (such as 校) in their first grade, and much simpler kanji (such as 父) in their second grade. Because 父 is one of the radicals (that is, an element) of 校, ideally it should be introduced before 父. In spite of its faults, the

arrangement into 6 grades is the most traditional and well-known; therefore, many students are familiar with it. Keeping this in mind, *Kanji in MangaLand* proposes an original arrangement, which will help the non-Japanese student who is unfamiliar with the kanji writing system. The arrangement that we have implemented is designed to help you remember and distinguish the characters, and tries to cover the criteria specified below:

DIFFICULTY: our course will first introduce the simpler kanji and then progress, little by little, in stroke number and complexity.

COINCIDENCE OR SIMILARITY OF ELEMENTS: the *Kanji in MangaLand* method is based on the pictorial representation of the “elements”, or “radicals,” which form each kanji. Sometimes, the element is a kanji in itself (as in 一, #1), as well as being an “element” in other kanji (本, #60, for example); sometimes, it’s only an element in other kanji (as the *pregnant woman’s belly* in 九, #25, and in 丸, #92). Sometimes, the elements are slightly deformed when forming part of another kanji (as happens with 火, #54, which sometimes becomes 灬). And, sometimes, some simple elements are combined to form a compound element to which we associate a new meaning (as the 三 *trident*, the 一 *tutu*, and the 巾 *apron*, which are combined to form the element for 帚 *housewife*, lesson 15).

DIFFERENTIATION OF VERY SIMILAR KANJI: in one same grade we will study the following kanji together: 大 *big*, #47, and 犬 *dog*, #48; 馬 *horse*, #230, and 鳥 *bird*, #231, so as to emphasize their differences and to avoid mixing them up.

SEMANTIC FIELDS, SYNONYMY, AND ANTONYMY: we group and learn the following kanji together: 父 *father*, # 212, 母 *mother*, #214, and 兄 *elder brother*, #215; those with very similar meaning, such as 戸 *door*, #131, and 門 *gate*, #132; or opposites, like 行 *go*, #136 and 来 *come*, #135.

The lessons

The lessons in *Kanji in MangaLand* consist of various parts. The first is the longest and is made up of the **KANJI TABLES** (we will explain in detail in the following section). These are in fact the essence of the book. All the necessary information related to the kanji studied in each case is included here. Most importantly, a picture representing the kanji is also given to remind us of its form. This helps express the image of an abstract entity as something concrete, something we can visualize, and later on reproduce when needed.

Besides different kinds of information, the kanji tables also offer a word list where the studied kanji is used in words called 熟語 *jukugo* (compound words). These are the words we will later find used in context in the following page: the **MANGA** page. This book contains 21 cartoon stories with which you can stop studying for a moment, have a pleasant break, and see in context, as well, the compound words and kanji you have studied. Those who already know grammar, can test their reading comprehension capa-

city with these manga stories; those who don't, can resort to the translation of the story (on the last page of each lesson). Thus, they can also follow the story, and still see the words they have learned in the real context of a Japanese text.

After the manga, a page of **EXERCISES** will help you practice your acquired knowledge. You can check whether you have memorized the kanji form with the pictures in the tables; whether you remember how to draw them in their correct stroke order; and how to read them depending on whether they are combined with other kanji or they are on their own, and depending on the meaning of the sentence. We have tried to find a balance between the reading and the writing exercises, as well as the mistake identification exercises, which are always helpful to prevent mistakes one could make later on.

Finally, in the last page of each lesson, we offer you the **ANSWERS** to the exercises, so that you can assess your progress; the **TRANSLATION** of the manga; and a look ahead at the **NEXT ELEMENTS**, which will be covered in the following lesson. The answers to the exercises are an essential component part of any self-taught learning method; remember you must use them for your assessment once you have finished the exercises, and not before.

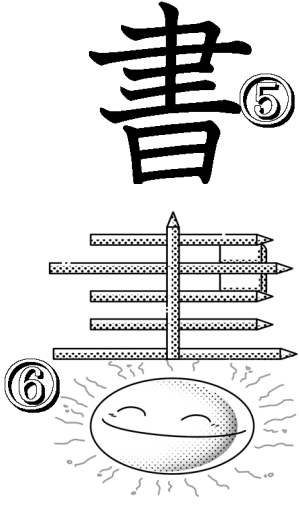
At the end of the first grade, which covers lessons 1 to 7, we suggest you take a break: you have studied the equivalent of a full year course! Therefore, stop on the way, and complete the **LEVEL 1 REVIEW**, with which you can make sure that you have assimilated the knowledge acquired in the first seven lessons. Also, because your learning is cumulative, it is best to check that by the end of lesson 7 you still clearly remember what you studied in lesson 1. This is always true for the study of any language; but more so with kanji, since they are studied by “elements” which form each other. It is, after all, like building in your mind a gigantic Lego model. The same is to be applied to the **LEVEL 2 REVIEW**, at the end of the 21 lessons, which then prepares you for the second book.

To conclude, at the end of the book you will find two **INDEXES**. The first one is a kanji index, following the numerical arrangement of the kanji in the book, from 1 to 240; the second one is an index of readings in *rōmaji* (Roman letters), in alphabetical order. It is a joint index for both the readings of *on'yomi* and *kun'yomi*; the *on'yomi* in capital letters and katakana, and the *kun'yomi* in lower case letters and hiragana, which is the conventional and generally preferred method. With this index, you will be able to find any kanji, even if you only remember one of its readings.

The tables

The essence of *Kanji in MangaLand* is the kanji tables for study and their pictograms, which graphically represent each kanji. They are what make this learning method original and fun, besides making it suitable for a very wide age range. Here we have a kanji learning table, where we can see what its twelve parts have to show us:

Breakdown of a table

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シヨ <small>しよどう</small> 書道 calligraphy <small>ぶんしよ</small> 文書 text, sentence <small>しようめいしよ</small> 証明書 certificate, diploma	5  6	9																								
か(く) 3 <small>か</small> 書く to write <small>か</small> <small>じゆん</small> 書き順 (kanji) stroke order <small>した</small> <small>が</small> 下書き rough draft <small>あと</small> <small>が</small> 後書き epilogue																										
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① **KANJI NUMBER:** its number in our method. Kanji will be numbered from 1 to 1006; this book will cover kanji numbers 1 to 240.

② **NŌKEN LEVEL:** level of the kanji in the official test for Japanese as a foreign language, the *Nihongo Nōryoku Shiken (Nōken)*. The *Nōken* standards differ quite a lot from the Ministry of Education, which is why we will surprisingly come across simple kanji which appear in advanced levels of the test (level 4 being the most basic, and level 1 the most advanced).

③ **READINGS AND JUKUGO:** the reading or readings of the kanji we are studying (in katakana the *on'yomi* [Chinese reading], and in hiragana the *kun'yomi* [Japanese reading]), as well as several examples of *jukugo* (compound words). Be careful with velarization, occlusion, and sound division phenomena (page 10) that some readings undergo in combination with other kanji to make their pronunciation easier, a perfectly normal occurrence. Unfortunately, in these cases, the only solution is to learn them by heart. Examples:

In table 112, the *jukugo* 大声 is not read *ookoe*, but *oogoe* (velarization).

In table 88, 散歩 is not read *sanho*, but *sanpo* (occlusion).

In table 78, 学校 is not read *gakukō*, but *gakkō* (sound division).

In table 1, 一本 is not read *ichihon*, but *ippon* (sound division + occlusion).

④ **MEANING:** general meaning of the kanji.

⑤ **KANJI:** the kanji we are studying.

⑥ **PICTOGRAM:** picture representation of the kanji. Each “element,” or radical, forming the kanji has been assigned a picture, and the sum of the various pictograms provides us with an effective and original way to remember the kanji. The slogan is: the more absurd and flamboyant, the better!

⑦ **STROKE ORDER:** detailed, step by step, order of strokes in which the kanji is written, which is very important in order to write it properly. There are certain rules, as well, for stroke writing order. Here we give the most basic ones. You should learn them by heart:

- a) Kanji are written from top to bottom (see kanji #5 and #70 for clear reference).
- b) Kanji are written from left to right (see #9, #106, and #139).
- c) Horizontal strokes come before vertical strokes (see #31, #47, and #116).
- d) The center portion comes before the strokes which flank it (see #49, #53, and #144).
- e) The outside encasing comes before the inside (see #33, #34, and #182).
- f) Strokes which bend toward the left come before strokes which bend toward the right (see #17, #57, and #212).
- g) The stroke dividing the kanji from top to bottom comes after rules a-f (see #18 and #13).
- h) The stroke dividing the kanji from left to right comes after rules a-g (see #76 and #77).

⑧ **STROKE NUMBER:** the number of strokes the kanji has.

⑨ **OTHER KINDS OF WRITING:** Japanese, like Western languages, evolved over hundreds of years. As a result, it has many styles of calligraphy with which it has been, and can be, written. Here we give different ways that you might find the same kanji (for example, in italics, bold, hand-written, artistic, primitive versions, historical versions, etc.). This list is only for your reference, and to help you identify kanji that you know, but which is written in a different style. Although we show you these variations, you should commit yourself to writing the kanji with the modern stroke order that we have provided.

⑩ **EASILY CONFUSED KANJI:** different kanji which can easily be confused with the kanji we are studying, usually due to similarity. The number after each kanji indicates its order in this book. “3rd,” “4th,” “5th,” or “6th” indicates which of the corresponding grades of *Kyōiku kanji* that they belong to. Thus, the 3rd and 4th grades will appear in *Kanji in MangaLand 2*, while the 5th and 6th grades will appear in *Kanji in MangaLand 3*. When we indicate “Jōyō,” it means the kanji is one of the 939 “common use kanji” (常用漢字 *Jōyō kanji*), which are not studied in elementary school. “not Jōyō” indicates the kanji is not in the list of *Jōyō kanji*.

⑪ **MNEMONIC CAPTION FOR THE PICTURE:** so that you can remember the picture better, and the kanji by extension, we offer a simple sentence using the elements and the general meaning of the kanji.

⑫ **ALTERNATIVE FORMS:** alternative or archaic forms of the kanji we are studying. We offer them basically for the purpose of reference, and you don't need to study them. "alt" indicates it is an alternative version; "old" an archaic form, now obsolete; "hom" indicates kanji which are read the same way and have similar meanings, though slightly different nuances of usage; and, last of all, "simp" indicates a simplified form of the kanji (generally used with handwritten kanji).

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