

## Concept

This work is essentially a language learning game for people who are planning on short trips to Japan. While the scope of the game is large, the purpose is to simplify the overwhelming nature of planning an international trip.

Many people often attempt to learn the language of any countries that they plan to visit, but most travelling to Japan find the language extremely daunting. Rightly so, as the U.S. Department of State lists it as one of the most difficult languages to learn. The official website states that it is “exceptionally difficult for native English speakers”<sup>1</sup> and requires 2200 hours of dedicated studying to learn. The casual traveler does not have that kind of time to devote to learning a language. However, a basic grasp of a foreign language does make for a more enriching travel experience.

The concept is taking a trip through Japan stopping at some of the most popular tourism cities. This will be done using a combination of Twine with embedded Bitsy games. The player starts in Tokyo and moves south finally ending in Hiroshima. Each city will have its own “language lesson” along with some information about popular tourist spots, some background history, and famous foods from each location.

The Twine sections of the game will include real-life travel photos and lessons. There will be embedded audio files that include pronunciation guidelines, sample English spellings, and information about two of the three alphabets (katakana and hiragana). The language lessons contained will be simplified versions of greetings, question words, directions, food terms, and transportation as these were determined to be the most useful categories to cover after analyzing a small group interview of former visitors.

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<sup>1</sup> “Foreign Language Training - United States Department of State,” U.S. Department of State (U.S. Department of State), accessed April 15, 2020, <https://www.state.gov/foreign-language-training/>.

Once the player has had a chance to work with the language, they will be given the option to play a bitsy game focused on that particular lesson. The bitsy art will be based off of 8-bit images of some of the more famous art movements in Japan in addition to pixelated images of real-life locations that the traveler can visit. Players will be given simple “quests” to find the pieces of the word, alphabetic character, or phrase that the twine lesson focused on.

Overall, this game is an attempt to scale down the intimidating nature of the Japanese language to a more manageable and enjoyable experience. Obviously, the game is not striving for fluency, but rather, its focus is on making one’s trip a more enriching experience without having to devote 2200 hours of classroom time for a relatively short trip.

### References

“Foreign Language Training - United States Department of State.” U.S. Department of State. U.S. Department of State. Accessed April 15, 2020. <https://www.state.gov/foreign-language-training/>.

Qualitative research was conducted on people who had previously visited Japan to see what sort of issues they encountered on their trips and any travel phrases they might have found particularly useful.

Participants were asked to communicate with each other in an informal chatroom setting. This allowed for any who struggled to remember parts of their trip to piggyback off of other participants. It also prevented any one person from feeling called out or put on the spot. However, such a method, while serving to make the participants comfortable, led to a lot of reinforcement of earlier statements and may have prevent any novel contribution from less social members. Despite this, such a method was necessary as the game would focus more on a general consensus of what the majority of travelers needed on their trip than anecdotal incidents only encountered by an individual person. This still happened in the chat, such as one member humorously noting she wished she'd been able to say "What am I eating? It is delicious and I will never find it again," but for the most part, trends could be determined among the group.

This information was then compiled and analyzed to see what direction the game should move toward. Many of the participants noted that they struggled with the language, but there were a few key terms that they managed to pick up on. A phrase of note that they generally agreed was useful was "sumimasen" (すみません). *Sumimasen* generally means "I'm sorry" but within the general culture it can stand in for the English version of "excuse me" to get attention. A two-week visitor noted that "I got far on Sumimasen and Gomennasai" and a student who studied abroad noted that "I think half of my interactions involved sumimasen."

Another thing to note was that food and directions came up in multiple situations. In the world of smart phones, one would perhaps find directions unnecessary, but many travelers do not have international data plans. Therefore, basic directions were deemed appropriate for the project. The study abroad student noted that, "I did wish we'd learned directions early on. It was not helpful to learn them a month in."

From this, it was determined to include a more comprehensive list of "attention grabbing" terms, directions, and restaurants and food within the project.

While there are many language learning games and apps available, this project is geared toward a more concentrated form of travel language lessons. In order to achieve this, it was decided that the game would play out in the form of a hypothetical trip through Japan. As most international flights arrive to Tokyo, that was set as the starting point and the game proceeds to move south. Certain images and ideas needed to be sourced from the internet, including famous locations, food items, and historical details.

The overall theme for the Tokyo section of the game is modernity. Locations focus on shopping and the population of the city and some of the sights included relatively close to specific shopping districts. While researching this, it became apparent that there was no way to include all of Tokyo's famous landmarks within this game. Sites such as Tokyo Skytree<sup>1</sup>, Tokyo Tower<sup>2</sup>, Ueno Park<sup>3</sup>, and the Edo Tokyo Museum<sup>4</sup> were omitted for the sake of the theme and simplicity. Just as the player is using this game as a guide for basic travel language, this section of the game became a basic guide of the more populous areas of Tokyo. As this is the start of the game, the language section tied to it focuses on greetings, or *aisatsu*.

Additionally, it was decided to focus on two more unique twists on well-known Japanese foods. While, ramen and sushi are known internationally as traditional Japanese dishes, *tsukemen* and *kaitenzushi* are related but distinct food groups. There were a plethora of dishes that came up in research, but ramen and sushi were determined to be the most famous and added to the game content.

From there, research showed that most international travelers purchase something called the JR Railway Pass.<sup>5</sup> This pass allows international travelers to prepay for a rail pass on all Japan Railway trains, including the bullet-trains, or Shinkansen. Most travelers use this to take the Shinkansen from Tokyo to Kyoto in just a fraction of the time it would take on a bus.<sup>6</sup> Because of this, it was decided to include Kyoto on the trip and continue moving southward.

Kyoto is Japan's historic capital. It remained the center of culture and politics until the Tokugawa Shogunate in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup> It contains 17 UNESCO World Heritage Sites<sup>8</sup> and as a result, this section of the game focuses on tradition and features two memorable shrines. The image results that constantly came up in image searches were Kinkaku-ji and Fushimi Inari Taisha. Again, there are many other striking locations relevant to this city, but these two in particular were chosen for their memorable aesthetic. Interestingly, both are located outside of Kyoto-proper, requiring bus or train rides to reach. As a result, the language lesson for this section focuses on transportation.

Traditional foods were chosen for the Kyoto section. Particularly the more decorative and showy meals. *Kaiseki* is a rather expensive and time consuming affair featuring multiple courses over a seasonal set meal.<sup>9</sup> The dishes are often as beautiful as they are expensive. *Wagashi*, or Japanese style sweets

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.tokyo-skytree.jp/en/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://thetowerinfo.com/tokyo-tower-facts/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gotokyo.org/en/spot/482/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.edo-tokyo-museum.or.jp/en/about/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.jrpass.com/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.jrailpass.com/shinkansen-bullet-trains#tokaido-shinkansen>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kyoto-Japan>

<sup>8</sup>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2009/10/understanding-kaiseki/28068/>

have become an art form in Kyoto with intricate sweet desserts molded and shaped into flowers and other natural forms. The forms of wagashi served depend on the season or formality in which they are served; most famously, they are served at traditional Japanese tea ceremonies.<sup>10</sup>

The next stop on the game's trip is Osaka. Osaka's theming was a mix between Tokyo and Kyoto. Osaka castle often came up in searches, along with a restaurant heavy tourist street. Omitted were the recommendation to visit Osaka's baseball stadium to see a game as it is not guaranteed that the Tigers would be playing when travelers are visiting<sup>11</sup>. Still, the love of their team and friendly attitude came up in descriptions of the city multiple times.<sup>12</sup> The katakana section of the language lesson is tied to Osaka as katakana is a newer script for foreign words and tied to fun onomatopoeia terms.<sup>13</sup>

Arguably, Osaka's most famous dish is okonomiyaki. However, after further research, it was shown that Hiroshima had a unique regional variation not found throughout most of Japan. Osaka style is the most popular in the country, and thus can be found in virtually every city<sup>14</sup>. However, as Osaka is known for its more relaxed nature than Tokyo or Kyoto, its dishes are also more relaxed and comforting. Both dishes chosen can be found throughout Japan and are considered comfort dishes to many of Japan's people. Takoyaki and yakitori are simple street dishes easily found and reasonably priced and it was decided that these dishes fit the overall theme of the city. They are also associated with snacks that go well with alcohol and thus fit with the location of Namba as one of the tourist spots to visit.<sup>15</sup>

Himeji is a short section. The city itself is located between Osaka and Hiroshima and has the only original castle in the area of this hypothetical trip. Many tourists are often disappointed to learn that Osaka castle is a replica of the original castle from that city, but the nearby park and interesting museum make it worth the trip. As Himeji Castle is visible from the Shinkansen station, it makes sense to visit it. Like many of the sites in Kyoto, Himeji Castle is also an UNESCO World Heritage Site and worth a trip.<sup>16</sup> This section includes question words, suitable for "What is that giant castle I can see from the train?" and "Where is the bus to Himeji Castle?"

Lastly, the final stop is Hiroshima. Arguably most famous as the location where the atomic bomb was dropped in August of 1945, it also has one of the most famous vistas in all of Japan. One cannot ignore a visit to Hiroshima Memorial Peace Park which contains a number of free museums and monuments not specified in this version of the game's draft. These include the Flame of Peace, lit in 1964 to promote a world without nuclear arms; the Phoenix Trees, which survived the blast and are still living today; and Children's Peace Monument, which is a monument to the many children affected by the blast including the now famous cancer victim Sadako Sasaki.<sup>17</sup>

Itsukushima is a much more tranquil experience in Hiroshima. Only accessible by ferry, the floating torii gate is considered one of the famous "Three Views of Japan" and a "Special Place of Scenic

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<sup>10</sup> <https://epicureandculture.com/sweet-japan-what-is-wagashi/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://hanshintigers.jp/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://wikitravel.org/en/Osaka>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.tofugu.com/japanese/japanese-onomatopoeia/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://okonomiyakiworld.com/Okonomiyaki-History.html>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.japantwo.com/en/life/food/japanese-food/yakitori/history\\_of\\_yakitori.php](http://www.japantwo.com/en/life/food/japanese-food/yakitori/history_of_yakitori.php)

<sup>16</sup> <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/661>

<sup>17</sup> [https://visithiroshima.net/world\\_heritage/a\\_bomb\\_dome/](https://visithiroshima.net/world_heritage/a_bomb_dome/)

Beauty” by the Japanese Government.<sup>18</sup> This image continuously came up in searches for travel to Japan, and it was determined to be worthwhile to add to the game.

There are three foods listed in the Hiroshima section of the text, the aforementioned Hiroshima style okonomiyaki, a much more adventurous meal of anago, or salt water eel, and momijimanju, or maple leaf shaped cakes stuffed with a variety of fillings.<sup>19</sup> As such, this section of the game includes the last language lesson-food terms.

A great deal of research had to be done to determine the overall aesthetic of the game. When trying to determine an overall look for this project, research was done into the art history of Japan. Many earlier works were heavily influenced by China and unfortunately lack any sort of distinctly Japanese characteristics. However, around the 17<sup>th</sup> century, wood block prints, or ukiyo-e became extremely popular.<sup>20</sup> Instead of focusing on the nobility, these images often featured every day people and events. They were also mass produced and easily available, contributing to their proliferation.<sup>21</sup> Today, these images are seen as quintessentially Japanese in their aesthetic and choice of subject.

Because the works feature swaths of simple colors and a limited palette, it was decided that this style would be the best format for the Bitsy environments. This aesthetic would be replicated with transfers of the works and ukiyo-e inspired original pieces. Twine pages would feature more modern travel images would also be included for clarity.

Lastly, the avatar needed to be determined. Search done into possible guides for this game led the research to the concept of mascots. Mascots are a big deal in Japan. They are created for cities, prefectures, companies, and games<sup>22</sup>. Based off of this proliferation, it is highly likely that a visitor will encounter some sort of mascot during their trip. For this project, it became apparent that the game would need a mascot to guide the player through. Generally, they are not complex looking characters, which luckily suited the game’s mechanics and are meant to be soft, likeable creatures. Using this information plus information gleaned from research of Fushimi Inari Taisha in Kyoto, it was decided to use a fox as the mascot for the project as it could be simplified into a clear avatar for the Bitsy games yet still used as a guide for the more complicated language lessons.

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[https://web.archive.org/web/20090327083232/http://www.bunka.go.jp/bunkazai/pamphlet/pdf/pamphlet\\_en\\_03.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20090327083232/http://www.bunka.go.jp/bunkazai/pamphlet/pdf/pamphlet_en_03.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> <https://trip101.com/article/10-must-try-food-in-hiroshima>

<sup>20</sup> <http://scribendi.unm.edu/1126/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/art/Japanese-art/Wood-block-prints>

<sup>22</sup> <https://edition.cnn.com/2014/06/10/world/asia/japanese-mascot-pear/>





A sample of the more simple palettes found in Ukiyo-e works.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> "e Gallery," Ukiyo, accessed April 15, 2020, <http://www.ukiyoe-gallery.com/detail-d634.htm>.



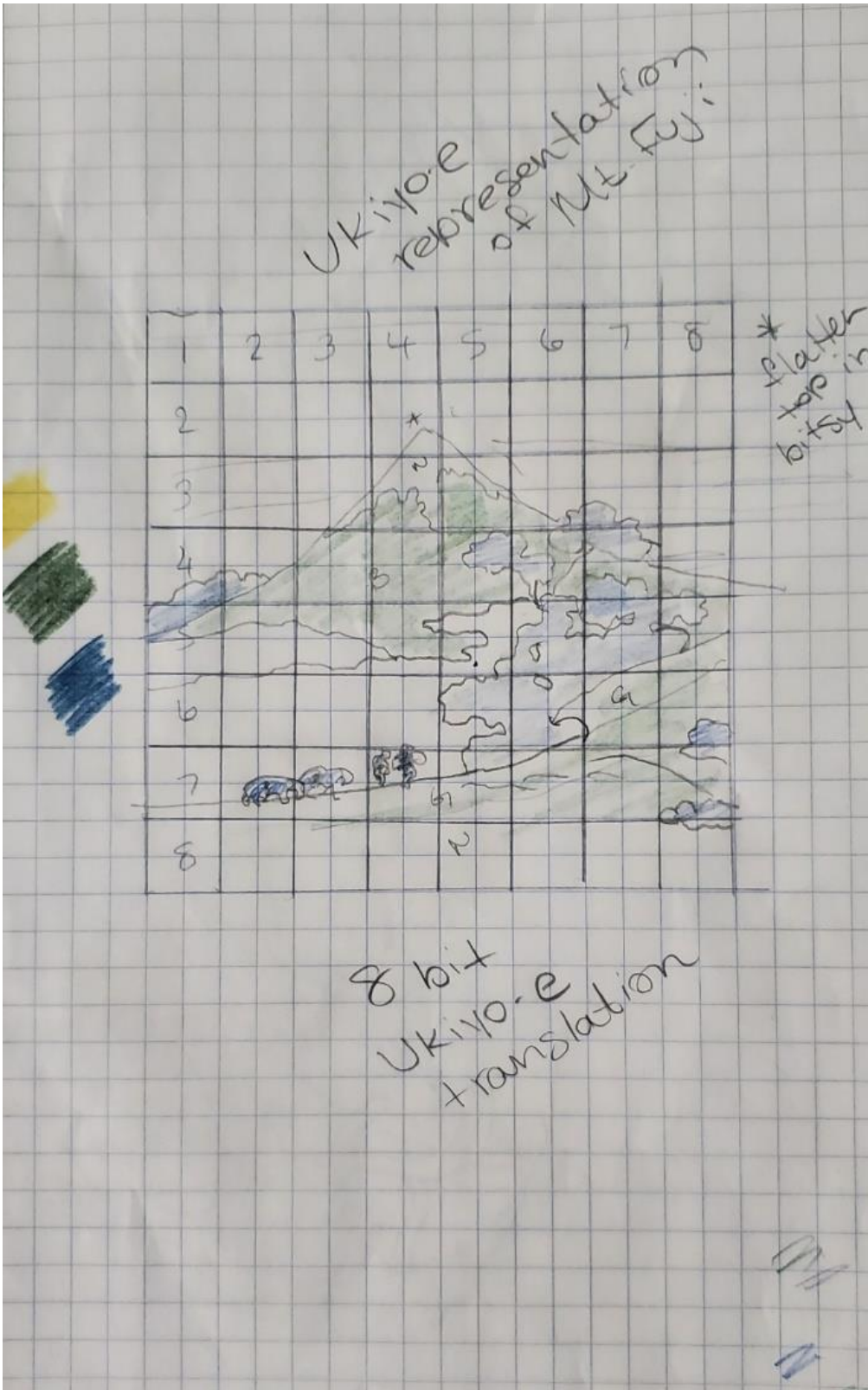
"The Great Wave off Kanagawa"<sup>2</sup> is arguably one of the most famous wood blockprints.



The "Inume Pass", one of the images from the "Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> metmuseum.org, accessed April 15, 2020, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/36491>.

<sup>3</sup> metmuseum.org, accessed April 15, 2020, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/45030>.

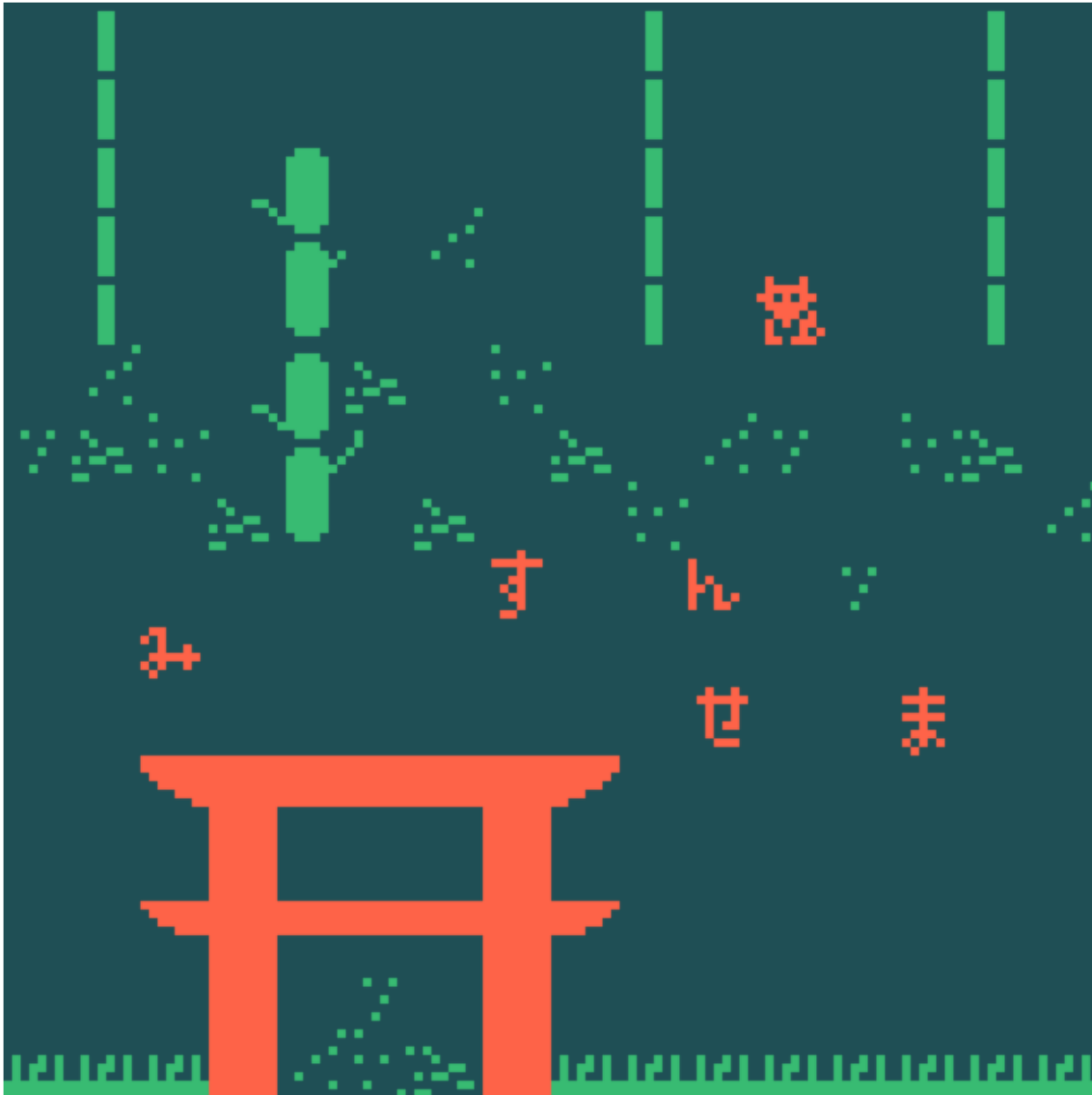


The same image translated onto a 64x64 square grid to create it in Bitsy. It requires some modifications, but the overall tone transfers well within Bitsy's limitations.

Real life photos were also used as inspiration for the work to be used in the language section of the game and the Bitsy environments:



Bamboo forest in Kyoto used as inspiration for a Bitsy room:



In progress Bitsy room.

### References

"e Gallery." Ukiyo. Accessed April 15, 2020. <http://www.ukiyoe-gallery.com/detail-d634.htm>.

metmuseum.org. Accessed April 15, 2020. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/36491>.

metmuseum.org. Accessed April 15, 2020. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/45030>.

Since the user needed to interact with the language in both Bitsy and Twine two sets of items were created of the Japanese alphabets. The two main alphabets focused on in the app are hiragana and katakana.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, Twine can handle the Japanese scripts as long as the user's computer or phone supports it. However, Bitsy cannot and as such specific items needed to be made for every letter. Here are the letters of the hiragana alphabet for the game:

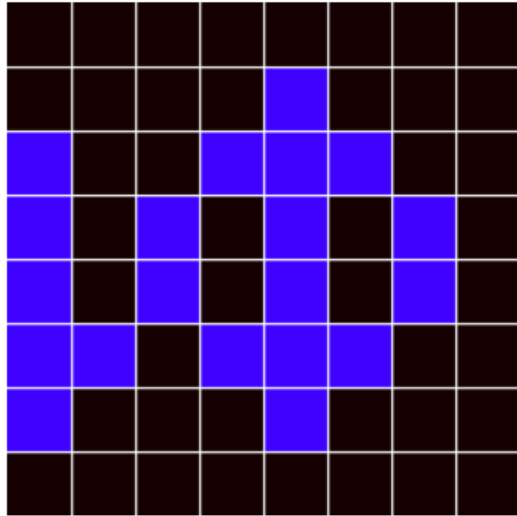
## ひらがな

ひよちゆきや hyo chu kya	ん n	わ wa	ら ra	や ya	ま ma	は ha	な na	た ta	さ sa	か ka	あ a	ど do	ず zu	が ga
みやちよきゆ mya cho kyu			り ri		み mi	ひ hi	に ni	ち chi	し shi	き ki	い i	ば ba	ぜ ze	ぎ gi
みゆにゃきよ myu nya kyo			る ru	ゆ yu	む mu	ふ fu	ぬ nu	つ tsu	す su	く ku	う u	び bi	ぞ zo	ぐ gu
みよにゅしゃ myo nyu sha			れ re		め me	へ he	ね ne	て te	せ se	け ke	え e	ぶ bu	だ da	げ ge
りゃにょしゅ rya nyo shu		を wo	ろ ro	よ yo	も mo	ほ ho	の no	と to	そ so	こ ko	お o	べ be	ぢ ji	ご go
りゅひゃしよ ryu hya sho	ぴよ pyo	ぴゃ pya	びゅ byu	ぢよ jyo	ぢゃ jya	じゅ jyu	ぎよ gyo	ぎゃ gya		ぺ pe	ぴ pi	ぼ bo	づ zu	ざ za
りょひゅちゃ ryo hyu cha		びゅ pyu	びょ byo	びゃ bya	ぢゅ jyu	じょ jyo	じゃ jya	ぎゅ gyu		ぽ po	ぷ pu	ぱ pa	で de	じ ji

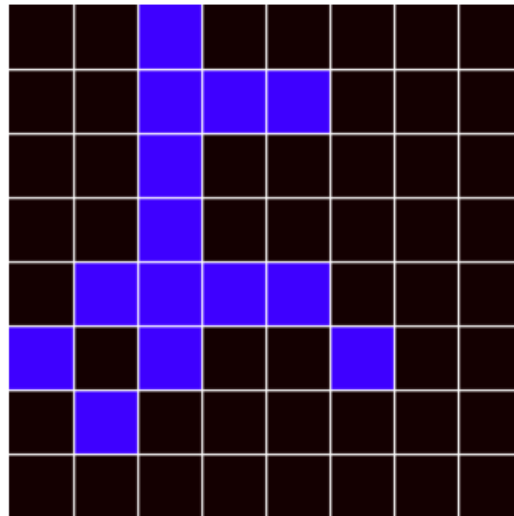
Chart outlining hiragana alphabet.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Libros Media Ltd, "Japanese Alphabet," Rocket Languages, accessed April 18, 2020, <https://www.rocketlanguages.com/japanese/lessons/japanese-alphabet>.

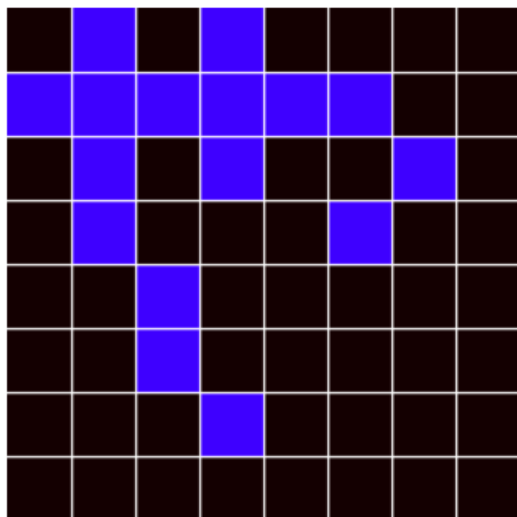
<sup>2</sup> "Hiragana (ひらがな)," sthnihongo, February 9, 2015, <https://sthnihongo.wordpress.com/hiragana/>.



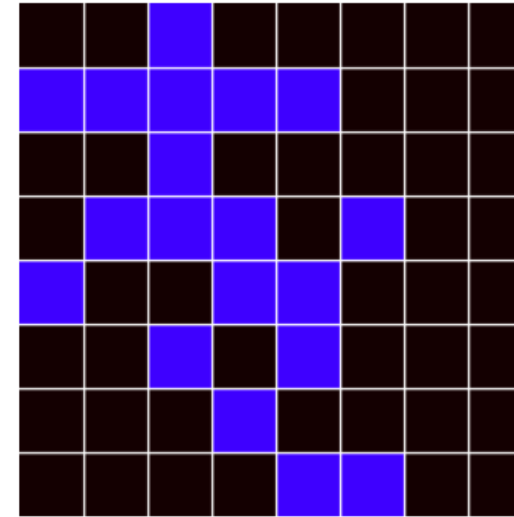
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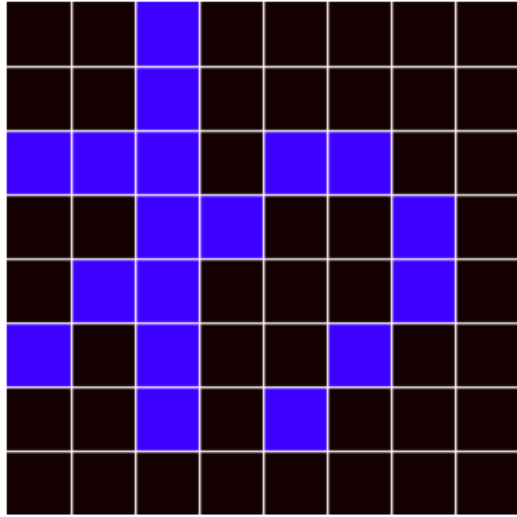
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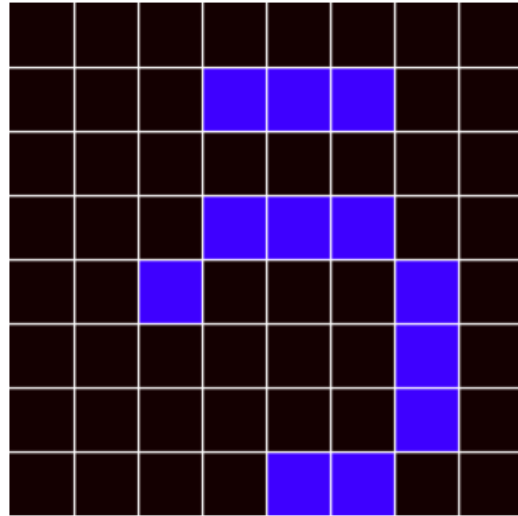
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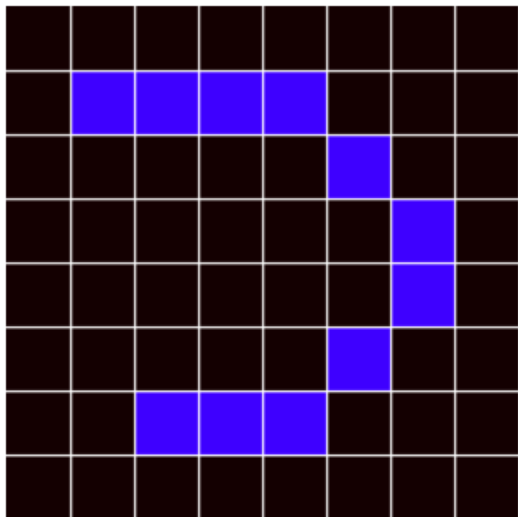




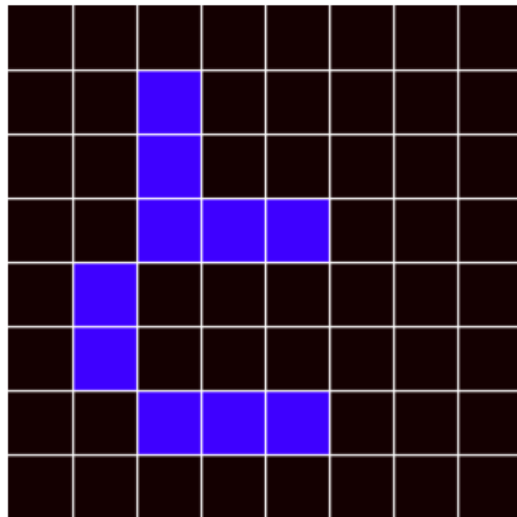
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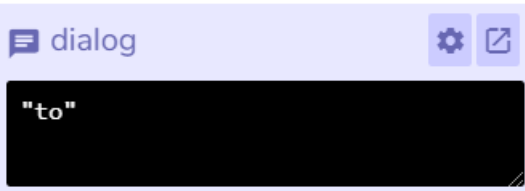
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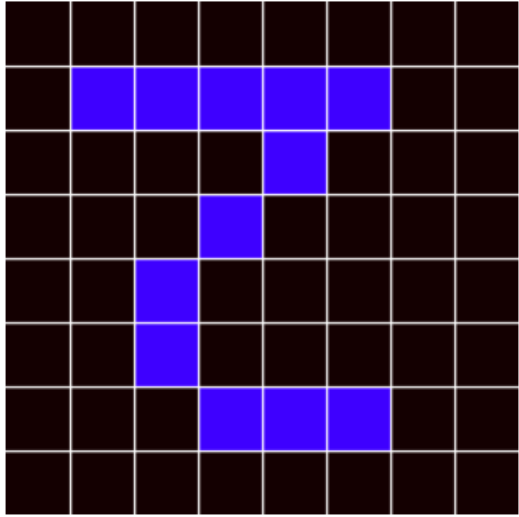


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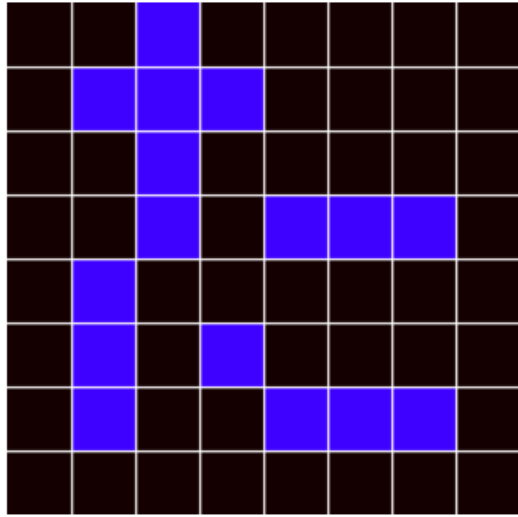


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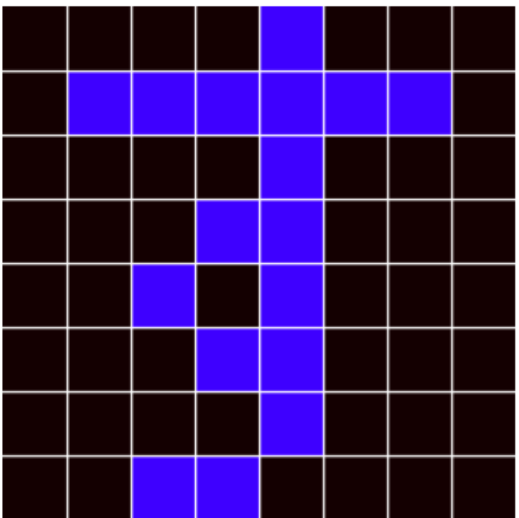
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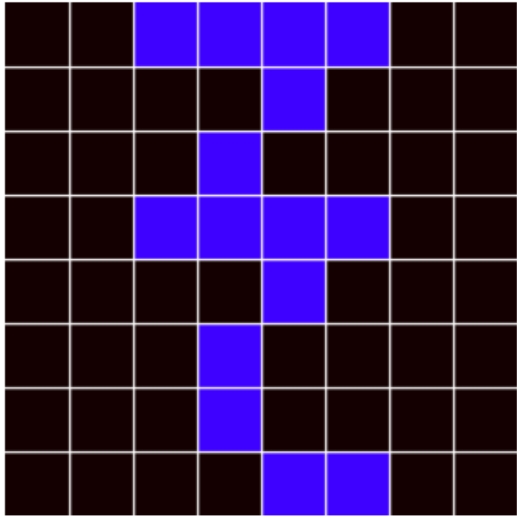
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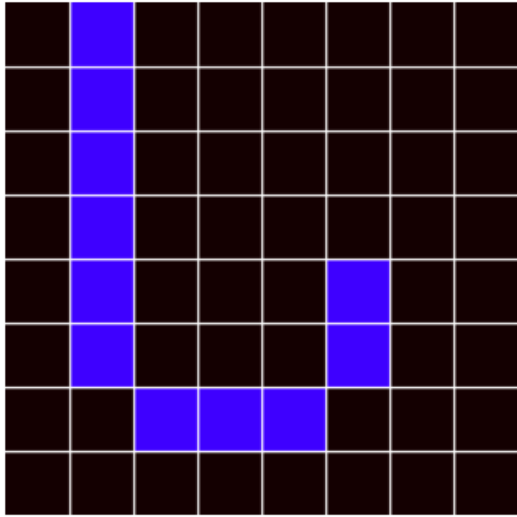
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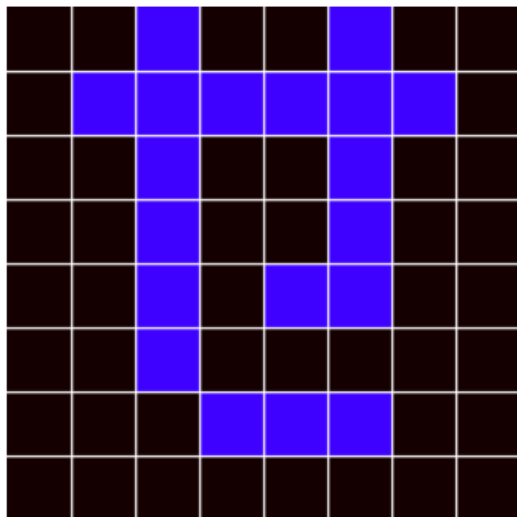
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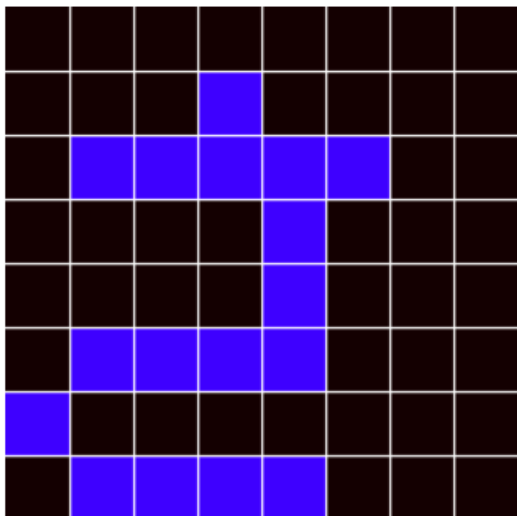
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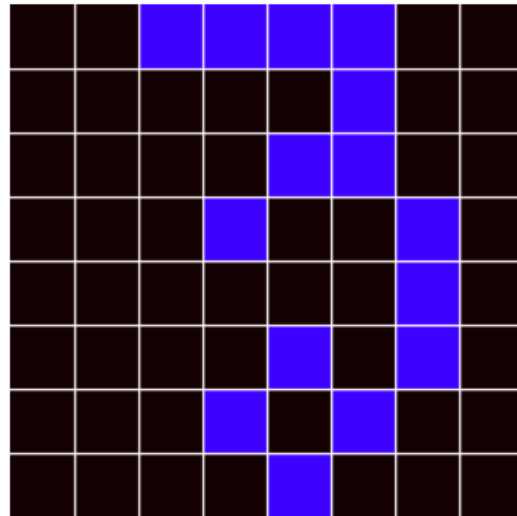
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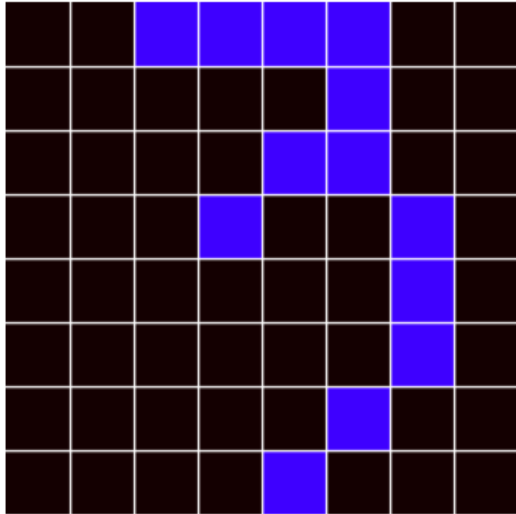
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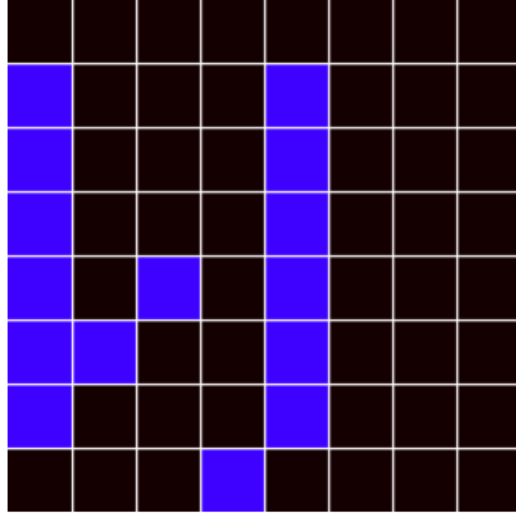
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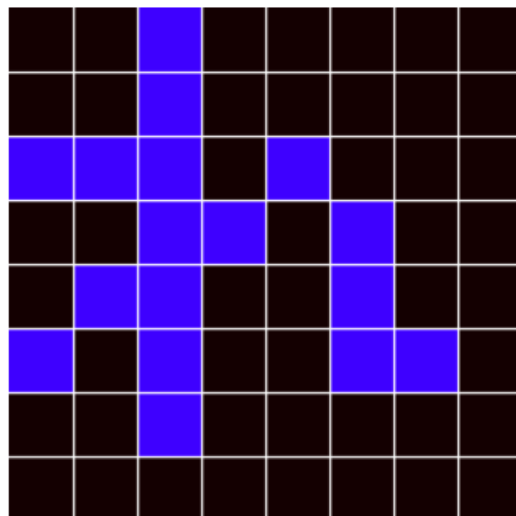
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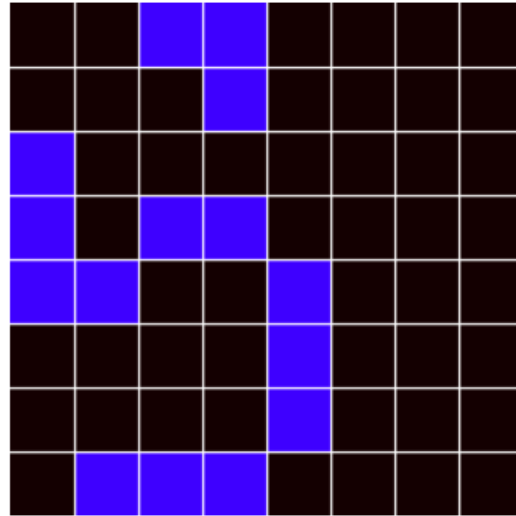
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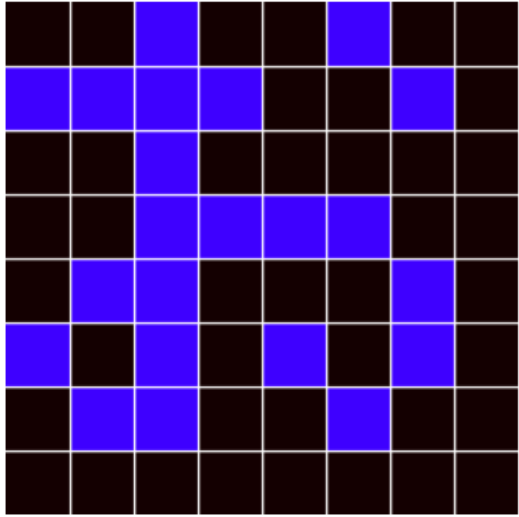
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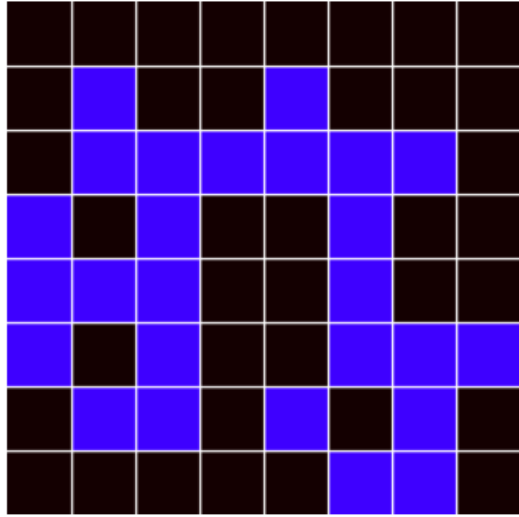
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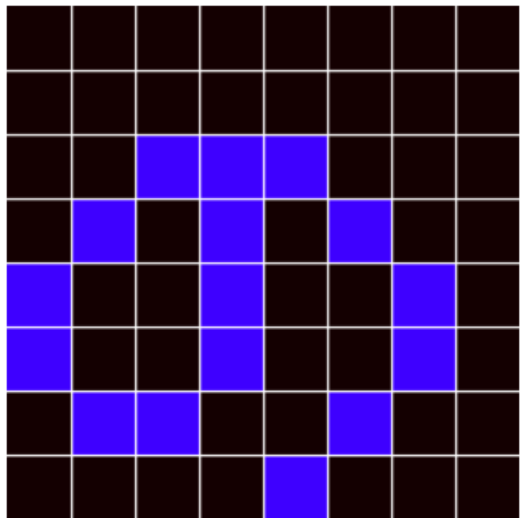
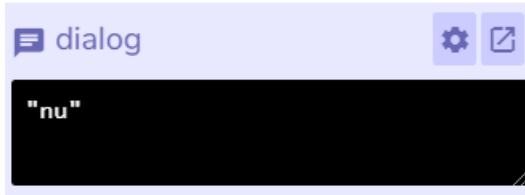
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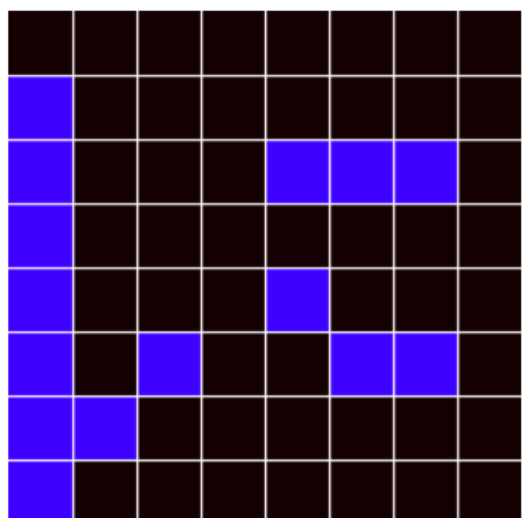
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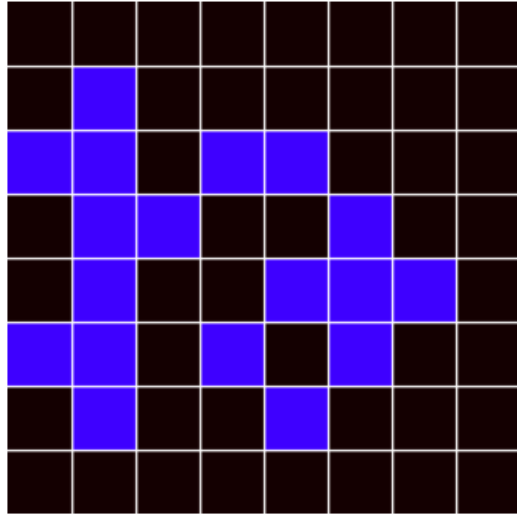


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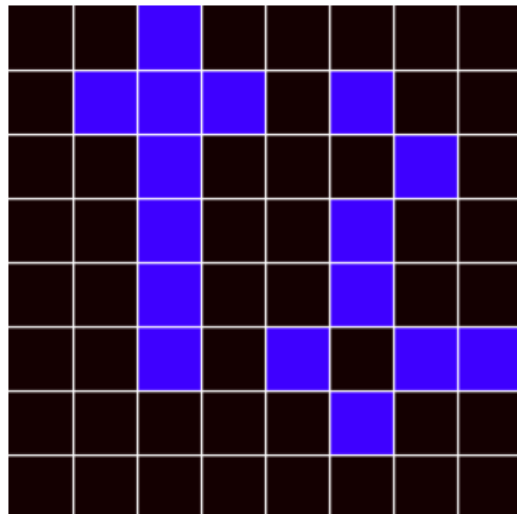


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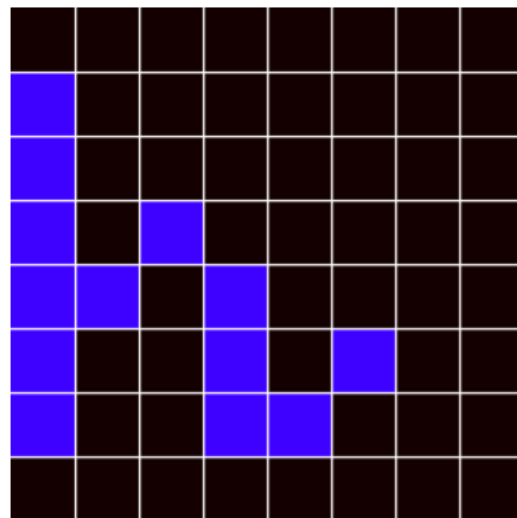




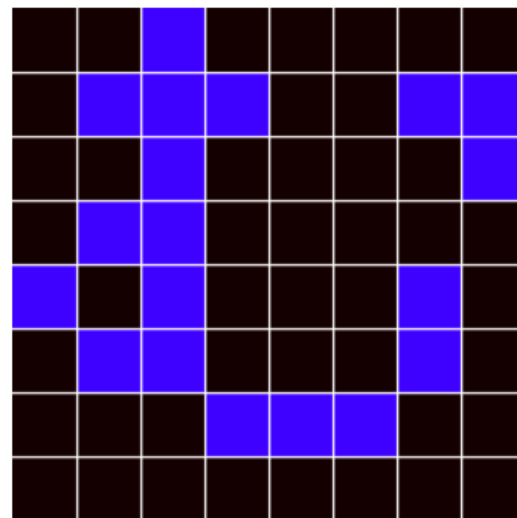
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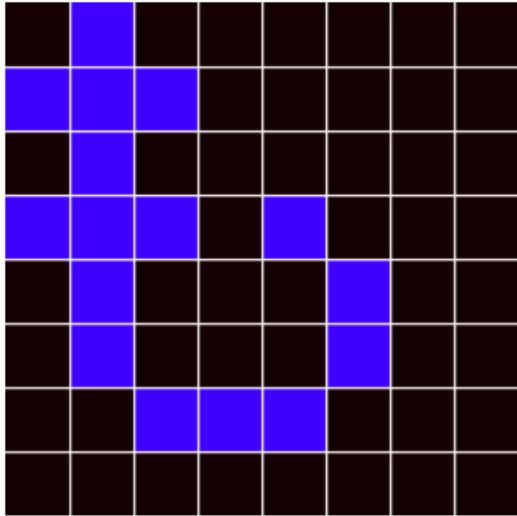


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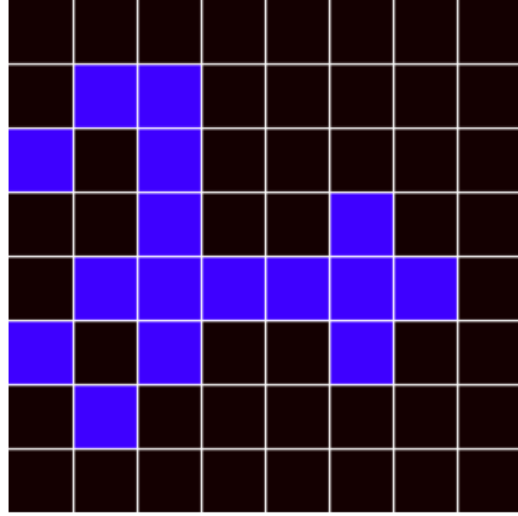


grid inventory





👁 grid 🔑 inventory



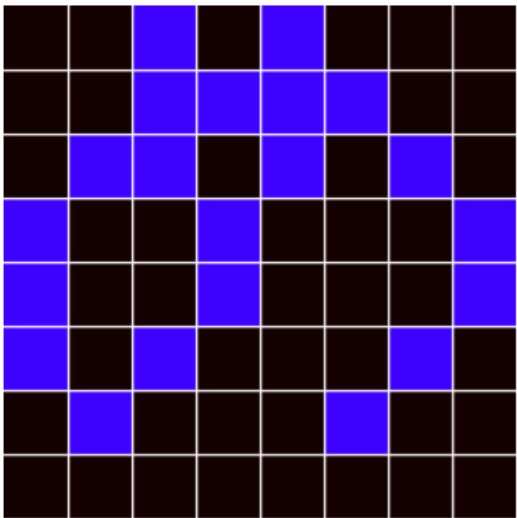
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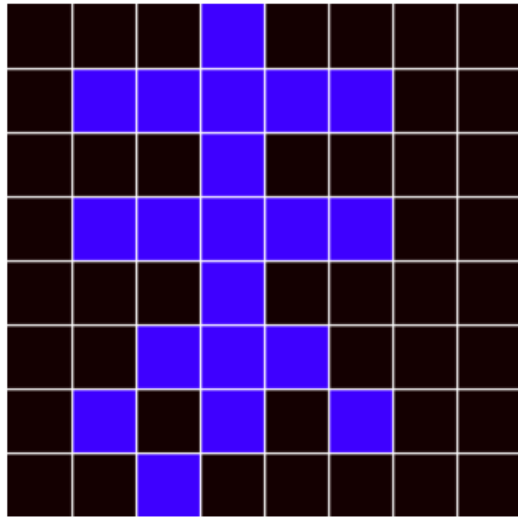
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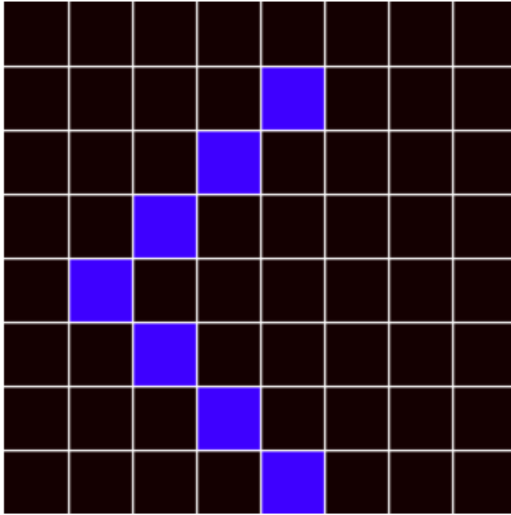
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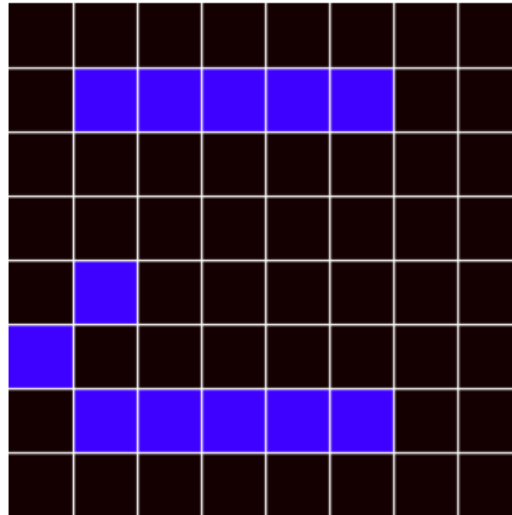
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grid inventory



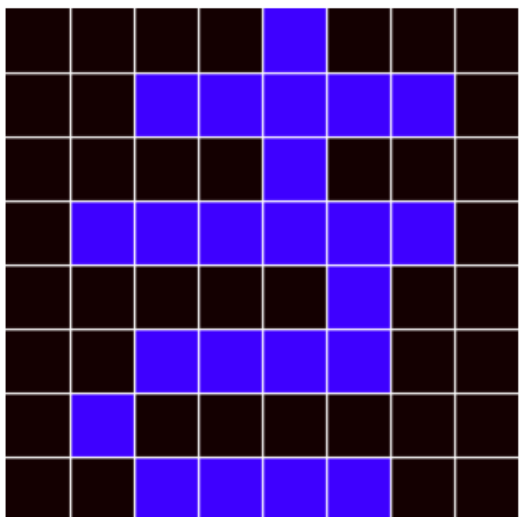
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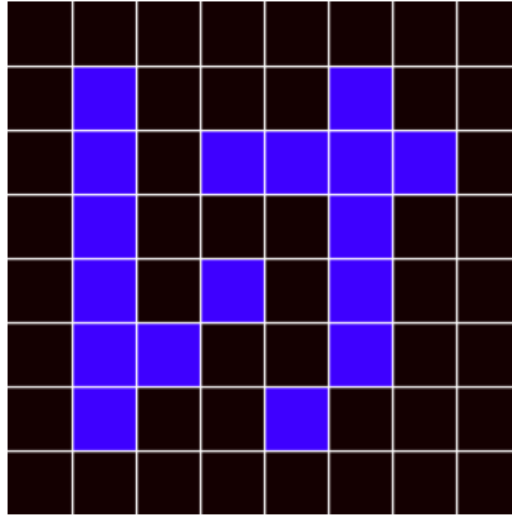
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grid inventory



grid inventory

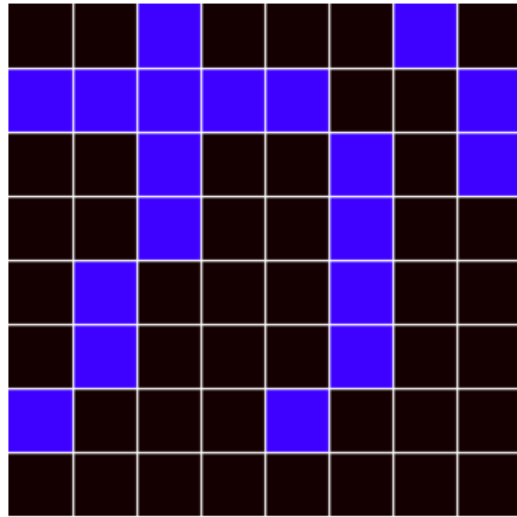
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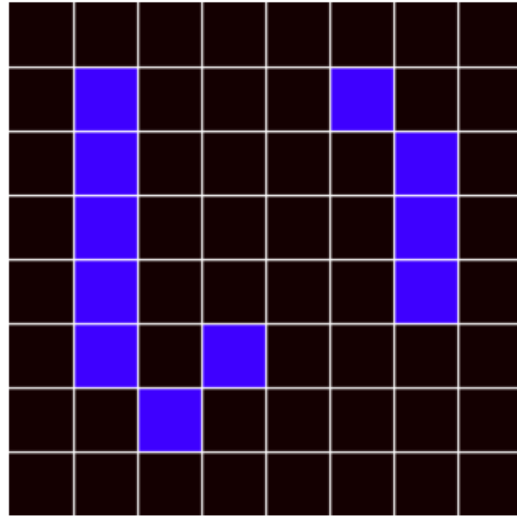
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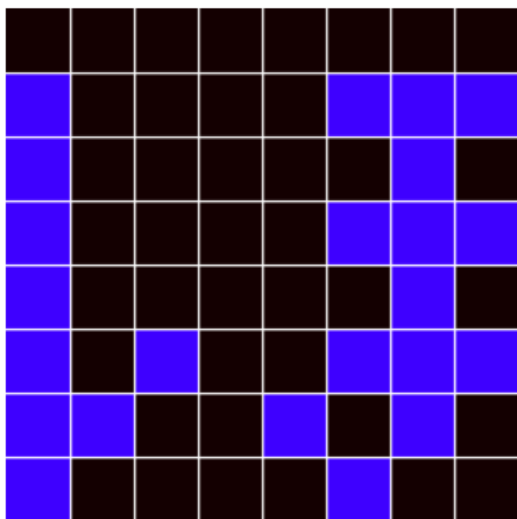
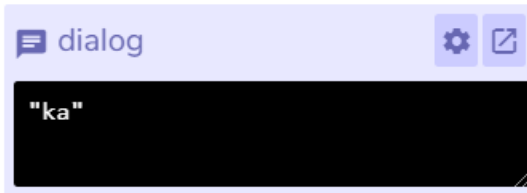




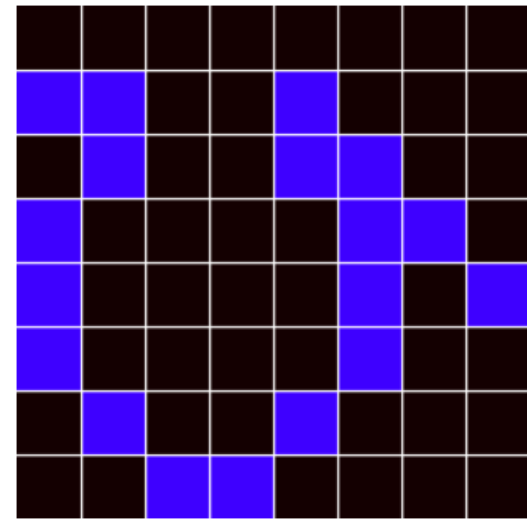
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grid inventory

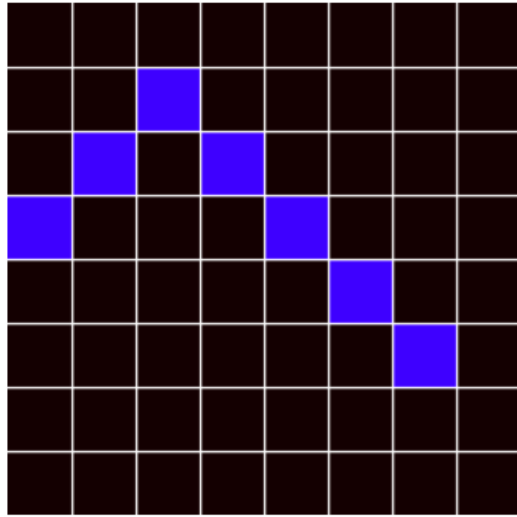


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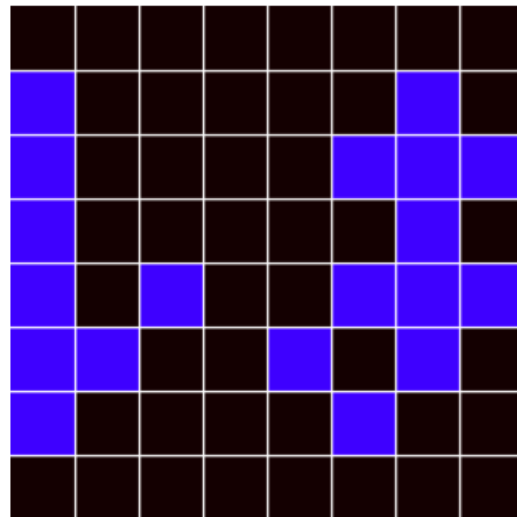


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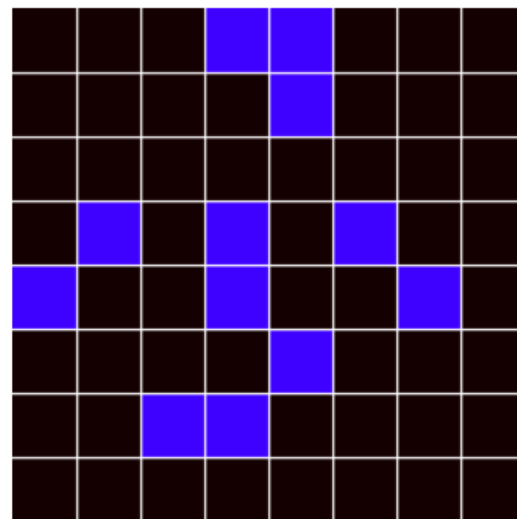
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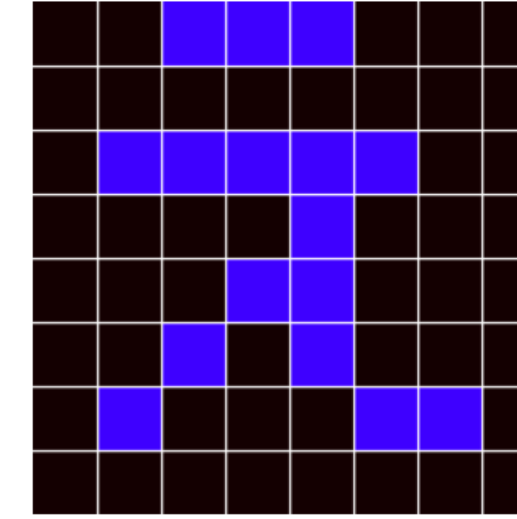
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grid inventory



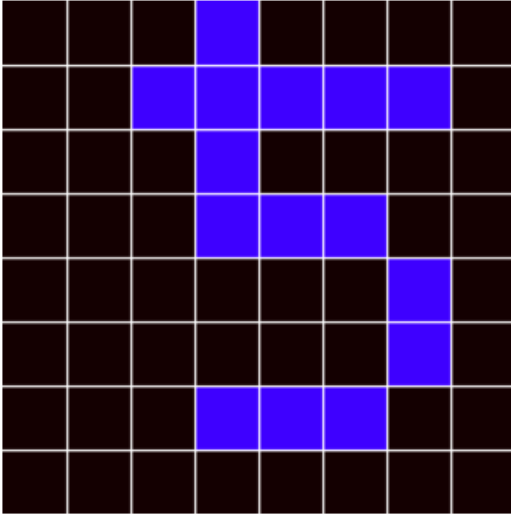
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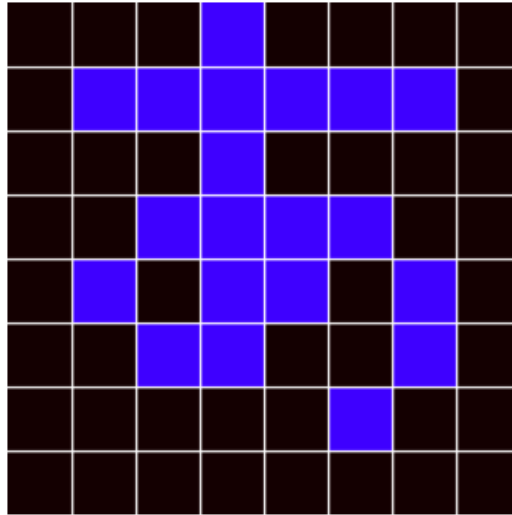
"e"



grid inventory

dialog

"chi"



grid inventory

dialog

"a"

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<https://www.rocketlanguages.com/japanese/lessons/japanese-alphabet>.

## Idea Book Section: Macots

### Mascots

They can be thematic:



Funashi or Funassyi is the mascot of the city of Funabashi. It is a mascot

representation of a pear, one of Funabashi's famous agricultural exports<sup>1</sup>.

Have a historical basis:



Ieyasu-kun is the mascot representation of Tokugawa Ieyasu. He is the mascot for Hamamatsu in Shizuoka prefecture. Hamamatsu was Tokugawa's birthplace. The city is also famous for its piano manufacturing as seen represented on his clothing.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Will Ripley and Edmund S. Henry, "Talking Pear Becomes Japan's Superstar Mascot," CNN (Cable News Network, June 11, 2014), <https://edition.cnn.com/2014/06/10/world/asia/japanese-mascot-pear/>.

<sup>2</sup> "出世大名康くん【公式】 (@ieyasu\_hamamatsu) Instagram Profile • 276 Photos and Videos," Instagram, accessed April 18, 2020, [https://www.instagram.com/ieyasu\\_hamamatsu/](https://www.instagram.com/ieyasu_hamamatsu/).

Idea Book Section: Macots

Or be based on a real creature:



Tama is the mascot for Kishi Station and the Kishigawa railway line.<sup>3</sup>

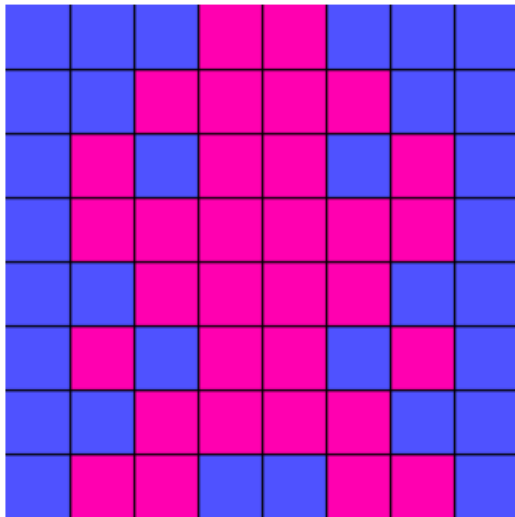
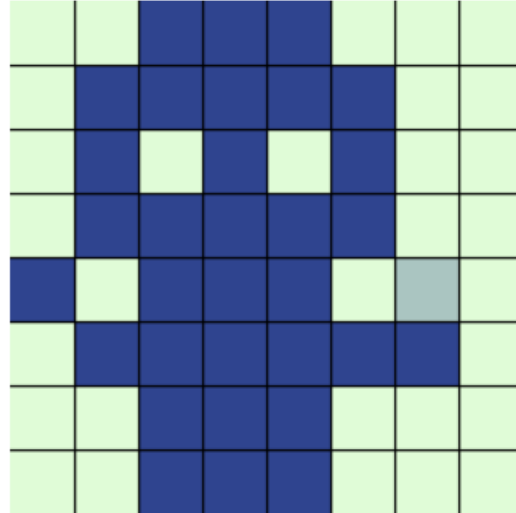


<sup>3</sup> Maggie Hiufu Wong, "The Cat That Saved a Japanese Train Station," CNN (Cable News Network), accessed April 19, 2020, <http://travel.cnn.com/cat-saves-japanese-train-station-586471/>.

## Idea Book Section: Macots

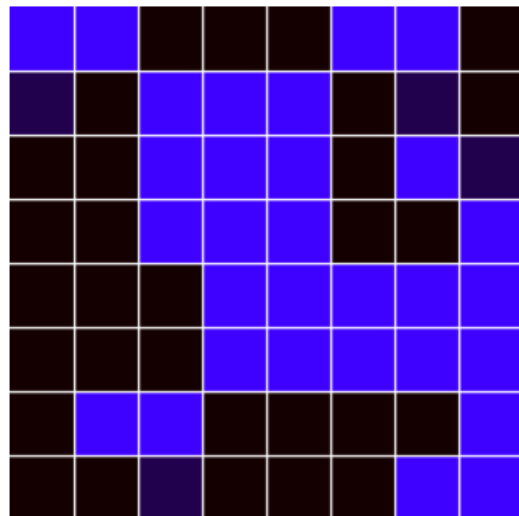
Because there would have to translate into an 8-bit avatar, it was determined to use that limitation as a starting ground. Here are some examples:

This is based off of the more formless mascots. His animation is a wave.

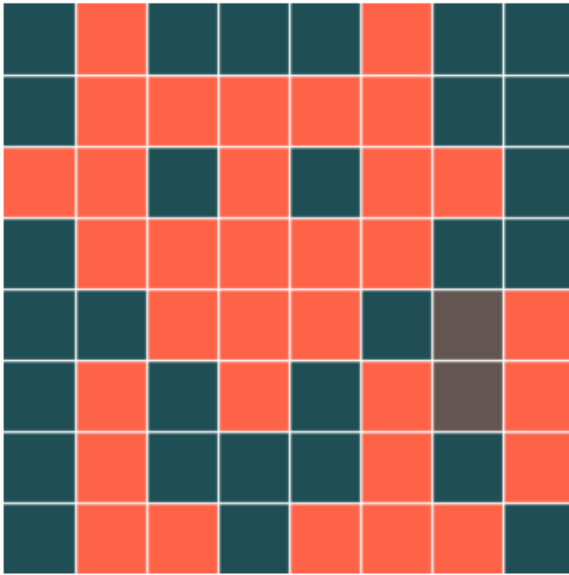


Here is a more rounded version reminiscent of a squid.

This is meant to be a dog. It has tail wagging and ear perking animations.



## Idea Book Section: Macots



Ultimately, it was decided to use an animal mascot based off of the myth of Inari. Inari is a well-known character in Japanese folklore and is the god of rice (another culturally important feature) and uses foxes as messengers.<sup>4</sup> Based off of this information, it was decided to use a “kawaii” form of a fox.

Still recognizably a fox in different palettes as seen in this in-progress Bitsy environment:



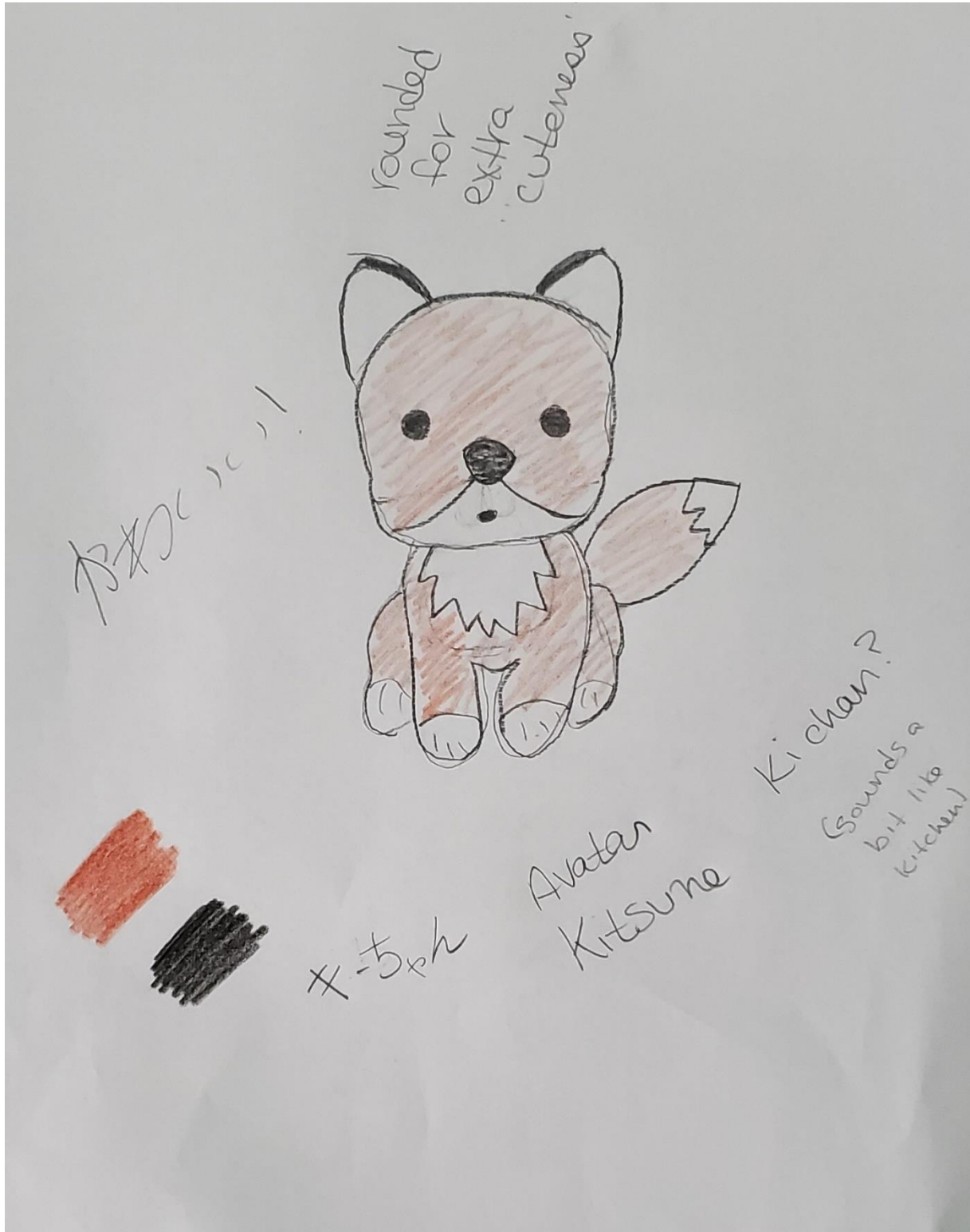
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<sup>4</sup> The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Inari,” Encyclopædia Britannica (Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., February 14, 2018), <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Inari>.



Idea Book Section: Macots

A softer cartoon version for the language lesson sections:



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Network, June 11, 2014. <https://edition.cnn.com/2014/06/10/world/asia/japanese-mascot-pear/>.

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Accessed April 19, 2020. <http://travel.cnn.com/cat-saves-japanese-train-station-586471/>.



Locations to visit in Kyoto:

With seventeen UNESCO World Heritage Sites found in this city, there is plenty to see. Here are the two arguably most famous (and photogenic) sites.<sup>1</sup>



Kinkaku-ji is Kyoto's famous gold-covered shrine. Take a bus to get out of the city to see it while also taking in the mountain air.<sup>2</sup>



Matcha (green tea) and milk flavored swirled ice cream available outside of the shrine.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Kyoto UNESCO World Heritage Sites," Inside Kyoto, accessed April 19, 2020, <https://www.insidekyoto.com/kyoto-unesco-world-heritage-sites>.

<sup>2</sup> "Kinkaku-Ji Temple (The Golden Pavilion)," Kyoto City Official Travel Guide, accessed April 16, 2020, [https://kyoto.travel/en/shrine\\_temple/132.html](https://kyoto.travel/en/shrine_temple/132.html).

<sup>3</sup> Photos by Michele Ritter



Fushimi Inari-Taisha is famous for its plethora of Torii gates. The shrine is dedicate to the god Inari and features a nearby shopping district where you can gather souvenirs.<sup>4</sup>

A tunnel of Torii gates.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Fushimi Inari Taisha, accessed April 17, 2020, <http://inari.jp/en/>.

<sup>5</sup> Photo by Michele Ritter

To eat:

Check out some traditional Japanese food and snacks in Kyoto.



Matcha and wagashi<sup>6</sup>. Many people like to combine the bitter flavor of match green tea and sweet japanese snacks.<sup>7</sup>



Summer inspired wagashi.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Photo by Michele Ritter

<sup>7</sup> "8 Types of Wagashi (Traditional Japanese Sweets)," Let's experience Japan, accessed April 18, 2020, [https://gurunavi.com/en/japanfoodie/2017/02/traditional-japanese-sweets.html?\\_\\_ngt\\_\\_=TT108e1a717005ac1e4aee98VG72TR50ZLBtes7hYEKHwN](https://gurunavi.com/en/japanfoodie/2017/02/traditional-japanese-sweets.html?__ngt__=TT108e1a717005ac1e4aee98VG72TR50ZLBtes7hYEKHwN).

<sup>8</sup> "Japanese Culture," Web Japan, accessed April 16, 2020, <https://web-japan.org/>.

Japanese style haute cuisine known as kaiseki. It is a set meal featuring seasonal dishes.<sup>9</sup>



A sample of the many courses.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Elaine Yu and Amanda Sealy, "A Beginner's Guide to Kaiseki, the World's Finest Meal," CNN (Cable News Network, August 26, 2016), <https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/guide-to-kaiseki-cuisine/index.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Hub Japan, "10 Best Kaiseki Restaurants in Tokyo Your Tongue Will Never Forget," Hub Japan (Hub Japan, May 5, 2016), <https://hubjapan.io/articles/what-is-kaiseki-ryori-and-where-to-find-it-in-tokyo>.

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Yu, Elaine, and Amanda Sealy. “A Beginner's Guide to Kaiseki, the World's Finest Meal.” CNN. Cable News Network, August 26, 2016. <https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/guide-to-kaiseki-cuisine/index.html>.





Idea Book Section: Osaka

Osaka is Japan's second largest city. Considered more laid-back than the hustle of Tokyo, Osaka is known for its food and its sense of humor.



Visit:

Osaka Castle<sup>1</sup> is a picturesque site surrounded by a busy park. Inside the castle is a museum of Japanese history.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Photo by Michele Ritter

<sup>2</sup> 大阪城天守閣, accessed April 19, 2020, <https://www.osakacastle.net/english/>.

The Minami (or southern) Namba part of town has many shops and restaurants to check out for a fun night out.<sup>3</sup>



The Glico advertisement is a famous landmark in the city. It has been in the city since 1935.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup>“Minami (Namba),” Osaka Travel: Minami (Namba), accessed April 19, 2020, <https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e4001.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Anna Masui and Kazuaki Otsuji, “Like Iconic Sign, Confectionery Giant Glico Sets Sights on Overseas Markets,” The Japan Times, accessed April 19, 2020, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/09/national/history/like-iconic-sign-confectionery-giant-glico-sets-sights-overseas-markets/#.Xp1ncMhKhPZ>.

Idea Book Section: Osaka

To eat:

Takoyaki are a famous snack food said to be from Osaka.



These are savory balls of dough filled with octopus and covered with a variety of toppings usually including mayonnaise and a sweet sauce.<sup>5</sup>



Grilled chicken skewers, called yakitori, make an inexpensive meal. This also provides an excellent opportunity to try some more adventurous snacks for cheap.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup>“What Is Takoyaki? All About the Delicious Japanese Octopus Balls! LIVE JAPAN Travel Guide,” LIVE JAPAN, accessed April 18, 2020, <https://livejapan.com/en/article-a0001178/>.

<sup>6</sup>“Best Yakitori in Osaka,” Inside Osaka, accessed April 19, 2020, <https://insideosaka.com/best-yakitori-in-osaka/>.

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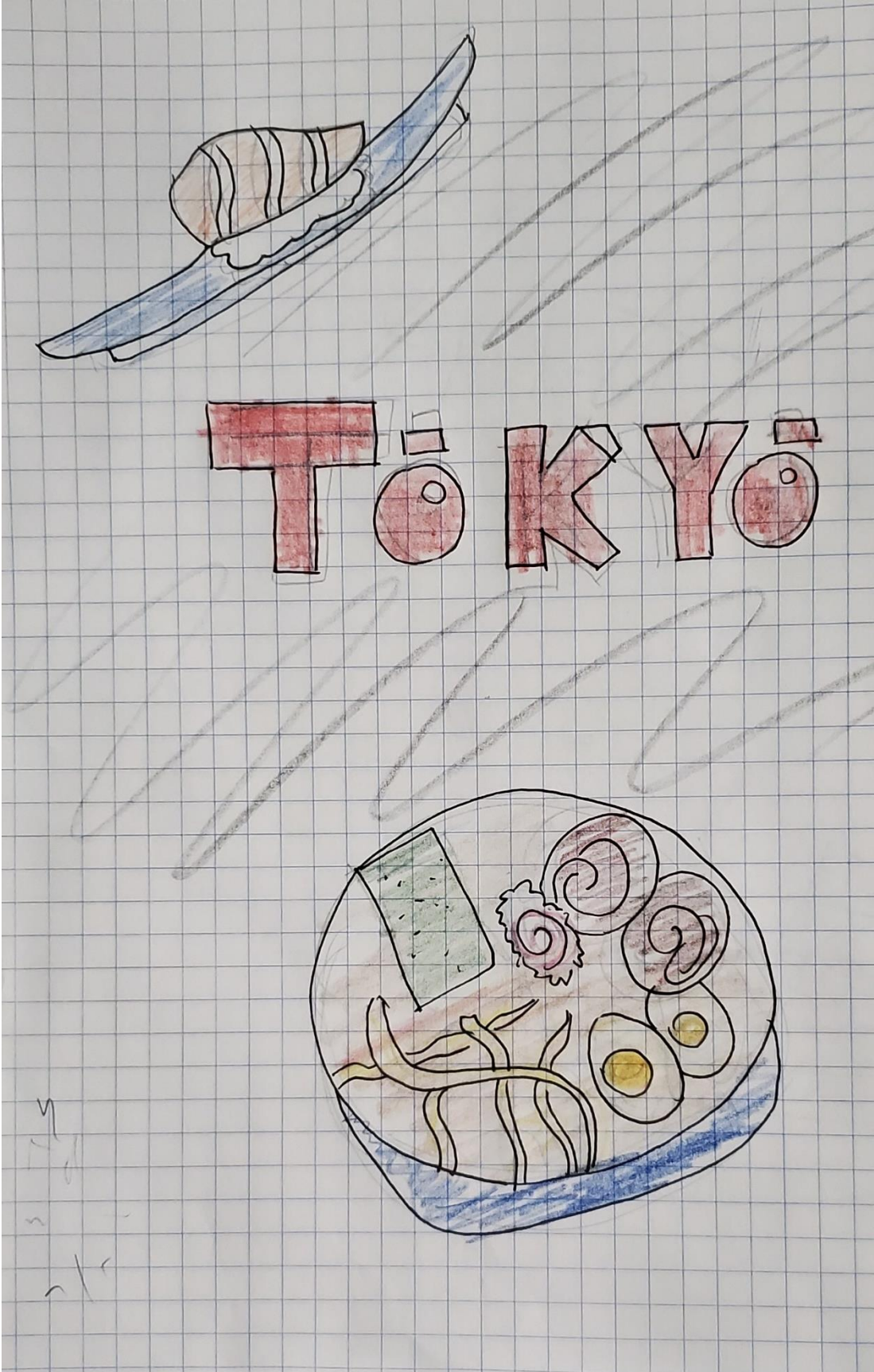
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## Locations to visit in Tokyo



Takeshita Dori<sup>1</sup> is a popular shopping street in Tokyo<sup>2</sup>. It is famous for its fashion culture and Japanese style crepes which differ from French style crepes for their over-the-tops accoutrements.



Crepes with various toppings.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Takeshita-Dori Street," Truly Tokyo, accessed April 17, 2020, <https://trulytokyo.com/takeshita-dori-0street/>.

<sup>2</sup> "Harajuku•," Tokyo Travel: Harajuku, accessed April 17, 2020, <https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3006.html>.

<sup>3</sup> "Crepes", photograph, *Flickr.com*, accessed April 17, 2020, [https://c1.staticflickr.com/1/475/31624732883\\_4d61fac69b\\_b.jpg](https://c1.staticflickr.com/1/475/31624732883_4d61fac69b_b.jpg).

While in Harajuku stop by nearby Meijijingu to see check out one of Tokyo's most famous temples.<sup>4</sup>



Sake barrels stored in the park near the temple waiting to be blessed.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> "Meiji Jingu Shrine (Shibuya) - 2020 All You Need to Know BEFORE You Go (with Photos)," Tripadvisor, accessed April 17, 2020, [https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction\\_Review-g1066456-d1373780-Reviews-Meiji\\_Jingu\\_Shrine-Shibuya\\_Tokyo\\_Tokyo\\_Prefecture\\_Kanto.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g1066456-d1373780-Reviews-Meiji_Jingu_Shrine-Shibuya_Tokyo_Tokyo_Prefecture_Kanto.html).

<sup>5</sup> Photo by Michele Ritter



Shibuya is a great place to visit for nightlife. With a variety of Japanese style bars known as izakaya, clubs, and famous department stores, there is plenty to do while visiting.



Shibuya crossing is another famous landmark in Tokyo. It encapsulates the frenetic feeling of Tokyo's massive population.<sup>6</sup>



Visit the statue of Hachiko while exploring Shibuya. This historical pet became famous for his steadfast loyalty to his owner.<sup>7</sup>

To eat in Tokyo:

In the capital city, try some of Japan's most famous foods with a twist.

<sup>6</sup> "Shibuya Crossing - Shibuya, Tokyo," JapanTravel, accessed April 16, 2020, <https://en.japantravel.com/tokyo/shibuya-crossing/3016>.

<sup>7</sup> Shusuke Murai, "Famed Dog Hachiko's Home City Wants Loan of Much-Loved Statue," The Japan Times, accessed April 16, 2020, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/01/20/national/famed-dog-hachikos-home-city-wants-loan-much-loved-statue/#.Xp1D28hKhPZ>.



Tsukemen is a variation on ramen where diners dip their noodles into a broth before slurping away.<sup>8</sup>

Spicy tsukemen.<sup>9</sup>



Kaitenzushi or “conveyor belt sushi” allows guest to grab as many plates as they would like with the option to special order items. Plates are tallied up at the end of the meal.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> “6 Best Tsukemen in Tokyo,” byFood, September 5, 2019, <https://www.byfood.com/blog/where-to-eat/best-tsukemen-in-tokyo>.

<sup>9</sup> Photo by Michele Ritter

<sup>10</sup> “Kaitenzushi (Conveyor Belt Sushi),” Kaitenzushi (Conveyor Belt Sushi Restaurants), accessed April 16, 2020, [https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2036\\_kaitenzushi.html](https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2036_kaitenzushi.html).

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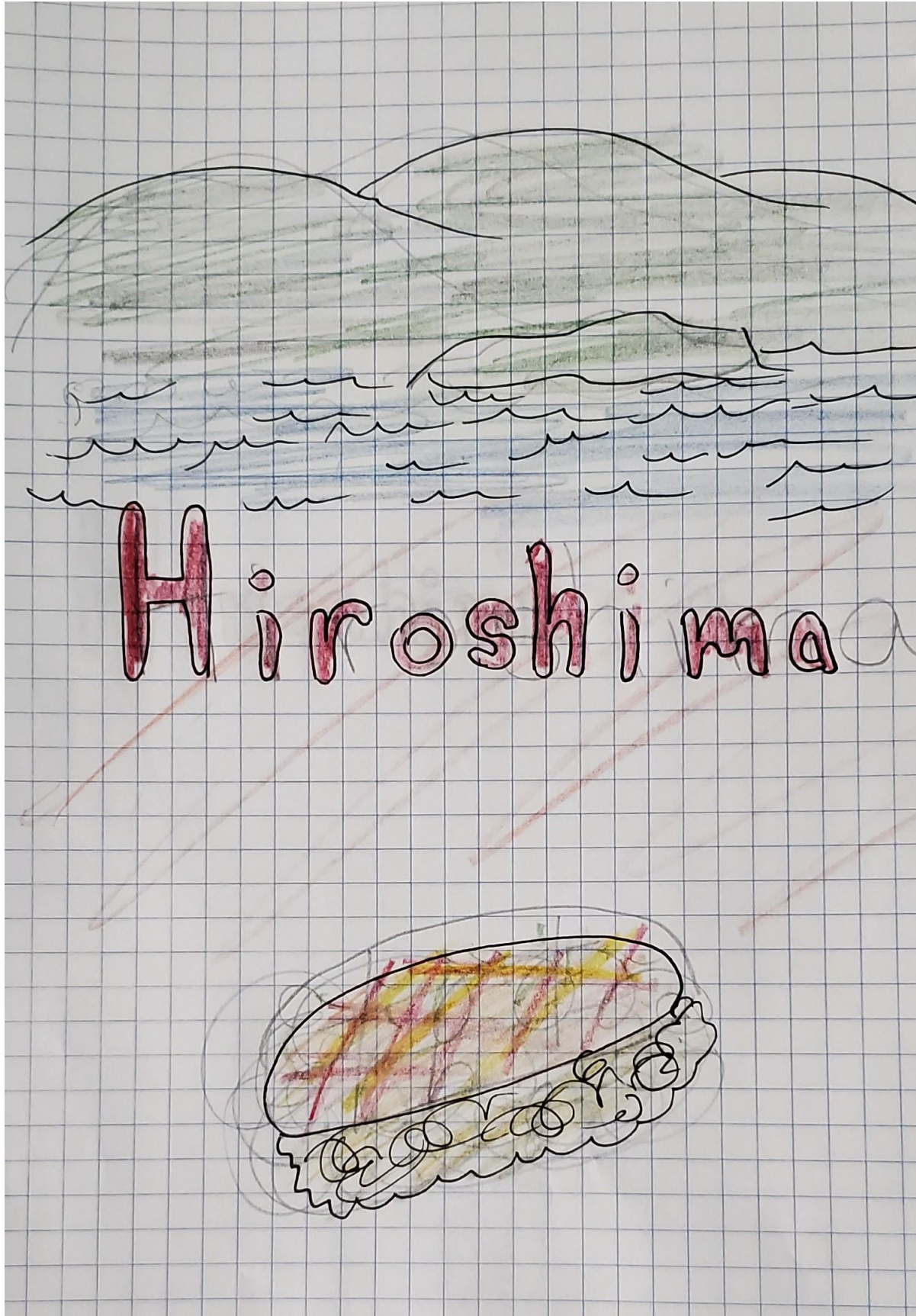
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"Shibuya Crossing - Shibuya, Tokyo." JapanTravel. Accessed April 16, 2020. <https://en.japantravel.com/tokyo/shibuya-crossing/3016>.

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Most people know Hiroshima as the site where the first ever atomic weapon was dropped. Now the location is a monument for peace and eternal representation of the danger of nuclear weapons.

Visit:

The Peace Memorial Park including the Atomic Bomb Dome and Hiroshima Peace Memorial.



The Peace park includes the original building that survived the hypocenter of the blast. It has been left virtually untouched since August 1945.<sup>1</sup>

Itsukushima, or Miyajima, has one of the most famous views in all of Japan, the floating Torii Gate. Take a ferry to the island for a small charge and be sure to check out the accompanying shrine.

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<sup>1</sup> "About Atomic Bomb Dome," Visit Hiroshima, accessed April 17, 2020, [https://visithiroshima.net/world\\_heritage/a\\_bomb\\_dome/](https://visithiroshima.net/world_heritage/a_bomb_dome/).



The Torii Gate<sup>2</sup>



Itsukushima Temple<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Photo by Michele Ritter

<sup>3</sup> Photo by Michele Ritter

## To Eat:



Check out Hiroshima's take on okonomiyaki<sup>4</sup>, This regional style includes a ton of noodles hidden under a savory, eggy pancake.<sup>5</sup>



Anago<sup>6</sup> is a saltwater eel caught in the waters near Miyajima. Get it served in a lunchbox style bowl for a filling meal.<sup>7</sup>



Be sure to take home some momijimanju when you visit Miyajima as well. These sweet snacks make great souvenirs.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> "Okonomiyaki - Dining: Visit Hiroshima," Okonomiyaki - Visit Hiroshima, accessed April 18, 2020, <https://visithiroshima.net/dining/okonomiyaki/>.

<sup>5</sup> Todd Wojnowski et al., "Japan Travel - Japan Tourism Guide and Travel Map," JapanTravel, accessed April 18, 2020, <https://a2.cdn.japantravel.com/photo/1165-6124/840x560!/hiroshima-hiroshima-style-okonomiyaki-6124.jpg/>.

<sup>6</sup> Photo by Michele Ritter

<sup>7</sup> "Unagi and Anago (Eel)," The Sushi FAQ, accessed April 18, 2020, <https://www.sushifaq.com/sushi-sashimi-info/sushi-item-profiles/eel-unagi-and-anago/>.

<sup>8</sup> Japan Brand, "Momiji Manju: A Snack Worthy of Miyajima," All About Japan, accessed April 18, 2020, <https://allabout-japan.com/en/article/495/>.

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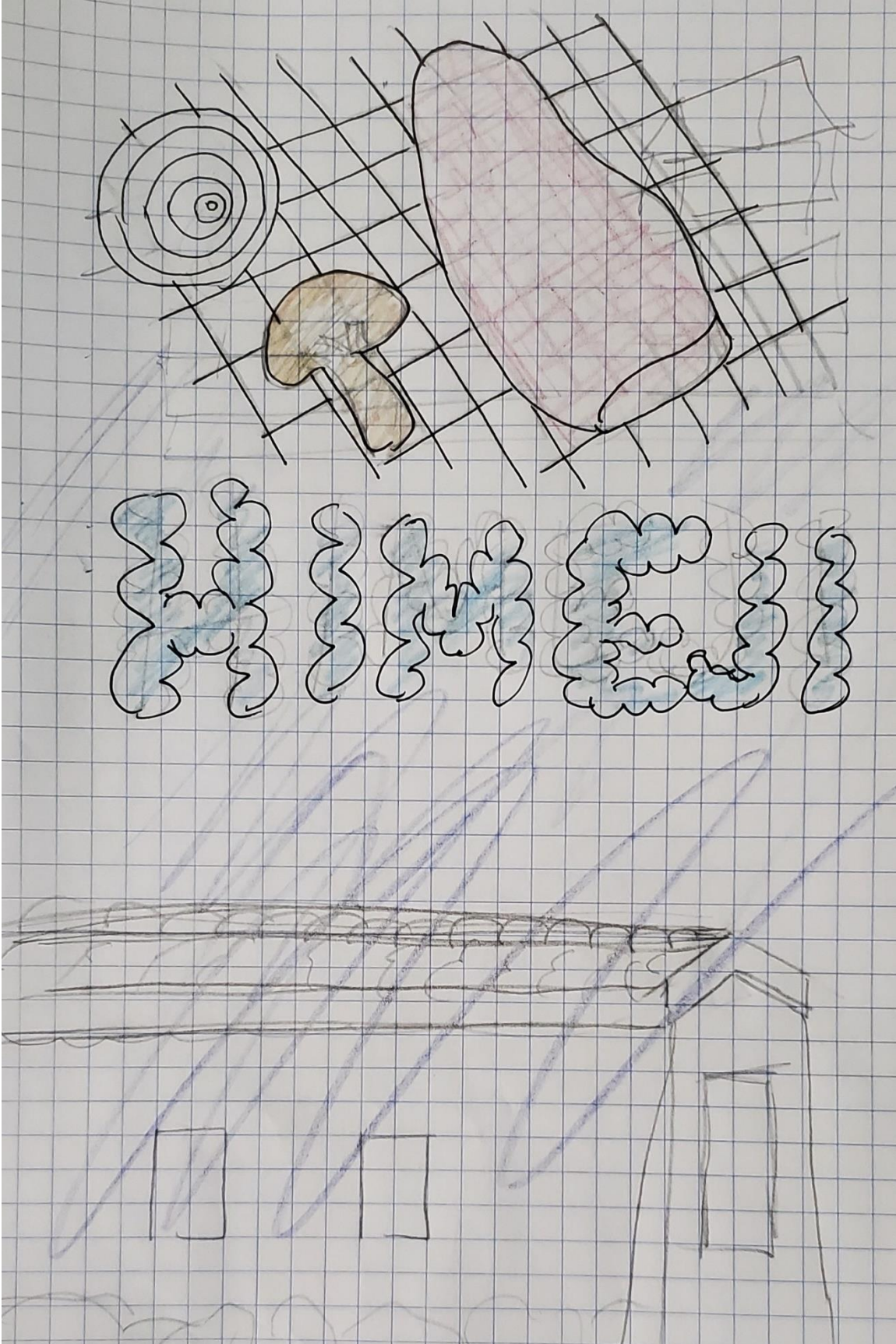
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There are very few original castles remaining in Japan, as they are susceptible to fires, floods, lightning and other kinds of damage. Himeji Castle<sup>1</sup> is one of the few that is still original to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It is worth a stop if passing by to reach Hiroshima on your trip.<sup>2</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> Photo by M. Ritter

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO World Heritage Centre, "Himeji-Jo," UNESCO World Heritage Centre, accessed April 15, 2020, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/661/>

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