

MEEK SPEAK

ミークスピーク



Kanji lesson 001: *On yomi and Kun yomi*



Hi! You opened this article, which means you are keen to learn Kanji?
Or just be curious about Kanji?

Either way, I am really happy that you are here as kanji is one of my favourite parts! Not only it looks cool but also it is amazing because kanji itself has meanings – it sounds really cool doesn't it?

So I will tell you more about this attractive letters.

Let's begin!

音読み (On yomi) and 訓読み (Kun yomi)

I guess you already knew but Kanji came from China, so most kanji has Chinese reading. Moreover, to adapt Japanese language, Japanese readings were added to kanji. So most kanji has 2 (and more) readings.

We call them 音読み (On yomi) = Chinese readings, 訓読み (Kun yomi) = Japanese readings. It's not too important to recognize which is On yomi and which is the other for now, so please just remember that **most kanji has 2 and more readings**. On yomi tend to be written in Katakana and Hiragana for Kun yomi because Hiragana is for Japanese original things and Katakana is for foreign stuff. (Chinese in this case) This style is used only for distinguish On yomi and Kun yomi.

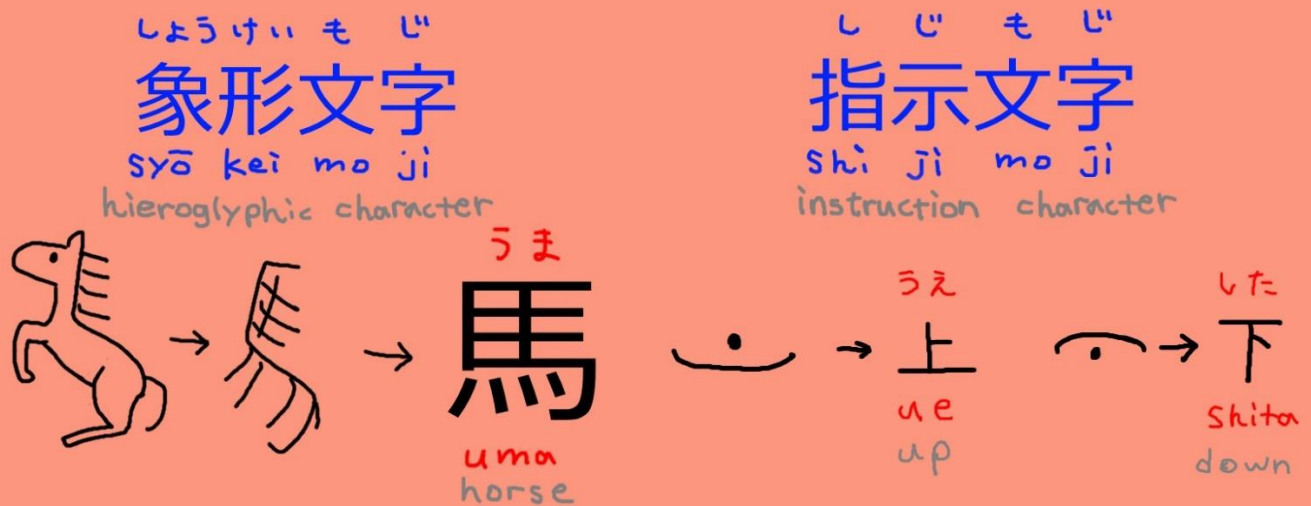
i.e)

前	音 On	ゼン zen
	訓 Kun	まえ mae

If you know Chinese, On yomi is relatively easy for you even though we changed pronunciations a bit. On the other hand, Kun yomi could be easier for us Japanese because most Kun yomi express the meaning of its kanji. For example, the kanji above, 「前」 means “in front of ~ / before ~” and its Kun yomi is 「まえ」 which also means “in front of ~ / before ~”. Easy! But don't worry even if you know neither Japanese nor Chinese, I will explain how fun kanji is!

漢字の構成 kanji no kousei – structure of kanji –

Kanji is distinguished as **hieroglyphic characters** (象形文字 syoukei moji), **instruction characters** (指示文字 shiji moji) and so on.



I personally prefer hieroglyphic characters, but in general, to know these origins will help you to learn kanji!

