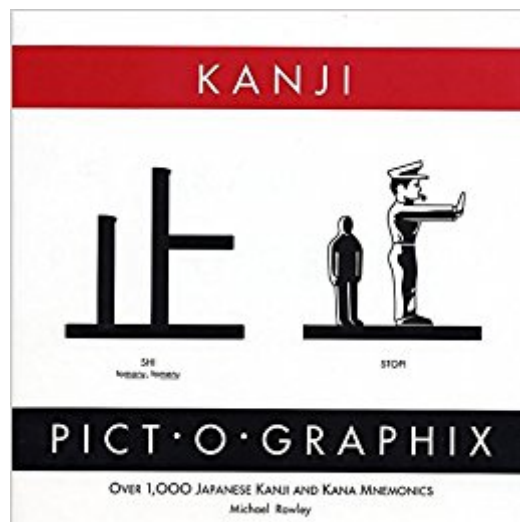




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Kanji Pict-O-Graphix: Over 1,000 Japanese Kanji And Kana Mnemonics



Synopsis

"Kanji Pict-o-Graphix offers an engaging way to learn and memorize Kanji."â "Rocky Mountain Region Japan Project" A fun book for studying kanji. The illustration reveals more of its contents and method than any description ever could."â "Japan Times" It is a very nice book, simple and pretty effective. A useful addition to the library of all beginners who aspire to learn Japanese. Recommended."â "Protoculture Addicts" Learn more about kanji from Stone Bridge Press: Kanaâ Pict-o-Graphix, Designing with Kanji,â Kanji Starter 1&2, and Crazy for Kanji

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

How does one learn kanji, the characters of written Japanese? The traditional approach is rote memorization. Japanese children write each kanji hundreds of times at their desks, and eventually they are acquired. Michael Rowley offers a different way, a mnemonic-association approach that provides a hook on which to hang the meaning and retrieve it easily when the kanji comes into view. The concept is simple: each character is represented under the word or concept it stands for (such as turf, bamboo, eat, or duty), followed by the pronunciations of the word in Chinese and Japanese, and a drawing that captures the meaning and resembles the character enough so that it'll come to mind whenever the kanji is seen. Organized thematically in chapters such as "Power," "Places," "Tools," "The World," "Food," "People," and "The Body," Rowley's book lets you learn the root symbols before teaching the words that add to them for further meanings. For example, the character for water is a splatter of three dashes that Rowley pictures as three splashing water drops. Later, you see that steam, float, boil, dirt, and bathe all build on the water character. For

steam, there's the water character plus a series of lines that Rowley exaggerates to resemble swirling, vapory tendrils, and the association helps. Building on units of memory and relationship, recall is aided considerably by the simple yet evocative drawings. Rowley even manages to help with the hiragana and katakana syllabaries, providing appealing pictures that look a bit like the letters in question and begin with the same sounds. So the na letter looks like a knot, nu resembles Rowley's drawing of noodles held by chopsticks, and it's easier to remember which symbol means te when you picture a telephone pole. It's hard to do Rowley's book justice with words, since the visual element is what makes it tick. He does a wonderful job, blending insight, imagination, and drawing technique, in a book that far surpasses the old rote method, making kanji learning both appealing and accessible. --Stephanie Gold

Michael Rowley has created a visual vocabulary that is striking and, most importantly, memorable." -Wired Magazine -- -Wired MagazineMichael Rowley has created a visual vocabulary that is striking and, most importantly, memorable." -Wired Magazine -- Review

At first you'll be flipping to the notes in the appendix every verse-end for some tiny bit of extra info that should have been printed in-line (one really common note could have been done with a tiny icon right there in the entry kanji). Then you'll be flipping back and forth through the book for some radical or component kanji that should have been introduced earlier in the book than the entries that depend on it (that's just common sense and a common courtesy). By this stage you'll have several fingers stuck in several places in the book just to get to the bottom of a lot of the kanji. But sometimes the radical or component is right there on the same page; it's just ordered AFTER some kanji that depend on it, so you'll already have gone through the process of being bemused for a while before finally getting to the tiny bit of info that could have saved you the trouble. Oh, and at the start of the book, the reading order is top-to-bottom, left-to-right then it changes to left-to-right, top-to-bottom for no discernible reasons. Then you'll start to see that a lot of the notes are actually not in the appendix at all! WTF? And then that a lot of the references to radicals or components are mis-numbered, sometimes they're one or two off, or 10 off, or you just can't find them. In the end, you'll find that around half of the notes and references are dead-ends and you'll start to shake your head whenever you see one, and put your chances at 50-50 that it'll be a waste of time looking them up. Then you'll realize that some of the references are not factored correctly, and that a lot of the visuals are unintelligently chosen or just wrong-headed and distracting. One idea is to rotate a kanji 90 degrees and print that right next to the correct one, as if doing so will somehow help and

not just imprint the wrong, and confusing, thing into your mind. This book's heart is in the right place but it's just so frustratingly badly executed. It's not completely useless (hence two stars), but it's pretty close. It was only my love of Japanese that gave me the strength to wade through this mess. Rowley, you need to rethink your book, reorder it, refactor it, get it proofread and checked for errors, get some other intelligent and imaginative collaborator to check your work, and get the copious lazy and inexcusable errors out of there and try again. A disgrace, really, for the price.

It is an alright book but it is very unorganized and sloppy. Many of the mnemonics are just purely silly. The author put in too many characters in the book with out the help of an english glossary. What good is the book with an English glossary. He expects the reader to learn it his way going page by page and learning them incrementally. Most of us have 9 to 5 jobs and do not learn this way and so when I am learning 'slowly' and at my own pace, it would make sense to have an English glossary to quickly reference a word or character. I have to have about over 50 language books and they all have an English glossary. Luckily I bought the book used for 50 cents but I would be very displeased if I paid the retail price, and would return this immediately.

Very fun way to learn kanji!! You have to be highly motivated to make this book work for you, however. The illustrations are really cool and provide meanings that one can remember. Worth checking out!

Very easy to follow and illustrations are clear and easy to see. Logical - a great help for someone considering taking up Japanese.

this author also wrote a book devoted to kana mnemonics. THAT book was brilliant, perfect, the must-have for beginner-beginners. THIS book frankly just sucks. My MAIN objection? The atrocious font used for the kanji characters themselves. It makes the characters unrecognizable, if you memorized them using this book, you would not be able to recognize them as the same character when faced with the same kanji in the type of script-like font that is used in like 99 percent of other kanji references and in general usage of the language. this is obviously not true for the simpler characters, but why buy a book if it can only be hopeful to be useful up to about 10 to 15 percent of it's content? My other objection is the choice of kanji represented. it seems like the author chose to include kanji based on whether they seem fun and interesting, rather than whether or not they would be useful in practical application. the OTHER book, the one on the kana? Everyone beginning

japanese needs to own it, it is indispensable. THIS book? No serious student of japanese, no one attempting to learn japanese with the ambition of some day actually being able to speak it, or even any dedicated otaku with the simple(but perfectly valid) dream of watching anime unsubtitled, should buy THIS book. It isn't even worth the warmth it would provide if you burned it.

Overall this book is bad. The pictures for the less radical kanji are okay, but once you get to the more complex/radical kanji, the pictures just become ridiculous and you are better off just studying with flashcards.

It's a nice book, I bought it used so 4\$ is a right price, not worth more. It's nice for a first or a light different approach to the most used kanji, but you cannot learn kanji with it. First of all you have only the kanji with graphic explanation (sometime really creepy :D). On and Kun reading are romanji only, not hiragana or katakana! Example are poor and english only.

A little messy, but very interesting

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