



Kana de Manga Special Edition: Japanese Sound FX!

By Glenn Kardy

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Have you ever wondered what a cat's meow sounds like in Japanese? How about the grumble of an empty stomach, the wail of a police car's siren or the crash of an ocean wave? Japanese manga artists rely heavily upon onomatopoeia -- sound-effect words -- and this special entry in the best-selling Kana de Manga / Kanji de Manga language-learning series from Japanime is jam-packed with illustrated examples of those sounds (and more!) in action. Featuring more than 100 Japanese onomatopoeia and their English equivalents in categories such as "Humans," "Animals," "Machines" and "Nature." Japanese/English text.

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Editorial Review

Review

These cute, little books use manga-style graphics to help English speakers learn the Japanese writing systems. *Kana de Manga: A Fun, Easy Way To Learn the ABCs of Japanese!* teaches the hiragana and katakana syllabaries, the closest that Japanese has to an alphabet. For each kana are provided the sound, a word using the sound with accompanying illustration and cultural note, the stroke order for drawing the kana, and empty grids for practice. Front and back matter provide kana contractions plus more information about the kana systems. Almost 40 pages are devoted to practice grids, unnecessary for library readers. The volume is inexpensive, cute, and useful, although other kana tutorials that use mnemonics that is, likening the kana to an image can be effective, too.

The four *Kanji de Manga* volumes teach 320 of the more complex Chinese-based kanji characters, of which some 2100 are used in standard Japanese. These books teach kanji only through the kana. This may be a good discipline, but most English-speaking readers would have greatly appreciated Romanizations, too, even if relegated to a back section in place of practice pages. There's no Romanized index or glossary, either. Not a priority purchase.

Japanese Sound FX! is likely to be the most useful of these books, with Romanizations, cultural explanations, and illustrations for many of those untranslated sound effects sprinkled tantalizingly throughout manga. This last is recommended for libraries where manga is popular. --**Library Journal**

About the Author

GLENN KARDY is founder of Japanime, an award-winning creative agency and publisher of Manga University's acclaimed lineup of educational materials. He lives in the Tokyo suburb of Kawaguchi City with his wife, their daughter and a collection of Oakland A's bobblehead dolls.

CHIHIRO HATTORI has been the featured artist in all nine volumes of the *Kana de Manga/Kanji de Manga* series, and she also illustrated Manga University's *Manga Cookbook*. Chihiro, her husband and their son live in Yokohama, where they enjoy fine food, fast cars and high fashion.

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