

# Seniors & Juniors

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Good morning, UNAN! Today is Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019, and this is the last morning speech of this school year.

Next year, you will be second and third-year students, and there will be new first-year students at UNAN. You will be *senpai*, and you will have new *kouhai*. But what does *senpai* and *kouhai* mean in English? It's difficult to translate these words because the *senpai-kouhai* relationship you have in Japan is a bit different in America. In English, *senpai* means "upperclassman," or someone who is older and has more experience. They can also be called seniors, meaning that they have a higher rank. *Kouhai* means "lowerclassman," or someone who is younger and has less experience. They can also be called juniors, meaning that they have a lower rank.

It's exciting to become seniors, but for the juniors, it may be equally as scary as it is exciting. Do you remember your first day of high school? How were you feeling at that time? I remember on my first day of high school I was nervous about what my classes would be like and what kind of friends I would make. Everyone was so much bigger and taller than me, and the seniors looked cooler than me. It was intimidating to be in a new school with people I didn't know.

So what does it mean to be a senior? Seniors have a responsibility to help new junior students get accustomed to high school life. They should be kind and helpful to new students who are lost or confused. They should lead by example, demonstrating values like respect and independence. And most importantly, they should create a safe school environment for all students, free of bullying. Being a senior means that you are a mentor and a guide for your juniors. Good senior-junior relationships lead to friendships that will last forever.

