

*Developing an Immersive
RPG to improve Japanese
Students' English
communication and
Cultural Awareness*

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About me



- Ireland - Irish
- Juggler
- Former actuary
- Japan in 2015
- All levels
- MA Applied Linguistics and TESOL

The problem

- Study abroad
- Increased ability (confidence)
- Wasted time
- Australia 3 weeks
- EIKEN 2 (CEFR B1)
- “can deal with most situations likely to arise when travelling in an area where the language is spoken.”



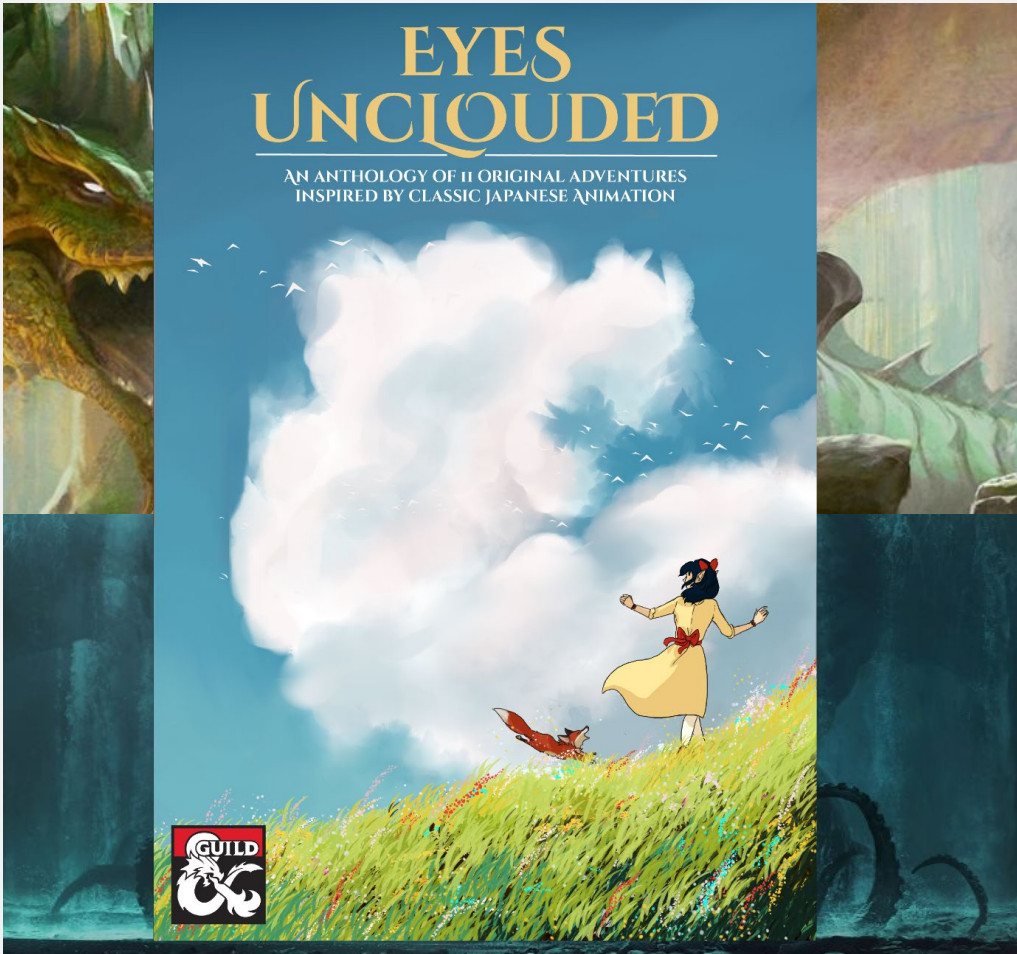
The current system

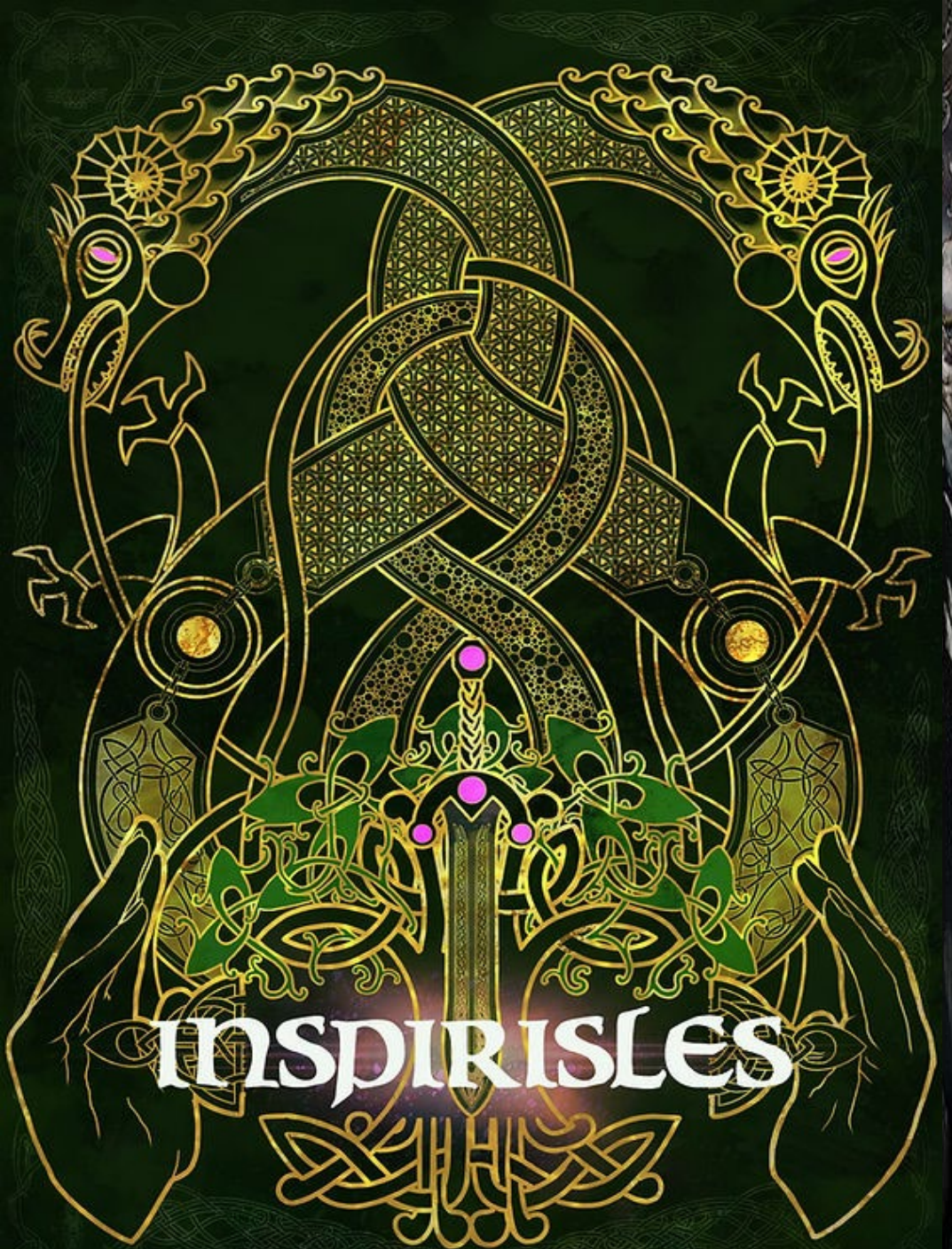


- 10 weeks
- 1 hour a week after school
- Mostly self-intro with scrapbook
- Benefits
- Drawbacks
- Similar styles Wales, Hawaii (different schools and levels)

What is an RPG?

- Students take role of a character
 - Freely interact with the environment
 - Unscripted
 - One person Game Master (GM)
 - GM controls objects/people
 - Players interact freely
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- Popular Dungeons and Dragons (Fantasy), Call of Cthulhu (Horror)
 - Eyes Unclouded (Miyazaki/Ghibli themed D&D)





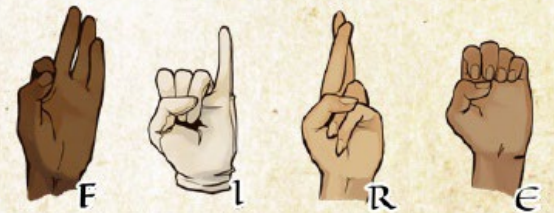
- Magicians – Fantasy RPG for learning Korean

- Inspirisles – Fantasy RPG for learning sign language ASL/BSL (Overisles expansion coming soon)

Exercise

Using your **alphabet** sheet (pages 170-171), fingerspell your Shaping element.
For example... **F I R E**.

ASL



BSL



This game

American English	Australian English
Parking lot	Car Park
Gas station	Service station (servo)
Guy	Bloke
Drug store	Chemist shop
Movie	Film
First floor	Ground floor
Vacation	Holiday
Elevator	Lift
Woman	Sheila

Here are some common Australian phrases. Again, you can add anything that was difficult for you to understand when you went to Australia.

Australian Phrase/Slang	Meaning
No worries mate, she'll be right	Everything will be OK. Don't worry
What's the John Dory?	How are you?/ What's going on?
Lobster	\$20 – the money is red, like a lobster
Pineapple	\$50 – the money is bright yellow
G'day mate	Hello.
They're having a bit of a chinwag	They're talking.

- Australian student from partner school is GM
- Benefits
- Explore cultural differences, linguistic differences, etc.
- “Jack the NPC”
- Week 1 – intro
- Week 2 – 9 – scenarios
- Week 10 - reflection

Schedule (1/2)

Week	Topic	Goal	Jack the NPC
0	GM Training	To familiarize the Australian students with the system	Yes, to show the usefulness of Jack
1	Explanation, tutorial	Players use pre-generated character in simple situations. Helps players to get accustomed to system, and an easy introductory session for the GM to run	N/A
2	Scenario 1: Departing for Australia	Students make preparations to prepare for departure. Simple scenario to consult with NPCs (students and teachers) to decide what to take.	No, but many helpful teacher and senior student NPCs are present.
3	Scenario 2: Meeting the host family	Students arrive in Australia and meet their host family. They explore the house and the neighbourhood while having simple interactions with Australian NPCs	Yes, present for the entire scenario
4	Scenario 3: Going to school	Students go to school with Jack, meet new classmates, discover the school schedule and rules. Students have brief interactions in certain classes (e.g., math) to expose them to school life in Australia	Yes, but disappears from time to time for different classes and talking to his friends
5	Scenario 4: Seaside Trip	Jack brings students to the beach by bus, but Jack doesn't stay with them. Students explore the beach freely and interact with a number of people as they please.	Yes, joins them on the bus and reappears for reflection

Schedule (2/2)

6	Scenario 5: Shopping and cooking	The students have been given the day to themselves and asked to cook a Japanese meal for their family. They are given money and are dropped off at a supermarket.	Yes, but only appears towards the end to eat their dishes
7	Scenario 6: Getting lost	Students find themselves lost in the city and have to figure out ways to get home, through asking for help, describing locations and other creative methods.	No, absent for the entire scenario
8	Scenario 7: Souvenir Shopping	Students go to a number of stores looking for souvenirs. They can ask for people's opinions, but they may be recommended something they don't want.	No, absent for the entire scenario
9	Scenario 8: Leaving Australia	Students prepare for departure and say goodbyes to their family. There is time to do one last activity before they leave. What will the students choose?	Yes, but plays a minor role, just to say goodbye
10	Reflection on the experience and open Q & A	In new groups, students will share their experiences. This exposes students to many different perspectives, as all groups had unique experiences. Third-year students will help to facilitate the sharing of ideas. At the end, there will be an open Q&A session to discuss any remaining worries the students might have before departure.	N/A

Creating Characters

		
I saw a koala	I went surfing	I used a boomerang
		
I visited Sydney Opera House	I visited Uluru	I played cricket
		
I saw a kangaroo	I made new Line friends	I got new Instagram followers
		
I practiced with the school basketball club	I practiced with the school baseball club	I practiced with the school brass band



Character Name

Appendix 3: Sample list of goals

You can choose any goals that you want. What do you want to do in your trip to Australia? Here are some examples to give you ideas. You can use them, you can change them a bit, or you can make your own original ones. Please choose about 8-10 goals. Try to make at least 3 original goals.

Australia sightseeing

- See a kangaroo
- Hold a koala
- Visit Uluru
- Visit Sydney Opera House

Social

- Speak to 5 people on the street
- Get a new Instagram follower
- Add new school friends on LINE

Food

- Eat a kangaroo burger
- Eat a meat pie
- Try some Vegemite

Sports/Clubs

- Practise with the school basketball team
- Play music with the school brass band

Souvenirs

- Australian Football ball
- Boomerang
- Cricket bat

go surfing
cook Japanese dish for host family
play cricket

Self Determination Theory

- Deci & Ryan (2002)
- Competence (feeling we are capable)
- Autonomy (feeling we have control over our actions)
- Relatedness (feeling meaningful connections with those around us)
- Problems with gamification



COMPETENCE

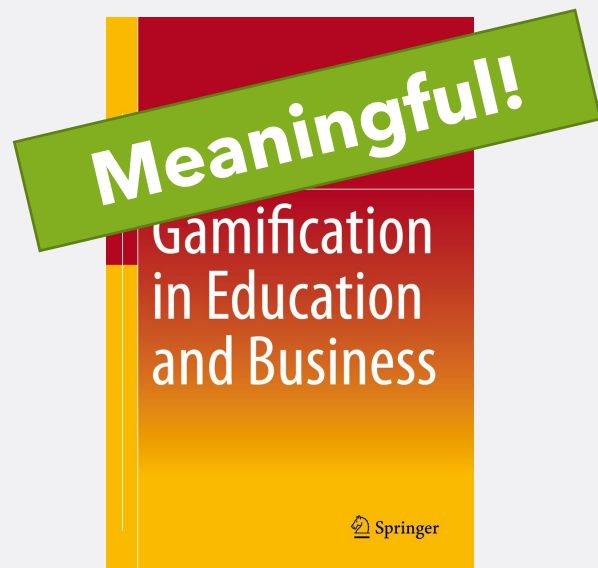


AUTONOMY



RELATEDNESS

RECIPE for meaningful gamification



Nicholson (2015)

- R – Reflection (Debriefing)
- E – Exposition (Narrative)
- C – Choice
- I – Information
- P – Play
- E – Engagement (2)

Debriefing



Goals

The goals of debriefing are for students to:

- Describe (talk about their experience and their feelings)
- Analyse (talk about what they learned and how it relates to their lives)
- Apply (talk about how they can apply what they learned to the real world)



Describe

Sample questions:

- How do you feel?
- What happened?
- What did you do next?
- How about you?
- Did you do anything else?



Analyse

Sample questions:

- What did you learn?
- Have you ever had similar experiences?
- What was difficult for you?



Apply

Sample questions:

- What would you do next time (X) happens?
- What if someone gets angry at you again?
- What if you don't understand a sign? What would you do?

- Critical component of learning
- “learning comes from the debriefing, not the game” (Crookall 2010, pg. 911)
- 3 core components

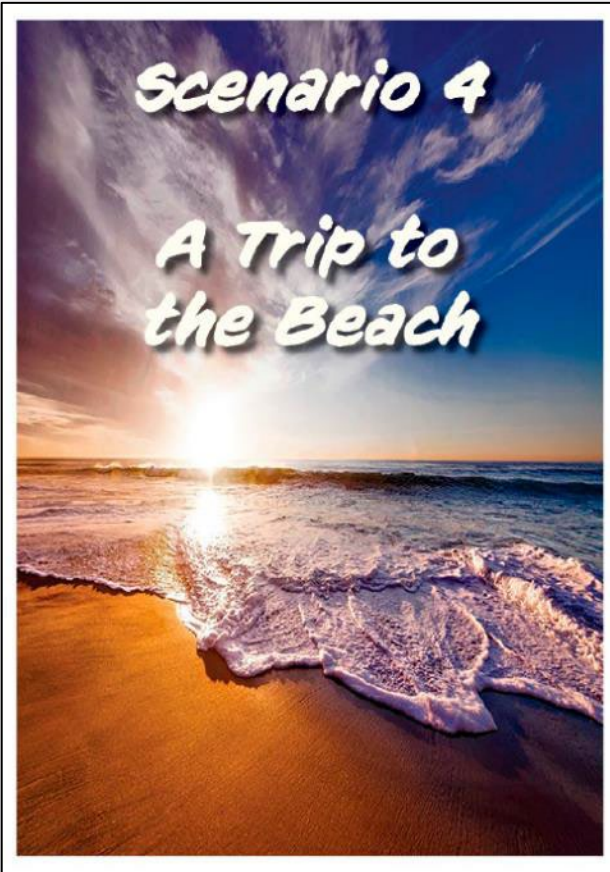
Describe – players describe what happened

Analyse – players analyse their actions and make connections with personal experiences

Apply – players apply lessons to their lives

- 15 minutes guided reflection
- Delayed self reflection

Quick sample



- Scenario 4 – A Trip to the Beach
- Notable encounters/decisions

What to bring (timed)

Choosing from a variety of options

Learning meaning of different beach flags

Different meaning of “spicy”/“mild” out of Japan

Not checking prices before ordering food

Sample Dialogue

Getting Ready

Jack: Hey guys. It's a beautiful day, so let's go to the beach. Grab anything you want quickly and let's go! The bus will be here really soon!

GM: So, is there anything you guys want to bring?

Player A: I'll bring my towel.

Player B: I'll bring my swimsuit.

Player A: Oh, me too!

GM: C? Anything you want to bring?

Player C: Suncream.

Jack: OK, you've got your stuff now, let's go!

GM: You hurry out to the bus stop and arrive just before the bus. You sit down towards the back of the bus.

Sample Dialogue 1: Getting Ready

Sample Dialogue

Choosing what to do

GM: You step off the bus. to your right is a large signboard. Behind it is a beach. Some flags are flying along the beach. A man is renting surfboards. Many people are sunbathing next to a man sitting in a tall wooden chair. Some people are swimming. To your left, a crowd has gathered and is posing for selfies (pictures of themselves). On the other side of the road there are some restaurants. What do you want to do?

Player A: One of my goals is to go surfing in Australia. So, I'm going to talk to the man with the surfboards.

Player B: I want to get some Instagram followers! I'm going to the selfie spot.

GM: Great (*notices that player C is quiet*). How about you, C?

Player C: Eh...

GM: You can go swimming, check out the sign, talk to someone...Anything you like.

Player C: Eh...

GM: OK, well think about it and I'll come back to you. Remember there are no wrong answers. OK, A, you walk up to the man with the surfboards:

Surfer (GM) G'day mate! What's the good word?

Player A: Huh? I...I want to surf...

Surfer (GM) Ah right! Nothing better than that is there? Is this your first time?

Player A: No, I'm really good at surfing! I wanna catch a tube today!

Sample Dialogue 3: Introducing the beach

Explanation

Spicy food

The Three Amigos

This is a simple burrito restaurant. The server will ask them a few questions:

There are 4 kinds of salsa:

- Tomato salsa (mild)
- Salsa verde (a little spicy)
- Chipotle (very spicy)
- Naga (EXTREMELY SPICY!)

The server will prepare it all and wrap it up in tin foil to the player. Ask them how they eat it. If they don't know, you can explain how other people around them are eating it: You tear off

a bit of the foil and eat it from there. No knife or fork.

Cultural difference

In Japan "mild" means very mild. But in other countries it might be a bit spicier. The very spicy one will be difficult to eat. Maybe players don't know what to do with spicy food. If they drink water, it makes it worse! It spreads the spiciness. Milk is the best option. Don't tell them unless they ask someone.

will get a really spicy meal. Don't tell them unless they ask.

Sample Dialogue

Can't pay for food

Waiter: Here is your bill. (*walks away*)

Player A: What?! It's so expensive!

Player B: 110 dollars? How much is that in yen?

Player C: I think about 9,000 yen.

GM: Yeah , that's about right.

Player A: I can't pay for this, what will I do?

Waiter: Can I take your money now?

Player A: L..I don't have that much money

Waiter: I see. Well you have to think of some way to pay for it.

Player B: I can give you some money, but it's not enough.

Player C: Me too.

Waiter: That's still not enough. Can you call your parents?

Player B: We're from Japan, we're studying abroad. We didn't know the price.

Waiter: I see, well you have to pay for the meal. I have to call your teacher.

GM: Just then a woman gets up from her table and walks over

Woman: Hey, it's their first time in Australia. I'll pay for the difference

Waiter: Alright, if you want to.

Player A: Thank you so much! You're our hero!

Sample dialogue

NATURAL reflection

Jack: Hey guys! Welcome back. How was your day?

Player A: Yeah we had a good time, we did a lot

Jack: Tell me all about it. On the bus we played I spy. What happened after that?

Player B: A went surfing and C went swimming

Player A: Yeah I was great at surfing

Player C: But then the lifeguard got mad at us!

Player B: Yeah, I didn't know about the flags. But now we understand it.

Jack: Oh wow! I forgot to tell you about the flags. Don't you have flags in Japan?

Player C: I don't know...I don't think so.

Player A: I've never seen them before.

Jack: Ooops! Sorry! Well what did you do B?

Player B: I took some selfies at an Instaspot and made some new friends.

Jack: Oh really? What were they like?

Player A: She met a really muscly man and she's in love!

Player B: No I'm not! I just followed him on Instagram

Player C: He followed you too. Maybe you will fall in love and get married

Player A: Then you can move to Australia just like Yumiko!

Jack: Ha ha ha wow you had a busy day. Did you get anything nice to eat?

Sample Dialogue 5: Reflection with Jack

Helping the GM and players

Appendix 1

These points are ada
this is given to each

Maybe you are wo
follow:

1. Uncertainty

Things will
During reflection tim

2. Rules

This game
changing some rul
game, so you can

3. Personal engag

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space. No-one will
role-playing and do

4. Frivolity and pr

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Appendix 5: GM tips

You are great for being a game-master!

It may seem overwhelming, but remember these key points:

- There is no right or wrong thing for you to say – react however you feel
- The second-year students are so grateful for your help
- YOU are in charge. You decide what happens. If you say something different from the scenario THAT'S FINE!
- HAVE FUN!

The main goals you have are:

- Encourage students to interact with you and each other
- Let them know about different words and phrases used in Australia (see below)
- Let them know about cultural differences between Japan and Australia

Remind the students (and yourself!)

- There is no right or wrong answer, anything is OK
- This is a safe space
- You don't need to have perfect English, just communicate

At the end of every session you will do some reflection with the students. You want them to think about

- What they did
- How well did they do it
- How can they apply these experiences to their lives

You can help with any advice or experience you had, especially based on your time in Australia.

If you need to take a minute to gather your thoughts – take it. There's no pressure.

If you have any questions, let one of the teachers know.

Each scenario you run will get easier and easier and it will help your creativity and spontaneous conversation!

Let's make it better



- I can only guess
 - Students experience
 - Post-return survey - what worked, what didn't
 - Design your own scenarios (optional?)
 - Be a GM (or co-GM) for your juniors
-
- Students could design one for foreign students coming to Japan
-
- Not only for students travelling abroad

FAQs



- Paddy, you are so handsome, how did you also come up with such a genius game?
- Is this really CALL? (TELL)
- What about lower level students?
- Can this work for other levels/countries?
- Can I make my own?

Stockunlimited

This person does not exist

Questions?



- Feel free to contact me anytime

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References

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