

Dictation Contest (PR Jr, 初級) No. 1057

Hi, everyone! Welcome back to PR Junior.
Let's read the e-mail to Kevin from Yuko together.

Hi Kevin,
What are you going to do this Sunday?
My little sister Sayaka and I will play in a piano concert on Sunday afternoon.
It's at the hall by the station.
Sayaka plays at 1 pm, and I play at 3.
Do you want to come? I can give you the tickets.
Bye!
- Yuko

This is all for today. Bye!

Dictation Contest (PR 1, 中級) No. 1057

Hello, everyone! Welcome back to PR 1!

When we're cold, watch a scary movie, or listen to our favorite song, we might get little bumps all over our skin. The bumps are called goosebumps; they are tiny muscles on our body that tighten our hair and make it stand upright. These bumps are an involuntary response to intense emotions. Goosebumps have a practical purpose for animals. When an animal's hair sticks up, it makes the animal look bigger and helps protect it against predators. A raised layer of fur can also help keep an animal warm when cold. According to experts, goosebumps aren't a survival reaction for humans. They are the result of an adrenaline rush sparked by an extreme emotion.

That's all for today. See you next time!

Dictation Contest (PR2 上級) No. 1057

Hello, everyone! Welcome back to PR 2!

Today I will talk about the hanami tradition in Japan. Let's begin!

In Japan, the tradition of cherry blossom viewing, known as hanami, dates to the Heian period. However, in ancient times, there were many seasonal traditions, such as New Year's visits to shrines, Japanese apricot blossoms in early spring, and wisteria in early summer. The tradition of cherry blossom viewing began to stand out distinctly, possibly around the late 17th century. The groundwork for this was laid around the 17th century. During the Edo period – early 17th century to mid-late 19th century – what we might now call mini-trips, where commoners in Edo ventured out together to famous [cherry] blossom viewing spots such as Ueno's Kaneiji Temple, Sumida River's embankment, and Asukayama Park, gave rise to a culture of communal gatherings and feasting. And in the mid-19th century, the emergence of 'Somei-yoshino' also contributed to this trend. 'Somei-yoshino' grow quickly, allowing for the creation of cherry blossom viewing spots with minimal effort, which greatly contributed to the popularization of hanami. Also, with the development of transportation networks such as railways, individuals could journey longer distances, facilitating large gatherings at cherry blossom viewing spots. Hanami gained widespread popularity from the late 19th century onward as a result.

That's all for today! See you!