

Dictation Contest (PR Jr, 初級) No. 446

Hello!

Do you remember Fluffy, the puppy? Today's story is also about Fluffy! Let's begin!

One morning, someone left the gate open and Fluffy was able to sneak out. He thought it would be an exciting adventure to go out exploring all by himself. He walked down the street, until he reached the edge of the town, where he saw a farm! Fluffy had never seen farm animals before!

What do you think happened next? That's all for today! Bye-bye!

Dictation Contest (PR 1, 中級) No. 446

Hello, everyone! Welcome back to PR1.

This is the second half of the text about good things that come in small packages. Let's begin!

Computers are another example. The earliest computers took up several rooms in a building. Now, a computer can be smaller than a book or notepad, and completely wireless. These ultra-small computers are called "laptops" or "notebooks" because they can be placed on a person's lap and are small and thin like a regular notebook. Of course, the parts that go into these computers also need to be very small. Companies vie to make the tiniest microchips that can be used in smaller and lighter computers.

Can you think of any other examples? Well, that is all for today. See you next time!

Dictation Contest (PR2 上級) No. 446

Hey, guys! How are you doing?

Hope you're all still staying healthy and safe.

Now, as I'm sure you know, every year in Japan a kanji character is chosen to represent the past year. And if you don't know what this year's kanji character is yet, well, take a listen to this:

The kanji character for *kin*, which means "gold" or "money", has been selected as the character that best summarizes the year, a Kyoto-based academic organization announced December 13th. The kanji points to the gold medals of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics, which proceeded this July after being postponed for a year and then held without spectators due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Japan's athletes won a record number of gold medals – 27 in all – at the Games, smashing the country's previous record of 16 set at the 1964 Tokyo Games and again in Athens 2004. News about cash handouts in the headlines also helped push the kanji to the top of the list, the foundation said.

Huh. Now, I don't want to be pessimistic, but that choice seems a little odd considering the main reason for it – the Tokyo Olympics – caused quite a lot of controversy and maybe shouldn't have even happened at all. Plus, you could also argue that the government and public's handling of the pandemic for most of this year was hardly 'gold-standard' and barely even bronze... hmm, but at least things are a little bit better now. So, maybe a better choice would be the kanji character for, hmm... "barely-scraping-by-through-sheer-dumb-luck"?

Alright, guys, well, until next time – and as always – study hard, stay safe, and I'll see you soon.