

Dictation Contest (PR Jr, 初級) No. 858

Hey, guys! Welcome back to PR Junior.

Today, you are going to listen to [a] story about English.

Do you know how many people speak English? About 350 million people speak English all around the world. English is an official language in many countries. In countries such as Japan and Korea, English is not an official language, but everybody learns it in school as a second language. This is why English is often called the international language.

That is all for today, bye-bye!

Dictation Contest (PR 1, 中級) No. 858

Hello, everyone! This is PR1. Are you ready? Let's start!

India is located in South Asia. More than one billion people live in India. They speak many languages. In India, there is a saying: "Every four miles the speech changes." There are 22 official languages, and more than 250 other languages are spoken in India.

One of the major official languages of India is Hindi. More than 500 million people can speak it, and you know a few words, too. For example, 'pajamas' and 'shampoo' come from Hindi. The Japanese word "daruma" comes from Hindi, too.

Urdu is another official language. It is mostly spoken in northern India. Its writing system comes from Arabic, so it goes from right to left. The language is known for its beauty and grace. A lot of great literature and poetry are written in Urdu.

That's all for today. Bye-bye!

Dictation Contest (PR2 上級) No. 858

Hello, everyone, and welcome to PR2.

This is Part Three of the story on Gavin Pretor-Pinney. Let's begin.

Slowing down to appreciate clouds enriched his life and sharpened his ability to appreciate other pockets of beauty hiding in plain sight. At the same time, Pretor-Pinney couldn't help noting, we were entering an era in which we were losing a sense of wonder. New, supposedly amazing things bounced around the Internet so quickly that, as he put it, we can now all walk around with an attitude like, "Well, I've just seen a panda doing something unusual online—what's going to amaze me now?" His passion for clouds was teaching him that "it's much better for our souls to realize we can be amazed and delighted by what's around us."

At the end of 2004, a friend invited Pretor-Pinney to give a talk about clouds at a small literary festival in South West England. The previous year, there were more speakers than people in the audience, so Pretor-Pinney wanted an interesting title for his talk, to draw a crowd. "Wouldn't it be funny," he thought, "to have a society that defends clouds against the bad reputation they get—that stands up for clouds?" So he called it "The First Annual Lecture of the Cloud Appreciation Society." And it worked.

Okay, that's it for now. I'll see you in class, bye!