

# CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter July, 2017

## OLDER THAN TREES

According to some scientists, modern trees appeared on Earth some 345 to 360 million years ago. Most of the earth's forests in the late Devonian period comprised of the now extinct "Archaeopteris".

Of course trees are a kind of plant and their existence on Earth was preceded by other plant species. But it's fascinating to think that some animals alive today also go back to the time before trees appeared.

Sharks are one such animal. According to researchers, sharks have been around for



over 400 million years. Like the other animals in this article, they survived four global mass extinctions and today there are over 470 species of sharks swimming around in our oceans. Some like the Great White, the Tiger and the Hammerhead, to name just a few, are the apex predators of their environment.

Even older is the Nautilus. This critter can trace its ancestors back half a million years. Not only does it have an ancient lineage, but individuals can live up to 100 years old.



Living in shallow ocean waters on soft, sandy or muddy sea beds is another living fossil, the Horseshoe Crab. This animal can trace its lineage back 450 million years.



But the king of longevity for multi-organ animals is the Jellyfish. They go back at least 500 million years with estimates stretching further to 700 million years! They can be found happily



floating around in just about every ocean on earth. And in that 700 million years, they have managed to diversify to over 2,000 different

species.

What do these long surviving species have in common? The most obvious answer is that they are all ocean dwellers. And that suggests that if a species is to stay around on this earth for an extended period, it needs to live in a safe environment, like, under water.

It would seem that a few originally land-based mammals have taken the hint. Among them is the biggest creature that has ever lived on Earth, the whale. Also, the brainy dolphins have made the conversion. Others, like seals, walruses and sea lions are in the process of evolving back to an under-sea life-style. Makes sense, doesn't it?

So, get your snorkel, tank and diving gear out and start practicing.....



## Net News

**NET LESSONS:** Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons on the net!*

Here's a list of ancient creatures you may find interesting: <http://www.ranker.com/list/the-top-10-oldest-living-things-on-earth/analise.dubner>

# Some Thoughts for the Month



**Joshua Says:** Here's a quote from Michael Jordan, perhaps the most famous and successful basketball player of all time: "I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed." Inspirational, wouldn't you agree. Being prepared to make mistakes in order to learn and grow – Students...?

**Junko Says:** Here's a Leonard da Vinci quote: "There are three classes of people: those who see, those who see when they are shown and those who do not see at all. "I see" in English also means "I understand." "See" is also used sometimes in the same way in Japanese. When one starts to understand or realize something he says he can "start to see it." Understanding may, after all, come not with the brain, but with the eyes.



**Matt Says:** In England it only gets as hot as it is currently maybe 2 or 3 days a year. When that happens there is always front page news in the papers that says "It's hotter than Lisbon or Ibiza in England this weekend." We celebrate it since it's a rare occurrence but I think most British people would not be able to deal with the constant heat that is Japanese Summertime.

**Darrin Says:** G'day and 'owsitgoin mate? Two phrases that you hear a lot in Australia. The first is simply a way we Aussies say hello and it has been shortened from the British greeting Good day. The second phrase is actually a blend of words; How's it going mate, but we like to shorten many of our common phrases. Mate actually means friend, so the second phrase really means, how are you friend? Mateship is a very important part of our culture and I'm hoping to make many more 'mates' here in Japan.



**Danielle dit** Voici ma dernière participation à ce bulletin mensuel. Enseigner le français ici aura été une expérience intéressante, riche en enseignement. Le temps passe et il est désormais l'heure pour moi de continuer ma route vers d'autres horizons. L'apprentissage d'une langue est une quête de toute une vie et j'espère donc que ceux qui ont compté sur moi pour les aider dans la leur continueront leur chemin.

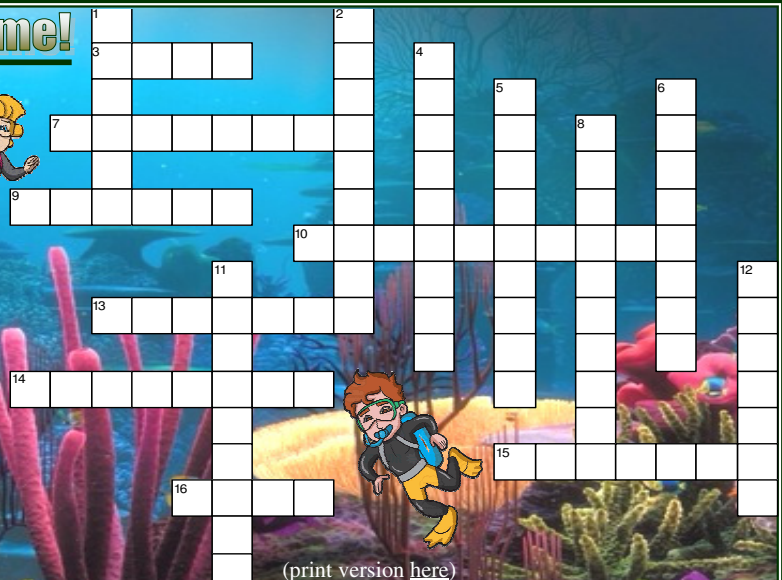
## ACROSS

- 3 highest point, top
- 7 gone before
- 9 very old and extinct
- 10 change or transformation
- 13 easily understood
- 14 inhabiting a particular place
- 15 descendants of a particular individual
- 16 an indirect suggestion

## DOWN

- 1 a sea mammal
- 2 hunters
- 4 of being long-lived
- 5 made up of
- 6 long in duration
- 8 no longer in existence
- 11 make variations in order to spread or expand
- 12 especially domesticated animals

## Play A Game!



(print version [here](#))



## Back to Sri Lanka

*If you have been coming to Crossroads for more than a year, you may remember my report about Sri Lanka last year. I got the opportunity to visit that country again on a business trip this year. I learned some new and interesting things there. Today, I would like to introduce them to you.*

## Sigiriya Rock

*Although the Internet has made information more accessible, paper guidebooks are still useful. Most guidebooks exhibit Sigiriya Rock as a symbol of Sri Lanka. It is a gigantic rock fortress. It contains elaborate murals painted in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Unfortunately, I didn't see it last year because of our tight itinerary. So, this year I encouraged (or, forced) my boss to visit it. Sigiriya is about 195 meters in height. To get to the top of the rock, you have to go up 2,000 steps. If you don't have acrophobia, you will be moved by its dizzy height and beautiful sight.*

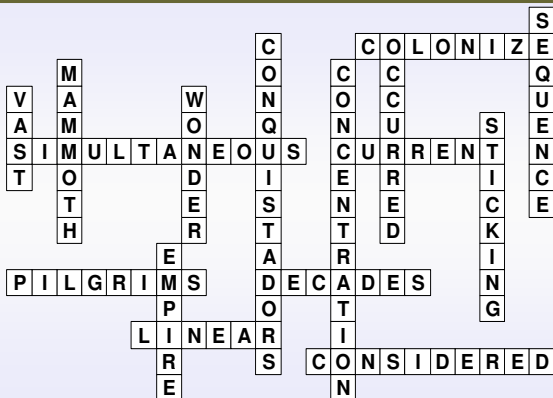


# *A Latent Spark*

*Sri Lanka is popular among European people as an ideal vacation spot. In particular, many British people visit it because of its beautiful sunshine and the prevalence of spoken English. However, it seems that Sri Lankans have complicated feelings towards British people. It is true that Britain provided Sri Lanka with some benefits like a railway network and tea cultivation. But on the other hand, they were also dominating conquerors who tried to break the native culture. There is a prison for rebels built by Britain in Colombo. For local people, it is a memorial to the heroic martyrs of their country. According to our local guide, Sri Lankans don't openly hate the British today, but everybody, more or less, has antipathy in their hearts towards them. He expressed it as "a latent spark in the charcoal."*

*Kandy aka Nuwara*

*As we read in the former paragraph, Sri Lanka was colonized by Britain. We give its cities names in English. But, local people have their own names. Kandy is an ancient city which is famous for the “temple of the tooth.” People in Sri Lanka call it “Nuwara”, not Kandy. “Nuwara” means “capital” in the local language. Historically, it was the capital of the country in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. During our travels, we were scheduled to go to NuwaraEliya in the countryside. NuwaraEliya is located about 40 kilometers south of Kandy. We called it “Nuwara” by mistake because we didn’t know Nuwara meant Kandy. When my boss asked a local guide how long it would take to get from Kandy to “Nuwara”, he looked perplexed. What did this Japanese person mean? It would take zero minutes, of course!*



## Last Month's puzzle Solution

## ACROSS

- 3** start a new settlement far from home
- 10** at the same time
- 11** belonging to the present time
- 13** people who travel in foreign lands
- 14** tens of years
- 15** measured lengthwise
- 16** thought about

## DOWN

- 1 following in order
- 2 a Spanish soldier of fortune
- 4 happened
- 5 a large extinct elephant
- 6 crowding together in a small space
- 7 great in size
- 8 have a desire to know something
- 9 staying, not changing
- 12 a country ruled by an emperor



Don't forget... Our SPECIAL 1+1 Campaign offer! Up to 50% off!!

See our notice board, or ask Junko in our office, for the details.