

CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter August, 2020

Friend... or Foe?

In recent months we've been hearing about viruses and practically nothing else. A vast majority of the information we get about viruses, is predominantly negative and for many decades scientists had concentrated on their destructive nature, largely dismissing their useful attributes.

But how much do we really know about viruses and their role? Are they here only to wreak havoc on us? Are they needed at all?

Only in recent years we have learned that viruses are not mere mindless assassins that often kill their host, consequently dying alongside them. The latest studies reveal that viruses actively communicate with each other and employ sophisticated strategies to overwhelm their victims' immune system. By sending tiny strands of proteins as messages, they can form alliances with different families of viruses, based on their specific "talents". For example, one virus strain can be good at entering the cell wall of a bacterium, but will be immediately killed by the bacterium's immune response. To successfully attack the cell, the virus will pair up with a different strain capable of switching off the immune system then decide the most optimal timing for the attack, and whether to outright kill the host or just invade and start replicating in the organism.

All this sounds quite scary, but the good news is that viruses often use this tactic to establish a healthy balance of bacterial colonies in a given environment by carefully manipulating the host's DNA and communicating with each other. They deserve much credit for keeping us in good health, by forming a symbiosis with us, ensuring that we don't fall ill from bacterial infections. One example of that positive impact is the health of our digestive system.



Our intestines are full of good and bad bacteria that digest food and process generated food waste. If any bacterial colony becomes dominant, it may lead to debilitating illnesses, such as Crohn's disease. Viruses act to prevent these bacterial imbalances by killing off those bacteria that become overabundant in our body.

Our very existence on this planet is directly dependant on viral behaviour and influence on us and our DNA. Whether we like it or not, we have to put up with them.

Article by Marek

Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

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

Read on! : <https://www.sciencealert.com/not-all-viruses-are-bad-for-you-here-are-some-that-can-have-a-protective-effect>

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua Says: “The greatest mistake we make is living in constant fear that we will make one.” This is a quote from John C. Maxwell. I wonder if in this notion we might find the cause of why so many Japanese people have difficulty expressing themselves openly and clearly in English. Have years of “exam hell” and conformity to the educational status quo here left people in fear of freely and confidently adopting English as a natural second language?

Junko Says: People in most nations are still exposed to Corona Virus infection and their activities at work, school and in their private and social life continue to be limited. But this is also a great chance to build up English skills in preparation for a future career. If you find someone that you think English can help provide future opportunities for, please suggest to them to start studying with us. There will be a substantial benefit for you and your friend if you do!



Marek Says: The summer is in full swing and we all seek salvation in A/C, but I myself love the heat and sunshine, which I was deprived of for over a decade, living the UK. British holiday-goers are prepared to risk contracting Covid-19, if they can have a week’s break in Spain. It seems like a small price to pay... when you wait 10 months for the sun to arrive in the Isles.

Mandcy dit: Un episode de canicule s'est abbatu dernièrement en France et au Japon. Quels sont donc les secrets des français pour résister aux fortes températures? Par exemple, les français boivent toutes leurs boissons avec beaucoup de glaçons, ils ajoutent aussi de la menthe et des fruits dans leur bouteille d'eau. Ils utilisent de plus un brumisateur d'eau type Volvic ou Evian pour asperger leur visage et enfin et surtout, ils vont à la plage pour bronzer. Alors tous à vos serviettes.



ACROSS

- 2 violent, needless disturbance
- 4 secure against
- 5 causing loss of strength and vitality
- 8 joining together
- 11 insignificant
- 13 organisms that slightly differ from others of the same type
- 17 as a result
- 19 beneficial relationship between two species
- 20 almost, nearly

DOWN

- 1 in control or most influential
- 3 more than enough
- 6 greater in number or influence
- 7 influencing, controlling
- 9 characteristics that distinguish
- 10 reproducing, making an exact copy
- 12 single or non-cell organism
- 14 without restriction, delay or hesitation
- 15 overpower
- 16 best, most favored
- 18 great in size or amount

Play A Game!

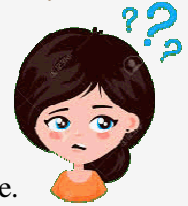
Find the answers on P1

(print version [here](#))

Crossroads Writers' Corner - a place for you to get creative and get "published!"



Here's part 2 of Natsuki Fukui's tale "The Professor"

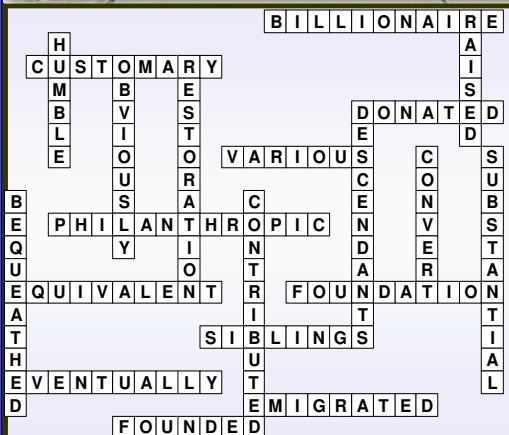


The professor - Part 2

I arrived at his office 10 minutes earlier than the appointed time so that when the professor came, I would make a good impression. I knocked and opened the door; the professor was not there. But I instantly noticed the pungent smell that filled the room. The first thing that came into view was the piles of books and papers stacked up everywhere in the room. Those soaring paper towers which almost touched the ceiling were staggering enough, but as I looked around the room my eyes captured unpleasant gobs of unknown stuff which I could barely discern. I zigzagged to avoid stepping on the papers scattered on the floor and tried to get closer to the gobs. When I got close enough to tell what they were, I could not believe my eyes. They consisted of left-over food, used dishes and cups, crumpled cans and bottles and other disgusting garbage. His table was encrusted with crumbs from the food he had eaten and there were snack bags beneath his desk on the floor which had already expired. He must have been accumulating garbage for years. I was utterly shocked and the glamorous image that I had had of the professor completely shattered. I stood there half paralyzed for about 5 minutes and came to the realization that if I stayed there and worked for him in that crazy environment, I might lose my mind. I had no option but to run away from that room. I scuttled into my dorm room and quickly wrote an apologetic email to the professor. I made up the excuse that due to a family emergency, I was unable to work for him. I thought I would have to keep recalling the horrifying experience if I continued taking his classes, so I dropped out of his class right after sending the email.

I talked to one of my friends who took his class about my experience. It was then that I found out he was notorious for not being able to clean up. She also told me that he was basically kicked out of the school he previously worked for because he was causing too many problems. When he left that school, the room was in such bad condition that it needed to be renovated. It is rumored that he was charged for the work and it set him back over \$5,000. I was incredibly lucky I didn't end up working in that mess. I should have noticed that there was something odd about the job and that the pay was too good to be true when I looked at the flyer, but I was too dumb to realize. The next time I look for a job, I had better make sure to get outside information before I apply.....

THE END



ACROSS

- 1 a hundred times richer than a millionaire
- 4 usual or normal
- 7 given to a charity or a good cause
- 8 of many different kinds
- 13 relating to the support and promotion of human welfare
- 14 the same as
- 15 an institution usually supporting education or the arts
- 16 brothers and/or sisters
- 17 after a long delay
- 18 leave your own country to live in another one
- 19 established

Last Month's puzzle Solution

DOWN

- 2 provide for and care for children
- 3 modest or low position
- 5 unmistakably, clearly
- 6 getting something back to its original condition
- 7 all of the offspring from the same blood-line
- 9 change or replace with another
- 10 fairly large
- 11 left by will after one's death
- 12 provided time, energy or money to help with development or growth



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.