

CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter July, 2021

A..A..A..Achoo!

In Japan it's "hakushon," for the French it's "atchoun," Italians say "hapsu" and the Swedes say "atjo." These are all onomatopoeias in their respective languages that represent the sound we make when we sneeze. The accents may differ, but the message is the same. A sneeze is universally recognizable, an unambiguous expression that everyone can relate to no matter where you are in the world.

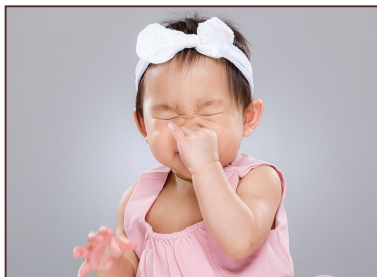
Sneezing has been with us (and throughout the animal kingdom) at least as long as mammals on this earth started to breathe air. And in various cultures, human nature being what it is, has created weird and wonderful "explanations" as to what a sneeze is and why we do it.

In some cultures, sneezing is believed to bring good luck, unless you sneeze at the same time as someone else. Then it's bad luck.

Some say that if someone is talking about you behind your back, you sneeze – one sneeze means they are saying something good; two, not so good. In Polish culture, the person who is talking about you is your mother-in-law and she is not happy!

In Italian culture, it's commonly considered good luck if your cat sneezes, especially on your wedding day. While the Scots believe a newborn baby is being held captive by a fairy until the spell is broken with the baby's first sneeze.

Kids in many parts of the world will tell



you that if you try to block a sneeze, your eyes will pop out! So you should be sure to close them at such times.



The ancient Greeks, Egyptians and Romans all believed that sneezing was a sign that the Gods were trying

to reveal the future, good or bad.

Other beliefs say that the soul leaves the body momentarily during a sneeze. Or that evil spirits can enter a person's body when they sneeze.

Related to these ideas is the expression, "God bless you" (or "Gesundheit" in German), now a social custom used to wish the sneezer well. But why do we say this? The expression "God bless you" goes back to the 6th century in Europe; the time of the "Black Plague." The plague ravaged Europe on and off for about two centuries causing the death of up to 25% (some accounts put the figure at 50%) of the world's population at that time. One of the symptoms infected people showed before death was a fit of sneezing. In the 6th century, Pope Gregory imposed a law that said anyone who sneezed must be blessed with these divine words; and so the custom has remained to this day, though often shortened to a simple "bless you."

Like their human companions Cats and dogs also sneeze. The causes are similar. Like us, they can catch a cold, noxious smells can set them off as well as irritants in their noses - "Achoo!"
Gesundheit, Fiedo!



Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

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

For some more on sneezing, try this site:

<https://www.loc.gov/everyday-mysteries/item/does-your-heart-stop-when-you-sneeze/>

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua Says: Richard Branson, in his “Virgin Galactic” spaceship, has just become the first self, and privately, funded “spacenic” to reach space (“hooray” for the Brit’s). He was closely followed a few days later by Amazon’s Jeff Bezos, and they will both soon be welcoming Elon Musk of Tesla to their exclusive club if his ambitions come true. And while these little billionaires are having fun out in space, the world gets hotter.

Junko Says: Did you notice that one of our olive trees in the front of our building had many more little white flowers this May than in past years? Just like the books on “how to grow olives” say, they flowered in the fifth year after we planted them and now, if you look carefully, you will see some small green olives growing here and there among the leaves. It will still take many more months before we can harvest them, but we are looking forward to trying them.



Marek Says: Recently I've been trying to learn a song for children that I once heard in a supermarket. What's interesting about that is, as I am learning it, I also pick up many other words that have similar meanings. Also, I'm doing my best to pronounce it as fluently as possible, much to my friends' amusement. Thanks to learning through something I enjoy, my language skills and confidence see a noticeable improvement.

Mandcy dit: "L'été au Japon, il fait chaud, il fait même très chaud et le temps est très humide. De plus, il faut faire attention à ne pas attraper un coup de chaleur. Voici l'astuce des français :chaque été, les français utilisent systematiquement des glaçons, dans chaque boisson, les glaçons sont nécessaires. Un peu de Badoit, un quartier de citron et beaucoup de glaçons. Vous voilà français ! Restez bien hydraté et buvez 3 litres d'eau par jours."



ACROSS

- 3 cause extensive destruction
- 4 to be aware of
- 6 not the same
- 7 in the company of friends
- 9 forced with authority
- 12 very odd or unusual
- 13 different kinds of
- 14 having no doubt or misunderstanding
- 15 indicating illness or disease
- 16 everywhere
- 17 to call on God's protection

DOWN

- 1 being confined as in a prison
- 2 considered individually
- 3 make clear or visible
- 5 words that imitate sounds
- 6 having the nature of a deity
- 8 nasty, offensive, disgusting
- 9 things that annoy or disturb
- 10 in the place of something
- 11 under normal, usual conditions

Play A Game!

Find the answers on P1

(print version [here](#))

