

Crossroads

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter December, 2022

UNPLEASANT PRESENT

At the end of the era of colonialism in the 19th century, exploration and trade brought with it a pursuit of knowledge and an understanding of new cultures, territories and the sharing of wealth from those lands' rich and exotic fauna and flora. Botanical gardens, universities and private estates of rich nobility were quickly amassing impressive collections of ornamental and functional (medicinal and high market value) plant species, with little regard to, nor understanding of, said plants' properties beyond their outward appearance.

One such example, imported from Japan to the UK in 1884, is the Japanese Knotweed, which quickly became a popular addition to gardeners' plant collections.

It is native to much of South East Asia and is traditionally used in medicine and makes for a tasty vegetable.



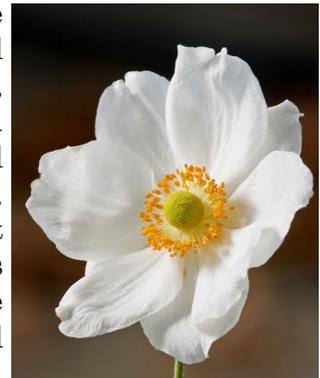
The plant is a pioneer species, being the first to thrive on freshly formed volcanic lava rock, withstanding high temperatures and toxic levels of chemicals in the environment. Its roots spread laterally and can penetrate rocks as hard as concrete. Its hardiness is useful in protecting sand dunes, while the mature dense growth effectively blocks strong winds. The flowering parts and heart-shaped leaves are used in wreaths and bouquets. Unfortunately, the Japanese knotweed has become an invasive plant, when established outside of its native environment. In the UK, much of Europe and USA, it is unstoppable and nearly impossible to eradicate. Its propensity to grow in large thick clumps means that it smothers the land, virtually wiping out all other plant species, thus devastating local biodiversity.

Pesticides are ineffective in controlling it and the only method that seems to work is fooling it into thinking it is exposed to a volcanic eruption, by poisoning it with imperceptible doses of a weed killer, over the course of decades, which will eventually render its roots dormant, at least for some years to come.

Another unpleasant present from afar, this time from Russia, is the Giant Hogweed. Initially, apart from prettifying gardens, it was meant to be used as cattle feed. Unfortunately, it turned out to be an invasive plant, and also an extremely toxic plant to humans. Slight skin contact with the fine hairs of the plant's stems may result in an intense rash and blistering.

Some invasive plants, however, are occasionally a welcome addition to the landscape.

One of them is the Japanese Anemone, and while it spreads readily, it is – for a change – a harmless and unassuming flower, which will certainly not offend anyone with its overenthusiastic presence along pavements and road drains.



These foreign species have been established through repeated attempts by gardeners to make them grow and produce fertile seeds, but the mentality of people was vastly different back then.

The age of careless and unscientific botanical endeavours to plant non-native vegetation in all corners of the world is long gone. By now, we have done enough damage to the natural balance of biodiversity, and only nature itself can right our wrongs.

Article by Marek

Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

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

For more details, please visit:

<https://celsolicitors.co.uk/invasive-plants-weeds-uk/>

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua Says: Another year has flown by. It was at about this time last year that we were getting ready to make the move from ISSEI building to our new and present school here on the 7th floor of K. K. Ichibancho building. Everyone seems quite satisfied with the new facility. Life is all about change, but being in almost the same location feels as though nothing much has really changed at all – apart from the improved teaching/learning facilities, that is.

Junko Says: Sometimes I hear from our students that they notice they speak English well during their dreams. Scientists say that just about everyone dreams for about 2 hours every night when they are sleeping. They say that dreams help us to consolidate memories, process emotions, express our deepest desires and/or gain practice confronting challenges. I wonder if in your dreams you are expressing desires or trying to face challenges?



Marek Says: With the advent of global travel, we facilitate the spread of invasive species across the world, but this phenomenon also occurs naturally, aided by climatic changes, which force fauna and flora to colonise new territories and compete with endemic species for land and resources. As long as we don't actively destroy the environment around us, the nature will find a way to achieve balance in the species composition.

Mandcy dit: En hiver, chaque pays a ses propres rituels. Car il fait froid, très froid !! En Amérique, les gens mangent de l'ail crue le matin pour lutter contre les maladies. En France, nous préparons le grog, c'est notre boisson de l'hiver. Quand je ne me sens pas bien ou que je suis malade, je prépare cette tisane très spéciale. En effet, dans une tasse, vous versez deux cuillères à café de rhum, deux cuillères à café de miel, un demi-citron pressé et enfin de l'eau. Vous faites chauffer votre mélange et hummmmm, c'est vraiment délicieux et votre corps est réchauffé. Et vous ? Que préparez-vous en hiver ?



ACROSS

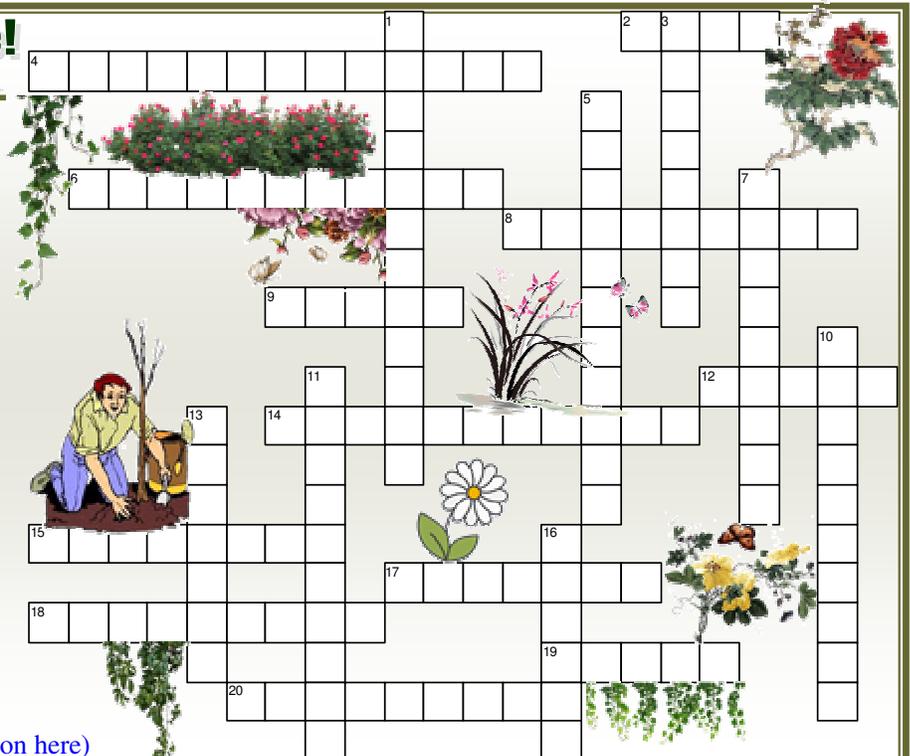
- 2 produced by volcanoes
- 4 impossible to detect
- 6 useless, hopeless
- 8 remove or destroy completely
- 9 all plant life
- 12 all animal life
- 14 making more beautiful
- 15 penetrate, assault intrude harmfully
- 17 inactive
- 18 being strong, healthy
- 19 poisonous
- 20 relating to plants

DOWN

- 1 variation of plant and animal life
- 3 gathering together
- 5 causing extensive destruction
- 7 to or from the side
- 10 humble, modest
- 11 tendency to do something
- 13 go in search of
- 16 to a great extent

Play A Game!

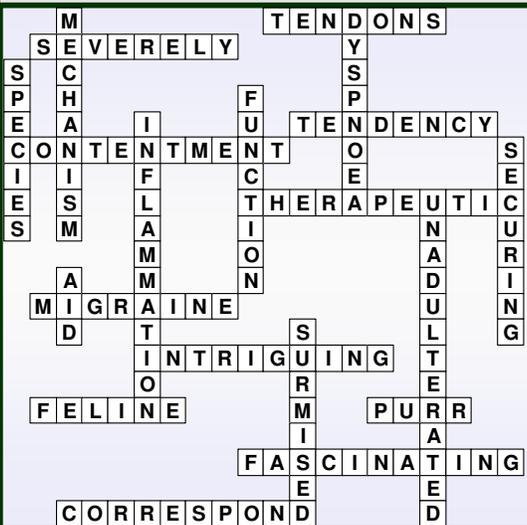
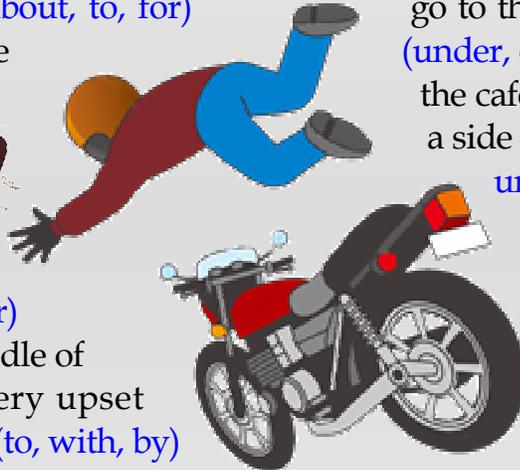
Find the answers on P1



[\(print version here\)](#)

Prepositions! They're annoying little things, aren't they? But using them correctly is essential if you want to communicate clearly in English. They are small, but they are full of a lot of vital information – place, time, direction, etc. The passage below uses them. Your job is to select the correct preposition from the choices given – note, in some cases more than one choice is correct, while in other cases none are needed, meaning all choices are incorrect.

My friend's cousin was born (at, on, in) 1986 (on, in, about) the 23rd of February (at, in, of) Matsuyama City. Last week she asked me (about, to, for) meet her (in, with, at) our favorite café (for, to, about) celebrate her cousin's birthday. I was supposed (for, to, of) meet them (at, by, on) 7:30pm (on, at, in) yesterday (across, with, for) the birthday cake she had baked (on, at, in) the day before. I had (toward, of, to) work overtime and was running late so I decided (about, to, for) motorbike balancing the cake was almost (at, to, from) came out (from, of, in) into) quickly swerve (by, but by bike's wheels skid road and (onto, at, through) went flying (into, onto, under) "splat" (onto, on, in) the middle of (to, from, for) say, she was very upset after that and hasn't spoken (to, with, by) go to the party (on, in, with) my (under, on, at) my lap as I rode. I the café when a truck suddenly a side street. Well, I had (to, off, under, to) avoid a collision (across, under, into) the the sidewalk. The cake the sky and landed the road. Needless (with, about, for) me me since.



Last Month's puzzle Solution

- ACROSS**
- 2 tissues that connect muscles to bones
 - 4 to a very serious degree
 - 8 inclination to do something
 - 9 happy with one's situation in life
 - 11 helping to cure or restore to health
 - 14 severe headache
 - 16 fascinating, curious
 - 17 inclusive of all animals in the cat family
 - 18 a cat does this
 - 19 causing great interest, curiosity
 - 20 be compatible with
- DOWN**
- 1 system, method of doing something
 - 3 difficulty breathing
 - 5 of the same type (especially in animals)
 - 6 what something is used for
 - 7 the body's reaction to injury or irritation
 - 10 making sure
 - 12 pure, not mixed
 - 13 help, support, give assistance
 - 15 inferred from incomplete evidence

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.