

This week seems to be Lilac Week in Sapporo. People on the news were talking about how much they love lilac, and many people were going to places in Sapporo to see the lilac. I wonder how many of them know that we have the first lilac tree here. Sara Clara Smith brought it to Japan. (At least, that's what I've been told. I hope it's not just propaganda¹.) We need to get our school on the news. If people are interested in lilac, then they should come here. We could start having lilac tour busses stopping. 100 yen a person. That will help boost² my pocket money³.

Something Interesting (Trains)

1. The first train was invented⁴ in 1804. It was a steam locomotive⁵. It hauled⁶ iron⁷.
2. The fastest train in the world is in France. It can travel at 574.8km/h. However, it can only run on a special track⁸ and does not carry passengers. The fastest passenger train is a maglev⁹ train in China. It can travel at 431km/h. However, it only has a 30km track.
3. Porta in Portugal to Saigon in Vietnam is the longest unbroken¹⁰ train journey you can make in the world. It is 17,700 km, takes 275 hours and you have to change trains 10 times.
4. The longest train was in Australia. It had 682 cars and was 7.4km long.



JR Apologizes Because Train Leaves 25 Seconds Early

I'm sure that all of you know how punctual¹¹ Japanese trains are. They are famous around the world. In fact, you can set your watch by¹² the rail network. Trains in my country (England) are sometimes good, but more often than not they are late. Sometimes a few minutes, sometimes a few hours and sometimes they don't come at all. When I was in India, I once waited twelve hours for a train to come.



Well, last week, a train on the JR West line departed¹³ 25 seconds too early. It was waiting at Notogawa Station in Shiga Prefecture. The train was supposed to¹⁴ leave at 7:12, but it left at 7:11:35. The driver mistakenly¹⁵ thought the departure time was 7:11 and closed the doors. He realized¹⁶ his mistake but couldn't see anyone on the platform¹⁷ so he decided to leave. It would have made him late to open the doors again.



Last Week's Answers

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I have to admit: I couldn't solve this.

Announcements

4th grade English Major students have a workshop on Saturday morning. A lot of students are not here because of sport competitions. I hope they all do well.

Well, it turned out¹⁸ that there were people waiting on the platform that he hadn't seen, and these people now had to wait for the next train (six minutes later). Some of these disgruntled¹⁹ passengers complained²⁰ to a station attendant who obviously told his boss, who then told his boss. JR West issued a public statement²¹ apologizing²² for the mistake and the inconvenience²³. This is a problem that would make people laugh where I come from. It is nice to have reliable²⁴ trains.



- 1.Propaganda** 宣伝活動 **2.Boost** 上がる **3.Pocket money** お小遣い **4.Invent** 発明する **5.Steam locomotive** 蒸気 (SL) 機関車 **6.Haul** 引っ張る **7.Iron** 鉄 **8.Track** 線路 **9.Maglev** (magnetic levitation) 蒸気機関車 **10.Unbroken** 切れてない **11.Punctual** 時間を守る **12.Set your watch by** 時間を守る **13.Depart** 出発 **14.Supposed to** ~になるはず **15.Mistakenly** 間違いに **16.Realize** 気づく **17.Platform** ホーム **18.Turn out** になる **19.Disgruntled** 不満な **20.Complain** 文句を言う **21.Public statement** 公式声明 **22.Apologize** 謝罪 **23.Inconvenience** 迷惑

★ English News Page 2 ★



Strange World Records

Do you use a spoon to eat? Do you carry one around with you in case you find a pudding? How do you carry it? In your pocket? Well, Etibar Elchiyev doesn't use his pockets. He has the world record for the most spoons balanced on a body. He calls himself "the magnetic man" and he balanced 53 spoons on himself. I'm not sure about magnetism. I think he should change his name to "the sticky man". He has stuck many other things to himself over the years. He quite often sticks frying pans, iPhones and irons to himself. He once stuck a man on a chair to his chest. A useful skill.



the struggle you're in today is developing the strength you need for tomorrow

★ Places you should visit ★

If you have the time and the money, you should definitely visit the Plitvice Lakes National Park in Croatia. The park is world famous for its cascading lakes. There are 16 lakes that have been separated by natural dams. The lakes are many colors and the colors can change due to the minerals in the lakes and the angle of the sunlight. A lot of moss and plants have also grown around the area. The water pours from lake to lake in small waterfalls. The area is stunningly beautiful, but each year over a million people visit the lakes. They are the most popular tourist destination in Croatia, so you might have difficulty taking a photograph like these. Still, with a bit of luck, or photoshop, you can take amazing pictures, too.



★ A Strange World Food ★

Casu Marzu

This is a type of cheese that comes from the island of Sardinia, Italy. It is a little different to regular cheese because it has live maggots inside it. The maggots are introduced to the cheese and they make it very soft and creamy. The cheese is eaten with the live maggots.



New words: 1.in case 念のため 2.magnetic 磁気の 3.sticky ベタベタ 4.struggle 苦労 5.cascade 滝のように落ちる 6.mineral 苦勞 7.stunningly 驚くほど 8.live 生きている 9.maggot 蛆