

Did you enjoy the 6th grade sending off party last week? It was good, but my ears always ring¹ after it's finished. What about you? The teachers had fun dancing on stage. I thought about wearing a wig², but it made me look *too* good, so I dropped the idea. Are you enjoying your ski classes? I took my daughter skiing to Mt. Moiwa a couple of weeks ago and they were offering discount lift tickets because most of the courses were closed due to lack of snow. She likes skiing when I hold her, but cries when she skis on her own. How good are you?

Something You Didn't Know (Prince Harry HRH³)

1. His real name isn't "Harry". He is Henry Charles Albert David of Wales. His real surname is Mountbatten-Windsor, but both he and his brother use the name "Wales".
2. He joined the army and was the first member of the royal family to fly a helicopter.
3. 95% of his income⁴ comes from the Duchy of Cornwall, which is a portfolio of property⁵ and investments⁶ owned by his father, the Prince of Wales, who is also the Duke of Cornwall.
4. He is 186cm tall, and his brother William is 191cm tall.
5. He is 6th in line to the throne⁷. (I think I must be about 10th then)
6. His real title, which he is giving up, is His Royal Highness The Duke of Sussex, Earl of Dumbarton and Baron Kilkeel.



Idiom: the straw that broke the camel's back.

藁を運ぶためにラクダを使っていた頃の、“the straw that broke the camel's back”. 「藁がラクダの背中を折った」という表現から派生したイディオムです。ラクダの背中に藁を乗せ続けたらどんどん重くなり、遂にはラクダの背中も折れてしまう。積もり積もった状況では、藁のような軽いものであっても大事の引き金になるという表現です。

The last straw はその引き金となる物事を指すイディオムとなりました。

Prince Harry Steps Away from The Royal Family

Two weeks ago, Prince Harry announced that he and his wife were going to step away from the Royal Family. This is an unprecedented⁸ move. The Prince and his wife say they want to be independent and support themselves. Right now, the Prince gets 95% of his income from his father's (the Prince of Wales) estates and 5% from public funding. He will renounce⁹ all of this. It is yet to be decided how they will make their money, but I'm sure they can find some way.



The Prince has had a difficult relationship with the media ever since the death of his mother, Diana. She had divorced his father and was in Paris when the media hounded¹⁰ her and were a huge part in her death. It took Harry years to come to terms with this. And now he is married, and he can see the media doing the same thing to his wife. I guess the birth of his son a few weeks ago was the straw that broke the camel's back.

The Prince has lived his whole life in the public eye, and he wants to withdraw. Nobody can blame him. He is constantly watched by the media, he cannot make decisions for himself, he always has to keep up appearances, he cannot go where he wants or do what he wants, he has to spend his whole life going to public engagements, and he will never be king. It will be a difficult transition for him, but I wish him the best of luck.



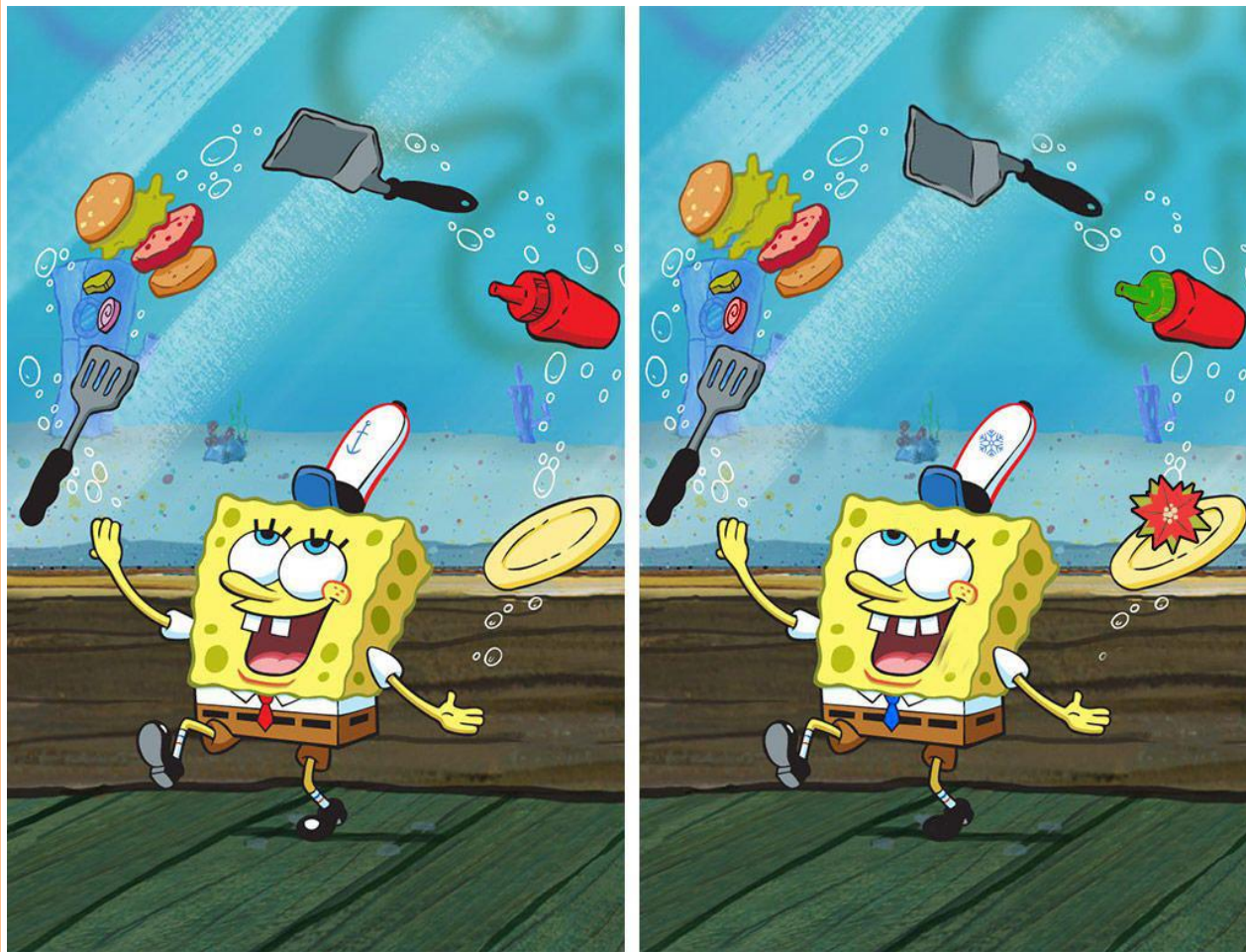
- 1.Ringing ears 耳鳴る 2.Wig かつら 3.HRH His Royal Highness 殿下 4.Income 収入 5.Property 土地を所有 6.Investment 投資 7.In line to the throne 英国王位継承順位__位である 8.Unprecedented 前例がない 9.Renounce 放棄する 10.Hound 放棄する

World records



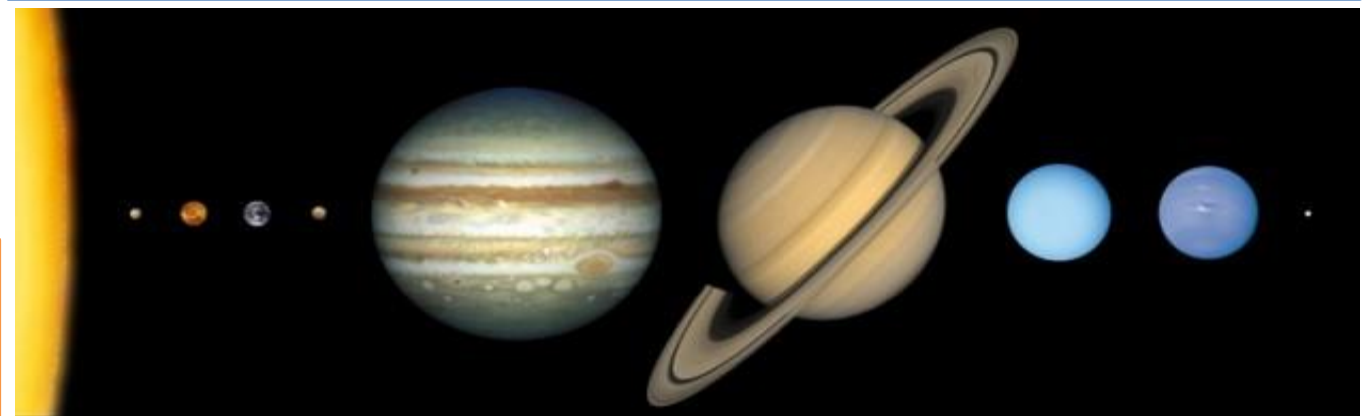
Don't you just hate it when paperclips get hooked¹ together? Well, Imran Sharif of Bangladesh doesn't hate it. In fact, he loves it. He has the world record for the longest paperclip chain. He managed to string together 72,200 paperclips, making a chain that is 2.257km long. How long did it take him? I have no idea. However, because I love you all so much, I will find out. Ok. Here we go Right, it was very annoying and fiddly², but it took me 45 seconds to string together 10 paperclips. That means, 4.5 seconds per paperclip, which, for his record, is 324,900 seconds, or 5,415 minutes, or 90 hours and 15 minutes! Wow! What do you think? Should we try and break this record?

Spot the difference – 15 differences



Something Big and Small

Do you know what the smallest planet in our solar system is? Well, it used to be Pluto, but that was demoted³ from planetary status in 2006. The smallest planet is Mercury, the closest planet to the sun. Its diameter⁴ is about 40% of that of Earth. The largest planet, although I'm sure you all already know, is Jupiter. As you can see from the picture below, it is massive. Its diameter is about 11 times bigger than that of Earth. In fact, Jupiter is so large that it is 2.5 times bigger than all of the other planets combined. Jupiter is a gas giant, which means that it doesn't have a solid core⁵. In the picture below, you can see a small red spot at the bottom right of Jupiter. This is a storm that has been blowing for hundreds of years. It is called the "red spot" and it is bigger than Earth!



Why do we...

... blink? The reason why we blink⁶ is pretty simple. We do it to clear our eyes of dirt and dust and to lubricate⁷ our eyeballs. Nearly all animals blink. We blink, on average, about once every ten seconds. However, what is interesting is that we don't notice that the world has disappeared every ten seconds. If you close your eyes for a long time, you know that it is dark, but when you blink, you don't see that momentary⁸ darkness. Interestingly, it is because your brain doesn't see it. When you blink, the part of your brain associated with vision shuts down for a fraction of a second⁹ and then goes back to normal. This gives you the sensation of continuous vision. We can become aware of the darkness when we try to track¹⁰ some kind of action. Then we force ourselves not to blink so that we don't miss something.



- 1.Hook 繋ぐ 2.Fiddly 手間のかかる 3.Demote 格下げする 4.Diameter 直径 5.Solid core 固い核 6.Blink まばたき 7.Lubricate 潤す 8.Momentary 一瞬 9.A fraction of a second ほんの一瞬 10.Track 跡をたどる