This is the first English News of 2024! Welcome back! Did you have a good winter vacation? Hopefully, you rested a lot, ate a lot, and had a lot of fun. Did you make any new year resolutions[1]? I hope you can be successful[2] with them. I have just decided to try and do more of the things that make me better and healthier, and less of the things that make me worse and unhealthier. I don't know how well I will do, but just thinking about it and trying is good enough. Nobody can be perfect. I have a feeling that 2024 is going to be a great year. What do you think? So much is going to happen, so many exciting things. We're going to have a great time.

10 differences

Last week's answer

Something you didn't know about Tetris

1. Tetris was made in 1984 by a Russian computer programmer called Alexey Pajitnov. His job was to make games to test the power of Soviet[3] computers. He also wanted to show people computers were easy to learn.
2. The name Tetris comes from the Greek word "tetra", meaning 4 and "tennis".
3. Pajitnov was in the Soviet Union[4] and he couldn't sell his game. He had to give the rights[5] to the Soviet government[6]. The Soviet government then sold the rights of the game to Nintendo. Pajitnov didn't make any more from the game until the rights returned to him in 1996.
4. The Tetris theme song is a 19th century Russian folk song[7].

13-Year-Old Beats Tetris

Do you know the game Tetris? I'll put a picture of it for you. Maybe you have played it. I think everybody in my generation knows it. It was one of the most popular games in the world when I was growing up. If you have never played it, here is an explanation[8]. Different shaped blocks come down from the top of the screen. You can turn the blocks around as they move down the screen. You have to fit[9] them into the other blocks already on the screen. If you make a line of blocks across the screen, that line disappears[10] and all of the blocks move down one space. You get points. If you cannot fit the blocks in and they pile up and reach the top of the screen, you lose. When you get enough points, you move up to the next level. As the levels get higher, the blocks come down faster and faster until a human can't keep up. AI can beat it, but a human can't. Until a 13-year-old boy called Willis Gibson managed to do it. And, what happens at the end of the game? It freezes. The game code was not designed to go so high and when Willis reached level 157, the game crashed[11]. He is the first person to ever achieve this. Do you want to try? You can find versions of the game online and there is probably an app for your phone. It is fun, but frustrating[12].

1.new year resolution 新年の抱負 2.successful 成功する 3.soviet ソ連の 4.Soviet Union ソビエト連邦 5.rights 著作権 6.government 政府 7.folk song 民謡 8.explanation 説明 9.fit 入れる 10.disappear 消える 11.crash クラッシュ 12.frustrating イライラさせる

YOU MEAN YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF A SELFIE? NOPE.

IT'S WHERE YOU HOLD THE CAMERA PHONE WAY OUT LIKE THIS AND TAKE A PHOTO OF YOURSELF.

OOPS! THUD!

IT SOUNDS LIKE A SCHEME DREAMED UP TO SELL MORE CELLPHONES.

World record

Here is a world record that I didn't think was possible. Two French pizza chefs, Benoit Bruel and Fabien Montellanico, have broken the world record for the most types of cheese on a pizza. How many types of cheese do you think there are? If I asked you to name cheeses, how many could you name? 3? 5? See how many you can name before you read on. … … How many did you get? Well, in their world record, they put 1,001 different types of cheese on a pizza! 1,001!! They used 2g of each variety, which means they had 2kg of cheese on the pizza. They put the hard cheeses at the bottom and the soft cheeses at the top so everything wouldn't slide[1] off the pizza when they cooked it in the oven. 940 of the cheeses were French, and the rest were from other countries. If they had used more cheeses from other countries, they could have made a pizza with thousands of varieties! Wow! I would love to try them.

Life is really simple[2], but we insist on making it complicated[3]. – Confucius

One thing we can do to help the environment

#12 Stop Using a Plastic Sponge

I started doing this over the winter vacation and I have not been successful yet. My shower sponge was a regular[4] sponge from the hundred yen shop. It was old, so I needed to get a new one. I realized[5] that cheap sponges are made of plastic, and my sponge will become a source of microplastics. I decided to stop using plastic sponges. I wanted to buy a sea sponge[6], but I realized that they are animals, not plants. I don't feel good washing myself with a dead animal, so I have tried something else. There are many sponges made from the fibers[7] of different plants. I bought a sponge made of plant fiber first. Plant fiber is sustainable[8], but the sponge wasn't very good. It was like a ball of string[9] and I couldn't get any foam[10] from it. It hurt a lot to use. Then I bought a sponge made from bamboo fiber and something called polylactic acid[11], which is a plastic made from plants, such as corn or sugar cane. It behaves very much like a plastic, but it is biodegradable[12]. It does have some problems, and it is not perfect, but it is better for the environment than my plastic sponge. I will let you know.

SUSTAINABLE Bamboo
Bamboo & Loofa Full Body Scrubber

1.slide 滑る 2.simple 簡単 3.complicated 複雑 4.regular 普通の 5.realize 気が付く 6.sea sponge 海綿 7.fiber 食物繊維 8.sustainable 持続可能な 9.string 凧糸 10.foam 発泡体 11.polylactic acid ポリ乳酸 12.biodegradable 生物分解可能