

Design: Masako Ban



Mr. Pole

goro-goro lying about

“Are you going anywhere over the summer vacation?” I asked a Japanese friend, and he said, “It’s been a long time since I last took a vacation, so I just want to lie about at home (**goro-goro shimasu**).” Another friend of mine told me he was planning on visiting his parents’ home (**jikka**) with his wife, but that he was heavy-hearted (**ki ga omoi**) and didn’t look that happy. I don’t see why my Japanese friends don’t seem that excited when the summer vacation is coming.

お盆 obonBuddhist festival of the dead (Aug. 13-15)

During the **obon**, many people return to their parents’ home or the home where they were born and visit the family grave to offer incense, flowers and fruit. Married women are responsible for taking their children to their parents-in-law. With gifts to present to parents and relatives and a long travel home, it is typically an expensive visit for the returning family. For many, such expenses are **itai shuppi**, or “painful cost.”



Grammar notes

When you describe your “will; decision”:

less certain		more certain
I’m thinking of _____.	I plan to _____.	I will _____.
volitional form + to omoimasu	dictionary form + tsumori desu	masu -form
e.g., I’m thinking of going. 行こう と思います。 ikō to omoimasu	e.g., I plan to go. 行くつもりです。 iku-tsumori desu	e.g., I will go. 行きます。 iki-masu
maybe, perhaps		probably
た..... ぶん..... ta.....bun.....	た... ぶん... ta...bun...	たぶん tabun
If you are very uncertain, stretch the vowels as you pronounce the word.		

穴場 anaba	secret spot/good spot known to few people	すし詰め sushi-zume	jam-packed
がらがら gara-gara	empty (applies to rooms, shops, trains and so on)	長蛇の列 chōda no retsu	long line
のろのろ運転 noronoro unten	drive at a snail’s pace	ごろごろ します goro-goro shimasu	lie about

Answers

① 予約をしよう と思います。 yoyaku o shiyō to omoimasu	② たぶん tabun	③ 穴場 anaba	④ がらがら gara-gara	⑤ すし詰め sushi-zume
⑥ のろのろ運転 noronoro unten	⑦ 長蛇の列 chōda no retsu	⑧ ごろごろ しよう goro-goro shiyō		

Pera Pera Penguin's

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Working people usually take a summer holiday only for three to four days, often from Aug. 13 to 15, a period called **obon**. Since this is a very short holiday, vacationers tend to concentrate at tourist spots (**kankōchi**). Because of this, trains are in a state of **sushi-zume** (jam-packed), and major highways are jammed (**jūtai**) as long as 100 kilometers. What happens to typical vacation goers is, when they return to work, they are exhausted from taking a vacation! This is why many Japanese say they would rather stay home and just **goro-goro shimasu**, or “lie about and relax in a lazy manner.”

Mr. Pole and a friend are talking about their summer vacation plans.

Mr. Pole: I’m thinking of reserving a room at a Japanese inn tomorrow.

明日 旅館の
ashita ryokan no
tomorrow inn

① I’m thinking of reserving

Friend: It is probably already booked to the full.

② probably もう いっぱいですよ。
mō ippai desu yo
already full

Do you want to know the best spot? It is business districts.

③ a secret spot を 教えましょうか オフィス街 です。
o oshiemashō ka office-gai desu
Let me tell you business district

Restaurants and trains are empty.

レストランも 電車も
restaurant mo densha mo
also train also

④ empty です。
desu

Mr. Pole: How about tourist spots?

観光地は どうか。
kankōchi wa dō desu ka
tourist resort How about...?

Friend: Trains are jam-packed, cars move only at a snail’s pace,

電車は ⑤ jam-packed 、車は ⑥ drive at a snail’s pace 、
densha wa kuruma wa
train car

whatever you do, you have to wait in a long line.

何を するにも
nani o suru nimo ⑦ long line

That is the typical summer vacation.

これが 典型的な 夏休み です。
kore ga tenkē-teki na natsu-yasumi desu
this is typical summer vacation

Mr. Pole: Mmmm.... I think I will just lie about at home.

うーん 家で
unnnnnn uchi de ⑧ lie about
at home



的

teki
-ic; -li; -al; -like;
-ish; -ally; -ly

e.g., specific(ally)... 具体的
gutai-teki

的 な + noun
teki na

e.g., (This is) the specific content.
具体的 な 内容 です。
gutai-teki na naiyō desu
contents

的に + sentence
teki ni

e.g., Summarize in specific points.
具体的に まとめてください。
gutai-teki ni matomete-kudasai
please wrap up

的 だ と思います。
teki dato omoimasu
think

e.g., I think that is very specific.
非常に 具体的に だ と思います。
hijōni gutai-teki da to omoimasu
very

典型的	tenkē-teki	typical(ly)
対照的	taishō-teki	opposite(ly) /by contrast
楽観的	rakkan-teki	optimistic(ally)
比較的	hikaku-teki	relative(ly) /diametric(ally)
基本的	kihon-teki	basic(ally)
国際的	kokusai-teki	international(ly)
計画的	kēkaku-teki	deliberate(ly) /premeditated(ly)
長期的	chōki-teki	in the long run
短期的	tanki-teki	for the short term
積極的	sekkyoku-teki	spontaneous(ly) /aggressive(ly)
消極的	shōkyoku-teki	passive(ly) /negative(ly)
根本的	kompon-teki	fundamental(ly)
文化的	bunka-teki	cultural(ly)
好意的	kōi-teki	favorable(-bly) /friendly
科学的	kagaku-teki	scientific(ally)
現代的	gendai-teki	contemporary(-ily) /modernistic(ally)