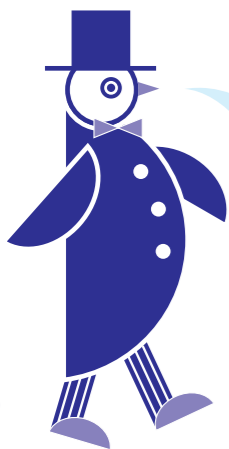


Design: Masako Ban



しりとり shiritori



Pera Pera Penguin's

5-minute Japanese Class by Hitomi Hirayama

Vol. **44**

One day on the train, I overheard a child next to me having a conversation with his mother. He said to her, "**okāsan, shiritori shiyō-yo!**" (Mom, let's do "shiritori"!)" and, I wondered, "What? '**shiritori**'? '**shiri**' (one's back side) and **tori** (take).' Butt-grabbing!?" As I was trying to guess what this meant, the child said, "**usagi** (rabbit)." Then, the mother said, "**gi...ginkou** (bank)." Then, the child said, "**uchi** (house)," and the mother said, "**chi...chi... chizu** (map)," and so on. They kept doing it until the train stopped at the next station. I wondered what they were doing.

■■■ shiritori is a Japanese word game in which players must say a word beginning with the last sound of the previous word, for example, "**u-sa-gi** → **gi-n-ko-u** → **u-chi** → **chi-zu....**" The first player to say a word ending with "N" loses the game. For example, "**su-i-ka** (watermelon) → **ka-gi** (key) → **ki-ri-n** (giraffe)." (In the first example, **ginkō** is pronounced **ginkou** in Japanese. Therefore, the last syllable is "u.")

Note: In shiritori, similar sounds are considered the same:

- ka, ki, ku, ke, ko** ↔ **ga, gi, gu, ge, go**
- sa, shi, su, se, so** ↔ **za, ji, zu, ze, zo**
- ta, chi, tsu, te, to** ↔ **da, de, do**
- ha, hi, fu, he, ho** ↔ **ba, bi, bu, be, bo / pa, pi, pu, pe, po**

- e.g.,
- kaze** (wind) ↔ **sekai** (world)
 - kaba** (hippopotamus) ↔ **pazuru** (puzzle)

2) Seven country names are hidden below in consecutive order. (Note: South Korea = **Daikan** *minkoku*) (Go clockwise →)

ダイカンミンコク
 ナミナガントーエ
 リアメリカナ
 ギンキョウ
 シ
 ユ
 ジ
 ユ
 ジ
 ナ
 マ

3) Fifteen words in kanji are hidden at right. Look for the word in kanji, not the sound of the word. (Go clockwise →)

鏡台所在地地球場外車
 眼鏡茶番
 一本日月年生

Answers : You can start at any place.

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) | 2) | 中学生: middle school student |
| ika : squid | クウェート: Kuwait | 生年月日: date of birth |
| kani : crab | トンガ: Tonga | 日本一: No. 1 in Japan |
| niku : meat | ガーナ: Ghana | 一番: first |
| kuri : chestnut | ナイジェリア: Nigeria | 番茶: coarse tea |
| ringo : apple | アメリカ: the United States | 茶色: brown |
| goma : sesame | カナダ: Canada | 色眼鏡: colored glasses |
| manjuu : a steamed (bean-jam) bun | | 鏡台: chest of drawers with a mirror |
| umeboshi : pickled plum | | 鏡台: kitchen地球: Earth |
| shijimi : a shellfish | | 球場: baseball stadium |
| mimi : ears | | 場外: outside the grounds |
| mimikaki : ear pick | | |
- 3) 車中: in a car / in a train



会話

kaiwa

Many readers have asked for examples of typical conversations people have when visiting a company.

Pole: Excuse me, I'm James Pole from Japanese Lunch. And

あの〜 ジャパニーズランチ の ジェームス ポール ですが、
anō Japanese Lunch no James Pole desu ga
 your company name your name

I have an appointment to see Mr. Chida at five o'clock today.

5時 に 千田 様 とお約束しているんですが...
go-ji ni Chida sama to oyakusoku-shite-irun desu ga...
 appointment person's name ("I have an appointment")
 time who you will meet

Receptionist: I see... you are Mr. Pole from Japanese Lunch.

はい、ジャパニーズランチのポール様ですね。
hai Japanese Lunch no Pole-sama desu ne
 (confirmation)

Please take a seat over there, and he'll be with you in a minute.
 そちらにお掛けになってお待ち下さいませ。
sochira ni okakeninatte omachi-kudasaimase
 over there honorific of "take your seat" and "please wait"

Mr. Chida's secretary comes out to welcome Mr. Pole.

Secretary: Mr. Pole. Sorry for keeping you waiting.
 ポール様お待たせ致しました。
Pole-sama omatase-itashimashita
 honorific of "thank you for waiting"

Please come this way.
 どうぞこちらへ。
dōzo kochira e

The general manager, Mr. Chida, is on his way, so please wait for a few minutes.
 ただ今部長の千田が参りますので
tadaima buchō no Chida ga mairimasu node
 right now Chida manager humble form of "will come"
 少々お待ち下さい。
shō-shō omachi-kudasai
 for a few minutes please wait

A few minutes later.

Chida: Excuse me, sir. I'm sorry to keep you waiting.
 すいません。お待たせしました。
suimasen omatase-shimashita
 thank you for waiting

Pole: Not at all. I always appreciate your kindness.
 いいえいつもお世話になっています。
iie itsumo osewani natte-imasu
 always appreciate your kindness.

With cooperation from Yasuhiro Koga