

Warm Up

Let's start 2026 by having a conversation about the holidays. With a partner, please talk about the following.

2026 年は休暇の話題から始めましょう。パートナーと以下のことについて話し合ってください。

- How your winter vacation was. 冬休みをどう過ごしたか
- Where you went. どこへ行ったか
- What you did. 何をしていたか
- Who you saw. 誰に会ったか
- Presents you gave or got. 贈ったプレゼントやもらったプレゼント
- New things you tried. 初めて挑戦したこと
- Family traditions that you continued. 続けてきた家族の慣習
- Things you realized. 気づいたこと
- etc.

Idioms

Let's look at some beauty related idioms. With a partner, read the following idioms and tell each other which ones you have heard before and which ones you have not. Then talk about the meaning of each idiom. If you don't know an idiom, talk about what you think it might mean.

「美しさ」に関連する慣用句を学びましょう。下記の慣用句で、聞いたことがある／ない、を互いに伝え合ってください。その後、それぞれの意味を話し合しましょう。意味がわからなければ、推測を話してください。

1. Dress to kill
2. A head-turner
3. Ugly as sin
4. Put on your face
5. Look like something the cat dragged in
6. Pretty is as pretty does
7. Look like a million bucks
8. Beauty is only skin deep
9. Lipstick on a pig
10. Easy on the eyes

Example Sentences

1. You sure were **dressed to kill** the other night.
2. Man, that girl is **a head-turner**.
3. I don't mean to be rude, but that dog of yours is **ugly as sin**.
4. I just have to **put on my face**, then I'll be ready to go.
5. What happened to you? You look **like something the cat dragged in**.
6. You don't need that dress, honey. Remember, **pretty is as pretty does**.
7. I don't mean to brag, but I **looked like a million bucks** on my wedding night. You should have seen me.
8. It's hard to believe he's so popular with the ladies, but you know what they say, **beauty is only skin deep**.
9. Painting this old house is like putting **lipstick on a pig**. The windows will still be drafty and the roof will still leak.
10. Who is that man over there in the blue blazer? He sure is **easy on the eyes**.

Idiom Practice

1. Ever since 2008, governments around the world have been doing one stimulus package after another, but they are all just _____ .

2008 年以来、世界中の政府は次々と景気刺激策を打ち出してきたが…

2. I wasn't much of a _____ in high school, but in college, I really blossomed.

高校時代は…、大学では見違えるほど変わった

3. It only takes me five minutes to walk here from the bus stop, but the wind was so strong this morning, by the time I got here, I looked like _____ .

バス停からここまで歩いてたったの 5 分なのに、今朝は風が強すぎたので、着いた時には…

4. You should buy that suit. It makes you look like _____ .

そのスーツは買うべきだよ…

5. You look different today. Did you forget to put _____ ?

今日は何か違うね…

6. I know, Mom. You don't have to tell me that again. _____ , right? Even so, I'm not going out looking like this.

わかってる、ママ。何度も言わなくていいよ。…でしょ？ でもこんな姿で出かけるわけにはいかない。

7. I like the changes you made to your homepage. It's a lot _____ than it was before.

ホームページの変更、いいね。前より…

8. You might be a good cook, but you sure don't know a thing about decorating. This room is _____ .

料理は上手かもしれないけど、装飾のセンスはゼロだね。この部屋…

Today's Scene

Elizabeth Sparkle is a very famous fitness instructor/TV personality. Her show, *Sparkle Your Life*, has been a success for many years now. Today is her 50th birthday, and the producer of her show has a personal rule that any woman the age of 50 is too old for fitness videos. As a result, he takes her out to lunch and tells her that he is canceling her show.

エリザベス・スパークルは人気フィットネスインストラクター兼テレビタレントです。『スパークル・ユア・ライフ』は長年続いた番組ですが、彼女の 50 歳の誕生日に打ち切られてしまいます。プロデューサーが「50 歳は歳を取り過ぎ」という独自ルールを昼食の場で彼女に告げたのです。

While driving home from this luncheon, Elizabeth is in a very bad car accident. Fortunately, though, she survives without so much as a scratch.

そこから帰宅途中に大事故に遭いますが、幸いにも無傷で生還します。

Today's scene starts when she is walking out of the hospital, right after having been evaluated by a strange doctor who secretly puts a mysterious card in her coat pocket. As Elizabeth is looking at the doctor's card and contemplating where it came from, she bumps into an old high school classmate.

今回の場面は、病院を出た直後から始まります。奇妙な医師に診察された時、彼女のコートに謎の紙包みが忍ばされていたことに気が付きます。包みの中身を見つめて考え込んでいる時、彼女は偶然高校時代の同級生と再会します。

Their interaction is awkward. Let's watch the scene and see how it is awkward.

二人はぎこちない会話を交わします。どのようにぎこちないのか、場面を追って見ていきましょう。



Role Play:

There are three characters in today's scene: Elizabeth, Fred, and a narrator. In pairs, one person can play Elizabeth and the narrator, and the other person can play Fred. If you're Elizabeth, practice being surprised and hesitant. Then, when you switch to the role of narrator, try being firm and professional.

登場人物はエリザベス、フレッド、ナレーターの三人です。ペアで演じ、一人がエリザベスとナレーター、もう一人がフレッドを担当してください。エリザベス役の時は驚きやためらいがちな態度で、ナレーター役の時は毅然としたプロらしさを意識してみましょう。

Conversation

At the end of 2025, the Japanese U-can buzzword of the year was Sanae Takaichi's, *Work. Work. Work. Work.*

2025 年新語・流行語大賞は高市早苗氏の「働いて、働いて、働いて、働いて、働いてまいります」でした。

With the idea of creating a better work/life balance trending globally, some might say that Sanae Takaichi's words are a step in the wrong direction. To borrow the words of Aldo, from the movie *Conclave*, she is undoing years of progress.

ワークライフバランスの改善が世界的な潮流となる中、高市氏の言葉は時代に逆行していると指摘する声もあります。『教皇選挙』の Aldo の言葉を借りれば、彼女は「長年の進歩を台無しにしている(undoing years of progress)」かもしれません。

What do you think?

Do you like Takaichi's words? Do you think they promote an ideal that is important for Japanese society today? Or, do you think that her words are potentially dangerous because they seem to encourage a return to the hard Japanese work culture of years past?

あなたはどう思いますか？

高市早苗氏の言葉に賛同しますか？ 現代の日本社会にとって重要な理想を提唱していると思いますか？ それとも、過去の過酷な日本的労働文化への回帰を促す危険な発言だと考えますか？

Examples:

- I agree with Takaichi because I think hard work leads to success
高市氏に賛成です。努力は成功につながると思うからです。
- I like the words *Work. Work. Work. Work.* I think people are becoming lazy and need to be reminded that working hard is important.
「働いて、働いて…」という言葉が好きです。人々は怠けがちになり、努力の重要性を再認識する必要があると思います。
- I don't agree with Takaichi because working too much causes stress and poor health.
高市氏には賛成できません。働きすぎはストレスや健康悪化を招くからです。
- I don't like the words *Work. Work. Work. Work.* I think Japan has a lot of bad working expectations like unpaid overtime and actually working so hard that you die. To me, Takaichi's words encourage the continuation of these bad work habits
「働いて、働いて…」という言葉は好ましくない。日本では無給残業や過労死といった悪い労働慣行が蔓延しています。高市氏の言葉はこうした悪しき労働習慣の継続を助長しているように思えます。