



THE TOMIICHI TELEGRAPH



STUDENT EDITION, JANUARY 2026

NEW YEAR'S AROUND THE WORLD



A crowd visiting a shrine (left) and a girl praying at a shrine (right) on New Year's Day

A girl looking at prayer boards (below) on New Year's Day
Photos by Y. H.

In Japan, people spend New Year's Day with their families, and they eat *osechi*, *ozoni*, and *kagamimochi*. People also play with kites and play *hanetsuki*.

In the US, New Year's Day is not as big of an event as it is in Japan, but people still hold a party. In the UK, they also hold a party, and they sing a Scottish song called '*Auld Lang Syne*', which means "Old Times". It is the origin of the melody of *Hotaru no Hikari*.

In Ecuador, people burn dolls to drive away evil spirits. In Italy, people wear red under their clothes and eat beans. Red is a symbol of love and justice, and beans are symbols of money. They also throw furniture to start the new year with fresh minds.

In Germany, people melt a piece of lead, cool it down, and forecast the future based on the shape of the lead. There are many other unique events around the world for different holidays.

La Tomatina in Buñol, Spain: First they do *Palo Habon*, an event where people try to climb a pole covered with soap and get ham on top of the pole. Second, they start throwing tomatoes at each other. We do not know the origin of *La Tomatina*, but it is said that it started by accident when friends had a food fight.

Carnival in South America and the Caribbean: It is held before fasting, a time when people do not eat anything. People enjoy dance, music, and eating meat. The music is different in different places. In Brazil, people enjoy samba with beautiful clothes. In Trinidad and Tobago, they enjoy calypso and soca.

Seimeisetu in China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan: It is like Japanese *Obon* and people burn money to pray. After that, people hold a party with many flowers.

Rose Festival in Bulgaria: People celebrate the harvest of roses. People in ethnic clothes, which people wore in old times,

sing and dance. They also choose a rose queen. At this festival, many people try to pick roses.

You can read many things about New Year's Day around the world and interesting events happening in different countries. If you are interested in some of these different events, why not try researching about it yourself?

By K. S.



FOOD WORDSEARCH

D	Z	U	K	M	C	S	H	P	D
C	P	G	F	O	N	G	B	U	O
G	A	I	B	U	Q	U	F	D	N
E	C	G	E	S	V	M	J	D	U
X	O	W	H	S	O	M	O	I	T
X	O	P	I	E	F	Y	X	N	D
A	K	N	B	K	T	M	H	G	J
S	I	O	P	M	C	A	K	E	T
J	E	L	L	Y	C	A	N	D	Y
C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E	G

Can you find all the words in our wordsearch?

WORD LIST:

- CAKE
- CANDY
- CHOCOLATE
- COOKIE
- DONUT
- GUMMY
- JELLY
- MOUSSE
- PIE
- PUDDING

Answers on the last page

SAVE OUR LIVES FROM BEARS

Recently, the number of bears seen has been increasing. Also, the number of people killed by bears has been increasing. What can we do to protect our lives from bears?

Prevention Measures

If bears notice people from a distance, most bears keep their distance from people. So, it is important that bears notice people before people notice bears. One of the measures is the bear bell. The bell rings loudly so that bears can notice people. However, even if bears notice the sound of the bell, sometimes bears do not keep their distance from people. People have to know what to do when they meet a bear.

What to Do if We Meet a Bear

When you are about 50 meters away from the bear, you have to move back silently while waving both arms and not looking away from the bear. Waving both arms

may let the bear notice us. When you are about 20 meters away from the bear, you have to move back silently and position yourself so that obstacles come between you and the bear while not looking away from the bear.

Bear's Meat

A lot of bears are killed by hunters every year and they are eaten. Do you know what kinds of bear dishes there are? One famous bear dish is hotpot. It was eaten at the Tateyama food festival. It is so delicious. The meat is not stinky and not hard. Some people say the taste is similar to pork.

Every year, a lot of bears are killed, so Toyama residents look for ways to enjoy the meat.

By T. M.



Cooked bear meat (left) and bear hotpot (right)
Photos by T. M.

TOYAMA'S KELP CULTURE

Toyama City ranks first in Japan for annual household spending on *kombu*, or kelp, per household. In the Edo period, there was a ship called *Kitamaesen* which moved along the Sea of Japan and from the Seto Inland Sea to Osaka. At that time, the ships traded kelp, herring, and salmon from Hokkaido for kelp, rice, sake, and medicine in Toyama. Additionally, during the Meiji period, the number of people moving from Toyama prefecture to Hokkaido increased, and a culture was born in which these people would send kelp to their families and relatives.

For these reasons, people in Toyama eat a lot of kelp. There are many kinds of kelp dishes such as kobujime, Toyama oden and rice balls wrapped in tororo kelp. Kobujime is sashimi sandwiched between kelp. Toyama oden is a style of eating kelp on oden.

If you are interested in these foods, why not come to Toyama to try it?

HOW TO MAKE KOBUJIME

Prepare the fish: Dry the fish with kitchen paper.

Prepare the kelp: Lightly wet the kelp.

Wrap: Put the fish between layers of kelp and wrap it with plastic wrap.

Rest: Keep it in the refrigerator for 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Finish: Remove the kelp and slice the fish. Serve with soy sauce.

Like this, the fish becomes more flavorful and tasty.

By M. A.



Kobujime (kelp-cured fish)
Photo by M. A.

NOTO EARTHQUAKE IMPACT IN TOYAMA PREFECTURE



Damage to a building in Noto
Photo by A. K.

On January 1st, 2024, a strong earthquake hit Noto Peninsula and also affected Toyama. Roads and about 22,000 buildings were

damaged in Toyama Prefecture. Also, the water supply was stopped in Himi City and Takaoka City.

Many public facilities were damaged, and small tsunamis were recorded at some ports. Some stores ran out of food.

Many hotel reservations were canceled, so the number of tourists decreased. The catch of white shrimp decreased, and food sales went down. Some factories also stopped production.

The Noto earthquake reminded residents that it is important to prepare for future earthquakes. People should check hazard maps to know safe areas and dangerous spots. They should

also fix shelves and cabinets so they will not tip over. Storing a week's supply of water and food is important as well. Working together with neighbors also helps during disasters. Families need a clear plan for communicating with each other during emergencies.

The earthquake had a big impact on Toyama, and people realized that disasters can happen anywhere. Lifelines such as electricity, water, and gas were restored, but some areas are still recovering. Everyone wants those areas to be rebuilt soon.

By Y. H.

HOW TO MAKE FRIENDS



*A group of friends smiling together
Photo by M. T.*

Have you ever had trouble making friends? Many people feel this way at least once in their lives. There are many different things

that you can do to make friends. If you are having trouble making friends after changing classes, please try some of these methods.

1. Let People Learn About You

When meeting people for the first time, try introducing yourself. After saying your name, try mentioning your favorite food or anime. If you find someone who shares your interests, it could lead to friendship.

2. Say hello loudly

A bright and cheerful greeting is the first step to making friends. The key is to look your friend in the eye. In the morning, say "Good morning," and when you leave, say "Goodbye." Also, when a friend says hello, smile back.

3. Increase Opportunities to Do Things Together

Spending more time together, such as during recess, after school, or on the way to and from school, can help you become closer. It is important to have the courage to talk to them at these times.

4. Invite them to spend time together

Going to a friend's house and playing your favorite games or doing your favorite hobbies can help you become closer. Try asking them, "Do you want to hang out?". If you spend time with a large group of people, you may suddenly meet more people you can become friends with.

Based on these tips, you can take a step forward and make new friends. If you do not have friends now, it does not mean that you are a failure. Keep trying and you will succeed!

By M. T.

HOW TO BE A SMARTPHONE SUPERUSER

Did you know that many children around the world are spending too much time on their smartphones? Using your smartphone for too long can cause some "not-so-good" things to happen.

Your brain is growing every day! If you use your phone too much, it gets harder to focus on your homework, and your grades might go down. Your brain needs time to think and play without a screen.

If you look at a screen late at night, you will not be able to sleep well. This makes you feel very tired the next day, and it is easier for you to catch a cold or get sick.

Too much smartphone time makes your body and mind feel tired. Here are 3 steps you can take to become a smartphone superuser:

1. Make a "Phone Hotel"

Pick a basket or box and call it the "Phone Hotel." When you eat dinner or get home from school, everyone puts their phones in the hotel. It is time to talk and laugh with your family, not with a



screen! Also, decorate your "Phone Hotel" and make it your own special hotel!

2. Set a "Superuser Timer"

Before you start using your phone, set a timer for 30 minutes. When it goes "Beep-Beep!", stand up and stretch!

3. The "Sun and Moon" Rule!

No phones before breakfast (the sun) and no phones one hour before bed (the moon). Your brain needs a gentle wake-up and a peaceful sleep.

*A girl using her smartphone
Photo by Y. H.*

By Y. H.

FLAMINGOS

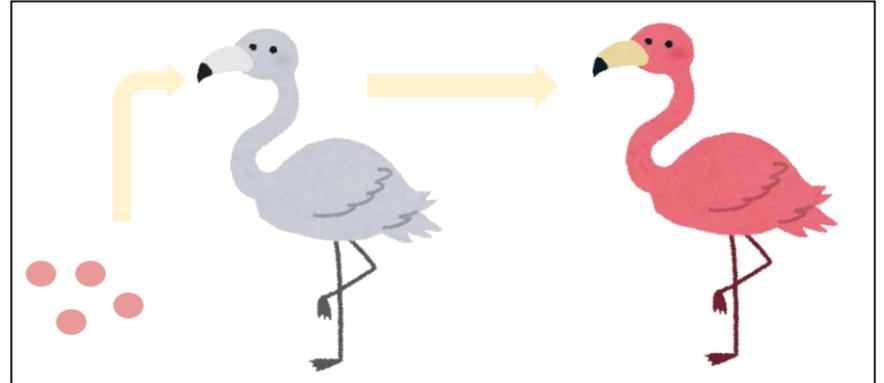


A flamingo in its habitat

Flamingos live in many countries across Africa, southern Europe, western Asia, and Central and South America. They live in

Photo by Getty Images

shallow areas of lagoons, salt lakes, along the coasts, and inland. They are between 80 and 140cm tall and can weigh between 2kg



How flamingos get their pink color

Diagram by V. S. using flamingo images from Irasutoya

and 4kg. Their wingspans are between 1m and 1.5m in length. Flamingos are pink because their food has “carotenoids” in them, which are red chemicals that they keep in their bodies.

One place that you can find flamingos is the Guadalquivir Delta in Spain. Their nests are built from silt, clay, and sand. The shallow, salty waters of the Guadalquivir Delta have lots of nutrients, which is why there are many different crustaceans, crabs, and insects that live there. All of these insects and animals attract flamingos.

Flamingo chicks are born grey or white with feathers. Young birds eventually become greyish-brown with a pinkish tint. By the time they are three years old, they get

the brightly colored feathers of adult flamingos.

Flamingos use their beaks to get food. They lower their heads into the water with their beak upside-down and use them as a filter. Their tongues move up and down to suck up water, sand, algae, small crustaceans and young insects, which are then filtered out by special plates inside the beak.

The sounds that flamingos make are usually described as low-pitched, slightly muffled sounds like “quacking” or “grrring.” Even though they look very elegant, they actually have a quite loud, sometimes even violent, cry.

By V. S.

ALL ABOUT SYLLABLES

Have you ever wondered why Japanese songs and English songs sound different? The key to this question is syllables.

What are syllables?

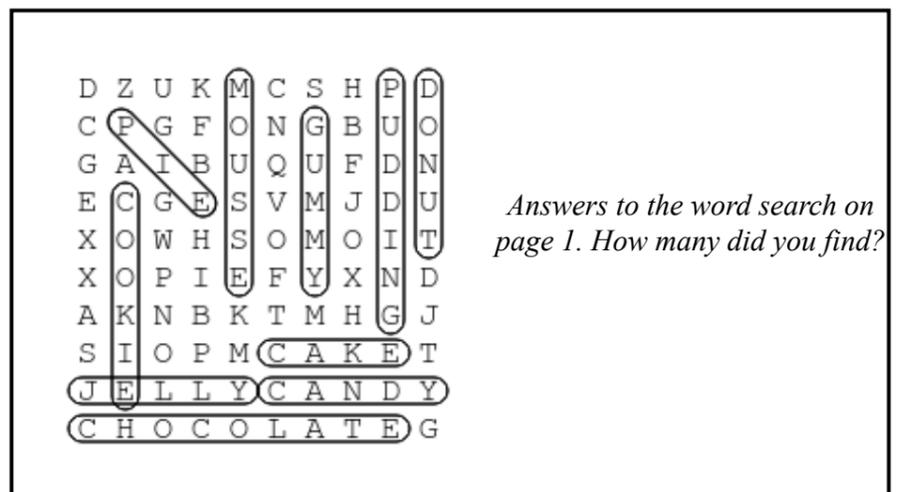
Syllables are the minimum unit of rhythm when a person speaks. Rhythm is the patterns of how strong or weak voices sound, how long or short the sound of the voice is, and how high or low the pitch sounds. For an example of syllables in an English sentence, when you say, “He is cool”, there is an accent on the “e” of “he” and the “i” of “is” and the “o” of “cool”. So the syllables are like this – “He / is / cool”.

Japanese syllables

Japanese syllables are decided by duration, which is called *mora*,

but English syllables are decided by pitch. It makes people who learn the language confused. For Japanese speakers, English sounds so quick because the syllables are not all the same length.

By K. S.



The Tomiichi Telegraph

Published by a group of seven students from Toyama Daiichi High School, a private high school in Toyama City, in cooperation with the not-for-profit Global Education Information Center (GEIC).

Publisher: Toyama Daiichi High School

Project Supervisors: A. K., C. C., and T. O.

Chief Editor: K. S.

Assistant Editors: V. S., Y. H.

Staff Writers: K. S., M. A., M. T., T. M., V. S., Y. H., Y. H.

Contact: Toyama Daiichi High School

5-1-54 Mukaishinjomachi, Toyama, 930-0916

TEL: 076-451-3396 / FAX: 076-451-7928

URL: <https://www.tomiichi.ed.jp/>