



## When Numbers Turn into Words

Read the story. 英文を読もう。

Class \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

① In Japanese, every number can be read in more than one way. The number 2 can be ni or fu. The number 8 can be hachi, ha, or ya. Japanese people play with these sounds and make words out of numbers. This word game is called goroawase.



- ② Goroawase has given Japan many special days. February 22 is Cat Day, because 2-2-2 can sound like nyan nyan nyan. That is how cats say meow in Japanese. August 7 is Banana Day, because 8 and 7 can be read as ba and nana. And November 22 is Good Couples Day, because 11-22 sounds like ii fufu, a good couple.
- ③ Some of these days are quite old. In 1928, Japanese dentists chose June 4 as a day to protect teeth. The numbers 6 and 4 can be read as mu and shi. Mushi means bug, and a bad tooth in Japanese is mushiba, a bug tooth. The police use goroawase, too, so January 10 is 110 Day, for the emergency number.
- ④ Today, companies and groups often create their own pun days. A company can pick a date that sounds like its product and use it in ads. English speakers play this game, too. May 4 is Star Wars Day, because May the Fourth sounds like May the Force. But in Japanese, numbers have so many sounds that puns can fill the whole calendar.

### Words 単語

**pun** ダジャレ、語呂合わせ

**sound like** へのように聞こえる

**read** 読む

**protect** 守る

**dentist** 歯医者

**emergency** 緊急事態

**product** 商品、製品

**calendar** カレンダー、暦



## Reading Check

Choose the best answer. 正しいものを選ぼう。

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### 1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- (A) Japanese numbers can be read as sounds, so many special days come from puns.
- (B) Japan has only one special day for cats.
- (C) All special days in Japan are national holidays.
- (D) Goroawase started in the United States.

### 2. Why is August 7 Banana Day?

- (A) Because bananas are yellow.
- (B) Because summer starts on August 7.
- (C) Because 8 and 7 can be read as ba and nana.
- (D) Because monkeys were born on that day.

### 3. When did Japanese dentists choose June 4 as a day to protect teeth?

- (A) In 1987.
- (B) In 1999.
- (C) In 1956.
- (D) In 1928.

### 4. In paragraph 4, why does a company pick a date that sounds like its product?

- (A) To close its stores.
- (B) To use the date in ads.
- (C) To make a national holiday.
- (D) To change its name.

### 5. In the dialogue, what example from English does Lucas give?

- (A) Cat Day.
- (B) Banana Day.
- (C) May the Fourth.
- (D) Pi Day.

### True or False? 正しいければ T、ちがえば F に○

|                                           |       |
|-------------------------------------------|-------|
| Cat Day in Japan is on February 22.       | T / F |
| All goroawase days are national holidays. | T / F |
| June 4 is a day to protect teeth.         | T / F |
| August 7 is Apple Day in Japan.           | T / F |



## Word Work

Words & phrases. 単語のれんしゅう。

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① Match the pictures and the words. 絵と単語を線で結ぼう。



●

● cat



●

● nose



●

● tooth



●

● banana



●

● ninja



●

● ear

② Fill in the blanks. 語群から選んで ( ) に入れよう。

cafe

cats

dog

rice

pun

summer

photo

22

lap

nyan

### A Day for Cats

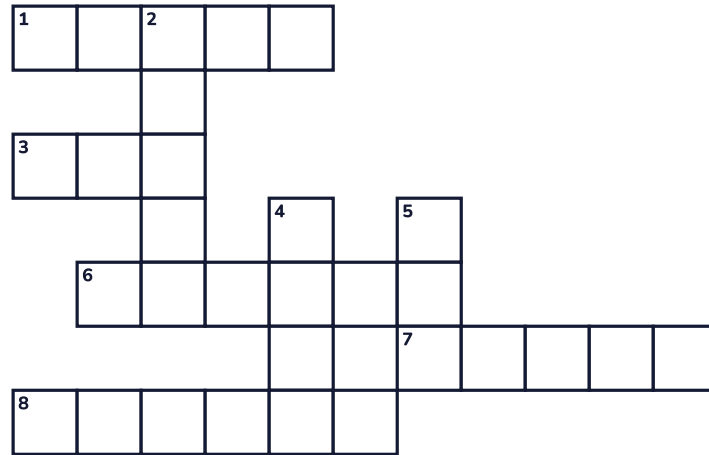
Today is February (1) \_\_\_\_\_. Riku's sister loves (2) \_\_\_\_\_. She says, "In Japanese, two can sound like (3) \_\_\_\_\_!" So today is Cat Day. They visit a cat (4) \_\_\_\_\_ after school. A small white cat sits on Riku's (5) \_\_\_\_\_. His sister takes a (6) \_\_\_\_\_. On the way home, Riku says, "Let's make our own (7) \_\_\_\_\_ day!"



## Crossword Puzzle

Read the clues and fill in the puzzle. ヒントを読んで、ク  
ロスワードを完成させよう。

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### Across →

- 1 Chinese characters used in Japanese writing. (5)
- 3 A funny use of words that sound the same. (3)
- 6 A long yellow fruit. (6)
- 7 You brush this to keep it white and strong. (5)
- 8 One, two, and three are examples. (6)

### Down ↓

- 2 A secret fighter and spy in old Japan. (5)
- 4 February 22 is one. It is on the calendar. (4)
- 5 A pet that says meow. (3)



## Word Search

Find the hidden words. かくれた単語を探そう (→ ↓ ↘  
↗)。

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|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | T | Y | M | F | H | I | B | C | J | N | G | G |
| H | Y | O | M | G | Y | F | W | T | S | N | M | V |
| S | W | I | O | F | E | B | A | N | A | N | A | B |
| D | N | C | K | T | Y | D | A | J | H | A | U | D |
| S | I | W | R | T | H | J | T | D | A | T | E | W |
| L | R | O | R | K | N | M | M | S | L | F | D | W |
| B | B | R | L | I | H | M | H | O | L | R | F | I |
| N | T | D | N | N | K | F | Y | U | V | E | L | K |
| K | U | G | L | R | L | B | U | N | S | N | A | H |
| A | W | M | A | E | Y | W | C | D | U | U | H | V |
| N | B | V | B | G | D | B | F | P | W | K | U | S |
| J | W | G | L | E | S | W | L | G | C | A | T | R |
| I | H | C | D | W | R | K | M | B | U | P | T | M |

### Find these words! 10

- ☐ BANANA
- ☐ CAT
- ☐ DATE
- ☐ KANJI
- ☐ NINJA
- ☐ NUMBER
- ☐ PUN
- ☐ SOUND
- ☐ TOOTH
- ☐ WORD

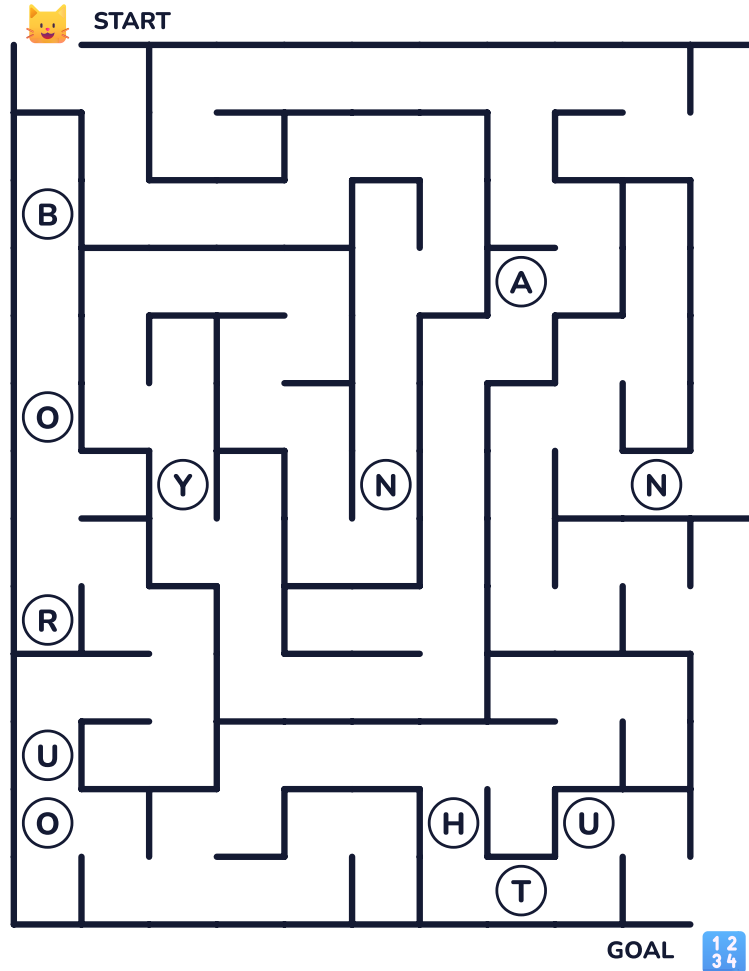


## Maze & Sentences

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Help the cat find the number 2!

Collect the letters on the right path. What is the secret word? 正しい道の文字を集めると、ひみつの言葉になるよ。



Secret word: \_\_\_\_\_



## Class Activity & Writing

Class \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Let's Write! 英語で書いてみよう。

If I made a pun day, it would be on \_\_\_\_\_ because the numbers sound like \_\_\_\_\_.

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My favorite pun day is \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

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## Trace & Color

Trace the words. Then color the picture! なぞって書こ  
う。絵に色を塗ろう。

Class \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_



cat



banana



tooth



ear



nose

Draw your Japan's Pun Days (Goroawase Anniversaries)! 語呂合わせ記念日ずかん（日本の変わった記念日）の絵を描こう。