



The Day the Sun Sets Due West

Read the story. 英文を読もう。

Class _____

No. _____

Name _____

① Twice a year, the sun rises exactly in the east and sets exactly in the west. One of these days comes in September. In Japan, it is a national holiday called Shubun no Hi, or Autumnal Equinox Day.



音声を聞こう

② The date is different from year to year. It is usually September 22 or 23. For example, it was

September 23 in 2026, but it will probably be September 22 in 2028. The law does not give a date. Instead, scientists at the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan study the movement of the sun and find the right day. The government announces the date each February for the next year.

③ The holiday is a day to respect our ancestors and remember people who have died. It is the middle day of Higan, a Buddhist week in spring and fall. Many families visit their family graves, clean them, and bring flowers. Some people also go to temples for special services. They also eat ohagi, sticky rice covered in sweet red bean paste.

④ Why this day? In Buddhism, a happy world called the Pure Land is far away in the west. On the equinox, the sun goes down right in the west, so people thought it was the best day to pray. This custom is found only in Japan.

⑤ Around this time, bright red flowers called higanbana bloom along rice fields. Their name means equinox flower. People also say that the summer heat ends at Higan. And by the way, day and night are not exactly equal on the equinox. In Tokyo, the day is still more than 10 minutes longer!

Words 単語

equinox 春分・秋分（昼夜平分時）

autumnal 秋の

exactly ちょうど、正確に

observatory 天文台

announce 発表する

ancestor 先祖

remember 思い出す、しのぶ

grave 墓

paste ペースト、練ったもの

pray 祈る

bloom （花が）咲く

poisonous 毒のある



Reading Check

Choose the best answer. 正しいものを選ぼう。

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

1. What is the main idea of the reading?

- (A) Japan has a holiday on the autumn equinox to remember ancestors.
- (B) Scientists in Japan found a new star in September.
- (C) Red flowers are the most popular gift in Japan.
- (D) The summer in Japan is very long.

2. Who finds the right date for the holiday?

- (A) Buddhist monks.
- (B) The Prime Minister.
- (C) Farmers in the rice fields.
- (D) Scientists at the observatory.

3. When does the government announce the date?

- (A) On the day itself.
- (B) Each February, for the next year.
- (C) Every September, one week before.
- (D) Once every ten years.

4. Why did people think the equinox was a good day to pray?

- (A) Because the moon is full on that day.
- (B) Because it is the hottest day of the year.
- (C) Because the sun goes down right in the west, where the Pure Land is.
- (D) Because the flowers are red.

5. In paragraph 5, what does "bloom" mean?

- (A) To grow open as a flower.
- (B) To die in the cold.
- (C) To be sold in a shop.
- (D) To be eaten.

6. Which sentence matches the reading?

- (A) The holiday is always on September 23.
- (B) Day and night are exactly the same length on the equinox.
- (C) Higan is a custom from India.
- (D) In Tokyo, the day is longer than the night on the equinox.

7. What can we guess about the date of the holiday?

- (A) Nobody knows it until the morning.
- (B) It depends on the movement of the sun, not on a fixed number.
- (C) It was chosen by a famous emperor.
- (D) It is the same in every country's calendar as a holiday.

8. In the dialogue, why does Yui say Liam should not pick the red flowers?

- (A) Because they belong to the temple.
- (B) Because they are poisonous.
- (C) Because Grandpa did not like red.
- (D) Because the shop is closed.

True or False? 正しいらば T、ちがえば F に○

The law gives a fixed date for Autumnal Equinox Day.	T / F
The holiday is usually on September 22 or 23.	T / F
On the equinox, the sun sets exactly in the west.	T / F
Higan started in India.	T / F
Many families visit their family graves on this day.	T / F
Day and night are exactly the same length on the equinox.	T / F



Word Work

Words & phrases. 単語のれんしゅう。

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

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



●

● rice plant



●

● night



●

● autumn leaf



●

● sunset



●

● red flower



●

● telescope



●

● chestnut



●

● pray

② Unscramble the words. 文字を並べ替えて単語にしよう。

1. O E N U X Q I

2. N T U A M U

3. A E R G V

4. E S U T N S

5. A V R S T E H

6. N O T E S A R C

③ Fill in the blanks. 語群から選んで () に入れよう。

smile

water

pizza

fields

incense

higanbana

grave

snow

ohagi

plate

summer

beach

flowers

Higan with Grandma

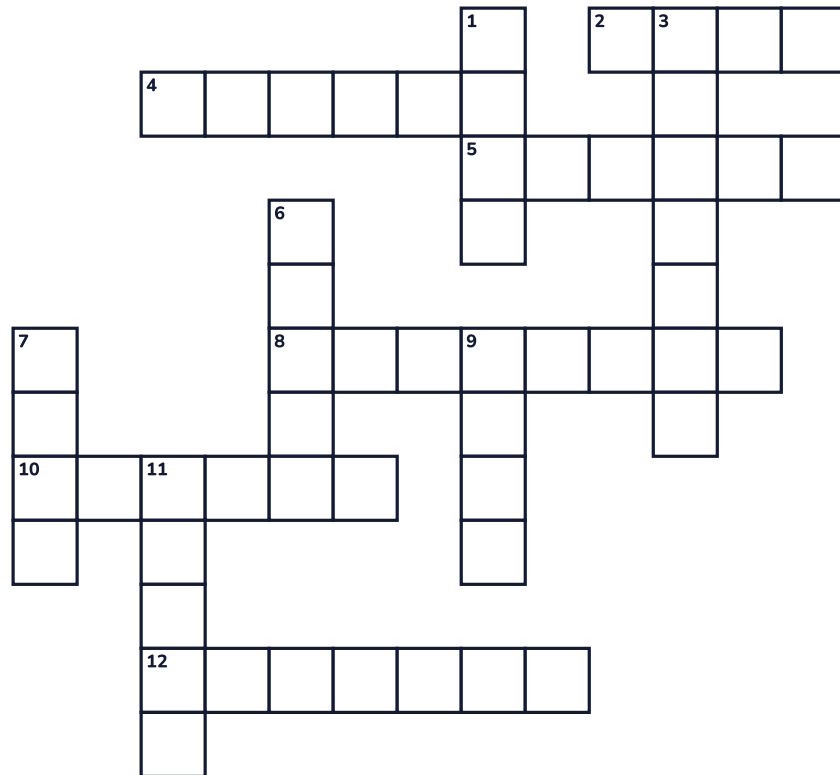
On Autumnal Equinox Day, Hana went to the (1) _____ with her grandma. They cleaned the stone with (2) _____ and put (3) _____ in front of it. Grandma lit some (4) _____. "Your grandpa liked (5) _____," she said, and she put two on a small (6) _____. On the way home, they saw red (7) _____ along the rice (8) _____. The air was cool. "The (9) _____ heat ends at Higan," Grandma said with a (10) _____.



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。

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____



Across →

- 2** A small seed. Sweet paste is made from red ones. (4)
- 4** A rose or a lily is one. (6)
- 5** The season after summer. Americans often call it fall. (6)
- 8** A family member from long, long ago. (8)
- 10** The time in the evening when the sun goes down. (6)
- 12** The time when farmers cut and collect rice. (7)

Down ↓

- 1** To talk to God or Buddha with your heart. (4)
- 3** A day in March or September when day and night are almost equal. (7)
- 6** A place where a dead person rests. (5)
- 7** The direction where the sun goes down. (4)
- 9** The direction where the sun comes up. (4)
- 11** The dark time between evening and morning. (5)



Word Search

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

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

Find these words! 13

- ☐ AUTUMN
- ☐ BEAN
- ☐ DAY
- ☐ EAST
- ☐ EQUINOX
- ☐ FLOWER
- ☐ GRAVE
- ☐ MOON
- ☐ NIGHT
- ☐ PRAY
- ☐ RICE
- ☐ SUNSET
- ☐ WEST

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

Secret Code 暗号を解こう！記号を文字に直すと、メッセージが出てくるよ。



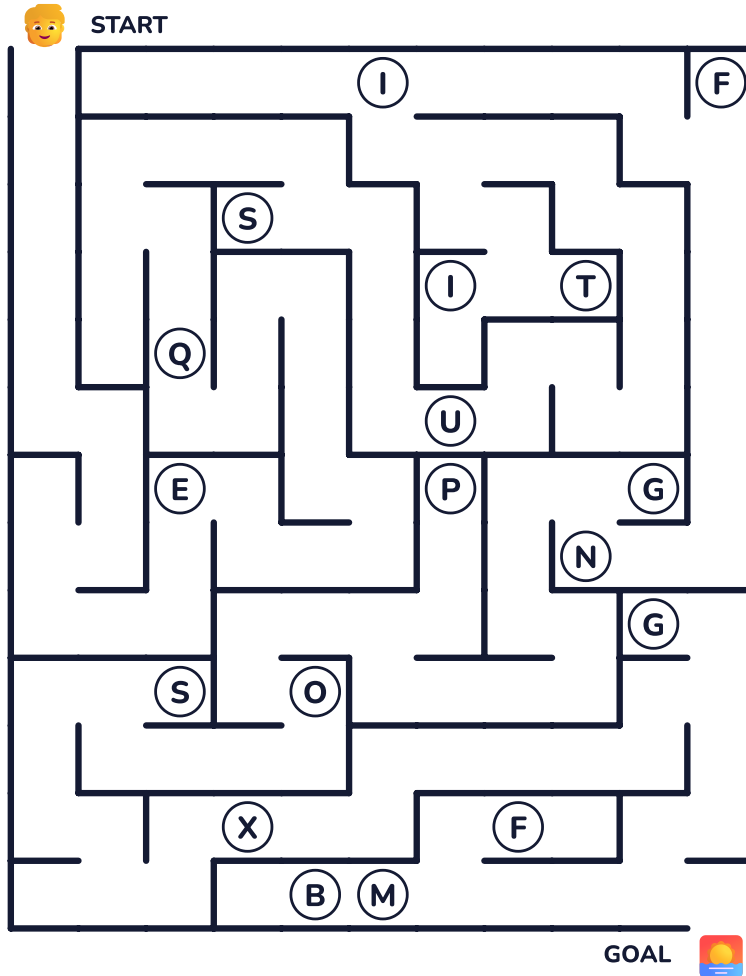


Maze & Sentences

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

Follow the sunset to the west!

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: _____

Put the words in order. 並べ替えて正しい文にしよう。

1. sets / The / sun / in / the / west / exactly .

2. day / this / our / grave / We / on / family / visit .

3. covered / is / paste / Ohagi / sweet / in / bean .

4. the / fields / rice / Red / bloom / along / flowers .

5. The / around / ends / heat / this / summer / time .

**Class Activity & Writing**

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

Find Someone Who... クラスで聞いて回ろう！ Ask: "Do you ...?" / "Have you ...?"

Find someone who ...	Name
... has visited a family grave this year	
... likes ohagi	
... has seen red spider lilies	
... knows the English word for 秋分	
... can point to the west from this room	
... has watched a sunset this month	
... knows the name of a grandparent's grandparent	
... likes autumn better than spring	

Let's Write! 英語で書いてみよう。

On Autumnal Equinox Day, I want to thank _____ because _____.

My favorite thing about autumn is _____.

If I could talk to one of my ancestors, I would ask _____.



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 _____



sunset



autumn leaf



red flower



pray

